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SERMONS  
FROM THE PULPIT.

BY

*Henry Biddleman*  
H. B. BASCOM, D.D., LL.D.

AS WE WERE ALLOWED OF GOD, TO BE PUT IN TRUST WITH THE GOSPEL,  
EVEN SO WE SPEAK.

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FIRST SERIES.

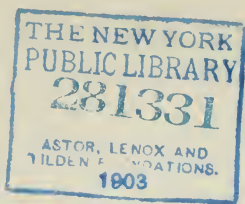
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## P R E F A C E .

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THE Author having consented to the publication of a volume of his Sermons, owes it to those who may become his readers, not less than to himself, to explain the circumstances under which they were prepared for use, and are now, without any material alteration of any kind, allowed to go to the press. Had these sermons been originally prepared for publication, or even re-written with a view of adapting them to the reader rather than hearer, he should have deemed explanation out of place, because unlikely to be of any service to himself or the reader. As it is, however, explanation becomes necessary, and the author is compelled to risk a brief statement of facts, by way of introduction.

Under the mingled influence of youthful ardor and religious zeal, encouraged and brought forward by the kindness, and perhaps indiscreet solicitude of friends, the author, regarding himself divinely directed, early resolved upon the Christian Ministry as the business of his life, and was formally admitted to the Pulpit, and commenced preaching when he was but sixteen years old, and with such qualifications only, as in connection with his age, may be inferred from the fact, that whatever native vigor of intellect he possessed, and an education which had been little more than commenced, had, under the pressure of many disadvantages, been turned to some little ac-

count, by unremitting devotion to elementary books and study, the two preceding years.

The very slight miscellaneous training he had received, was as defective in kind as limited in extent, and with heart and will to go forward in the great work before him, he felt from the first, and at every step, that something beyond the ordinary food and shelter of mind, was necessary to prepare him for the pulpit. He saw that determined and earnest reliance upon his own efforts was his only resource, and relying upon Divine aid, he sought to apply himself accordingly. Without guide or model, with no one to direct or strike out a course for him as a student, he was left to project and explore his own path, or be content with what he was likely to become, from the mere force of circumstances.

With strong intuitive perceptions and sympathies, in relation to the good and the beautiful in nature and morals, with irrepressible yearnings to learn and to know; the means and expedients to which he would be driven, as the only possible condition of ability and influence as a minister, can be readily imagined. He soon found that while improvement, in the field of thought and labor he had chosen, had some fixed and necessary elements, many of its phases were altogether doubtful and tentative, and that all depended on trial and effort, and under the stimulus and pressure of duty and necessity, the tension of strong desire and unrelaxed endeavor, yielding to the tendencies of his nature without rule or model, except the ideal of his own perceptions, he appealed for aid to whatever was likely to avail him. He was the pupil, and sought to learn of whatever there was about him, from which he could derive instruction or aid. Reading, reflection, observation and experience—inward springs and outward relations—all the affinities and influences of mind,



thought and action, within his reach, were honestly invoked in view of light and guidance. The urgent succession of labor and duty, called for constant preparation. The night became a necessary part of the day's labor. Thought demanded material, and ends exacted means. Without constant effort and struggle for growth and enlargement, all hope or chance of success was foreclosed. Such were the circumstances of want and trial, under which the author commenced, and for a series of years prosecuted, his ministry; and the reader will soon perceive why he has deemed it proper that the statement should accompany the publication of his sermons.

The following discourses go to the press, in the precise form in which they were prepared for the pulpit. No one of them was written with a view to publication. They are in fact the "Preaching Notes" of the author, as used by him in preparing for the pulpit, during a term of more than thirty years. These Notes, at first little more than outline memoranda, have gradually grown upon his hands as he has had occasion to use them in his preparations for the pulpit from time to time, until they have assumed the form of elaborate discourses. As none of these discourses have been reconstructed, either in plan or style, they will, as a matter of course, present great diversity, and, it may be, want of unity and individuality of character, on the score both of thought and expression. From this obvious elementary trait, the author might have redeemed them; but, for many reasons, would not. He prefers the hazard of allowing them to be read in the shape and livery in which they were prepared for the pulpit, and have been called for by those who heard them.

The subjects, with perhaps one or two exceptions, will

be found within the ordinary range of pulpit instruction. The reader will perceive a sustained attempt at a popular practical exhibition of the faith and ethics, the doctrines and duties, of Christianity. The diversity, as it regards style and thought, will be readily accounted for, in view of the circumstances under which they were produced. Several of them received the body and form in which they now appear, at least twenty years ago, when the author must be presumed to have thought and felt in a manner more or less peculiar to the *earlier* years of a student, relying upon his own energy and application, as the means and warrant of improvement and usefulness. The larger number of them date back more than fifteen years, and none of them are of more recent origin than ten years back. Thousands who have heard these sermons preached, in different parts of the United States, and at different periods during the last twenty-five years, cannot fail, should they read them, to recognize them as actual pulpit ministrations, to which they were a party, and with which they will find themselves more or less familiar. Should these discourses be judged by the ordinary tests of composition and authorship, their true character must of necessity be misunderstood. They were never intended for the judgment of such a tribunal. Not one in the series was continuously written out at one time, or even within a brief period. They are the growth of years, gradually matured and perfected, as the wants and exigencies of pulpit labor led or urged the author to preparation. In these sermons, whatever may be their value, or want of it, the *writer* is essentially merged, and should be lost sight of, in the *preacher*. Any ambitious claim which might combine with the former, gives place to the simple and the actual, connected with the varied and current ministrations of the latter. The reader, instead of meeting with the more

formal creations of regular continuous composition, will meet with the somewhat irregular accumulations of thought and language, such as have occurred to the author, and been noted down at different times, and under almost every variety of circumstance. In the preparation of these discourses, from the first elementary sketch to the only finish they have finally received, and often amid the haste and urgency incident to unexpected calls and sudden occasions, the author had of necessity to "become all things" to himself and others, in view of proper impression and effect; and under all such circumstances, he always regarded himself as *at school* to whatever book, mind or other available means of preparation and improvement might be found in his way. He had to look out of himself as well as within, and yield himself to the shaping influence of necessity and the circumstances surrounding him. He found laborious and often baffled effort to meet the claims upon him, the stern condition of all growth and every thing like progress.

The earlier nucleus forms of these sermons date so far back in the personal history of the author, he may be unconscious in many instances of the extent to which he may be indebted to others, for the scope and spirit, and even the shape and coloring, of his own thoughts. Amid the ever varying vicissitudes and appliances of laborious self-instruction, he must have been largely indebted to others, for the sources and inspiration both of thought and language. He believes, however, from the best means of judgment in his power, particularly his general habits of study and composition, that the plan and prosecution, the logic and language, of each discourse, are so essentially his own and unlike any other productions with which he is acquainted, as to stamp upon the whole series those distinguishing features of mental aptitude, constituting all that is

usually meant by originality of conception or style in the instance either of the speaker or writer. Occasional imitations and resemblances, more or less tangible, and applying alike to forms of thought and language, in a sentence or even paragraph, here and there, will no doubt be detected by the critical reader; and when he recollects how and by what means and methods these discourses have assumed their present form, he will be the more readily able to account for them. Such probable resemblances, the result of his earlier habits of study, the author has no wish to disguise or disavow. He is rather inclined to allow criticism the benefit of any prominence they can be made to assume. He affects in such connection, no creative power of thought or independent force of conception, and fully admits his deep indebtedness to other minds for the furniture of his own. It will be proper to add, more circumstantially here, that the early and long-continued habit of reducing to writing, as the means of self-improvement, *his first vivid impressions, in the shape of notes and strictures*, upon nearly all the more important subjects and topics in the entire range of his reading, and freely using such notes and memoranda, as he found it convenient or necessary in his pulpit preparations, may have betrayed him into the use of occasional trains of thought and forms of expression to be met with in the works of others, and with regard to which he has now no means of judgment or correction, as he sought only to preserve thought; and in doing so, relied entirely upon impression and memory. The author thinks it quite likely that defects of this kind, incidental to his earlier habits of application, may, in many instances, have escaped his notice. How far such occasional blemishes, if met with, should affect the character of the general subject or train of thought, as fused in the mind of the author and elaborated in the following dis-

courses, is cheerfully left to the judgment of the well informed reader.

The author's own ideal of fitness and excellence, meanwhile, has always in every instance furnished the starting point, path, and goal. In the preparation of his discourses, he has always been careful so to idealize and vivify the *sermo interior*—the body of thought—the organic whole—as to make the vision his own, in contradistinction from all others. He has always labored so to conceive and improvise the plan of his discourses, as to give them, in his own mind at least, the force of a scenic representation. The author has for more than thirty-five years industriously sought after and bowed low before the model forms and aspects of thought in the instance of other minds, but he has not allowed the aids for which he is indebted to others, to displace or supercede the agency and activity of his own mind; and by how far he has turned such aids to new accounts and uses, he cannot but regard himself as entitled to be heard, as an original, separate witness. If in any instance he has availed himself of such subsidiary helps, without opening new sources of thought and feeling, and presenting new traits of observation, and thus giving them new practical uses, he has done so most unconsciously and without intention. All such means and methods have been resorted to, as merely lateral and adjunctive, and in no sense more than tributary to the controlling current of his own thoughts. In this way and for such purposes, the thickly noted page and record of the past and present, have been constantly appealed to. Standing in his own right of inquiry and search, the author has never hesitated to shake hands with nature, books, the circumstances of the times, and his own position, that he might the better fulfill his mission and make it be felt. And he

believes the light thus reflected from others, has been with such variations, if not increase, as to justify the extent and manner of its use.

Intense sympathy with mind and thought in others—the “mighty shapes and mightier shadows” of intellect, as found in the works of the dead and achievements of the living—furnishes no presumption certainly of want of self-reliance and independence on the part of the mind of which it is affirmed. The mind may have center and steadfastness of its own—may have proper balance of power among all its faculties—may have ability faithfully to represent truth and nature—may have an eye of its own, and see things in its own light—may have a mechanism and texture of thought peculiar to itself, and yet be so influenced by fellowship with other minds, as to receive from them constant impulse and direction, even when no note is taken of it, and no such result dreamed of. Who does not know that the mind receives spring and momentum, in a thousand forms, from causes and sources, and has its wants supplied by innumerable means and methods, unnoted and unobserved at the time, or subsequently? There is mental product without knowing whence or how.

The expansive tendency thus given to the mind, vigorously astir under the impelling circumstances of spontaneous aspiration, or exigence and want, shows how truly the thoughts of others may color and invigorate our own, while the diffusion and interpenetration of our own throughout the whole mass, is too entire and controlling not to give essential insulation and independence with regard to all others. The power and habit of perceiving things in a manner different from others, and yet true to facts and nature—such mental production bearing the impress of what is peculiar to

the mind producing it—is the true and only originality of sound philosophical criticism, and the original interest of any production is limited to this distinction, and should be determined by it. The pages of Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Hall, Robert South and John Milton, may tend directly to increase the power both of thought and expression, without any implication of servility or dependence.

The author has been thus explicit on this topic for several reasons, in which his readers have an interest as well as himself. First, as it regards himself and the sermons found in this volume, the peculiar if not entirely unique circumstances under which they received body and form, suggested the propriety of enabling the reader to perceive that while the author has received impression and inspiration from the might and influence of other minds in their production, these discourses, such as they may be found to be, are his own ideal creations, both as it regards the *tout ensemble* of their structure and the great mass of their elementary details. In the next place, without reference to himself, the author has felt disposed to suggest caution with regard to the commonly received tests and standards of judgment on this subject, by which profoundly original productions are often pronounced mere imitations, because in them, forsooth, are found occasional and more or less striking resemblances to the productions of other men! And on the other hand, it is not uncommon to meet with works, commended as highly original, merely, it would seem, because so utterly common-place, both in matter and style, as not to remind the critic of anything of note he has ever seen or heard before! And finally, it has been the wish of the author to attract to this subject the attention of the ministry, and especially

the younger divisions of the ministry in his own church. He greatly fears the popular sophisms and dogmas of a false taste and bastard criticism, are rapidly tending to injure and reduce the power and influence of the pulpit. Its incumbents are required to adjust themselves to rules and conformities, whose only tendency is to place the pulpit, as an engine of influence, in the hands of those who have no just conceptions of its mission and functions, and who are withal, perhaps, interested in giving it misdirection. These suggestions are at least worthy of careful examination. The author does not regard himself as having more than a common interest in them, and beyond this has no wish to claim their protection or deprecate consequences. His sole object is to direct attention to the fair and the just in relation to a mooted question, connected with the rights and interests of the pulpit.

Of the true character and relative value of these discourses, the author, on many accounts, can scarcely be considered as a competent judge. In his own personal history they are the memoirs of thought and feeling, as belonging to the past rather than present. They received form and expansion, and were prepared and preached, as he thought and felt, and in view of resource and opportunity, at the time. They are the living type of his actual conceptions and emotions, in preparing for the pulpit, and before the audiences to which they were addressed. There is not a paragraph in them, that was not written for immediate use before an audience soon to be met. There is not a thought entering into the substance of any one of them, that has not mingled with the devotions and been part and parcel of the worship of assembled thousands.

Such as they are, and whatever reception they may



meet with, they exist in deep and vivid association with the past; and regard for the living, and reverence for the dead, who have in various forms asked for their publication, have mingled with other reasons in withholding the author from any attempt to change their character. Connected as they are with years of toil and study—with the interests and activities of a severe and hazardous course of self-training—they have become invested with a melancholy traditional interest, about which the heart (however the judgment may demur) will have its superstitions and exact indulgence. As a part of himself—the renewal of his past history—affording lessons of fidelity to the real and actual in the drama of life—linking thought and feeling to scenes, events and persons, dear to the heart's best memories—the author cannot consent to change them. Left to his own judgment, he should have withheld them from the press, but change them he cannot. He would much rather suppress them.

To furnish the reader with the means of correct judgment, is the sole object of this preface. How the successive elements of thought gained lodgment and force in the mind, and put on their final livery—where were found the germs of thought, or how suggested—what gave life and pulsation to reflection and feeling, and led to development and individuality—others, with the statements of this preface before them, can perhaps explain better than the author. He only knows they were produced in sympathy with a thousand forms of interest and excitement; and to whatever extent they may be found pervaded and vitalized by a oneness, a continuous unity of conception and idiom, must be traced to the fact, that, amid all the moods and phases of activity and effort, interest and excitement—that, while availing himself of

all the objective aids within his reach—he has always sought to give everything of the kind proper subjective basis in the clear perceptions of his own understanding, however humble or unimportant they may have been.

In the structural plan of his sermons, the author has aimed at substance rather than form, and sympathy with the general mind rather than an appeal to the fastidiousness of cultivated taste. It has been his wont to blend, as far as he might, the vivid and impressive with the more occult and profound. Judging others by himself, he has preferred fruit and foliage, in natural combination, believing this to be the true simplicity of style ; and, without substituting shadows for things, he has not forgotten how necessarily they coexist, both in nature and the human mind. He has been careful, also, while dwelling largely upon the more important truths of the Gospel, not to give undue expansion to any one element or topic, or to press any single truth, to such overbalance in the system, as to destroy the proper effect of others—of the whole.

The selection of the discourses composing this volume, has been made by the persons calling for their publication. There is not a sermon in the volume that has not been called for by *special* and *formal* application.

As these sermons were written for the author's own exclusive use, in his character of preacher, the right, and indeed necessity, of explanation, would seem to extend to whatever there may be about them in any way unusual or peculiar ; and he would regard it as by no means a recommendation of these discourses, were he unable to show reasonable motive for any serious departure from established pulpit usage. He feels obliged, therefore, to ask attention to one or two additional items.

The author has long been impressed with the idea—perhaps he should say conviction—that the force and value of pulpit instruction are greatly lessened by the restraints and mannerism of pulpit style, arising mainly perhaps from undue attachment to creeds, confessions and church formularies, as the tests and standards of truth and uniformity among different denominations of Christians, and the vicious standards of critical judgment already adverted to. The natural, manly and varied, freedom of expression found in the Bible, and preserved in greater or less degree in all its translations into different languages, is laid aside, and gives place to the staidness and precision of an exclusive technical phraseology, and often having all the essential characteristics of a mere pulpit *patois*. And on this account alone, with or without reason, the pulpit too often becomes to the hearer a mere limbo of common-place, from which he turns away with indifference, if not disgust. It is felt not to be true simplicity, either of thought or language, and is therefore rejected by the popular taste. Entertaining such an opinion, it is possible the author may have erred in preferring a somewhat abrupt and irregular, but, as he believed, true vernacular freedom and catholicity of expression.

So far as mere style is concerned, but slightly heeding the laws and fetters of usage, he has been ambitious only of clear and strong impression—force rather than refinement. Style, under any circumstances, is but the expression of mind, of thought; and will, of course, and by all means should, vary with the development, conditions and force of the one and the other—the necessary vicissitudes of taste and judgment. And is not the pulpit entitled to the benefit of such change? for beneficial it must be, as it is founded in a law of our nature.

Should not the pulpit avail itself of the possible advantage resulting from such change, as it is manifestly developed in the ever-varying activity of the human mind?

For mere party or sectarian technology, whether as met with in books or the pulpit, the author has never had any respect. The verbal encrustations, so often if not generally disfiguring thought in the pulpit, and giving it at best a fixed and statuesque air, he has always regarded as a grave defect, or to say the least, as unfortunate. The necessarily transitive and fluxional character of language and style, requires a corresponding versatility of use and application in the pulpit. From inattention to this fact, it need not be shown to what extent style in the pulpit must conform to a more or less mechanical standard, and become in fact a mere *caput mortuum*, instead of living instrument, of influence and action. The least that can be said on the subject, is, that exclusiveness and caste of style in the pulpit, necessarily lead to sameness, and very generally terminate in dullness and turgidity. Should the author be in error on this subject, what he has submitted will at least explain why he has felt at liberty to diverge somewhat from the common path. Simply to be understood on the subject, is all he aims at or has in view. In the instance of men of superior parts and attainment, or of rare zeal and piety, the evil in question is to a great extent neutralized; but, in the great plurality of instances, it is to be feared it operates the full amount of detriment suggested above, and cannot be unworthy of notice.

As these discourses were not originally written for the press, and have been subjected to no revision in this respect, each must be considered as complete in itself,

although something like organic relation, or harmony of substance and parts, will be found to connect the whole series. The reader, however, will find it a landscape rather than architectural grouping, and will meet with the relations of a forest rather than field-scene. Expecting to be heard not read, the object in the preparation of these sermons was to give form and voice to the thoughts and impressions, the convictions and feelings, of the preacher, in a way best calculated to arrest and impress the hearer.

Of these discourses in another aspect, affecting their subject matter, it is proper to say, that, honestly availing himself of all the lights he could discern in the firmament of truth about him—ability faithfully to represent truth and nature, the word and the works of God, together with the relations and interests involved, has been an aim from which he has never swerved. He has always studied and preached the character and claims of Christ as the great influential center of the Christian system—the true fontal element of all pulpit instruction. To the Bible he has turned without doubt or question, as the unerring, unimproveable standard of truth and goodness. To these great central points he has directed attention, as showing the relation and coincidence of all the different parts of the entire system ; and this general view has given unity and direction to all his ministrations. However imperfectly the author may have achieved the purposes of his ministry—and he feels it to have been done most inadequately—to magnify Christianity, in the estimation of all who heard him, and thus extend its influence among men, has been the text of his waking thoughts, and the dream of his sleep—has been the actuating principle of his studies, and filled the whole horizon of vision.

But in all this the author would not, cannot glory ; nor dare he offer himself as an example to others. He is but too deeply conscious he has not been all that a Christian preacher should be. To the firmness and zeal of resolved consistent piety, at which he has constantly aimed, should have been added a devotion and consecration—a more widely-diffused and pains-taking activity to “become all things to all men,” that more might be saved—to which he can lay no claim. While he has this to regret, however, he has acquired the right of saying, that, in the pulpit, to say nothing of a life of study and preparation for it, he has never trifled with himself or his mission—has never been indifferent or insincere—has never sought his own distinction or advantage, nor has he ever “lied to the Holy Ghost,” by an affectation of claim, to which he knew himself not to be entitled.

Transferred from the pulpit, as a regular vocation, by authority of the church, to other fields and scenes of labor, and for the last twelve years unable, except very limitedly, to perform its functions, from a diseased condition of the throat and loss of voice—whether busied with his books and pen, toiling amid the collegiate cares of the lecture room, or burdened with university oversight—he is conscious of no ambition or aspirations, unconnected with the great mission of the pulpit.

It is proper to state, however, that, owing to the almost entire engrossment of his time and energies in a different direction, the results of study and application for the last fifteen years of his life, have been brought to bear upon his pulpit preparations and performances very irregularly and inadequately. The sermons in this volume, with the exception of inconsiderable addi-

tions, all antedate the period in question. A series of sermons, more or less perfectly written out during this period, on the general plan of those now published, together with others of the same period and of earlier date, may or may not be given to the public in future.

As the author always relied upon *thorough study* without *committing* his discourses for delivery, he is compelled to suppose there will be a manifest difference between these sermons as read and as heard from the pulpit. This difference is, to some extent at least, readily accounted for. In the instance of the writer and reader, the contact of minds is less direct and perfect than in the case of speaker and hearer. The hearer meets with much to sustain the tone of thought and feeling, of which the mere reader is deprived. In the instance of the former, there is a kind of electric transfusion of feeling not to be expected in the latter. In the one case there is much to impress and attract, not to be met with in the other. Force and meaning are found in the speaker, which are wanting in the writer. With the speaker and hearer, the eye, hand, action, intent gaze and intuitive sympathy, all have an emphasis unknown to the mere writer or reader. Between the latter, the distance is greater.

It requires but a very slight acquaintance with the laws and aptitudes of mind, to know that on the score of warmth, interest, sympathy and impression, the speaker has greatly the advantage over the writer, and the hearer over the reader. The *personal*, in speaking and hearing, is found to be very different from the *ideal* in writing and reading. Among other things, a fullness and varied amplitude, and even rhetorical exaggeration of phrase and style, are not only admissible, but to some

extent necessary, in speaking, beyond the license of good taste in compositions intended only to be read.

It is not unlikely, therefore, that those who have expressed a wish to read the author's sermons *in the form in which they were preached*, may be disappointed. The influence of high wrought feeling—the comment of look and tone, of action and expression, on the part of preacher and audience—together with other causes to which we have asked attention—may have led to an improper estimate of their value, or that value may have been *really*, as well as *relatively*, greater in the one case than the other. For, to say nothing of frequent impromptu additions and variations—the unstudied inspiration of the preacher at the moment, even when the language is the same—the intensified thought and feeling of public address, are of necessity lost when the discourse is but simply read. Sermons, therefore, intended only for the pulpit, must be seen from the press in unfavorable and deteriorating lights; and in giving to the press these “Sermons from the Pulpit,” the author is fully aware of the risk he incurs in this respect.

These remarks are general, and are not expected to derive any additional significance from the author's manner as a public speaker, about which he knows but little, and to the good, bad, or indifferent character of which, he certainly never gave an hour's thought in the course of his life. The irrepressible emotion with which he has always appeared before an audience, has never allowed him to think of manner when *in* the pulpit, and rendered it useless for him to do so *out* of it.

In a series of separate independent discourses (prepared as these have been) designed for immediate effect, addressed alike to the mind and the heart, constructed



with a view to double tendency—to convince and excite, to win and wield an audience—the reader, while he has a right to expect in them unity of aim and structure, the native vigor and self-support of truth and argument, can scarcely expect the completeness and harmony of parts, the finish and proportion, resulting from habits of more regular study and continuous composition. As it regards the substance—the theological matter of this volume—it is believed the reason accompanies the show of things throughout, and that the discursive and perhaps somewhat unusual range of thought, will not be found inconsistent with strength of argument or force of logic, but in futherance of the proper functions of both.

There will be met with, in these sermons, very little of artistic skill, or the fashion of authorship (neither was thought of in their composition); but as a direct and earnest appeal to the highest nature of man, on a subject always and infinitely important, it is hoped they will not be found without their value. If in this hope the author is mistaken, he has been misled by the judgment of friends, who have selected the sermons and demanded their publication. If in one aspect it should appear, that the author has used great freedom of thought and language; in another he trusts it will be seen, that both have been austere controlled by truth and good sense, and that he has given them alike gravitation to a common center.

By how far the author has accomplished what he intended, there will be found, in these discourses, no sickly fancy or unhealthy pulse of passion—no appeal to a degenerate taste or unworthy appliances of any kind. The dim and the mystic are no where affected—the doubtful and forbidden have been at once rejected; and

it has been his controlling aim, to instruct, excite and improve, the thousands who have heard him—and, he must now add, the few or the many who may become his readers.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Oct. 14, 1849.

# SERMONS FROM THE PULPIT.

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## SERMON I.

CHRISTIANITY—ITS NATURE, DIFFUSION AND EFFECTS.

‘THE law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’ —Micah iv, 2.

EVER and anon, amid the scenes and vicissitudes engrossing thought and feeling, the human mind, the soul of man, will break loose from the low and the perishable about it, and attest its own eternity. How must any system, therefore, ostensibly revealing the interests and allotments of the future, rise in majesty and brighten in splendor, to the conception of the anxious inquirer! Immortality, guilt and danger, are intuitions of our common nature, always felt to possess arresting attractive power. Unprepared then, as we must be, to resist the evidence, or throw away the hope, of immortality, the question arises—How can we forecast its issues, or determine its conditions? And if not, the additional question arises—Whither shall we turn for light and guidance? But we need not multiply questions to this effect: hope and fear, in advance of all statement or reasoning, and despite all opposing theories, are turned at once to the revelations of Christianity, as alone able to solve the mystery; and we are thus compelled to feel, with what depth and intensity of meaning, a thousand facts and considerations lead us to regard the Bible as the Book and the Gift of God.

The general subject, thus glanced at, is unlimited in range; and we scarcely know how to throw limit or boundary about what we propose to say. Apart, however, from all elaborate attempts at proof, and the more formal classification of evidence, often rendered so available in accrediting the claims of Christianity, in how many striking and interesting aspects does the subject present itself? And at some of these, we must be permitted to glance, at our present interview.

No man can look at himself, and contemplate his destiny, as developed in the Christian Revelation, without becoming, even to himself, an object not only of interest but of reverence—for he must perceive, that, by means of its provisional adaptations, the least and most depressed, in external fortune and condition, may be the first and most illustrious, in all the better and more ennobling attributes of our intellectual and moral nature. And no man can turn to this Revelation, with the calmness and candor of full and free inquiry, without finding it a subject warm with light and life, and unrivaled in truth and loveliness, notwithstanding its seeming self-forgetfulness and unostentatious simplicity, both of claim and manner. It is perceived and felt, that its influence and tendencies, quiet and noiseless it may be as the lapse of the stream or the travel of a star, never fail to exalt and dignify our common nature.

And yet, strange and unaccountable as it may appear, in surveying the vast map of the unchristian world, and throwing a glance around the proud amphitheater of nations professing Christianity, we see active and thoughtless millions ever prone to erect the present—the busy, engrossing present—into an era of intellectual prostration and mad devotion, at the shrine of hopes and enterprises unworthy the confidence of human nature: we

see countless millions, formed and thirsting for happiness, and hurried forward by an indefinite, boundless energy within, fatally misled and finally wrecked in what affects them most—the high aims and lofty range of thought and action, for which they were created.

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the present age—regarded as the most enlightened the world has known, so far as mind and morals are concerned—will be found to be, that its self-deluded millions pant after novelty and excitement, the rare and the attractive in the regions of fiction and fancy, but at the same time, reject the one and the other, in the departments of truth and nature. The gloaming and badinage, for example, of the unnatural, the romantic, and the monstrous, are sought with passion, and seized and devoured with a kind of cormorant avidity, while moral paintings, fresh and glowing upon the canvass of time and history, true to nature, and connected with the interests of futurity, are turned from with indifference, or looked at, at best, with half-averted eye.

To this rule, even the religion of Heaven forms but a qualified exception. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, however—receive or reject, bless or ban, it as we may—will always command respect and excite solicitude. That the indiscretion and imbecility of the pulpit and other abused means of its propagation and enforcement, may, in but too many instances, have thrown around it an undistinguishable aggregate of caricature and abuse, we are compelled to admit; but still, like the majestic rock in the bosom of ocean, covered with sea weed, it continues to resist the heave of the tide, and the dash of the billow; and every assault of infidel rage upon the one, resembles the wave fated to perish, whenever it rushes to encounter the strength of the other.

Who need be told, that ours, not unlike its predecessors, is a vicious, fault-finding age, and especially as it regards the great moral relations and interests of man? And among other things of the kind, who need be informed, how often and in how many forms—one while with stupid vulgar sneer, and again with lofty Gibbonic bitterness—we are told the Gospel is not Divine, and Christianity unworthy of credit! We feel and regard our religion, however, as more true, amid and despite the findings of its foes. The dark and evil eye of unbelief, sees, or at least affects to see, nothing to admire, and casts upon it, or would be understood to do so, the scowl of unmingled disdain; but the Christian, meanwhile, re-addressing himself to the examination of his faith, finds its disclosures and consolations, not only accredited in a richer appanage of general belief, but he feels a vivifying force of conviction, resulting from the review—a hearted joyousness of triumphant undoubting trust—than which the burst of salient fountain upon the gaze of weary traveler is less grateful, and only to be exceeded by the fullness of rapture awaiting him, when, by the river of God, the trees of righteousness are first seen in the distance, throwing their broad branches of “living emerald” over the pavilions of the blest!

But to return. The subject to which we call your attention, will place us in the center of the great field of prophetic vision. Prophecy is seen stretching a line of obscure twilight splendor from one extreme verge of the gulf of time to the other, resting upon intervening points of duration between the days of the Seer and the days of the drama. Prophecy does not mark and divide, as man might wish and his ignorance assume, by equal and measured intervals, the events and course of ages. Vast spaces remain unnoted, and we are left without any

special intimations to guide us on the subject of approaching events. This we may regret; we may invoke the Genius of futurity to afford us some discovery; but, turning suddenly from an era already past, with rapid flight the Angel of prophecy passes us, and reaches a point in the vista of ages, to be looked at by others, when we and ours shall long have been done with time and earth!

The Christian Revelation was not intended merely or mainly to gratify the intellectual curiosity and enrich the mind of man, but so to change his nature and reverse his moral condition, as to establish him in the final virtue and happiness of Heaven. The great volume of God's Message to man, begins with history, and ends with prophecy; and these, the historic and prophetic portions of the Bible, in their mutual relations and aspects, may be said to constitute the morning and evening light of the great Sun of Revelation, which, in rising, shows us on one hand the shadow of the past, and, in setting, traces on the other an outline of futurity. And it is in this way Heavenly truth and vision have depicted to the enraptured eye of faith and the Church, the past and coming glories of Christianity. That portion of prophecy, now claiming attention, relates to the entire of the Christian dispensation. It embraces the whole range of Messiah's Kingdom, from the period of his ascension to the throne of universal dominion, down to his final conquest over the nations; and in attempting its explanation, at greater or less length, we shall

I. NOTICE SOME OF THE MORE DISTINGUISHING ELEMENTS AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE GOSPEL, DENOMINATED IN OUR SUBJECT, WITH DISTINCTIVE SIGNIFICANCE, THE LAW AND WORD OF JEHOVAH. In essaying this task, we cannot be insensible how feebly it must be performed. But, how-

ever we may in ourselves gravitate to such a result, the greatness of the subject, and the interest of the occasion, unless we lose sight of the one and the other altogether, will not allow us to be little or uninteresting. The treasure is in earthen vessels only, that the excellency of the power may be of God. And when the Gospel is unequal to the task of magnifying its own ministers, by showing their effectiveness to be of God and not man, it were well, perhaps, the Gospel had no ministers.

The Gospel, as a system or universal whole, although adumbrated by the religion of nature, and analogous to it in principle and provision, is, nevertheless, properly distinguishable, and should be distinguished in fact and form, from every other in the wide universe of mind and thought. It is a grand and peculiar system, resembling that of Nature and Providence it is true, and yet strictly *sui generis*, existing by itself, unmixed and incapable of coalescence with any other. Its basis is its own, surrounded by precincts upon which nothing human can trespass. *It claims a divinity of origin, an essential importance, an excellence of matter, an amount of evidence, a demonstration of claim, a convincing energy, an impressiveness of appeal, a practical utility,* to which no other subject or system can possibly lay claim, or, laying claim, must be found at fault and prove insolvent in what it affects. Upon each of these particulars, we beg leave to enlarge a few moments.

*Of the Gospel, then, we affirm—the source of its origination is Divine.* This is the great basement principle, the foundation axiom, of the Christian religion. The hand of God is seen in its construction. His finger is visible and his wisdom conspicuous in all its provisions and proportions. Springing from, it has always held communion



with, the Heavens, and proclaimed the divinity of its origin by the number and splendor of its triumphs. We rely upon this grand truth as the corner stone, and as constituting the bond-timber, of the Christian edifice, and but for which its ruins had long since been its only epitaph.

The enemies of our religion, have essayed a thousand times, and in as many forms, to disprove the supernatural source—the Heavenly origin of the Gospel—but have as often failed in the attempt, and retired from the attack—like Hume with Campbell, and Gibbon with Watson—with the names of their conquerors and the glory of the Gospel engraved on their broken and dismantled shields! The world has been in a tempest of controversy on the subject of its claims for nearly sixty centuries, and the result is, the religion of the Bible as a revelation from Heaven, is better and more unanswerably accredited now than it ever was before, and is infinitely more likely to become the religion of the world and give law and limit to the hopes and aims of all future generations.

Memorably indeed, upon trial, have all other systems failed. Of what avail, may we ask, have been the vague guesses sent forth from time to time, like Noah's dove, from the frail ark of man's unaided reason, to hover over the dark and unfathomed abyss of the future! Plato, we know, furnished the world with golden dreams; Socrates, with the lessons of philosophic meekness; Homer, with all gorgeousness of fiction; Archimedes, with the unadulterated calculations of physical truth—and so of others and the rest: but still the wayward and tossing vessel of the human soul, was left upon a sea of strange and untried expectation. And it was at this fearful, and yet most befitting crisis, that Revelation threw the full sunrise of immortality over our world, the undying light of which remains to guide us still!

*The great object of the bestowment of the Gospel, as the law and word of God, was the happiness of man.* To effect this, no other system, after ages of trial, had been found competent. All those means and expedients of which man could avail himself, had failed, signally failed to furnish him with satisfactory manifestations of the character of God, the medium of access to, and method of acceptance with, him. And all had equally and fearfully failed, in furnishing the laws and rules of morality, an accredited code of morals; in the love and practice of which, man might feel himself secure, and hope for the mercy and friendship of Heaven.

To insist upon no other test in this connection, we might, in numberless forms, advantageously estimate the superior value and excellence of the Gospel, by comparison and contrast. Here, however, we must substitute generalities for details. To institute the comparison fully, and bring out the contrast in clear relief, can it be necessary that we introduce you to the Pagan Pantheon, or amuse you with the dreams of philosophy. Is it necessary that we make Infidel, and even Pagan folly, blush, by citing you, on the one hand, to the Priesthood, say of Baal—the shrine of Moloch and Saturn—the groves of Venus and Thammuz—the rites of Pan and the revelings of Bacchus; or, on the other, to the vaunted illuminations and self-sufficient arrogance of the wisdom of the scribe and the disputer of this world?

We are aware, that Infidel sophistry has often essayed, in this way, to accomplish the adverse result, of obscuring the glory, and discounting the value of Christianity; but she has, in every instance of such attempt, by an invincible array of evidence, thrown around her the rays of her own divine effulgence, like a fount of living splendor, and left her assailants merged in their appropriate, in

hopeless, insignificance; while the Gospel of the Grace of God, steadily descending the stream of ages, is not only triumphant with regard to the past, but with "hold and heritage in distant time," is destined to reach the latest generations, "forever famed, forever loved."

*It is equally true of the Gospel, that the excellence of its matter—the subject-matter of its revelations—vindicates the conclusion at which we have arrived.* The product of the wisdom of God, it bears the impress of all his perfections. Its every ray of light, is a Heaven-transmitted beam, to the human understanding. The preëminent value and high moral loveliness of what it reveals and inculcates, must be obvious to every one, and if it be not excellence itself even, we have yet to learn the meaning of the term and the nature of the thing. It is indeed the veritable apotheosis of all that is lovely in the intellectual universe—an exhibition of heavenly worth—of the temper and conduct of the world above, and to which we aspire. In theory, it is a revelation of Deity; and, in practice, the nearest possible assimilation to him. It diffuses "the savor of life" throughout the whole range of its sway, the vast empire of truth and virtue upon earth, giving value and interest to all that belongs to duration and extension, without limit and without end. It places the interests of time in abeyance, and opens upon the soul the objects of immortality.

It is a system perfect in model and perfect in movement. It needs no touch of human perfection, or earthly finish. The Gospel was given to man to be studied and understood, to be received and conformed to, not altered or amended, by way of improvement or greater attraction. Stamped with the impress, and glowing with the energies, of immortality, Heaven gave it to the children of earth and time, to save them from sin and hell—and not

to fight and quarrel about, curse and deny, as but too many Christians, and all Infidels, do. We only lower, we but humiliate, this stupendous theme, whenever we essay to describe the sublime revealments and essential glory of the Gospel. It is a theme too high and holy—too full of reverent, of hallowed, monumental interest—it is too lofty and lovely—its developments of power and magnificence, are too expansive to admit of description; and we must leave them to challenge the immortal homage of virtue, and compel the reverence of all time.

*The evidence tending to its authentication, as a revelation from Heaven, whether internal, external or collateral, is abundant and indubitable.* No proposition in morals, no fact in history, has ever been better, and but few half as well and credibly, sustained, as the facts and assumptions, the outline and details, of the Christian system. We boast not merely a competence, but perfect opulence of Heaven-furnished and conclusive proof here, and the only difficulty is to know where to begin and how to select.

There are profound and learned proofs and reasons, deep and varied in application and bearing, to satisfy the learned and cultivated; and there are plain and simple, and yet equally forcible proofs, to satisfy the plain and less enlightened. There were prophecies, for example, many and special, fulfilled in the personal history of Jesus Christ, to satisfy his countrymen and contemporaries of the Divinity of his mission, to say nothing of his miracles and other proofs. And there are prophecies, concerning himself, his Church, the Jews, and other nations, either fulfilled, or in course of fulfillment, to satisfy the ingenuous and inquiring of all ages and nations, and of whatever training or prepossession.

Christianity is a system, exhibiting in its nature, evidence and claims, not only an uncompounded oneness, but a most striking distinctive uniqueness of character. So true, as to preclude every thing false; so wise, as to teach and recommend nothing foolish; so great and good, as to have nothing weak or wicked about it. In its elements and issues, it is above the virtue of vicious men. It equally transcends the invention of good men, and could not be the production of either. Angels, to produce it—a supposition, by the way, infidelity could not even hypothecate without borrowing from Christianity—angels to produce it, by the inevitable implication of falsehood, must have become devils by the deed; and devils producing it, as upon the Jewish hypothesis of the Talmud, must have been fools, beyond all human example, by giving birth to a system necessitating their own doom in hopeless preclusion from God and virtue. To name such absurdities, is to refute them. Still the refutation is valuable, in the proportion they may have been relied upon to discredit the claims of the Gospel.

The weight of evidence increases at every step. Let any man honestly and earnestly, with calmness and candor, examine the claims of the Gospel, and he will feel conviction of its truth penetrating the understanding, and thrilling through him like a barb! Truth after truth, in mingling effulgence, will break in upon the mind, as star at twilight flashes forth on star, lighting up the camps of Heaven! The skeptical and wayward may resist—may hypothecate schemes and methods of indemnity and escape—but in vain has the self-love of infidelity, or the sickly charity of Utopian reformers, separated punishment from sin; in vain have they dreamed and declaimed away the place of final evil. All this is but to demur to their destiny, without being able to avoid it;

for dream or fable as they may, it will not do; amid it all, that destiny comes dimly and darkly rolling on, and the avenging gleams of the hell they had denied, are thrown in agonizing cross-light, athwart their feeble glimpses caught of heaven, few and far between—and the only resource of unbelief, in the rejection of the Gospel, is not to think at all!

*The evolution of its principles and provisions speaks the same language.* Christianity has invariably displayed its might and immortality—its indestructibility and unfailing power—in behalf of man; and, if it be not important to his happiness, the alternative is irresistibly pressed, that God and eternity are but trifles—Heaven and hell the veriest expletives; and hope and virtue are thus let loose, at once and forever, from all the eternal moorings of right and wrong.

Obdurately stupid, and beyond feeling, must be the depravity of the man, who can survey the nature and claims of the Christian religion, without the deepest concern—without, in the deep travail of his spirit, feeling the rising energy of a sigh—high as Heaven, deep as hell, and enlarged as the universe—to become interested in it. For he must perceive, that Christianity reveals and accredits the noblest good—unutterable wonders—immortal hopes and issues, momentous as God and infinity can make them! You may essay to doubt, you may in terms deny, but truth and nature remain; and what but the Gospel, we ask, gives birth to those mighty hopes and fears, which gather over the soul like angels' wings, as now and again it is felt to be darkened by a shadow no body projects, and tossed by a tempest no order governs!

The vicious and wayward may resist these convictions, may attempt to disarm them of their force; but, in spite of themselves—in spite of infernal coadjuvancy—like the

eternal lights of the sepulcher, they continue to burn unextinguished in the wasted heart! Hope and fear alternate in the bosom, and, ever and anon, rush quivering over all the cords of the soul! The one fixes attention upon the harps of the blest, echoing the harmonies of Heaven; the other, opening an ear to the wail of the lost, dirging the perdition of undone eternity!

*The Gospel appeals to the mind and heart, with an illumination and efficacy unknown to any other system, or in any other department of inquiry.* Christianity has never been left without witness. She has an advocate in the bosom of every human being. Conscious remorse within becomes the omniscient accuser of crime. The offender's own heart executes vengeance upon him. The eye shrinks from the appalling brightness of the vision. Conscience shakes her terrific scepter and utters her monitory voice. Stung with compunction, keen as the remorse of the damned, how often do the rejectors of the Gospel feel it to be true even while the stain of its denial is coloring on the lip, and burning there the brand of their chosen infamy. Self-accusation rebukes them into insignificance. Self-distrust drives them, in forms often unknown to themselves, to the throne and succor of Omnipotence. They vaunt indifference it may be; but how often is it only to hide the scorpion pangs of a worrying hell within, as the daylight of eternity is felt to disturb the sleep of sin and the slumbers of crime.

The Gospel speaks to man in a tone that plants the soul in the eye and the ear. Its lessons are heard with a disturbing sense of insecurity and alarm. Its appeal is like the energy of the tempest, giving proof, in its irregular and untameable rushings, of descent from a region above the reach of man! Turn to the listening,

anxious thousands, in whose midst you have often heard its appeals, and you will at once learn our meaning.

*We have a demonstration of all this in the influence the Gospel exerts upon the character and destiny of man.* It is his only hope. This was the only haven, "unvisited by wrath and ruin," to which our benighted nature could repair, in the great primal shipwreck of hope and goodness. It is man's only resource. It nerves and sustains him in the renunciation of sin, the practice of virtue, and in reverence and affection for God and goodness. It is almighty to succor and support. No discouragement can gloom—no calamity appall. Look at the early Christians for proof, and let a single example type the rest: amid the clustering horrors of impending death, they refused to throw incense upon the altar of Jupiter, and spurned alike and together the gods and the dreams of Paganism. It is almighty to renew and restore. It exerts a creative, transforming effect, upon the inner and the outer man. It changes even the relations of Deity. The offended judge becomes an affectionate father—the guilty criminal his adopted son. The long-lost image of God is recovered, and the life-diffusing light of his countenance rejoiced in; and the whole will be found intimately connected with the preëstablished relations of order and perfection, as found in the moral government of God, and shown not less by its astonishing effects than by its resemblance to God and benevolence to man.

It is not more divine in theory than God-like in issue. Throw back your eye upon the page of history. Look at the thunder of even classic Imperial Jove—the awe of nations, crumbling in his moldering hand—his altars desolate and his temples hymnless—without victim or



worshiper—while the song of Bethlehem, first listened to amid the obscurity of the flocks and folds of Ephratah, is heard from the valley and the mountain, and comes to us wafted by every wind and floating on every breeze! While the contemplative philosophy of India, the metaphysical lore of deep-thoughted Greece, the lofty dictation of didactic Rome, exerted an influence feeble and unimportant on the few, Christianity became the heavenly enchiridion of millions, furnishing them with a proper estimate of earth, and placing in their hands a chart of the world to come! And now the savage of the Antipodes—the distant Australian, or wandering Troglodyte, in his primeval woods and wilds, coeval with creation, bows down to her; and prostrate nations, disjoined by boundless waters, bend before her altars!

We know of nothing to equal the high moral, the deep-felt, the soul-absorbing, joy of the Christian in the contemplation of this subject. His joy is ever new and always enlarging, and every glimpse he has of the glory that burdens our theme, is like the “first full draught of immortality to a new-made angel’s thirst!” It is an unspoken, untyped inspiration, too intense for words.

II. LET US NEXT TURN TO THE GOSPEL, WITH REGARD TO THE EXTENT OF ITS PROVISIONS AND ITS CORRESPONDING PUBLICATION. The Gospel provides for the moral illumination of man, the justification of his person and the regeneration of his nature. It fixes the standard of duty and morality, offers encouragement and authentication to the hopes and interests of piety, affords support in trial and adversity, and tenders final deliverance from the ills and evils of earth and time, to the Christian pilgrim, to every penitent believer in Jesus Christ.

These provisions anticipate the ruin and promise the

recovery of man ; and thus the Gospel, upon terms divinely conditioned and forming a part of it, provides for the essential happiness of every member of each successive generation. Immortality itself is in every practical sense a discovery of Christianity ; and by thus revealing an interest which includes every other, and well nigh hides all others from our view, it becomes to man pre-eminently “ the one thing needful.”

Or, to give something like point and condensation to the revelations of Christianity in this respect, let us glance at a few of its provisional adaptations. *Christianity, then, stands pledged for the destruction of the great primal curse—the sin and misery of our race and planet in the promised regeneration of the world.* It is the Gospel that is to harbingers and extend illimitably, in every direction, the wide diffusion of universal light. To this light the nations have clung at different periods, as the last plank in the wide-spread wreck of truth and goodness. Heaven, in kindness to our world, has held it aloft for ages, as the standard of reviving virtue, the signal of reformation and the dawn of hope. Sin and misery belong to each other as cause and effect, and have never, by eye of God or man, been seen apart. Together they were born, and together they have revealed alike upon human sacrifice and human agony ever since. Their birth was under the same malignant star ; the same accursed dominance has marked their history, and Christianity shall dictate the hymn in which the glad tidings of their destruction shall be pealed around the enlightened and renovated earth.

*Christianity stands pledged for the destruction of ignorance and error.* How rife, how dominant, is the one, while the other confounds all conception by seeming to possess attributes which should only belong to God and

eternity, alike incomprehensible and without end ! The illumination promised in the text, however, shall become coextensive with universal man, and shall be perennial as the wants of his being and the corresponding reign of the Redeemer. Truth shall everywhere triumph in the destruction of error, and darkness recede before the light of Heaven.

Then, as now, man need not go on pilgrimage in quest of knowledge. By a thousand ministries it shall descend from Heaven like the dews of Hermon. It shall spring up at our feet like grass of the earth, and every where its refreshing waters shall be accessible to all.

*The Gospel also provides for the destruction of violence and wrong, in the structure and relations of government and society, and the administration and management of their laws and interests.* These—the wrong and violence of government and society—shall be destroyed ; partly by the mild and bloodless triumphs of the Gospel and partly by the just judgments of Heaven. The Gospel penetrating every where, as indicated by the finger of prophecy, shall silently but securely operate its destined functions of renovation ; and in the instance of the incurably obdurate, Messiah will grasp un pitying vengeance with both his hands, and blight with final curse the agents and instruments of the one and the other.

In failure of the means provided by Christianity to accomplish the divine purposes in the destruction of these evils, they will meet the retribution they have challenged, in the revolt of determined millions, rising and uniting in the avengement of injured right, resistless as the career of the tempest or angry swell of ocean—the antagonism of adverse agencies thus uniting to bring about the same benign result !

*War and bloodshed, too, as applied to nations—the ends and objects, whether of legalized or predatory slaughter—shall be superseded by the realization of the hymn of Bethlehem—“on earth, peace, good-will toward men.”* The moral wrong of war, applies only to the individuals and nations provoking the result, and not to all who may be engaged in it or involved in its consequences. Aggression, without good and sufficient reason, gives the moral evil of war. As certainly as Christianity is true, so certainly there will be a period, in the world's history, when the glory of a man or nation shall not consist in the number of widows, orphans and dependent sufferers, doomed to tears and penury, want and woe, by the butcheries of this absurdly fashionable science. A science, the eulogium of which is written in blood and published in groans—at once the scourge of God and the calamity of nations—and such an obvious accursed barrier to the influence of the Gospel, that Christianity, unless the lips of Heaven have deceived us, can never become the religion of the world, until the foul stain, the damning blot, is wiped from the calendar of time.

The Gospel steadily aims at the extermination of this splendid vice of nations—this gilded curse of human kind—and will thus, by a single achievement, extinguish full one-half of the world's reputed glory!

*The conversion of the Gentile world ranks high among the provisions of the Gospel.* During a period of sixteen centuries, prophecy was multiplying assurances to the Jewish church, that the light and advantages they enjoyed, and infinitely superior, under the kingdom and administration of the Messiah, should be extended to the Gentiles—all other nations as well as the Jews. And the whole history of miscellaneous Christendom, exemplifies the truth and force of prophecy to this effect. We are

witnesses of its truth and so many living epistles in illustration of it. More than nineteen-twentieths of the ever-increasing myriads professing Christianity throughout the world, and among all its tongues and tribes, are of Gentile origin, and prove the truth of prophecy in this respect. Even our present meeting here in "the ends of the earth," is among a multitude of proofs, that the truth of God is in course of verification, in the conversion of the enslaved millions of Gentilism. The temples of piety, the altars of devotion, the baptismal font, wherever seen or resorted to, tell the same truth; and the only exception to the rule, is here and there a gloomy synagogue, pointing the hopes of the worshiper, prospectively, to what is already matter of history--the advent of Messiah and the conquests of his kingdom.

In the range of its spread, Christianity embraces Jew and Gentile without distinction. The Christian minister belongs to no part or people of the earth exclusively. He belongs alike to both hemispheres, and every people. The temperate, the frigid and the torrid zones, with all their angles and intersections, claim him equally. Every minister of Christ is, by his special appointment, a missionary both at home and abroad. The world is his Alma Mater and mankind the Alumni. Hence St. Paul, with inimitable point and beauty, "I am a debtor both to the Greek and the Barbarian"—civilized and savage man. And such are the charge and embassy of every true minister of Jesus Christ. And accordingly, in view of their efforts and those of others, the seemingly attenuated influence of the Gospel, is winding its way in a thousand meanders, to the point of ultimate destination. A thousand independent machineries of moral discipline, complete in themselves, and yet all parts of a universal movement,

are in successful play. And thus the streams of virtue, to change the imagery, are every where washing, every where extending their baptism to, the barren strands of vice and crime.

*The recall of the Jews and their conversion to Christianity, after ages of apostasy and rejection, are also foretold and provided for.* Under heavenly influence, and amid the splendor of Messiah's triumphs in the latter days, they shall appreciate the patience of God which has outlived their perverseness—his providence which provided for their return—his grace which led to it, and the glory in which it shall result.

God's watchful care, his burning jealousy, have hovered over every paragraph of Jewish history; and, although they have been the abjured of nations—although they have exhausted the curse of prophecy, in its most fearful repletion—although their wretchedness has been prolonged even into the old age of history—although the plow has passed over the ruins of Jerusalem, and the curse of the crucifixion yet lingers about Olivet and Kedron—although they have been visited by the last oppressions of humanity—although the mighty past of their story, closing with the immortal exploit of holding their city against all to the last, and finally yielding, not to the Roman, but the vengeance of Heaven—although all this has been succeeded by the humiliations of a thousand lands, in every clime and age, still they are the regal people of the God of all, and he will gather them!

*Universal and unmolested brotherhood between man and man, nation and nation, is equally a promise of the Gospel.* Men and nations shall become one in principle and one in policy, one in affection and one in conduct. Then there shall be no malevolent feeling, no ill-nature. There will be no exclusive bigotry, no sectarian zeal, no monopoly of Heaven's care and kindness by a few, and these

remarkable for nothing so much as want of resemblance to Heaven! none of the narrow-hearted, driveling illiberality, imbibed from ignorance, prejudice and party, and from other equally questionable and less reputable sources, inclining so many to place under ban and bind over to the communion of devils, all who cannot subscribe to the musty dogmas of the synagogue or the formulary, and who may happen to prefer the language of the Bible to that of human dictation.

Then reason shall not, as now, be hung by the neck, and common sense broken upon the wheel, because engaged in honest, independent search, to understand the Book of God. Then men and churches, shall not think of meriting Heaven, by making earth a hell all about them! This state of things, shall be corrected by the Gospel, which shall become the great law of moral gravitation, stretching beyond the vast limits of the family of man, and binding in the common fellowship of faith and feeling, the whole virtuous universe of intelligent beings.

*The Gospel fully provides for the prevalence of piety and purity the world over, and the lapse of its ages concluded.* Piety in principle and purity in conduct, shall become coextensive with the abode and the business of man.

Do you ask for proof? We summon our witnesses in more than two hundred languages of the vocal and lettered earth. But, we allow you to trifle with yourselves. The proof is before you. The work is now in visible progress, and steadily advancing to its consummation. While we address you, the Gospel is heard in the hut of the Esquimaux and the pavilion of the Persian. It is listened to by the Caffre and Rarotongan.

Its light is shining alike, amid Polynesian Isles and the Caribbean Archipelago. It has superceded the victo-

rious war-dance amid the Lakes of the North, and kindled its breathings in the Cinnamon groves of Ceylon. Its influence is felt in the mines of Golconda. Its warnings strike revelry dumb in the seraglio of the Mogul. And, as a miracle of heavenly creation, it contains within itself the principles of boundless increase, and shall spread through every clime and under every sky, until the voices of piety, the harps of Zion, and the hymns of her joy, shall everywhere fling, to the bending Heavens and listening earth, their sweet and varied melody!

III. WE NOTICE BRIEFLY THE AGENCY AND MEANS, BY THE OPERATION AND INSTRUMENTALITY OF WHICH, THE GOSPEL WAS TO GO FORTH FROM THE PLACE OF ITS FIRST PUBLICATION, AND DISDAINING ALL LOCALITY, DIFFUSE ITSELF AMONG THE NATIONS. Providence, omniscient and almighty, will prepare the way—Divine influence, the heart—while Divine truth, the Bible, shall be the grand exclusive instrument of the world's restoration to the image of God and the friendship of Heaven. The agency of this grand millennial change belongs to God, the instrumentality to the Gospel. Heaven in wisdom has selected the means, and will in time effectuate the work.

We have already noticed the provisional adaptation of the Gospel, to the removal of all the evils that afflict and degrade humanity, and everywhere curse and disfigure the face of our world. We have seen the essential nature of God and goodness, opposed to sin and misery, ignorance and error, wrong and violence, war and bloodshed.

In like manner, we have seen God and the virtuous part of the universe in alliance, to redeem the world from the effects of these evils.

And, accordingly, the consummation of the dispensation we now celebrate, will present us with the history of sin and misery, dislodged from earth, and winding up in the



gloom of interminable hell. Ignorance and error, until destroyed, will of course continue to resist the Gospel, but it will be like the waves of ocean, climbing the rocks in noisy war, only to break at their base, and die away in foam! The claims of wrong and violence, are already lessened in number and weakened in force, and may we not hope from the aspect of things and the signs of the times, that their name and their nature are already beginning to wither from the world?

As sin and misery recede, ignorance and error will follow in their train, and the recession of these will be followed by the destruction of violence and wrong; and, when the curse of God shall give these a grave, war and blood shall be blotted from the book of nations, and shall only be heard of in the "tales of other times!" Thus the destruction of sin, the fruitful source of all other evil, like the lightning of Heaven, preparing a path for the thunder, shall open and appain the way for the prevalence of universal holiness. The utterness of vice and the universality of crime, shall every where yield to the power of the Gospel, or resist in vain. Evil shall be made the precursor of good, as death precedes a resurrection to a glorious immortality, and worlds are reduced to chaos, that nobler systems may rise in splendor from their ruins.

In this way, Christianity asserts its boundless application to the wants of man—its own proper universality and indefinite increase, as well as reversion to primitive simplicity. In proof of which she points to antichristian prejudices, practices and institutions, crumbling before the discriminating triumphs of mind, and the redeeming changes of the times; nor will she pause in her triumphant progress, until the day, when the conformity and non-conformity of religious sectaries and church parti-

zanship, shall expire alike, in the universal brotherhood of Christianity.

Do you ask further after the means, not less than the agency, operating these grand results—we say, the spread of the Gospel will receive its direction from the purposes, and its impulse from the energy, of Heaven, while the Pulpit, the press, social intercourse and the force of example, shall secure its acceleration. The purposes of God will hold empire amid the contingencies and revolutions of the world. The energy of Heaven will, by the ministry of conscience and conviction, sway impulsively the human mind. The pulpit will multiply hearers, the press readers, conversation will have listeners, intercourse beholders, and example influence; and these elements of regeneration will accomplish the object we contemplate. As the yeasty trough of ocean operates its own health and purity, by means of its peculiar laws and conformation, so, by the laws of moral mechanism, comprehending the Gospel and the grace of God, the means and elements we have noticed in their aggregate and distribution, will change the world, and leaven the mass of its crowded millions!

IV. WE NOTICE, FINALLY, THE EFFECT OF THE WHOLE. There will be an incalculable enlargement of the Church, both in extent and influence—a boundless multiplication of its numbers and blessings. Christianity shall be displayed in all her resistless splendor, and the true millennial glory of the latter day shall consist in the genial, unrestricted influence of the Gospel, upon individual man, in his personal history, his social and civic relations. We know of no other millennium—we pray for no other. *But, let us look a little further, at the more distinctive influence of the Gospel, upon the MIND, the MORALS, and the MOVEMENTS of the world.*

*And, first, mind, in view of its higher manifestations especially.* Already the Gospel, in its expansive diffusion, is every where received as the solar light of the philosophical world, and the mount of vision from which we survey the living landscape of mind and morals outspreading before and about us. And as such, by an exhibition of its lofty motives and grand results, and borrowing impulse alike from the interests of time and the awards of eternity, it has curbed the lawlessness of genius in the instance of the loftiest minds, has directed and purified its flame and sent it kindling to the throne of God ! It has pressed the phenomena of nature—extending throughout the infinitely little and the infinitely great, comprehending all the gradations of earthly littleness and heavenly grandeur—into its own service. Guided by the Gospel, the field of nature and the tablet of the human mind become a book which all can read, and, reading, none dispute.

But for Christianity, large portions of the world's history would have been lost and its most eventful fortunes unknown. It is in her keeping, we are to look for the most valuable treasures of human lore. She has rescued from the grasp of oblivion, and the withering scorn of Pagan hate and Infidel meanness, spoils that belong to eternity ! It is under her guidance we see the bark of knowledge, where all beside was wreck, booming in safety over the rolling seas of time ! When nations without number, for ages uncounted, trod a moral waste and wandered on, without stumbling upon the landmarks of the desolation, the star of Bethlehem cast its radiance over the travel of earth, and lit the wanderer home to God ! She did more. Not only did she eclipse, by the splendor of her revelations, the wisdom of Paganism, and give its mythology to the ridicule of child-

hood, but in wrath she led the Gaul and the Goth, and the gods of Greece and of Rome crumbled upon their altars—the startled East shrank back, and the nations of the West waxed pale before her deeds!

This work of mental regeneration is going on. Whether we look at individual or social man, the fire side or the map of nations, the families and kingdoms of the earth, are submitting, one after another, to her gently subduing scepter, and soon the uttermost parts of the earth shall share the heavenly illumination, and Pagan lands of every lip and every name become the resting place of Heaven's light!

*Its influence upon the morals of the world, more directly, has been to the same effect.* What the philosophy of Aristotle, the dreams of Plato, the pandects of Justinian, the terrors of the Tarpeian Rock—representative of human wisdom and human control—failed to do, Christianity has accomplished: she has made this world wiser and better, enlightened and reformed it. She has done what the scepters and legions, the thrones, the swords and the scaffolds, of all this world's masters and tyrants could never do—that is, inform and liberalize the human mind. Regal intolerance and hereditary bigotry, political fraud and priestly cunning, had, age succeeding age, coined faith for the nations, and multiplied partizans and sectaries beyond all count—thick and offensive often as the frogs and flies of Egypt—but it was reserved for Christianity to make men good and resemble them to God.

Systems, elaborated in the brain of the book-worm, gloomy Theologue, or philosophical dreamer, adverse to the Gospel, and doled to thousands by the mystic theorist, have been offered in substitution for the Christian religion; while she, with simplicity and majesty, all her own, was content to open to the nations the Book of Life, and ask them

to write their names there, and live without the fear of death.

Wherever the Gospel has been published, it has given law to public opinion, drift and direction to ethical inquiry, and has, in fact, become the polar power of the moral world.

Look at the illustrious consequence of this regeneration of morals, in the far-reaching diffusion of the knowledge and practice of Christianity. Men, instead of being given to abuses that outrage nature and degrade mankind—living libels upon humanity, which is now the character of more than half the world—shall live as immortals and love like brethren. Professed Christians, and the ministers guiding them, instead of being in practice a parody on what they should be, shall furnish the credentials of genuine piety in the lessons of a holy life.

*And, as it regards the movements of the world,* Christianity is identified with the growth and the glory of ages, and we need not be minute. Against the foes of her faith and her fold, with unquailing eye and unflinching tread, she held her onward course, unawed and unsubdued by the tyrant of the cloister and the Judas of the Church, the intrigue of courts and the hostility of camps, hireling villainy and diplomatic guile! She met the perils of flood and field, disaster and death, vengeance and massacre, in their darkest forms—sometimes noiselessly extending her plans of evangelization among the tribes of Paganism, without offering resistance to her enemies, and at others hurling thunder at thrones and pronouncing the doom of nations! When streams of gallant blood, welling from the wounds of a million of martyrs, stained the scaffolds, deluged the plains, mingled with the rivers, or lay like dew in the valleys of Christendom, she bore, until further forbearance would have been cruelty to vir-

tue, infidelity to her cause, and then she aimed a blow of Heaven's deadliest wrath, and smote her enemies with a thousand thunderbolts at once! The hand of oppression was paralyzed, the smile of infidelity transformed to a groan in the very act of parturition; and, by a judgment powerful as fate, she compelled even her enemies to kneel and do homage to her banner! And, still the same, the citadel of our faith is seen rising before you, with no trace of time or stain of sin—standing amid earth's stormy vicissitudes, like eternal Lebanon with her diadem of cedars pointing to Heaven, while the desolations of ages are piled at her feet and storied in her shadow!

Cast your eye over the world. The monuments of her glory reflect the luster of every star, and no wind blows that does not waft from the shores of the nation's she has subdued, some freight of charity intended to subdue others. In this work of God-like benevolence, ministers take an active part; and, where they have been faithful, a recording finger shall trace their names on the pillars of immortality as the most illustrious benefactors of their kind—the only universal philanthropists that ever lived, for their charity covered the wants of both worlds, time and eternity. By ministers here, we mean not those of man's taste and training, but those who, under divine influence and direction, understand Christianity and teach it from conviction—those who love it because they understand it, and then teach it because they love it!

This work cannot be retarded. The indestructible elements of rejuvenescence and immortality found in the Gospel, will secure the triumph and multiply the conquests of Christianity, until the empire of sin is destroyed and death is swallowed up in victory—until the road

to hell shall lie waste and desolate beneath her frown, and the path of life, reposing in her smile, shall be thronged with travelers as stars bestud and crowd the broad galaxy of the Heavens! Let me but contribute to augment this exulting throng of Christian immortals, and I will know no other ambition. Sharing in this lofty distinction, I have but one word for the world—I ask but a single boon of earth—it is, oppress me with no other preëminence! Let the broken hearts I have spent my life in binding up, the wounded spirits I may have healed, be the throne and the evidence of my triumph!—

“Carve not a line, raise not a stone, but leave me *alone with my glory!*”

Do you doubt this triumph of the Gospel—look back, and see what Christianity has done, and infer the future from the past. However assailed by the rival powers of force and intellect, Christianity has met and resisted every shock, only to rise and reappear before her enemies, like the visioned war-tower of some primeval world, unmoved and unaffected by the changes of time, or the chances of doom! If her first disciples were fated to give their lives to their Pagan persecutors; dying, they overthrew the altars of their gods, and distant nations and after ages have felt the force of their example and followed in their steps. But Christianity will be avenged still more. Yet a little while, and never again shall the powerful and the lawless, write their caprices in blood, and seal them by death. Yet a little while, and persecution and oppression, for conscience sake, shall be read as an inscription fit only for the gates of hell. Yet a little while, and the Gospel will give, to the moles and bats, those damnatory creeds and proscriptive edicts, that brandished over Europe the thunders of the Vatican, and kindled the fires of Smithfield. A few more redeeming revolutions, and

all nations shall become the great confederation—one vast congress of peace and justice, confidence and piety; and Christianity, enthroned in the hearts of all, shall become immortal in the consciousness of triumphant virtue!

Do you still doubt—it can only be necessary to remind you, that, in arraying for combat the forlorn hope of the world—the introduction of a recent religion subversive of all others—Christianity selected her mode of warfare, in view of the attributes of God and the wants of men, and her plans were in a train of victorious evolution, before infernal agency took the alarm, or Infidelity had time to heave a single fortification. The very day on which she selected her first ministers from the fishing boats of Galilee, Imperial Rome shook to her foundation, the Jewish hierarchy crumbled, and the Devil fell like lightning from Heaven! And, destined to subdue the world, there shall be no pause in this magnificent movement of mercy and retribution, but era following era, as she descends the track of ages, shall add to the splendor of her triumphs; until the record of a world brought back to God, shall crimson the only remaining blank in her banner, and the unfolding apocalypse of her grandeur, tell the glory of the redeemed, and indemnify virtue for her toils!

Such shall be the increase and consummation of the Gospel. Its spread shall extend triumphant over the ravages of time, the casualties of empire, and the all-grasping avarice of oblivion and the grave. It is reserved for Christianity to realize the fable of the bird of Jove: grasping the thunder of Heaven in her hand, and spreading her wings from sun rise to the ocean of the West, she throws her shadow over the world; and the laurels of peaceful triumph and imperishable glory, shall encircle



her brow, when the wreath of the Cæsars shall only be remembered as the badge of crime!

In this conflict, witnessed by Heaven and earth, with an intensity of interest unfelt before, Christianity has had to struggle against the supremacy of the world; against the representative force and majesty of empire; against a gigantic aggregate of every thing vicious and powerful! But immutability and vassitude, men and fortune, means and things, have been pressed into the service of her victorious career, and the irresistible evidence of her final triumph, shall arrest the gaze of all intelligence; and, as from unnumbered millions, burning with the one impulse, and bowing to the same scepter, earth sends up the glad acclaim, angels, bending from throne and sphere, shall hush the music of their harps, and listen to the strain—  
*“Now is come salvation, and the Tabernacle of God is with men!”*

## SERMON II.

## THE PULPIT—ITS INSTITUTION AND FUNCTIONS.

“THOU shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to save thee, and to deliver thee, saith the Lord.”—Jer. xv, 19, 20.

WHEN the prophet and bard of Israel, appealed the suffering cause of truth and virtue from earth to Heaven, exclaiming, “It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy law,” the lesson taught was, that there is a point in the progress of human debasement, at which it becomes necessary for God to interfere, in view of his own honor and the welfare of his administration in relation to man.

The use we would make of the truth suggested here, is, that under circumstances such as surrounded the prophet, it is the duty of the Pulpit to interpose and arrest a state of things, whose manifest tendency is, to disparage and make void the law of God. In asking your attention to the momentous topics of duty and delinquency, as it regards the Pulpit, we renounce and abjure all tests and standards, except the Word of God, and the evidence of facts and experience. Here we repose, and by these alone we propose to stand or fall.

One of the most deceptive, and yet absurd of all the illusions that infest the human mind, is its proneness to make its own prejudices and prepossessions the standard of truth and right. This remark applies to the Pulpit not

less than to other departments of instruction and inquiry ; and in attempting the correction of this error, in its bearings upon the Pulpit, we deliberately incur the hazard of a departure from established usagé, and of adventuring upon somewhat, if not decidedly novel and daring ground. In doing this, however, we challenge the risk confidently, upon condition of a single indulgence on the part of the audience ; it is, that we may be judged, not by prejudice and interest, but by the laws and language of inspiration and common sense. We are perfectly assured, that the ever increasing resources and expansive energies of the Pulpit, can never be fully developed, and brought to bear upon human character and action, until the better informed and well-directed purposes and efforts of the Christian ministry, supported by the wisdom and grace of God, shall restore it to its original effectiveness, and inspired significance and application. For who can help perceiving, that the pulpit, as it is every where found blending with human enterprise and the activities of life, is, to a great extent, not only effete, but in relative disgrace, with the larger portion of those who might be brought under its influence. This general maxim, will form the basis of argument and appeal, in the following discourse.

Christianity is a Heaven-suggested system. Its attributes are peculiar, and its provisions extraordinary. And this position is not more true of the facts, doctrines and duties, than it is of the persons and agents, whose interests and relations are introduced as the subject of disclosure in the Christian Revelation. And among other things illustrative of the truth and appositeness of the position, we might appeal to the well known fact, attested alike by the consciousness of the living and the experience of the dead, that now, as immemorially, every

minister, every pulpit man, who performs his duty, and is faithful to his trust, is born, as exemplified in the life and fortunes of the son of Hilkiah, not only to be loved and trusted, but to be hated and abused. But, when it is remembered how worthless are blessings of the world, how impotent in any final sense its curses, it really boots but little whether the minister be loved or hated. He should do his duty fearlessly, and then, appealing his claims to Heaven and posterity, await calmly the disclosures of the coming future.

It may be regarded as true, to a very great extent, that the Pulpit, in view of its appointment and purposes, is destined to secure the conversion, or seal the perdition, of the world. Conformed to the purposes of its institution, it is the grand moral lever of the world's elevation into fellowship with God; but, degraded by the misdirection and imbecility of improper incumbents, it is annihilating piece-meal the energies of the Church, baffling the benevolence of Heaven, and throwing millions of the human family forward, upon ages both of delusion and crime. We cannot discuss this subject at large, in a single discourse; a few points only, of deeper interest and more vivid impression, is all we can attempt.

The prophet Jeremiah was a native of Anathoth, a small village in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. He was the son of Hilkiah, of the tribe of Benjamin. He had a hereditary right to the Priesthood, apart from his prophetic vocation, both by regular descent from Aaron, and in virtue of his birth-place as sacred to the Priesthood. He commenced his prophetic career, as a special vocation, unconnected with his Aaronic descent, at the age of fourteen, six hundred and twenty-nine years before the Christian era, and continued it, with astonishing zeal, fidelity and success, for the space of forty-three years.

He prophesied under four successive reigns of the Jewish monarchy. At the time the words of the text were uttered, Jehoiakim was on the throne of Judah, then the center of civilization and moral culture throughout the earth. But now that we are called upon to explain the words of the prophet, under a different dispensation, and in a distant part of the world, that throne has been desolate and without a sovereign, for more than twenty-six hundred years! How solemn the thought, how impressive the lesson! and the question recurs, "The Prophets, do they live forever? and our Fathers, where are they?" while, from the perished ashes of the sepulcher, the resting places of the long lost dead, echo, in melancholy cadence, returns the response, "Where are they?"

In offering some remarks further upon this passage, in its application to the Christian ministry, we assume,

I. THAT A CHRISTIAN MINISTER UPON EARTH, ESPECIALLY IN THE PULPIT, IS THE MESSENGER AND REPRESENTATIVE OF HEAVEN. For this purpose he is deputed and sent to the nations. The very terms of his mission send him out, as such, and thus accredited, "into all the world." He has revealed to him the will and mind of God concerning man, and the burden of this Revelation he is faithfully to announce to all who hear him. He is not at liberty to alter, augment or mutilate, his message, in any form, or to any extent. He is to guard and dispense, with the most sacred and uncompromising jealousy, the heavenly treasures of wisdom and knowledge, committed to him in trust, for the reformation of his kind. He is God's mouth to man—in the language of the text, the messenger of Heaven to an erring world; and in proclaiming the definite terms and weighty matters of his mission, he should sacredly confine himself to the instructions of Jehovah, and style of Heaven, furnished at his hand. God's Word

is his text-book, the Bible his only guide, and, so far as principle is concerned, he is emphatically "a man of one book." And any serious departure from this, degrades his character, cancels his mission, and, but for the mercy of God, and the operation of other moral causes, would, in proportion to the extent of his influence, damn his flock in addition.

He only is a real minister of Jesus Christ, who, in the character of his ministry, consults alike the weal of man, the welfare of ages and the glory of God, and is solely and burningly occupied with the one grand, intense interest. With such a minister, the faithful performance of duty acquires the force of principle and the fire of passion, and constitutes the master-charm, the foster-flame, of his being. When in the pulpit, nothing, excepting only what the imperfection of our nature cannot avoid, should be heard from the minister, addressed to the hopes or the fears of man, but what would grace the lips and become the mouth of God. All must be in the most sacred and careful accordance with Heaven's teaching and Heaven's telling. Unflinching integrity, in relation to the high commissioning Source whence they derive authority to preach, is the great ground of all virtue and success, on the part of the ministry. The will and mind of God, as taught in his Word, should be the study of the minister, his great engrossing study, by day and by night. The Bible should always have his fond and first regards, and the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms; the Gospels and the Epistles; these, with marked preëminence, should be his favorite classics, the grand models of constant imitation, the objects of ambitious emulation in all his enterprises, and the true goal of his wishes, in all his rivalships. And that minister, who does not thus distrust himself and defer to Heaven, at the same time that he has supreme con-

fidence in his cause, is unworthy of the Pulpit, and shall inherit its curses.

We are far from thinking, however, that the Divine commission of which we speak, is in any essential consecutive sense, dependent on human authority. The weighty, Heaven-required qualifications for the ministry, are not likely to result from a hasty miscellaneous conscription on the one hand, or systematic recruit for the pulpit on the other. Those who have rushed into the pulpit, from visionary impulse, or selfish, interested motives, or have been conducted thither by the drill and cant of others, deserve sympathy it is true, but only as objects of pity. They are like the prophet's "abomination of desolations," found in the place where of all others they ought not to be, and their folly is not unaptly illustrated—for the analogy is prophetic—by that of Uzziah, who, usurping the rights of the altar, lost his throne, and, entering the house of God an unaccredited priest, went out a perpetual leper.

In seeking the true basis of the ministerial vocation, we do not appeal to the fable of prelatical succession, or ecclesiastical reproduction by corporate church arrangement, inconsistently derived, as we conceive, from a union, a marriage of convenience, on the part of the man of sin and mother of abominations, and but too aptly symbolized by the one and the other. We are compelled to reject any theory, which does not preserve the ministry from the very doubtful origin, the bastardy involved in such an assumption.

And further, although fit and becoming, entirely so under proper, under ordinary circumstances, we do not believe the designation of men or the imposition of hands, essentially constitutive of the ministerial vocation, but rather lateral to it. For how often, for example and in proof,

have the depraved and incompetent, even villains and blockheads, been the choice of the one, while the other, not less frequently, has led to the shameful mistake, the damning farce, of laying careless hands on skulls that could not teach, because they would not learn.

Nor can it abate the evil in the least, that hierarchy and people, in but too many instances, loved to have it so, and patronized, paid well and applauded, for marring the image of God in ministers, the mere creatures of their choice and molding! The selection and designation of the ministry, therefore, if we turn to the high moral causes operating the result we assume, are the right of Heaven only, and the confirmation by the Church is but lateral and incidental.

In a general and comprehensive sense, all men have an undoubted right to teach Christianity, as they have the right of teaching letters and science, as far as their competency may extend. We assume, however, that it is the order of Heaven, specially to select some men for the definite object in question. Of this we have abundant proof throughout the Scriptures. Whether we look at the Levitical, Prophetic or Christian ministry, Heaven seems to have been equally guarded in holding the same language, on the subject of their Divine commission—a language, the point and definitiveness of which cannot be misunderstood. Addressing the incumbents, God says, "I have given the priest's office unto you, as a service of gift." Mark here the distinctive agency in the investment of ministerial right. Not only is the office given, but the men are chosen: "He separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and to stand before him, and minister unto him." God said of Aaron, "I know that he can speak well, and he shall be my



spokesman." "I will take of them for Priests and for Levites."

Or, turning to the Prophetic office, essentially distinct from the Aaronic Institute, and in no way dependent upon it, and withal the more proper type of the Christian ministry: "I have made thee a watchman unto Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning." "I will give you pastors according to mine own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." The priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and the people should ask the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, that shall never hold their peace." "I have ordained thee a prophet to the nations."

All that was local and special, belonging to the Levitical Institute, or the Prophetic office, has doubtless passed away, and been superceeded by agency and instrumentality of a different kind; but those distinctive principles in both, connecting themselves with the Divine purposes respecting man's recovery, and his relations as a sinful and yet accountable being, must be presumed to remain immutable in all time, and by consequence applicable to the Christian ministry.

Nor do we reach this conclusion by induction only, but the plain and often repeated declarations of Revelation to this effect, flash the lightning of their truth upon the mind at every step. Hear the Great Teacher of the Christian Dispensation, and those inspired by him. In that immortal example of intercession, which closed his ministry on earth, he says, "As thou has sent me, so have I also sent them into the world." Observe the speciality of the mission, the true ministry is "sent" of God. "I have chosen you:" without reference to hered-

itary claim or the succession of descent. "I send you out." "He sent out others likewise." "Go ye out." "Go ye, therefore"—that is, as sent. "He that receiveth you receiveth me." The ministry can only be received representatively, as sent by Christ; and not so received, they are rejected. "How shall they preach except they are sent?" In whatever way else, certainly not as they ought to. "Let a man [all men] so account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." "We, then, as ambassadors for Christ." "No man taketh to himself [rightfully] this honor but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." That is, specially. The true ministers of Christ have been Divinely directed and set apart for the special purpose in question. And it is around such, and such only, the shield of Heaven is thrown, and celestial honors cluster!

Thus every real minister of Jesus Christ, is an accredited messenger and representative of Heaven, and stands charged with the high vindication of God's honor and Heaven's rights. Man, from motives we shall not stop to analyze, may call, train and drill; may mint, stereotype and send out ministers—as is the wont of all denominations of Christians, some more and some less; but, without the concurrence of Heaven, it is all in vain.

The want of a principled enlightened piety, must always cleave to them like a leprosy. They may do good, it is true, but will be much more likely to do harm. Men, however, called of God, and invested as we have seen, have accepted and so taken upon themselves a most fearful, a most alarming responsibility. "Who is sufficient for these things?" asked the ablest of ministers. "Our sufficiency," says the inspired answer, "is of God." God says to every such watchman, "If thou

give them not warning, their blood will I require at thy hands." Can the unfaithful minister, hear this and live! For a Christian minister to be summoned to his final audit, the last great reckoning, with the weight of blood and crime upon his soul, is an idea so fraught with horror, so fatal to hope, we forbear to enlarge upon it. Most justly, therefore, in view of such responsibility, do the Scriptures assure us, that every minister is a watchman, a Heaven-appointed sentinel upon the walls of the militant Sion, and the poet paints his relations well, and pencils his duty and his danger with the hand of a master, when, with the watchmen in his eye, and on the eve of a conflict with the powers of darkness, he exclaims:

"In Heaven's high arch above his head, a glorious form appeared,  
Whose left hand bore a flambeau bright, his right a scepter reared;  
A diadem of purest gold, his brow imperial crowned,  
And from his throne he thus addressed the watchman on his round:  
What of the night, what of the night—Watchman! what of the  
night?

The myriad foe, in close array, come on to try their might—  
A night assault—and if thy trump mistake a single sound,  
I'll hang upon these battlements, the watchman on his round!"

Great God! who uncalled, unbidden, would be such a watchman!

How fearful the reciprocal attitude of the minister and his charge. How mysterious the corporate relations and affinities of the Church—the mystical body of Christ, instinct with the antagonizing energies of life and death, and where every pulse, throughout the mighty circulation, throbs with destiny! The Pulpit is ordained alike for guidance and for warning. In it every minister should paint for eternity, and all in attendance should sit for their likeness accordingly. In penning his earthly fold, however obscure or humble it may be, the minister

should recollect that it is for immortality, and that his dignity and virtue depend upon fidelity.

Truth in the Pulpit should be like the Ionian column—its simplicity should charm and its strength sustain. Nor can the ministry want examples to this effect. If they would be known by Heaven or earth, as the true ministers of God, let them imitate Jesus Christ, preaching in the synagogues of Galilee, and throughout the cantons of Jewry. Let them imitate his great precursor, the bold Baptizer at the ford of Jordan and in the wilderness of Bethabara, where he was only known as the reprover of sin and the messenger of grace! Let them imitate his apostles. With vice and irreligion they were never known to compound, even for a moment, but established the throne, reared the altar, and founded the Church, upon the ruins of Idolatry and the extermination of crime! Look at the prophetic leader of the Israel of God under the Old Dispensation. When called to the work of the ministry, he plead his frailty in bar to the performance of duty. Most eloquently did he tell his God that his was a “stammering tongue,” and that he could not, in the language of the Pharaohs, publish the will of Heaven to the “Princes of the land of Ham.” But when he opened his mouth and essayed the task, God was with him; and that tongue, but late so frail, over-awed Pharaoh, astonished all Egypt, and charmed the listening ear of Israel, until they followed its accents by thousands into the fastnesses of the wilderness! Look at Peter under the New Dispensation. Unlike his successors, he commenced his ministry with a thunderpeal. It opened upon the world like the radiance of the morning. The first lightning that escaped his eye proved mortal, and the death of the perfidious Annanias and Sapphira became the seal of his apostleship. And, miracles apart, God

has written upon the parchment of every minister "go and do likewise." God, who sent them, grant they may respond in death, "we have done as thou hast said, and yet there is room"—enlargement at the foot of the mercy seat, and welcome in the heart of God for all the world!

II. WHEN IN THE PULPIT, EVERY MINISTER SHOULD ATTEND TO A PROPER DISCRIMINATION OF CHARACTER, IN THE APPLICATION OF ALL THOSE DOCTRINES AND DUTIES, WHICH MAY, WITH HIM, BECOME THE SUBJECT OF ILLUSTRATION. The world of man—the sin-degraded family of Adam—is properly divisible, and in fact divided, into two great classes, whose distinguishing characteristics are those of obedience and rebellion—the children of light and darkness, of nature and grace, of God and the devil. The Bible abounds with appropriate instruction and appeal for each—for both. They are distinct in character, distinct in condition and distinct in destiny, and the faithful and skillful minister of the Word, will, in all his ministrations, give point and prominence to this distinction, in the application of doctrine, discipline, and all the moral tactics of the Christian faith. These great moral divisions of mankind, will be duly differenced and properly attended to; and this difference, such discrimination, will be found indispensable to ministerial fidelity and success.

If the Pulpit lack discernment or courage, in the proper discrimination of character, and the duties and dangers resulting, it fails of all its high designs. Its efforts are powerless, its objects unknown, and the confusion of chaos will hover about it. Owing to this defect, how many of the pulpits throughout the Christian world have been subjected to a most ruinous abuse and perversion of function? How many are sacred only to ignorance

and impudence, noise and nonsense, beggarly dogmatizing and mental inanity! The Pulpit, where Heaven and earth should meet to discuss the affairs of human salvation, too often becomes a scene of pious mockery and religious folly. How often is the angel Religion present but to look on, drop a tear and retire, while reason reddens with shame, and common sense retreats in disgust! That holy place, where the bread of life should be broken and the cup of salvation tendered—where consecrated lips should only know the word of life—becomes a theater, alas! on which to display, not the sanctity of a Jewish prophet or the purity of a Christian apostle, but something to excite the eager, it may be idiot, gaze of an undiscerning crowd, the vendings, perhaps, of sectarian bile, or the still more sickly pulings of some pampered favorite or starveling sycophant, ranting vulgarian or mere anecdote-monger. "Take heed," says the highest authority to the ministry, "that ye put a difference between the holy and the unholy, the clean and the unclean."

In Nehemiah's time, the era of the more formal commencement of preaching, the minister "read the law in the hearing of the audience, and gave the sense distinctly," and therein was found written, among other things, that the Ammonite and the Moabite—aliens from God and virtue—"should not come into the congregation of God forever." "Do nothing by partiality." "Those that sin rebuke before all." "Comfort my people, but show Jerusalem her abominations." "I have kept back nothing," says Paul, consulting only the interest of those addressed—not their taste—"I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." The charge upon which a portion of the Levitical priesthood was repudiated, as irredeemably unworthy the

office, was, "they have put no difference between the holy and the profane, the clean and the unclean;" but herded them together, as interest or inclination suggested. And hence their curse and rejection, as traitors to God and man. And, that these men have their successors, deserving and destined to receive the same treatment from Heaven and earth, admits of no dispute.

The minister, therefore, who does not attend to this distinction in the Pulpit, had better leave it for something else—any other vocation in preference. He had better become a knight of the green bag or crooked knife—had better return to the shop, the plow, or the counting-room. It would be better for him to throw the shuttle, or hammer the anvil, than to insult the dignity and outrage the sanctity of the Pulpit by an unprincipled ministry. An unfaithful minister, especially in the Pulpit, is the curse and mildew of society; he does Heaven no good, and earth much harm.

The Pulpit, blent with a thousand memories, and hallowed by a thousand associations, consecrating the recollections of the past and the hopes of the future, should never be prostituted to unworthy purposes. It should always stand the sentinel of truth and virtue, like Milton's personification of purity amid the abandoned crew of Comus.

The Pulpit should know, should keep, no terms with consequences. Its poverty should constitute no part of its humility. Gifted with an undying spark from the altar of God, it is rich in the only staple that can possibly repay its toils. If it be objected, that the wheat and the tares must grow together, it is granted; but, at the same time, they must not be allowed to coalesce in the distinctions of the Pulpit. They must be kept

separate, although together. The connection is one of locality, not of kind. The affinity is one of neighborhood, not of nature. The classes are as distinct as the principles of good and evil. The one class is still tares, the other wheat. The one is reserved for the fire, the other for the garner. The broad mixture of good and bad, of wheat and tares, typing the virtuous and impious, will not continue forever. The sickle of final retribution, will reap and bundle them in fearful contrast. The thunder that now rests as if idle in the hand of God, will soon awake from its slumber, and, in fixing the distinction, shake terribly, not only earth, but Heaven.

Hence, a system of religious police, or ecclesiastical discipline, whether Papal or Protestant, originating at Rome or Oxford, indiscriminately admitting to the sanctities of the altar and the baptismal font every species of moral criminal—the dissolute, the drunken, the profane, and the abandoned, unreclaimed and unreformed—and thus awarding the thrones of Heaven to a generation of vipers—is not only unworthy the confidence of Christendom, and a proper text for infidel derision, but a shameless prostitution of things sacred, sufficient to provoke an outburst of scorn, bitter and burning, from all the damned! Every minister, therefore, should be a prophet of plagues and curses, as well as a messenger of peace. He is obliged, even by kindness as well as duty, to point to the dart of vengeance trembling in the air!

And, at the same time that he would challenge the claims and plead the cause of truth and duty, with the fire of Milton, the rapture of a prophet, he should lash vice in all its possible forms with the indignation of Juvenal—the rebuke of unyielding virtue. He should



teach all, that moral qualities on earth can alone prepare them for the nature and character of their future abodes of residence, whether in Heaven on high or hell beneath. He should teach all, with unwearied urgency of appeal, that life is an orbit through which mortality can pass but once ; that it is but an hour-glass, and that every sand ought to be a pious deed or virtuous thought. And, if this be not so, so far at least as principle is involved, death and hell, it is to be feared, will be the heritage of the delinquent.

This is, indeed, a terrible thought, and we would not indulge in haste or rashness of denunciation. But we know of no species of infidelity equal, in point of recklessness and aggravation, to derelict motive and want of integrity in the Pulpit, where confidence is so naturally conciliated, and credulity so readily leads the multitude astray. Where, as in the Pulpit, can a man, with such ensnaring success, lie like truth, and yet most truly lie ? If a minister, thus delinquent, be a man of surface and sound only, he may be little more than a mere fungus in the fellowship of the altar where he serves. If he be gifted with the advantages of mind and information, however, and yet unfaithful to his trust, he becomes an infectious leprosy in the moral scene around him, ulcering the whole social mass.

Integrity, therefore, should always distinguish the Pulpit. Truth should be pervadingly its property, and every stroke upon its dial plate should be true to the occasion and the hour. We would have ministers accomplished, but honest. We would not have a minister a Goth in feeling, or a Vandal in manner. We would have him polished, but a shaft still, and an effective one too, in the quiver of his God. We would not have him polished and furbished, and furbished and polished, until

he becomes a mere extract, and the attenuity of the instrument destroys its efficiency altogether! Though an able and master-workman, he should be direct, honest, and pointed, in all his ministrations. Nerve and energy, a vigorous manhood of intellect and virtue, will likewise be found always necessary. How often does it happen, that when an earthquake of appeal and remonstrance is necessary to rouse an audience, we have nothing but moral prosing, labored essays, or captious disputation—as sheerly uninfluential, on the thousands addressed, as the burden of a moonbeam playing upon a surface of ice.

It follows, therefore, that every minister should properly discriminate character, and apply truth; and that this should be done with point and epigram. He should give to each his portion of meat, what he needs and what he deserves, in due season; recollecting, with the emphasis of deep and living concern, that Heaven or hell must be the destiny of all who hear him. And, hence, those ministers, who lay the principal stress in their character and profession upon a few imposing ceremonies, perhaps a single dogma or deified ordinance—upon the driveling senility of factitious pomp, upon the technicalities of a creed, the cant of a party, the mania of some supernumerary duty or virtue of recent origin, or the affectation of peculiar sanctity hung out for notice and admiration upon a singular and marked exterior—may do very well indeed as tools and minions, of functionary value, to recruit the ranks of a party, but are utterly unfit for Christian ministers.

To displace the death of Christ, and the repentance, faith, and holiness of the Bible, by a substitution, in their stead, of means and appliances merely extrinsic and modal at best, and which have no necessary con-

nection with the moral nature of man, and never can have until Omnipotence shall subvert and reconstruct the laws and elements both of matter and mind—the tendency of such a course, on the part of the Pulpit, seems to be one of the principal causes of its want of vitality and success. Let such ministers, then, take the New Testament for their model, and mold their character and ministrations accordingly, or leave the Pulpit in the hands of abler and better, because true and faithful, men. How many, uncalled, thrust themselves into this holy office! How many are thrust in, by the overweaning kindness of ignorant misguided friends! How many are mustered into the ranks from party, sectarian, and interested motives! How many volunteer their services without counting the cost, and check on Heaven and earth for compensation and good fortune, when Heaven, at least, is not their debtor, and is obliged to dishonor their drafts in mercy to those they would otherwise impose upon and lead astray.

III. WE NOTICE THE MODE OR METHOD OF DISCRIMINATION TO BE ATTENDED TO BY THE FAITHFUL MINISTER. And here we are compelled to present the offense of the Cross, in more than one distasteful lesson, to the ear of guilt and crime. Heaven has furnished the scale of judgment, and he that runs may read.

The Pulpit must not shrink from its duty. The imaginary God of modern conventional refinement, with the usual conformities of taste and fashion, are not to be consulted at all. The people, all people, men everywhere, and of whatever rank or condition, must know their sins, their danger, and the deep damnation of their doom, unless they reform. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” “He that doeth not right-

eousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Personal purity and social benevolence constitute piety in the Eye that discerns folly in angels and impurity in the Heavens. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "His servants ye are, to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey." "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." "Hereby know we that we love God, because we keep his commandments." "If ye love me ye will keep my words." Thus the grounds of difference and the law of distinction, are given in the Bible. These grounds of difference, and this law of distinction, must be placed and applied by the minister, not only abstractly, in general objective form, but, when he has the necessary knowledge of those addressed, by observation or otherwise, it should be so done as to let it be known and felt, that every species of vice is to meet the reprehension of the Pulpit, whether the guilty be present or absent. The artful trimmer or pulpit loafer, the polite loungee or drawing-room evangelist, who, on all occasions, is wooing and courting the breeze of popular favor, ought to be hissed from the Pulpit in disdain!

Let the minister, therefore, attend to character—the ordinary elements of which, are conversation, social intercourse, and private conduct. These are usually distinctive of the man. The topics which become textual and habitual with him, the company he seeks as kindred and congenial, the sources of enjoyment sought in private—by these outgoings of the inner man, men generally report what they really are. Every passion, movement and muscle, betrays the heart and speaks the

truth, and these tests seldom conduct to an erroneous conclusion.

Select the tongue as a solitary test. It is but one among a thousand; but, connecting itself with each of the more pervasive elements of character, to which we have asked attention, it will serve to type our meaning with regard to the rest. So true an index is it, it would appear to be, as Seneca says, "a parcel of the mind—the right hand of the soul." It is the great ordinary instrument of communication between mind and mind, man and man. And yet how versatile and various in all that belongs to it! In love or hatred, good will or revenge, the performance of good or the perpetration of evil, it is equally at the service of every one. In one aspect it is an instrument of control—a "bridle," says St. James, to guide and check, a "helm" to direct and control. In another, he pronounces it more unmanageable than "beasts," more intractable than "serpents," more indocile than "fishes;" while in a third he tells us, it is the common fire-brand of this world's contentions, lighted up at the flames of "hell!"

By these, and other kindred and dissimilar tests, men may be known, and should be addressed accordingly. Men of every character, and vice of every description, should be exposed, and especially those of the more abandoned kind. To all, Bible in hand and eternity in view, the minister should cry aloud and spare not. By "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," he should clearly enforce the lesson upon all, that character is destiny, and that boundless good or evil, is the alternative to which it points. And in making this discrimination, and maintaining the great distinction upon which we have been insisting, judgment should begin at the house of God—should commence at the altar—

and thence diverge through all the distributions of society. The arraignment should reach the Church and the world, and they should stand up alike for judgment.

*Impiety and worthlessness*, under cover of religious pretension; *the hypocrite*, with his studied circumspection and macadamized gravity, his hollow groans and treacherous smiles; *the Christian churl*, whose God is his interest, living for himself and to himself; *the lukewarm Laodicean* hanger-on upon the skirts of the Church, whose conscience is dead, and his feelings inured in the sleep of a death-like inactivity; *the bigot*, who hunts his fellow-being with the bitterness and ferocity of a fiend, and when his heartless unkindness has murdered him, would further assure himself he is right, by scenting the fancied smoke of his victim's torment ascending up forever and ever; *the prejudiced and self-secure*, in our churches, with whom improvement has no future tense, who, girt round with the weird sanctity of error, a bandaged and fettered herd, swear by their chains that they are free, and by their follies that they are perfect; *the teacher and propagandist* of gross religious error, although the wreathed viper may be found coiled about the heart and conscience of thousands; *the slanderer*, who glories in intellectual massacre and the murder of character—who lives only upon the offal of the reputation he has ruined—whose touch is contamination, and his contact death—who, wherever he exists, is a curse and a nuisance, his influence pestiferous as the grave and loathsome as the breath of hell; *the scoffer*, claiming the rights and wrapped in the robes of the scorner; *the Infidel*, with his boasted privilege of living without God and free from the restraints of virtue, like a solitary cloud self-balanced in a universe of gloom; *the worshiper of Bacchus*, the practical

drunkard, who has exchanged the glory of man, and bartered the hopes of heaven, for the rights and functions of a beast; *the licentious and debauched*, who resemble the reptile, in that they doom to neglect the flowers they fail to destroy, and leave behind them defilement and loathing wherever they are found; *the gambler*, who, rather than not gratify his passion for play, would stake the thrones of eternity upon the cast of a die—who, unmoved by the tears and entreaties of her that bore him, the wife of his bosom, and the children of his own bowels, continues to indulge his hated passion, until the infatuated reprobate would table his game upon the tomb of his father, or shuffle for infamy upon the threshold of hell; *the frolic sons and giddy daughters* of dissipation, amid scenes and saturnalia, which can only be thought of as the appliances of vice and passion, and as pandering to their aims; *the thoughtless and worldly-minded million*, with this world for their God and treasure; and, finally, *the unbelieving and abominable*, of every class and name!—these are all before, and in the eye of, the Pulpit, and to attend to them is one of its plainest duties. And, ordinary means failing to reclaim them, the more fearful denunciations of God's violated law should be appealed to, and the appalling apparition of the eternal future made to stalk before them, like an avenging specter!

Such an exhibition of truth and plain dealing, will require boldness of character and independence of action in the Pulpit; and this is what we want. Rejecting alike the schools and the tactics of Loyola and of Chesterfield—the Jesuitical arts of the one and the senseless duplicity of the other, together with the pestilent appliances of the mere demagogue of the altar—the minister should always consider himself a pupil only in the school of

Christ. How many Christianized heathen have we among us? How many Paganized Christians? How many unchristian religionists? Plato or the Stagyrte—some blinded dupe to bewildering metaphysics or systematic theology, or it may be dogmatizing propagator of novel discoveries, revealing a short way to truth and a broad one to Heaven—becomes dictator in the Church of God; and the uncompromising Moloch of party opinion, takes the place and wields the authority of the Bible.

How many in Christian lands, if instructed to do so by a human teacher or human creed, would turn Crusader abroad to pull down and destroy, or Anchorite at home to curse and revile. And this too, ostensibly, to purge the conscience from dead works, and deliver themselves from the snare of the devil! In all this, the real bullion can only be separated from the alloy by the fire of the assayer's crucible, which we are recommending. Well, but vice and error are so complicate, so multiform and undetailed, says the wily temporizer, the Pulpit politician. Never mind, if the hydra have seven heads, the monster must be beheaded seven times—and this will require not only that the minister have courage, but that he go at it early and continue late. Honest severity in the Pulpit, is like the lightning of Heaven—it makes holy what it scathes. It resembles the thunderbolt passing through tainted exhalations but to purify them. As the ever-varying bursts and touches and throes of nature are parts of her regularity, and essential to her ordained results, so stern collectedness, vigor and daring, are the elements of Pulpit worth and vital means of its success, not less than its generous compassion, lofty trust, and gushing tenderness—which should know no pause, nor ebb, nor bound. And if this be not so upon a large por-



tion of the Church frequenting thousands, who hear us preach the pleadings of piety and the voice of God, will fall unheeded as the sound of household words.

IV. THE HIGH STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN MORALS MUST NOT BE LOWERED TO ACCOMODATE THE DELINQUENT. The majesty of the Pulpit, and the sacred simplicity of the Christian Altar, should be maintained at the risk of life, and in prospect of the rack and the wheel. "Thou shalt not return to them." Let the minister sustain the dignity of his high vocation, with unbending firmness, if it cost him the death of Jeremiah, who was murdered in Egypt, or the martyrdom of Paul, in the capital of heathen Rome.

In the same proportion that a minister lowers the standard of Christian morals, he must, commensurate with whatever influence he may have, widen the empire, and prolong the reign, of sin. Principle should be his breastplate, and fidelity the girdle of his loins. He should be faithful to his trust, taking the poor of the earth for his clients, and Heaven his reversionary fee. He should maintain the ark of God and the weal of his Church, in all their fluctuating fortunes, while there is a drop of blood propelled from the heart, or a single breath from God to animate his toil and sustain him in the conflict. Assured of a well-weighed course of action, it only remains for him to pursue it with death-daring firmness—the sternness of inexorable resolve. Even the most faithful ministers, those of rarest worth, may fall in the conflict; but, it will be from the walls of Sion or upon the hill of God, and they shall sink in death, with the world for their shrine and mankind their mourners!

And will ministers hesitate to do this, fearing they will only be distinguished by the indifference and dislike of their kind? Will they dread the threats of the mighty—

the curses of the malevolent—the hisses of the fool? Surely not. For, after all, what glory is comparable to that of the Pulpit! Is it found in the torch of classic illumination, or the bannered arch of chivalry? Is it to be seen in power, extending its iron scepter to every thing beneath the circuit of the sun? Can it be seen in the spectacle of crouching millions, bowing to kiss the imperial hand of a regal Despot? Is it to be met with in the history of the world's Cæsars—its Alexanders—its Marlboroughs, and its Tamerlanes—who roll their chariots to glory over the dying and the dead; who light the fires of conflagration, and sweep creation desolate, from the cottage to the throne! Oh no! It is the immaculate simplicity of the Christian Altar that charms! It is this, that has made kings forego their crowns—the warrior his sword—the philosopher his lamp, and last, though not least, the miser his golden gains!

Such is the glory of the Pulpit. And long has it spoken more than the thoughts of man in the ears of every people. Contemporary and successive nations estranged from God, have beheld its rising power and exclusive bearing with virtuous dismay. It has humbled the power and pretensions of every other worship to the dust—even the most lofty and imposing, sustained by the lore of Greece and the empire of Rome. The groves of Delphi were deserted and her oracles confounded. The Minerva of the Acropolis became an ivied desolation. The fane and the altar of Ephesian Diana, boasting the richest magnificence of Ionian splendor, faded from the vision of the world; while the proud temple even of the Capitoline Jove, in all its bewildering grandeur, bowed low in a contest with the unlettered fishermen of Galilee!

Pulpit fidelity belongs to every situation—all conditions. Whether in the palaces of the great or hovels of

the poor, amid the Favonian breezes of summer or the tempests of winter, ministers must maintain their stand. That minister, who does not fear the world, will make the world fear him. Let the faithful minister say to Adam in his transgression, "Where art thou?" To Cain, the fratricide, "Where is Abel thy brother?" To David, the royal voluptuary, "Thou art the man!" To Jonah, the fretful prophet, "Doest thou well to be angry?" To Peter, the temporizer, "Get thee behind me, Satan." To the Devil, the common enemy of our kind, "The Lord rebuke thee." And, to the God-rejecting thousands that attend his ministry, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" To the infidel Sadducee, he should preach the immortality of the soul and resurrection of the dead. Before a Pagan tribunal, he should reason of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come; and in the imperial court of the Areopagus, drag Jupiter from his throne, and thunder against Idolatry, like a messenger from Heaven! He should break in upon their lethargy in the accents of the tempest. His warning voice should pierce their ears like the birth of the mountain wind—the near echo of an earthquake! He should come down upon them, with the palsyng sweep of impending terror and gathering wrath; while to the penitent, the weary, and the heavy-laden, the minister of God should be like the bow of tenderness, shedding its radiance amid the tears of the storm! Thus, in the character of a minister, devotion, fearlessness and feeling, should be made to blend, as nature has blended the breath, the brow and the vermilion of Heaven!

Such are the legitimate objects of pulpit-labor. The Pulpit is alike intended for the regeneration of the altar and the empire, giving character to the religious instruc-

tion and civic policy of all Christian countries. Still, Christianity is, by its very nature, excluded, so as to exist properly apart from every system of local legislation or conventional polity, and should be contended for in its purity, by its ministers, without any unnatural alliance with other systems, although the world beside should abjure it. In doing this, ministers should be consistent in purpose and direct in action. They are not to study show, but effect; not to aim at a display of fireworks, but a discharge of artillery. The glory of a minister does not consist in being "stuck over with titles or hung round with strings." Outward show and professional bearing are of but little moment. We want the blow as well as the blunderbuss. We want not bloodless tactics, but the field of death, with the wounded and the slain. Not only the thunder and the tempest, but the lightning and the bolt! And this effectiveness will throw around the minister an infinitely prouder distinction than all the gilded fancies and honeyed sorceries that ever lurked beneath the laurels of Delos and Delphi, or floated amid the clouds and the rainbows of Olympus!

Such ability and fidelity, however, will often fail to be appreciated. How often is the man, who, with humble awe and God-like toil, has devoted years of unremitting application to the study of the Gospel and its effective ministration, outlawed from the pale of pulpit worth, by those who never read and never think, and with whom posing superstition or canting insolence, arterial action or a muscular twitch, constitute both faith and hope, and, indeed, charity too! In this way, many an able minister has found himself tried, condemned and gravely laid aside, to the full extent of their number and influence, by the upstart, the dotard and the gossip, and other

equally interesting specimens of impertinent pretension or personified stupidity!

Faithful ministers will be opposed, but the opposition will be powerless. It is now as heretofore. "The moles and bats"—all know their reach of vision—"in full assembly find, on special search, the keen-eyed eagle blind." These moles and bats abound in all our churches. Many will demand that the minister "build with untempered mortar"—that he "heal the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly." They will call for a flesh-pleasing, sin-soothing strain in the pulpit; a Gospel diluted and dulcified, like the meretricious themes and persiflage of mere song or sentimentalism. And, in too many instances it is to be feared, the claim will be yielded by ministers, through fear of losing caste and influence—of offending, forsooth, some of the tithe-paying bigots or loose-living patrons of their charge. But not so the faithful minister. He will do his duty, and say to all such, your money and your influence perish with you: our negotiations relate to your immortality, not your purses or your patronage. If we share your coffers and countenance to a reasonable extent—the extent of competence and comfort commensurate with our rights and services—well: if not, our trust is elsewhere. While lilies bloom and ravens are fed, we have a lesson against despondency. God, who eyes the sparrow's fall, and by whom "even the hairs of the head are numbered," will heed the wants of his faithful ministers, and supply them too: and not only supply their wants, but lead them on, an embattled phalanx, against the forms of vice and the foes of virtue, wherever found and however confederated. Their cause is one of transcendent interest. They are animated by lofty remembrances—a high and disturbing stimulation. God is with them. They have to do with

the hopes of one world and the fears of another ; and the spirit-stirring effect of their efforts and labors cannot be resisted. It will be like the unfurling of the mighty wing of cherubim over an inquiring world !

FINALLY : THE PROTECTION, SUCCESS AND TRIUMPH, SECURED TO THE MINISTRY IN THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF DUTY. *They shall be protected.* “I will be with thee to save and to deliver.” It is God’s pleasure, and interest too, to protect them. Ten thousand evils shall impend, in as many threatening forms, but Almighty Goodness is their shield. Eternal self-sufficiency is pledged and sworn to sustain them in the breach of every hazard. Many will be the misfortunes of virtue, but strong is the Lord God who is set for their defense, and infinite are the resources embarked in their favor and cause. Let them but be as “God’s mouth,” and the only practical effect of all their trials will be to gem and star their crowns in Heaven. Heaven will protect them until they have fulfilled their mission, and then they shall cease at once to work and live.

In this great struggle, their collective might will be required. Let them not blench from their purpose or their work. Let them be seen removing stain after stain from the injured escutcheon of our common nature. Let them strike off some one, at least, of the thousand forms of misery from the almost endless catalogue of human woe. Surveying the world as would an angel of God, let them heed and help as they can, the want and anguish of its suffering millions. Let the baptism of the world’s tears prelude, in the hopes of the Pulpit, its coming purity. The subject and the occasion impel us to say to every one of them, go on : God will protect and succeed you, and soon the ridicule of Infidelity, despite its keen and classic point, will wonder at the impotence

of the shaft it leveled, and its malice weep fruitlessly, as do the damned, over the inefficacy of the hate it aimed at the Pulpit. Vain indeed will be found to be all its efforts and all its hopes. They only remind us of the gleams of putrescence which, unable to effulge, are fated to expire in the rottenness producing them.

*They shall succeed.* Heaven will crown their efforts with success. A measure of success will always attend ministerial fidelity. They will even imperceptibly mend the morals of their charge and the world. They may not see it, but the seed is sown, the "bread is cast upon the waters," and the net effect will follow. At the appointed time they shall return with their sheaves, amid the shoutings of harvest. If each shall have improved but a single soul, they have not lived in vain. It can only, however, be known in Heaven, to how many pious purposes they have given birth—how many tears they have dried—how many sighs they have checked—how many broken hearts they have bound up—into how many wounded spirits they have poured the balsam of hope and the balm of life. But, if no fruit of this kind, they have performed their duty, honored God, and acquitted themselves as ministers of his Word and stewards of his mysteries. This itself is success, and their reward is in Heaven. They have at least made themselves better, and left their example; and the achievement is more than the conquest of kingdoms.

But this is not all. Let the past explain the future. At the death of Christ his fold numbered less than a score. Now the hosts of his elect count ten times as many millions, beside the numbers without number who have died in his cause and heired the promised thrones of his kingdom. The tide has set in, in favor of their cause. The decisive battle has been fought, and nothing

worth retaining has been lost. The mighty impulse has been given, and every time the pendulum of unfolding destiny vibrates, it takes the diameter of a larger arch—and shall, until glory end the world's eventful drama, and the shout of its regeneration shall everywhere rise, like the echo of heavenly harpings amid the bowers of the celestial paradise.

*They shall triumph*—individually, collectively, ultimately. Whether poor or rich, distinguished or obscure, learned or unlearned—whether in the city full, or spreading waste—whether burnt by tropical suns, buried amid the snow-drifts of the North, or fanned by the breezes of California—whether they reel on the mountain or roll in the trough of ocean—an immortality of joy begins at the tomb! Shades of Frederic and Napoleon, Byron and La Place, would not this have been glory! He who hangs the universe on his arm, and feeds its vast family at his table, can, and will, protect and supply them.

He who opposes them, is like the silly Thracian shooting his harmless arrow at a thunderbolt; for they are the heralds of a holier, a sublimer message, than ever charmed the ear of earth before; and the idols and ceremonies of every other creed or worship shall be consigned to the custody of neglect, oblivion and scorn—the moles of their desolate grottoes—the bats of their deserted temples! And when Infidelity lies buried in the grave of years, epitaphed in characters of execration by the millions disabused of its sorceries, the Ministry shall receive the homage of ages, and share the admiration of a virtuous universe!

Ministers of every creed and name—of every color and clime—are imperceptibly wearing, falling and dropping, into the ranks and lines of Christian enterprise and evangelical reform; and soon will they present an extended



front of bristling bayonets the gates of hell cannot resist! The Pulpit has survived the tempest which has covered the ocean of time with shipwreck. It has stood like a column erect among ruins—an edifice unshaken and undefaced amid the surrounding overthrow of palaces and temples—peering, like the magnetic rod around which the lightnings of Heaven play but cannot harm—and the lamp of its glory, as the pharos of the world, shall live and burn immortal and undimmed!

It is thus the ministry under God shall spoil principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, as the spoils of battle and the trophies of conquest. Thrones shall crumble and dynasties fall, and altars and temples rise to repair the desolation and perpetuate the change! Headed by the great Captain of their salvation, they shall victoriously push the conquests of the Cross from Zembla to Cape Horn, and from the equator to either pole, until the religion of the Bible—the only glory of the Pulpit—orbéd in the rainbow of her own grandeur, and throned in celestial light, shall hold her high culminating point in the heavens, and everywhere shed her redeeming radiance on the evening of the world!

## SERMON III.

## THE DEATH OF CHRIST—A PROPITIATION FOR SIN.

“JESUS knowing that all things were now accomplished—said, it is finished.”—John xix, 23, 30.

THE utterance of these words, terminated the deep and desolate humiliation of the Son of God. The struggles of his eventful mission and his companionship with earth, are now at an end. And to this event, the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, it is our wish and purpose to claim your attention at our present interview.

The supernatural, connected with facts and principles, as found in the history of man's redemption, does not reach him now, as originally, by supernatural means and methods—but comes to him like every thing else depending upon documentary historical proof; and, invoking Divine direction and aid, the ordinary laws of truth and nature should govern us in the examination and reception of it. And, accordingly, it becomes our business, not to account for the rare and the marvelous, the strange and the mysterious, but simply to inquire whether the record be true, and to what extent we are interested in it.

The history of Jesus Christ, during the period of his advent upon earth, constitutes the great foundation of the Christian Religion, both in plan and issue—in principle and product—and he who is unacquainted with the one, or doubtful of its truth, cannot reasonably be presumed to understand or share the other. All the material substantive parts, therefore, of our Lord's history, must of necessity be matter of immediate concern, not less than immortal interest, with every human being.

The most interesting, eventful and impressive part of the history of our Lord, will claim your attention and challenge your devotion on the present occasion. We mean of course his death—an event, which, from the nature and extent of its mysterious connection with all others, has colored the fortunes and told upon the destinies of the world for a thousand generations, and will continue to do so, until, amid the fires of judgment and the light of the last conflagration, the awards of eternity shall decide forever the character of its inhabitants.

IN RELATION TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST, WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN CONNECTION WITH IT, AS REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES, AND THAT STATE OF THINGS ON THE PART OF MAN, WHICH THEY ASSUME AND DISCLOSE, AS HAVING RENDERED IT NECESSARY. The death of Christ, viewed as an atonement for the sins of men, is an event involving the most stupendous interests and displaying the utmost moral grandeur, as it regards both Heaven and earth; and should, therefore, be well understood and justly appreciated. Unless we can regard the death of Christ as an atonement proper, a grand compensative arrangement securing to the government of God vindication and safety in the salvation of offending millions, Christianity, to our conception, is a fable, and its hopes a cheat.

It is an assumption of Revelation confirmed by all analogous disclosures, that the evil of sin can only be shown by its punishment—the exhibition of attendant misery or suffering, as the unavoidable result of its commission. Accordingly, the Scriptures represent, that when man—from the freedom and direction of his own choice, without any internal impulsion or external necessity, without coercion of any kind from the appointments of the Creator—had sinned and bid from him the

protection and favor of Heaven, it did not become the Divine government, nor was it consistent with the assertion of its rights and claims, to receive him again into favor without some adequate, some public, impressive display of the evil of sin, and its utter and eternal repugnance to the nature and perfections of Deity, such as punitive visitation would be likely to effect.

Our Lord laid down his life for us, as "daysman" or umpire, as "mediator" and "surety," charged with the arbitrament of the great controversy existing between God and man. And his death proceeded upon the principle, not of literal commercial justice or exchange, but that of legal forensic substitution and satisfaction—a public legislative expedient; and the transference of the punishment incurred by us to him, upon his voluntary assumption of it, displayed the evil of sin, and God's abhorrence of it, as fully and fearfully as though the curse incurred had been divided and exhausted among the millions of our fallen family. The law did not require that sin should be finally irremissible, and the sinner subjected, without remedy, to the imprisonment of the damned. Its great substantive requirement was, that adequate and exemplary punishment, or suffering, should proclaim the evil sin. The character of God, and the principles of his government, required, with unbending firmness, that his eternal hatred of sin should be shown in some way that would say most impressively to the fallen, as well as other districts of his creation, that sin should not go unpunished in the kingdom and government of Jehovah.

The divine object in the punishment of sin, was not the individual injury of the sinner, but the good of all destined to be affected by the result. And, as the evil of sin could only be shown by its punishment in some

form, when Jesus Christ offered to bear the burden of that punishment in a way, and to an extent, that would justify Heaven and indemnify the interests of the universe in the pardon of the sinner, we see no reason why such a mediation should not be accepted, inasmuch as it answered and secured all the direct and ulterior ends both of law and government. And in this way Divine justice was maintained and asserted in all its range and severity—co-equal and co-regent with the Divine mercy, in the world's redemption. Upon any supposition assuming the salvation of man as a sinner, atonement becomes indispensable to the full extent the original law of punishment was necessary. If God could forgive sin without requiring its punishment, or some adequate substitutionary arrangement in a government of motives, answering the same purposes, of which, however, we cannot conceive, why not originally govern the world, and dispose of its destinies, without appending to its commission the sanction of retributive suffering at all? If the one was necessary, the other was equally so. If the law of punishment was originally necessary, it must be carried into effect, in some way equivalent to the purposes which gave it birth. The final cause or reason of the original law of punishment, must be fully met and satisfied, or man, as a sinner, cannot be saved without an imputation of the character of God.

That the law of punishment is a necessary element of the Divine government, with regard to man, is shown most incontestibly by the fact, that, notwithstanding the death of Christ and all its stupendous issues, sin is, and always has been, largely and fearfully punished in the mortality, suffering, want, anguish, and dissolution of our common nature. It is, moreover, true that the original curse, in its subjective relation to each indi-

vidual offender, is merely suspended, not finally removed. The atonement is but a provisional expedient, operating a suspension of the original penalty, and not a final cancelment of guilt. And unless the prescribed conditional terms of the covenant of redemption are conformed to, the primary law of punishment will still have its course, and give the offender to the perdition of a destiny he refused to reverse by accepting the Gospel of the grace of God.

In sum: sin infinitely hateful to God, and equally debasing and ruinous to man, whether considered in its nature or effects, so directly challenged Almighty abhorrence, that, without an expression of this abhorrence eminently extraordinary, it would have been madness in Heaven or earth to expect its forgiveness. We receive it, therefore, as an original indestructible element of the empire of God over the universe of mind, that the evil of sin can only be shown by its punishment; and with equal strength of conviction, we assume, that the death of Christ, as a propitiation for the sins of the world, accomplished this much more effectually than it could have been done by the perdition of all the unnumbered millions for whom Christ died!

II. THE SUBJECT, HOWEVER, HAS OTHER ASPECTS IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED; AND, RETURNING TO EARTH AND MAN, LET US NOTICE, IN THE NEXT PLACE, IN WHAT WAY, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, HUMAN AGENCY WAS CONCERNED, IN BRINGING ABOUT THIS EVENT. *And, first, let us glance at the charges of guilt and alleged criminal misconduct upon which the Jews ostensibly condemned and crucified the son of God.* These charges were three in number, with numerous confirmatory items and specifications. The first was hostility to the Jewish commonwealth, still existing and recognized as such, although,

in fact, Judea was, at the time, a Roman province. The second charge was sedition against the Roman Empire, or an invasion of the imperial rights of the reigning Cæsar. The third charge was blasphemy—in that he claimed equality with God, by declaring himself to be his son, thereby in effect, as the Jews understood him, and not improperly, declaring that he was God. On these charges, the last of which only was true, true as to the fact alleged, but not the construction making it blasphemy, the Jews proceeded to secure his sentence by Roman authority, and put him to death.

Such are the facts charged ; and, to understand them properly, with the relations and inferences involved, it is necessary to add, that had all these charges been true in their abstract general import, our Lord had furnished the Jews with full and overwhelming proof—proofs more irresistible than all the prodigies of their history—that he had a Divine and undoubted right to assume even more than this, not only in relation to the affairs of this world, but also of that which is to come. The Jews, therefore, by the law of their own creed and faith, were utterly and shamelessly inexcusable in putting him to death.

But, again, had not the Divine pretensions of our Lord been well and demonstrably founded in truth, the inference is irresistible, that he would have been guilty of blasphemy, in view of the third charge, according to Jewish law, and his death required by express statute—the statute of stoning. When, therefore, the Scriptures accuse the Jews of guilt and high moral blame, in putting our Lord to death, they unequivocally assume his Divinity, and announce his heavenly origin, as declared by himself, and upon which declaration he is arraigned by the Jews ; for unless this be so, the Jews, in putting

him to death, only did as God had commanded them, and deserved commendation rather than blame.

To assume the titles and claim the rights of Deity, is certainly the highest blasphemy of which any creature is capable. Had our Lord, therefore, done this, being a mere man, or even angel in human form, the deed, as a treasonous invasion of the rights of Godhead, would have challenged the vengeance of the law and invited its execution. Inasmuch as the claims of our Lord were only obtruded upon the notice of the Jews, by deeds and manifestations which their own Scriptures every where pronounced unerringly distinctive of Divinity, we are obliged to look upon their arrest and murder of God's Messiah, thus amply and variously accredited, as not only glaringly illegal in form, but remorselessly inhuman and infamously unjust in principle and purpose. And hence the guilt of the Jews, no abatement of which can be plead, in view of the Divine purposes connected with the Death of Christ.

III. LET US BRIEFLY ATTEMPT THE VINDICATION OF THE DIVINE CONDUCT FROM THE CHARGE OF INJUSTICE, CONNECTED WITH THE DEATH OF CHRIST. We remark, then, that it is important here, not to overlook the plainly revealed fact, that the death of Christ, so far as his own purpose and volition are concerned, was not coerced and violent. He gave himself for us. Had his death, as a sacrifice for the sins of men, been a forced and involuntary movement as it regards himself, we cannot see how the Divine conduct could have approved itself to the intelligence of the universe, as correct and just, in even the permission of the event before us, inasmuch as he was without sin, whether personally or by hereditary imputation. When we reflect, however, that Christ became the subject of this fearful tragedy, with avowed and perfect freedom from



all extrinsic constraint, other than what he chose to submit to, and look upon him as a Divine Being, possessing unlimited right of property in, and control over, his human nature, having "power" correlative with such right "to lay down his life," and by a similar almighty volition "to take it up again"—thus rendering his offering of himself a perfectly voluntary personal movement, and not an involuntary act of sufferance—however criminally conceived on the part of his murderers—we can see no injustice in God in accepting the offered interposition of his Son in behalf of man, but the reverse: the Divine conduct appears infinitely consistent and praiseworthy.

This view of the subject, is in perfect and striking analogy with the entire constitution and order, both of nature and Providence, and involves no new or doubtful principle of government or action, as charged by Infidelity, and even by some Christian creeds. Almighty God not only allows, but often requires it as a necessary condition of human virtue, that the self-chosen, voluntary toil and suffering of one man or nation, shall minister to the happiness and welfare, and even prevent the ruin and secure the salvation, of another; and this, too, by the incurrence of toil and suffering, equivalent in many instances to that from which deliverance is sought and obtained. And thus the philosophy of atonement—the doctrine of salvation by the cross of Christ—is pre-announced and authoritatively accredited both by nature and Providence, and cannot, with any show of truth or reason, be pleaded, as is often done, in bar to the reception of the Christian Revelation.

Deprive Christianity of the doctrine and glory of atonement by the death of Christ—dismantle the Gospel of the dread attraction of the Cross—and you have before you

only the perished remains, the ghostly shadow, of a once sublime but now defunct and exploded theory!

IV. LET US NEXT ATTEND TO THE NATURE, CAUSE AND DESIGN, OF THE GREAT INTERNAL STRUGGLE, THE INTENSE MENTAL CONFLICT AND SUFFERING, OF OUR LORD, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM HIS PHYSICAL SUBJECTION TO PUNISHMENT AND DEATH. The period immediately preceding his death, was one of intense moral suffering; and, as the cause and purpose of such suffering could not terminate in a sinless being, it is necessary to seek them elsewhere, and otherwise account for them. Regarding him as a man, with all the susceptibilities of our common nature in their utmost perfection, and in full and vigorous action—beyond, perhaps, any other example in the history of our race—such suffering, in view of the destiny before him, was matter of structural organic necessity. Every law, every principle, the very physiology of his being, rendered the result inevitable, under the circumstances. And hence he suffered deeply, inconceivably, and beyond all force of former or subsequent example.

But, in addition to this, his soul was pierced with unutterable anguish, because the light of his Father's countenance was withdrawn, and the fullness of his Divinity no longer communed with his suffering humanity. In order to the fitness and virtue of the great sacrifice he was about to offer, that humanity was, in some sense, and to a fearful extent at least, left to itself, in this hour of perilous, unprecedented trial. Nor must it be forgotten here, that, in making his soul an offering for sin, as the great Lamb of Atonement, the hand of God rested upon him in displeasure, as our surety. "It pleased Jehovah to bruise him." "God spared not his own son." "He was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him." "By his stripes

we are healed." And hence the extreme anguish that signalized the last hours of his illustrious life. Three times, in Gethsemane, his shrinking humanity deprecated the cup. Three times he prostrated himself in prayer and appeal to his Father. And three times he arose in the conflict, resolved to reach the issue of his agony.

Here, however, the utmost power of conception is at fault. At best, we can but approach the verge of the mystery. What reach or grasp of thought or language, can unfold the anatomy of his heart's anguish, or exhibit the chemistry of its bruised emotions! The fearful alternative was before him. If he did not die, he saw the wrath of his Father kindling in Heaven, scathing this fair creation, and lighting up the flames of hell. He saw generation after generation sinking beneath its fearful pressure, and swelling the congregation of the damned. He saw, he felt Infinite Majesty angry with man; Heaven lost; hell incurred, and the prospective thrones of eternity exchanged for the dark dungeons of perdition! The untrodden wine-press of the wrath of God was before him. The unequal hour of Almighty conflict had arrived. Earth was burdened with children about him, and Heaven lined with squadrons above—but "of all, there was none to help!" In the might, therefore, of his own invincible purpose, alone and unaided, he met the dreadful alternative. And hence his agony—the fearful exordium of the mysterious drama upon which he was entering.

The great design of the internal sufferings of Christ, connects itself directly with the one great atoning—the grand redemptive act of his history—his sacrificial death. And is not the effect, the end, sufficient to explain the cause, the means, giving birth to the result? Beside

all that the Scriptures say on the subject, the circumstances alone attending his death, demonstrate it to be the most important event that has ever occurred in the history of man. Prophets, apostles, martyrs and heroes, have been stoned, burned, banished, impaled and sawn asunder; multitudes have perished in battle; thousands have lighted up, with their expiring groans, the fires of conflagration; the earthquake has absorbed its myriads; pestilence, with miasmatic breath, has poured putrefaction upon the lungs of pallid millions; kingdoms have sunk in a night, and empires crumbled in a day; but, no event, that lives in the page of history, has ever been so attested by nature and nature's God, as was the death of Christ! And this can only be accounted for, by viewing his death, to which his internal sufferings were preliminary, in the light of a penal transaction—an atonement for the sins of men. The Word, the Providence, and the Works of God, equally with the faith and hopes of the Church, all conspire signally to attest the dignity of the sufferer, and the grandeur of the sacrifice!

V. LET US GLANCE AT SOME OF THE PRELIMINARY CIRCUMSTANCES ATTENDING THE DEATH OF CHRIST, AS NOT WITHOUT SIGNIFICANCE IN AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE GENERAL SUBJECT. Six days before it occurred, by a full disclosure, he prepares his disciples for the event, in the guest-chamber at Jerusalem. With prophetic solemnity he celebrates the Passover in prospect of his death, and institutes the Eucharist, to be observed in memory of it. He foretells his resurrection, and appoints a meeting with his disciples after it, in a mountain of Galilee. He is arrested by a military cohort, and appears, severally, before Annas, Caiaphas, Herod and Pilate. And, after the sheerest mockery of a judicial trial, is found guilty, upon the pre-arranged testimony of two perjured miscreants.

He is condemned and sentenced to a mode of execution more infamous, painful and revolting, than any other in the criminal code of nations. In the Common Hall or Pretorium, he is despoiled of his raiment, scourged, buffeted and spit upon, arrayed in mock royalty, crowned with thorns and sceptered with a reed. From the pavement of Pilate, he is seen bearing his own cross through the streets of Jerusalem, until, sinking under its burden, one Simon, of Cyrene, was compelled by the crowd to bear it up the hill!

We pause, to ask, was the compulsion, think you, ever regretted by him of Cyrene? And, before we return to the accursed throng of his clamorous crucifiers, let us throw a glance of mingled pity and admiration, at that amiable daughter of Paganism, the wife of Pilate, who so eloquently essayed to save his life! "Have thou nothing to do," said the anxious wife to her timid, time-serving husband, "with that just person!" When she came to die, was her touching plea for the man of Calvary forgotten or left unrewarded? But, meanwhile, the maddened reprobate mob, the whole mingled mass of Jewish spectators especially, are shouting for his blood to be on them and on their children! Invoking his curse by voluntary imprecation! And, God of Heaven, in what dreadful measure, shall the future fulfill the chosen anathema!

And here again we pause, to point you to another shade of relief in the picture. A few pious women followed him at a distance, "weeping and bewailing him." Thank the God of our nature, there was one little group that did not riot in his torture! And, He, never unmindful of goodness, however humble, cast on them an eye already weighed down in death, and with a look of God-like philanthropy said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for

me, but for yourselves, and for your children!" This city, in which I am thought unfit to live or even die, shall, in forty years, be drenched with blood and buried in ashes. In two short years, Caiaphas, the relentless bigot of an apostate faith, who now disgraces the Pontificate and presides at my execution, shall wind up his history in suicide and death! In the same length of time, the temporizing Pilate, banished and disgraced by imperial warrant as a traitor, shall, in like manner, die by his own hands! Soon Herod, with his malice and mockery, smitten of God, accursed and uncoffined, shall be eaten up of worms! This whole land shall be without altar or temple, and even the Holy of Holies a God-abandoned desolation! The high Priests, the Scribes, the Elders and Pharisees, and the whole multitude of the Jews, who, with blended voice from a thousand quarters, cry "crucify him, crucify him," *shall themselves be crucified*, until there shall not be room in the suburbs of this city, or upon the declivities of these hills, to erect crosses for them! Crosses shall be wanted for prisoners and space for crosses, and the vengeance of Rome shall be glutted, by everywhere exhibiting to the eyes in Jerusalem, a surrounding horizon of crucified sufferers!

For this act of *Deicide*—an atrocity without parallel in the memoirs of worlds—the Jews, fugitives and vagabonds, branded and scorned, shall be scattered throughout every district of the earth, without a synagogue and without a temple, while millions of the present and succeeding generations of them shall perish in their sieges with the belligerent Gentiles! And, accordingly, more than *eleven hundred thousand* of them perished in the siege of their capital alone; and, altogether, in the last great conflict, not less than a million and a half. And already, without glancing at the future, near two thou-

sand years have swept in darkness over the desolate pomp, the curse-bowed grandeur, of Jerusalem ! Well might the daughters of Jerusalem weep for themselves, and for their children especially. No longer a nation beloved of God, they wander without a shrine and without a priest. The four quarters of the globe attest their dispersion and publish their infamy. The page of history is, in every land and nation, stained with their blood ; and every wind of Heaven bears to the ear of insulted Majesty, the story of their wrongs and the record of their sighs !

VI. WE NOW APPROACH THE FINAL SCENE OF OUR LORD'S SUFFERINGS. We are now arrived at the foot of the fatal hill. The crowd rush with infuriate frenzy, that their eyes may drink the blood, and their ears the groans, of murdered innocence. The Cross receives a horizontal posture. The suffering Son of God is stretched upon it. His unresisting hands and feet receive their relative cruciform position, and the hardy, practiced executioners, with massive hammer and rugged nail, are in haste to give the ponderous blow that spikes the sacred humanity of the Son of God to the fatal wood ! The Cross is reared ; and, by a fearful, vehement concussion, its foot is deposited deep in the mortised rock ! O God ! what an appeal this horrid distension must have been to the utmost capacity of suffering, tearing the impaled nerves, and muscles, and tendons of his sacred hands and feet, and sending sick convulsion to the heart and brain ! Even at this distance of time and space, the heart is collapsed with a death-like feeling at the bare thought !

But we live again when we reflect, that on that crucial engine there bleeds a victim whose death shall tell upon the destinies of earth to its latest hour, and become a rallying point of interest and action among all the worlds

of God! Now, however, all about him conspire, in circling thousands, to bow the knee in mock prostration, and invite him from the cross! "He saved *others*, let him save *himself*!"

In this deed of more—of worse—than devilish venture, the ruthless soldiery and heartless mob—headed by the chief priests, and scribes, and elders—all united. Even his fellow-sufferers—though one afterward repented—suspended their death-sobs to reproach him; and the shoutings and rejoicings of hell shook the base of the mountain—"If thou *be* the Son of God, come down from the Cross and we will believe in thee"! Eternal justice, where were thy thunderbolts! Angels of God, where were ye encamped, or how restrained!

But the scene changes. Jesus calmly discharges the duties of a son to her who was identified with himself in the story of the Manger and the scenes of Bethlehem. He prays for those who were shedding his blood, and cries, in the language of the Chaldee paraphrase of the twenty-second Psalm, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani"—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"! That these Jews and Pagans should forsake me is, indeed, not so strange: that men should withhold succor and angels withdraw their ministry, is what I expected: a faithless world and frowning skies might be borne: but, "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" When did I fail to enforce thy claims and assert thy rights? When did I fail to make known thy name or publish thy love, by doing good to thy creatures? When did the poor, the needy, the maimed, the halt, the blind, ask of me and they did not receive? When did the heart-broken father ask me back his son from death, the anguished mother her daughter from the bier, or the orphan sisters an only brother from the grave, and I did not relume



the sightless eyeball and new string the chordless heart? And is this the only recompense returned me? Must I not only bear the malice of the mob and the fury of fiends, the desertion of earth about me and the murmuring heavens above, but also have mingled in this unutterable cup, the hidings even of my Father's face—"My God, my God, *why* hast thou forsaken me"!

And now, when his suffering humanity had uttered its last complaint, and was about to receive its concluding shock—when Heaven and earth, as by common consent, seemed to stand aloof from the persecuted sufferer—now, when the freedom of Divine intercourse was checked and the paternal presence withdrawn—when, alone and singly, without friend or auxiliary, he had to contend with the conflicting elements of an angry universe—at this eventful crisis, Nature could no longer endure the complaints of her Creator: she shuddered, as with conscious horror, through all her dominions. The sun, shrouded in darkness, rolled back his chariot from the accursed abode of man, and refused to see the Sun of Righteousness, from whom he had borrowed his beams, sinking beneath a horizon of mingled darkness, blood and death! Rocks rent, the temple swayed, earth shook, and the trembling mountains prolonged the terror of the scene! Men scoffed, hell howled, and the world above let fall a tear! Death heard the cry of the world's redemption in his dark dominions, forgot his prey, and, dropping the chains with which his prisoners were bound, they started into life, while angry destiny everywhere mantled creation with sackcloth and "hung the heavens with the habiliments of mourning"!

And all this for man—for you—for me. The human soul was the stake, and by such an altar and such a sacrifice, it is proved to be of higher import and weight-

ier reckoning than the whole amplitude of a dead or insentient universe. That upon which Heaven has embarked so God-like an expenditure of effort and achievement, must possess intrinsic, deathless value.

VII. WE NOTICE THE DEATH OF CHRIST AS THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY, AND THE SUBSTANTIATION OF TYPE AND SHADOW IN THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. In him, the import of the one and instituted meaning of the other, have been clearly and triumphantly fulfilled. These desiderated what was to be accomplished by Jesus Christ; and, in reference to this, in dying, he said, "It is finished." Not only did prophecy constantly point to the death of Christ as the consummation of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations and the completion of the world's redemption, but all the types and shadows, institutions and symbols, by which they were distinguished, pointed, with no equivocal intent, to this grand event, as their substance and completion.

If the victim flamed on the altar, it prefigured the Lamb of Atonement and the Offering of Calvary. If Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, it was to adumbrate the elevation of the Redeemer upon the Cross of suffering. Did the Prophet of Israel smite the rock in the wilderness, whose streams gladdened the desert; that rock, in its typical significance, was Christ. Did the Pascal blood, sprinkled over the doors of the Israelites in the land of Goshen, turn away the sword of the destroying angel; so does the blood of Christ, who is "the Lord our passover, slain for us." Were goats, in pairs, presented at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation, the one slain as an expiatory sacrifice, and the other sent into the wilderness typically laden with "the sins of the people;" it was to symbolize the oblation of him who, "in his own body, bore our sins upon the tree,"

and is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

Prophecy, we have seen, held the same language, and was in deep travail with the same immortal theme. With the Prophets this was the spring of action, the goal of hope and the guerdon of their wishes ; and, in depicting the great sacrifice of the Christian dispensation, every word seems to bend and break with the burden of a special and yet coincident revelation ! In whatever direction inspiration threw their vision, they saw the Cross—the Cross ! triumphantly rising upon the broad horizon of humanity, dissipating the gloom of nations and lighting up with splendor the vast valley of the shadow of death !

In this light, our Lord himself obviously regarded his advent, and especially his death. And it was this sustained him. Look at his victorious patience and unsubdued resolution amid the insults of his foes and the tears of his friends ! Even when the former shouted for his execution, and vociferated, "Not this man, but Barab-bas"—a bandit felon—and his friends, stricken with despair and yielding to their feelings, shed tears of immortal disappointment, with God-like firmness he undauntedly braved the fury, as he had lately resisted the flatteries, of the world, and trampled alike upon its gilded vanities and clustering terrors. For he had before him the prospect of his passion. He looked forward to the period when countless nations should load the altar of his crucifixion with the incense of piety, and time and space make haste to lay their spoils at the foot of the Cross, and herald the grandeur of his mission and his death !

And thus, as it was written in Heaven, so is it fulfilled on earth. What an irresistible concentration have we of

prophetic events and pre-shadowed phenomena, in the life, death, and constantly enlarging extension of the predicted empire, of the Son of God !

FINALLY : WE INVITE ATTENTION TO A FEW OF THE MANY REFLECTIONS MOST FORCIBLY SUGGESTED BY THE SUBJECT. And first, let us look at the death of Christ *as a grand legislative expedient for the salvation of men*. It is not to be regarded as originating good will in the bosom of Deity ; the supposition is as undeifying as it is unscriptural ; but merely as preparing a safe and honorable medium for its communication.

Had our planet, after its defection, or rather the sin of our race, remained unpunished, other districts of God's moral creation might have been emboldened to sin, in the hope of impunity from an example before them. But in the death of Christ we have such an appalling display of the evil, sin—such a magnificent illustration of the severity of God in controversy with a fallen world preliminary to its recovery—that now the supposition is utterly inadmissible. The death of Jesus Christ is hence conservative as well as corrective and remedial.

What a stupendous miracle of moral legislation have we here ! By the very expedient making atonement for it, the evil of sin is punished with a force and energy, felt not only by the thrones of Heaven and amid the depths of hell, but, lest man should remain unmindful of the lesson and to render it more ineffaceably impressive, the steadfast columns of the visible creation surrounding him trembled with dismay, as if about to be loosened from their eternal fastenings !

Fearful, indeed, had been the curse and overthrow marking the evil of sin, in anterior ages of the world's history, to say nothing of the ruin it had wrought in Heaven. Look at the destruction of the antediluvian

world for example, unnumbered millions perishing in a day. And to this add all the judicial inflictions of Heaven from the curse of Cain to the fate of Judas, or rather from the first great lapse to the present hour. Yet each in segregation, or all in dread accumulation, failed to make the millionth part the impression made by the sacrifice of the illustrious Victim of Calvary! It would seem all preceeding visitations of this kind, were soon merged in the chance and change of the world's engrossing drama—were buried in fable or evaporated in song. But the death of Christ stands out in the solitude of its own preëminence, as the birth-scene of a new era. The cross of his humiliation became the visible boundary of opposing worlds—a theater of manifestations upon which the goodness and severity of God developed principles and results, destined to affect the elements of moral order, throughout all the masses of intelligence crowding the universe of God.

*Let the conduct of those who crucified the Lord of glory, be to us a fearful prophetic warning, not to crucify him afresh, and by the rejection of the Gospel, resubject him, so far as we are concerned, to the dishonor of his original expulsion from the bosom of those he came to save. Their sin was willful, as ours must be. The evidence is irresistible, that his murderers proceeded to compass his death against the strongest motives of light and knowledge, for both were in their meridian before them, as it regarded his supernatural character and claims. In vain, therefore, did they make the will of God the blasphemed agency of their guilt and shame. Had they forgotten the prodigies of his birth and of his baptismal inauguration at the Jordan? Had they forgotten the God-revealing wonders of his life and ministry, arresting their gaze in concentrated effulgence, during the three preceding*

years? How could they forget? Were there not those standing about his cross, to whom he had restored the use and functions of the eye, the ear, the tongue, the hand, the foot. There were those there, it is likely, who had been raised by him from the bier and the grave. There too, perhaps, gazed the once mindless maniac, who first received from him the greatest, save one, of all God's gifts to man or angel—the power of thought. Did these unite in the malignant joy afforded by his sufferings, or did they bestow upon him the tribute of their tears and the expression of their regrets?

It has not, however, been left for us to bring the accusation against his murderers. We find the indictment in God and nature's own hand writing. The elements accused them at the time. The prodigies of the crucifixion convicted them on the spot. The impending darkness of the murmuring Heavens witnessed against them. The convulsed earth and disquieted deep broke silence to accuse them. The rent vail of the horror-struck temple bore testimony to the wrong, while the opening graves and rising dead so substantiate the charge of guilt, as to cover his murderers with the infamy in which they sought to involve him!

Thus, in conclusion, whether living or dying, let us identify the interests of time and the hopes of eternity, with the death and cross of Christ. His life exhibits a matchless outline of Christian virtue, and his death places before us a grand moral picture of what should be the concluding scene of our earthly destiny. Turn to the one and the other, and learn the dignity and value of your high-born nature! Even when but a few moments of his last hour remained, and the dread sense of desertion extorted from him the filial lament "my God, my God!" even then, his dying thoughts, as they still lin-

gered in the torture of the tree, turned to man : “ Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do.” Know they do, too much of their victim and this tragedy, to allow them either virtue or humanity. I only ask that vengeance may not be meted to them, as they deserve. Of outrage and cruelty to me, they know themselves guilty ; but, in what age-protracted sequence this injustice shall be measured to them again, “ they know not.” If they did, this mountain instead of a scene that holds the harps of Heaven dumb with grief, would everywhere be spread with bended knees, would be vocal with the cries of anguish, and stained with the tears of penitential regret.

In death, as in life, let us look to one who was himself a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and who, by living for our example and dying for our redemption, has thus fulfilled for us the highest possible mission of Heavenly love. Here, then, let us repose. Because he lives, having vanquished death and triumphed over the power of the grave, we “ shall live also.”

Followers of Christ—Children of God, of every age, name and condition ! let this great event ever occupy your minds and your thoughts, your hearts and your lives. And in view of the most eventful passage connected with your scene of earthly trial here, in the chamber or the desert, by field or flood, when you meet your fate, God Almighty grant the cross of your redemption may be lifted up, to dissipate the terrors of the grave, and light your path to the bosom of his mercies, and the beatitude of himself—the regions of immortality, and the thrones of Heaven !

## S E R M O N    I V .

## MESSIAH'S KINGDOM.

“THE Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through Kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore, shall he lift up the head.”—Psalm cx, *entire*.

It is certainly a remarkable coincidence, to say the least, that with the first denunciation of sin in the Hebrew Scriptures, we have conjoined the promise of Messiah and the hope of recovery; and that, accompanying the last threatened judgment in the closing prophecy of the volume, the same assurance is renewed, while the intermediate notices are so numerous, that a single Jewish exposition of the volume—the Chaldee Paraphrase—in customary and accredited use in the synagogues of Judea long before the Christian era, enumerates between seventy and a hundred predictions, having reference to the advent and kingdom of Messiah. Of all these prophecies, we have the sum and the substance in the text. Hence styled, by some of our old Divines, *Symbolum Davidicum*—the creed of David.

The history of redemption in the Christian Scriptures, is but the fulfillment and evolution of its promise in the Jewish; and of the truth and force of this remark, the



text is a very striking illustration, as forcibly shown by St. Paul, in more than one connection. And, accordingly, it has been the common conviction of the Church, that if ever the assurances of omniscient truth are verified to human consciousness, and the Hill of God be seen beaming with light and smiling with life, it will be in the accomplishment of the prophecy to which we now invite your attention.

That this Psalm, penned not less than twenty-eight generations before the era it celebrates, relates to the Messiah of the Old Testament and Savior of the New, is a position which has obtained the common suffrage of all antiquity and modern commentary. It is, perhaps, altogether the finest, the most comprehensive, epic representation of Messiah's reign found in the Bible. It is an exhibition of him full glowing and impressive, in his person, relations and achievements. In the dramatic language and scenery of this inimitable prophecy, like Melchisedek in Moses, Agamemnon in Homer, and Æneas in Virgil, our Lord is represented as a Prince, a Priest and a Hero. Claiming the dominion, effecting the atonement, and triumphing over the hostility of the world.

Our object, in the remarks we propose, will be to analyze the different parts of the text, divest it of whatever obscurity may seem to attach to its imagery, and present you with what we conceive to be its true prophetic meaning.

That the personal dignity of Messiah—the essential grandeur of his nature and character—constitutes the most distinguishing feature in the prophetic picture before us, must be obvious we think to most readers of the Bible, and truth and duty require, that it receive a proper share of attention. We would accord the fullness of this claim,

without restriction or compromise. We would evade nothing of its point or significance. We would affirm it, however imperfectly, in all the unmeasured grandeur of its nature and import. We attempt this, however, in no elaborate argumentative form, but by a familiar, practical blending of statement and argument, so as to instruct and interest, if possible, without fatiguing you.

To the extent we can suppose you sufficiently indifferent or prepossessed, from whatever cause, to pore over the pages of Xenophon and Thucydides, Livy or Sallust, without having your attention especially directed to the mind of Greece or the majesty of Rome, we must be prepared to suppose, that, under some similar preoccupation of view and feeling, you may study Christianity, without regarding the Godhead and grandeur of its Author, as substantive principles of the Christian system. We are glad to know, however, that, in the whole range of the christianization of our world, comparatively few have learned Christ in this way. And that, whatever may be the semi-pagan, the pseudo-philosophical faith, the light and dulcified morality, obtaining in many of the pulpits of modern Christendom, sustained by creed, liturgy and commentary, and thrown around them like a *chevaux-de-frize*, in the Encyclopedias, Reviews, Poems, Magazines and Miscellanies of our current literature, when we turn to the Jewish Evangelical and Christian Scriptures, we find them, during a term of more than thirty centuries, holding the same graphic, but one consistent, language on this subject—that Messiah is “Immanuel, God with us”—“The Mighty God”—“God manifest in the flesh”—“The true God and Eternal Life.”

We would not dogmatize. Others may honestly entertain very different views: but, to our conception, if the personal dignity and official relations of Jesus Christ, as

the great foundation of our common hope, be not of vital, of fundamental, importance in the Christian scheme, the incautious penmen of the Bible have strangely misled us, by an improper, unwarranted use of language, and as it regards the true character, and claims of Christ, have, by giving us a deceptive revelation, only "honored Heaven by leading earth astray," and we cannot resist the withering conviction, that, with regard to this subject at least, they might better have bequeathed the mere alphabet of the languages in which they wrote, and left us to ourselves; for then we should not, as upon the hypothesis we oppose, have been compelled to seek a meaning in the sacred writings, disavowed by the very terms in which it is said to be conveyed. To be able to confide in the lofty commission of the Son of God, as equal to the task of uplifting our fallen nature to fellowship with the Divine, we must, as we reason on the subject, regard him as self-existent and almighty—the creator and ruler of all—upholding the rights and claims of Heaven, and at the same time retrieving the guilt and doom of earth.

In order to just and comprehensive views of Messiah's claims, it will be necessary that we notice him, as do the Scriptures, *in his pre-existent, his militant, and his glorified states and relations.* And in doing this, the Scriptures of the New Testament must furnish a key to those of the Old. *Let us inquire, then, first and briefly, what they reveal, with regard to the pre-existence and original glory of Jesus Christ.* These unerring expositions of the elder and less perfect revelations of the Bible, inform us with point and directness, and without preface or the ceremony of anticipating doubt or contradiction, that he is "from Heaven"—that he "came down from Heaven"—that he "ascended up where he was before"—that he is "from above"—"above all"—existed "in the beginning"—

was “in the bosom of the Father”—had “glory with the Father before the world began”—that he “came forth from the Father”—was “before Abraham” and “before John,” although, in the order of time, his birth occurred ages after the first, and the last was known to be his senior ; that “the Father loved him before the foundation of the world”—that he was a “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”—that he “was sent”—was “given”—“came”—was “made flesh”—was “Alpha and Omega”—“beginning and end”—“first and last”—“was, is, and is to come”—“Prince of Life”—“Lord of Glory”—was “rich and became poor”—“all things were made by him”—“was before all things”—“and by him all things exist.” Thus the preëxistence of Jesus Christ, affirmed in the text by the declaration of a decree, long anterior to his manifestation in the flesh, is everywhere expressly or incidentally assumed in the New Testament; and we should be wanting to ourselves, and should not less certainly derogate from the glory of our subject, did we fail to give it due and distinguishing prominence. This follows especially from the 5th verse of the text, which is a direct apostrophe to God the Father, in which the Son receives the distinctive denomination of “Jehovah;” for the Jehovah, as every one must perceive, who “strikes through kings in the day of his wrath,” is the same who “drinks of the brook in the way, and lifts up the head;” and that this is Messiah, no one we must think ever doubted, who could not doubt without difficulty, or believe without evidence.

To the same effect with the New, is the language of the Old Testament. Here he is everywhere spoken of, and always proposed, as then actually existing, and pre-eminently exalted in glory, unlimited, and everlasting. The whole volume teems with notices and disclosures to

this effect. In Genesis, as "the seed of the woman," he was to obtain a distinguished triumph over the powers of darkness. As the "seed of Abraham," he was to invest himself with glory and conquest in the gate of his enemy." To both Isaac and Jacob, he was promised as the great source of good, in whom all contemporary and successive "nations" were to be "blessed;" and the latter represents him as the great object of religious confidence on the part of the "gathering" millions who should repair to him for life and happiness. In Deuteronomy, Moses announces him as the great Lawgiver of the universe, and predicts the overthrow of those who reject him. In Numbers, Baalim, the immortal soothsayer, rapt in the vision of ascending years, ascribed to him the illumination and dominion of Israel. Job claims him as his ever-living and redeeming God. David represents him as enthroned in Zion, and extending his kingdom illimitably, in every direction. He pronounces his throne "eternal," styles him "Jehovah," and quotes the "heavens" as "the work of his hands." The prophet Agur styles him "God's Son," a thousand years before the birth of his humanity. Solomon declares him "Chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely." Isaiah soars above all height, and his glowing pages depict him as "Immanuel, God with man"—"the mighty God and everlasting Father"—"the Jehovah, God of hosts, and only Savior." Jeremiah proclaims him "Jehovah, our righteousness." Ezekiel declares him the "only shepherd" whose "fold" is the unnumbered Israel of God. Daniel publishes him the object of worship among all nations, and declares his "kingdom" without limit and "without end." Hosea predicts that "Jehovah will save the people by Jehovah." Joel says expressly, as quoted by St. Paul, that he is "Jehovah," and that "all who call upon him shall be saved."

Amos declares him the "great Tabernacle," symbolized by that of David. Obediah tells us he shall be the "deliverer in Mount Sion and shall possess the kingdom." In Micah, he is "Ruler in Israel, and his goings forth are of old, from everlasting." In Zephaniah, he is the "Lord God in the midst of Jerusalem and his people." In Haggai, he is "the desire of all nations," filling the temple of the living God with glory. In Zachariah, he is "Jehovah sent by Jehovah" to the nations; also, Jehovah "pierced," as attested by St. John. In Malachi, who concludes and confirms all these prophetic notices, he is "Jehovah, the messenger of the covenant," and "Lord of the temple"—"the Lord God of hosts," before whom the Baptist was to "prepare the way." Here, then, we have more than a score of Heaven-instructed teachers—all conspiring, as we understand them, in the solemn attestation of the supreme dignity and excellence of God's Messiah. Establishing the fact of his preëxistence, and the underived nature of that existence, long anterior to his appearance and presence among men.

But again, in *his militant state*, on earth and among men, he claimed and displayed the same nature and perfections. When first introduced into the world, he was proclaimed the "God" of adoring "angels." He required expressly, that "all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." In what way and to whatever extent we homage the perfections of the Infinite God, we are required to honor him. He taught, that those "who had seen Him had seen the Father," because "he and his Father are one." "Whatsoever things the Father hath" or doth, within the compass of eternal excellence or almighty power, "these hath" and doth "the Son also." "The Son quickeneth whom he will," whether from the inanition of the grave, or the more fearful

lethargy of sin. He was to "raise himself from the dead," and Heaven and earth bare witness that he did so. He announced himself "Lord of the Sabbath"—claimed equality with God—"forgave sins" in fact, and received Divine honors in form. He claims the signature of uncreated, continual existence. "I AM," is his self-selected name, his own chosen designation; and from his name, his titles, expounded by his Word and works, we are to infer his nature and deduce his claims.

Let us attend, then, to the evidence of his works while upon earth, and the whole range of attestation to the Divinity of his claims, as God manifest in the flesh. The phenomena attendant upon his birth—the presence of the star-guided Magi, and the out-burst of celestial harmony from heavenly visitants, proclaimed him the long-wished for, and now welcomed "deliverer," who had been the great theme of primeval prophecy, and who was destined "to turn away ungodliness from Jacob." When a mere child, as the son of Joseph, he displayed Omniscient discernment in the confutation of the learned and sagacious Doctors in the temple. At his baptism on the banks of the Jordan, the powers of the world to come vouched the Divinity of his mission. In the Mount of Temptation, he foiled the sagacity of hell, by the defeat of her sovereign! In Cana of Galilee, the elements owned his creative mandate, while water, casting off the immemorial law of its nature, blushed to wine! In a fisher's hovel upon the bank of the lake of Gennesaret, "the mother of Peter's wife" was taught, that disease and death obey his voice! Thirty miles from Capernaum, he spoke, and the "Nobleman's son" in that city, sprang in the same moment from his bed of fever, and was well! The stormy wave of the sea of Galilee—the surging roll of the agitated Tiberius—felt his presence,

and the one was still, while the other became a pavement of adamant under his feet! In the wilderness of Bethsaida, more than twenty thousand heard his voice, and hung upon his lips in breathless expectation, while witnessing the supernatural multiplication of bread and fish in the hand and mouth of the eater! A beggar by the way side, in rags and misery, directs his sightless balls toward the way that he was passing by; stretching his palsied hands and feeling for information, he cries, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me;" and, anon, he chides the unkindness of nature, by pouring the light of Heaven upon the new opening eyes of the blind-born gazer! Listen to that wail in "the house of the ruler." Death had entered and stricken his daughter, the idol of a fond father's, a mother's broken heart. A moan was heard which it was felt earth might not help. But mark that hushed pause, as the trance of grief was broken by the sudden apparition of a stranger, bending in meekness and majesty beside the bed of death! No sooner does he seem to commune with that cold and lifeless form, than the dead mass quickens beneath the winding sheet, and grasping the hand of the God-like stranger, the next moment the shrouded sleeper is weeping upon the bosom of her mother.

A timid, fearful female invalid, diffident of all claim, addressed him not, but, approaching, "touched him" in the crowd, and health-restoring virtue ran through all her frame from the contact! He spoke, and the sea became the mint of a Roman coin, with the image and superscription of Cæsar upon it! His rebuke drove life from the eastern fig tree, and it withered at his will! He said to the "deceased damsel, *Talitha cumi*," and death fled in horror from her bier! He said to his friend Lazarus, four days after death and some time in



his grave, "come forth," and instantly putrefaction began to tremble with the vital spark, and the pulse of life to beat in the tomb! He said to demons, "depart," and anon they fled to rejoin the damned! Concessions from the lips of devils and the mouth of hell, proclaimed him "the Holy One of God." The beaming effulgence of his Deity shone resplendent upon the Mount of Transfiguration! At different times he deranged the functions of vision by simply willing it, and passed through the crowd without being seen! In the numerous processions that attended him at different times, through the cantons of Jewry, those who had never walked "ran before," and those who had never seen "opened their eyes," and the first object they saw was him who gave them sight!

Look at his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Now the disciples and the multitude publicly shouted him as their God and their Redeemer. Now, they seem to have the full contentment of their utmost wishes. Now the whole city is moved. They strew the way with palms and flowers. They proclaim him the long expected heir of David's line and throne. The throng of joyful spectators rent the skies with the exulting acclamation, "Hosanna in the highest." Now, that he had laid the foundations of his kingdom in the hearts of his disciples, and, as the "Lord Jehovah" of prophecy, had taken personal possession of the temple, as the Divinity to whose worship it was consecrated, the streets of Jerusalem, the porticos of the temple, and the bending heavens, resound with the continued hosannas of the multitude; and we are told, that had these been silent, even "the stones" in the sacred pile of the temple, and beneath their feet, would have been endued with voices to proclaim his titles and his grandeur!

And, once more, look at the closing scene of his most eventful life. He met death upon the Cross with no support from earth, save the tears of a few, and amid the insults of thousands. And yet his death was not a defeat. The prodigies of the crucifixion evidenced his Godhead, and threw "the gazer on his knee." The terrific drapery that in that dread hour was thrown around the vast theater of nature, proclaimed the dignity of the sufferer and the grandeur of the sacrifice.

In objection to a part of this evidence, it may be urged, that prophets and apostles wrought miracles as well as Jesus Christ. We reply—to say nothing of other classes of evidence so conclusively sustaining the argument—that in every instance they did it in the name of another and higher power than their own. In every instance they invoked the power, and solemnly obtested the name of God, Messiah or his Spirit. This Jesus Christ never did. All the wonders of his life and ministry were wrought in his own name, without appeal to another ; and the necessary inference is, that it was by an exertion of the inherent energies of Godhead within him. Hence, the objection is without weight or pertinence, and the argument remains, in all its force, as irresistible as it is complete ; and, in the instance of Messiah, the energy that expanded creation is again seen in the suspension of its laws. The Infinite alone is equal to the grandeur of his works and the sublimity of his ministrations.

*The glorified state of Messiah*, which commenced at his resurrection, and was confirmed by his ascension and the subsequent descent of the Holy Spirit, includes properly the whole range of his regal administration. His resurrection not only confirmed the Divinity of his mission, by breaking the bars of death and spoiling princi-

palities and powers, but leaving the grave in deliberate triumph, as he had said he would, he "led captivity captive," and victoriously dragged to his chariot-wheels the conquered millions of death and hell! And when he ascended in jubilant pomp through the immeasurable concave of the Heavens, had earth possessed immortal ears, she might have heard his princely heralds surprise the waiting thrones of eternity with the voice of thunder—"Lift up your heads, ye everlasting doors, and let the King of Glory in." Earth might have asked, in the dramatic language of prophecy, "who is the King of glory?" And Heaven had replied, earth has crucified him—"The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory!" Such was the regal triumph, the stupendous inauguration of the Son of God!

And thus, in his preëxistent, militant, and glorified states and relations, the peculiar and exclusive designations of Godhead belong to Messiah, and acts and works distinctive of Deity are ascribed to him. He is the appearing Jehovah of the antediluvian world—the uncreated acting angel of the patriarchal and Jewish ages—the resident God of the tabernacle and temple, and supreme Head of the Christian Church, reigning amid, and controlling the interests and destinies of, the universe, with a sway steady as the flow of time and enduring as the years of eternity.

II. WE NOTICE HIS HUMILIATION, PASSION AND PRIESTHOOD. "He humbled himself." Although David's "Lord," according to the inspired declaration of the text, wielding the scepter of universal dominion, yet, in his humiliation, he became his depressed, afflicted "Son." The "root" became the "offspring" of David. "The mighty God," "the child born." "The eternal Father," "the Son given." Temptation and suffering

in their multiform aspects and bearings, may be regarded as the great sources of human misery, and to both these our Lord was signally subjected during his humiliation on earth. As our representative, he first humbled himself, and was then re-advanced to the dignity of power and place at God's right hand—resuming that which was his own, *jure naturali*, before his manifestation in the flesh. Unmeasured was his humiliation in becoming man. Still greater in consenting to die. Greater still in dying for man. But, in submitting to a death so inconceivably painful and ignominious as that of the cross, the wonder deepens into such sublimity, that, pausing at its boundary line, we can only repeat that "he humbled himself." Almighty condescension could get no lower!

This is the great crowning mystery of our faith. The established order of Heaven and earth seems to have been inverted. The God of angels, such by right of creation, as already seen, was comforted, amid the sorrows of Gethsemane, by an angel of God. The Judge of the universe was arraigned before the Consistorial seat of Caiaphas, and compelled to bear the engine of his own death and symbol of his infamy. He who had been used to the homage and salutations of Heaven from everlasting, had his hallowed cheek polluted by the guilty lips of hell—those lips which had negotiated the covenant of his murder, and sealed the compact of his death! Those almighty hands that built the stories of the heavens, that flung through immensity its mighty wilderness of suns and systems; and those feet that, treading the sapphire plains of the heavenly world—had the nations for a footstool—were spiked in agony to the cursed tree! His brow that, from all the hoary annals of eternity, had sparkled with im-

mortal majesty, is now shaded beneath a thorny diadem! He, for whom Heaven and earth could not furnish a worthy train, is crucified between two thieves! He, who rolls your rivers, supplies your springs, and bows unbounded ocean in the hollow of his hand, said, "I thirst," and gall was all he got to drink! How measureless this surrender of claim!

He took our nature in a manger—was driven by Herod into Egypt—was obscurely educated in a cottage of Galilee—was tempted by the devil—was derided by his kindred—was traduced by the Jews—persecuted by the priesthood—betrayed by his disciples, and murdered by the world! Here we have the ineffable climax of grandeur and humiliation. Spirit of the Heavens, teach us the import of a mystery so transhuman, and in the center of our conscious being, touch and penetrate the master springs of devout, of adoring emotion!

*His passion.* Deep did he drink of the cup of sorrow, and fearful and prolonged were his sufferings, before being exalted to the throne of equal glory at God's right hand. It would seem that all communication of succor and support from the Divine to the human nature, united in the person of our Lord, was voluntary and occasional, and did not result consecutively from such union. And hence his passion, predicable only of his humanity, and yet deriving virtue and consequence from his Divinity—his pre-existing grandeur, giving glory and dignity to his humiliation. In becoming what he was not, he did not cease to be what he was before. Applying only to his humanity, his passion was a period of mysterious dereliction, of fearful desertion. His soul seemed to be engaged in an ineffable conflict with the displeasure of Heaven. Whatever confidence he had in God his Father, or in the final indissolubility

of his person, it is evident he labored under an utter suspension of heavenly comfort. The passion was a severe and unequalled trial of the natural affections and feelings, as well as moral virtues and sentiments of our Lord, together with a fearful confluence of penal affliction and calamity. It was "the hour and power of darkness" arrived in the plenitude of their horror, the mingled gloom of their blended final visitation.

During the last dreadful conflict, the scales of Almighty justice seemed, for a time, to tremble in fearful equipoise. It was an eventful crisis, because a war of elements infinite. The almighty Hero of the struggle threw himself into the dread appalling breach of a world estranged from God, and the strife of contending destinies shook the pillars on which its amplitude was poised. Nature throughout immensity sympathized with the sufferer, and her avenging ministries rebuked the apathy of earth, as rocks and mountains, uniting with the darkened heavens, broke their eternal silence to do him homage and vindicate his claims.

*His Priesthood.* By the oath of God our Lord was constituted a "Priest forever"—literally an "eternal Priest"—not after the Levitical Institute or Aaronic Priesthood, but upon the anterior Melchisedekan model—after "the order or similitude of Melchisedek." This extraordinary character, a Divinely accredited legal Priest, was, by birth and residence, a Gentile, a Canaanite, and, therefore, without the pale of the Abraham-ic family, or Patriarchal Church. He was, by God's special appointment, both Prince and Priest. In the priestly office he was without predecessor, coadjutor, or successor. No one went before, no one accompanied, and no one followed him. His priesthood was not restricted and provincial as was that of Aaron, but

universal with regard to man. He was "Priest of the most high God" in behalf by right of all men, and in these respects may be resembled to the Great High Priest of the Christian Dispensation.

In the priesthood of Melchisedek we have a most striking prefiguration of the priesthood of Messiah. The world was his birth-right, and he, as a Priest, was the common property of all—whether Abraham or the Canaanite. God's human creation—the world of man—was his home, and all had a right to his altar. He was a priest out of the ordinary course of things, by extraordinary appointment and special provision; and so of Jesus Christ, the great Christian Propitiation for the sins of the world—the unnumbered millions of our kind. Turning to the priestly functions of the Leviticum, we find them distinguished by much external show and secular pomp. Not so the Melchisedekan priesthood, the proper prototype of Messiah's. Its grandeur stood intimately connected with its intrinsic excellence and instituted meaning. The legal import of both was the same, and the final accomplishment of their object, is to be met with in the death and priesthood of the world's Redeemer—the eternal Melchisedek of the Christian system.

III. HIS REGAL DOMINION AND SOVEREIGN RULE. His scepter comprehends "all power in Heaven and in earth." His is a universal sovereignty—a strictly pleni-potentiary administration. It is an investiture involving an entireness of right and amplitude of power, without limit and without control. He has a two-fold claim upon the faith and obedience of the world, he made us and afterward redeemed us. As "God over all," his right to rule is inherent, and he has a derived, but equally well founded right, in view of his Messiahship and "obedience unto death;" on which account, as Mediator, he

is exalted to the regal lieutenancy of Heaven and earth, the supreme administration in the illimitable kingdom of Jehovah.

His regal jurisdiction, the extent of his kingdom, embraces the universe; comprehending the rule he exercises, his reign proper, together with the regions and subjects ruled, whether sought in connection with our world, the highest heavens, the planetary system, the stellar hosts, or hell beneath. He reigns with absolute knowledge, universal presence, almighty power, infinite rectitude, and unlimited authority. This rule regards the world of man especially. He rules by his grace in relation to his people, and by his judicial providence in relation to his enemies. He holds the scepter as well for the destruction of his enemies as for the salvation of his Church and people. Witness Judea, the subversion of its state and polity—the excision of its tribes and families, and yet the salvation of a remnant. Witness the disastrous overthrow of the persecuting powers of the Pagan world, and the preservation of the Church notwithstanding.

The constitution of this kingdom, chartered and confirmed before its actual extension over the face of our world, is the covenant of redemption first announced in Paradise, enlarged upon with Abraham, further unfolded at Sinai, illustrated by prophets, and finally perfected and confirmed by the advent of Messiah. This covenant includes the believing and obedient of all ages and nations—whether before Christ or after Christ, pre-christians or post-christians, children of the circumcision, and the baptized of every lip and every name.

The Jews, the Heathen, the wide world with its teeming population, infernal agency, and the degeneracy of our common nature, the pride of intellect, and the turbu-



lence of passion—these are the enemies and elements in the midst of which Messiah reigns, and every fifty years of his administration, for nearly sixty centuries, has given to heaven or hell, from our planet alone, some five hundred millions of immortals, to live and sing in the one, or sigh and suffer in the other! He holds in his hands the life, happiness and destiny of his subjects. Life and death, blessing and curse, heaven and hell, are all within his gift. His personal rights, as we have seen, are absolute; and the prerogatives of his rule universal and untransferable.

The principles, the interests, the bearings and the results, of truth and piety, these constitute Messiah's empire upon earth; and, from his throne of thrones in Heaven, he will assert and defend, maintain and extend it. His reign mingles splendor and happiness with trial and danger, and combines in one mighty scale the vast extremes of good and evil, as determined by the character of his subjects.

The reign of Messiah is not, as many assume, a mere parenthesis in the Divine administration. Spreading over the entire expanse of crowded immensity, throughout the length and breadth of the universe of God, and comprehending all the circling dependencies of his empire, it goes back to the throne and crown of Jehovah, when the morning stars and "sons of God shouted for joy;" and, embracing every intelligence and every interest—all the forms and all grades of being, actual or possible—it stretches forward interminably, until we lose ourselves amid the infinities of the future, and only know that the templed millions of the blest, in the central dominions of Godhead, find the grandeur of eternity heightened by "the Lamb" being "the light thereof!"

IV. THE MEANS EMPLOYED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND IN ORDER TO THE SUBSEQUENT GLORY OF HIS KINGDOM. And first and principally, as distinctly assumed in the text, The Gospel of the grace of God, addressed to every rank and condition of fallen humanity, together with its corresponding publication. The laws of this kingdom are those of the Gospel and relate principally to the manifestations of the Divine nature, the medium and method of acceptance with Heaven ; and, finally, the laws and rules of morality, the great principles regulating human action. How far the Gospel is entitled to the distinction accorded it in the text, the "rod" or "scepter" of Messiah's strength, we must judge from fact and inference, from its past, present and future probable influence. History will fix attention on the past, observation on the present, and prophecy and analogy on the future.

Appealing to fact and history then, we know not where to begin or how to select. In all time, what nation, not utterly savage, is not debtor to the cause we plead? Where is it the star of his empire has not been seen peering through the gloom of nature's night? Where is it that light has not arisen in darkness, to gild the gloom of earth's horizon, and direct the wanderer home to God? Where is it that salvation's morning is not breaking upon the world, as erst it broke, in bright and calm intelligence, upon the shepherd hills of Bethlehem!

*The present.* Every brief term in the calendar of time, almost every day, adds some new province or kingdom to the widening dominions of the Son of God. No sun rises to track your heavens in splendor, that does not gild some new trophy of his reign. At every short interval the recording angel traces it on the pillars of immortality that the Gospel has conquered another

language of the babbling and lettered earth, and soon it shall pour the salutary streams of light and life through the channels of a thousand dialects! East, West, North and South, through all the zones of earth, the moral midnight mantling the world, is struggling with the coming dawn! Everywhere over the mighty expanse of outspreading nations, light is gleaming and flashing through the firmament of mind, giving direction to the hopes, and shedding its radiance upon the path, of humanity.

*The future.* The vast river of Christian munificence and enterprise, is rolling, in Nile-like grandeur, its many and its mighty tributary streams in every direction. "The handful of corn" is already scattered upon the "tops of the mountains," and its fruit, in succeeding ages, shall wave like the forests of Lebanon, stirred by the breath and undulating in the winds of heaven! The foundations of this kingdom are already laid in the hearts of millions, and the heavenly influence is every hour diffusing itself throughout individual and social man, and it shall successively augment its rapidly accumulating triumphs, until the "obedience of faith" shall become universal, "and all the world be Israel."

It is in this way the future shall repay the mighty debt it owes the past. We will not dwell upon the plans and formula of Christian effort. The Bible, the Book of Books, shall every where operate its intended functions of light and influence—shall be received alike in faith and morals as the great Encyclopedia of man. While coextensively and bearing upon the world's conversion, the Church shall everywhere present the engaging eloquence of a holy life.

In this way, Christianity shall stain the pride of all human glory, and subjugate the world, with all its way-

ward elements, to the sway of Messiah. Crime, with its myriad shapes and shades, shall cease, and men shall live and love, and suffer, as God would have them. The gilded curse of war and blood, shall receive its degraded level in the esteem of nations, and memory, in recounting visions of glory worthy of man, instead of dwelling upon the prowess of the Macedonian madman or the altar of Hannibal—instead of hovering over the victor standard of Scipio Africanus or him of Corsica—shall consecrate its hallowed recollections to the diffusion of “peace upon earth” and demonstrations of “good will to man.”

It is in these aspects and thus viewed, that “the Gospel is the power of God.” Let your eye range along the history of the world, and you will see that for ages, as now, it has been the great gulf-stream of moral influence. Every hour in every direction, its light and power are invading inert resisting masses of mind and feeling, like the electric forces breaking loose from the poles and throwing their corruscations over the fields of heaven and the homes and wastes of earth!

V. THE CHARACTER AND NUMBER OF HIS SUBJECTS. They are his free, his willing people, flourishing amid the “beauties of holiness.” They are represented as willing, voluntary subjects—a people prompt and ready, ardent and impulsive. The Hebrew means “most willing,” “self-devoted,” or rather, “willingness itself.” The concrete is lost in the abstract, and they are said to be “free-will offerings.”

They shall be an attached, devoted, and princely race. All idea of coercion or forceful constraint, beyond conviction and persuasion, is precluded. Although receiving all from an intelligence and benevolence above, they are “willing” and cheerfully active, as self-determining

agents, influenced only by the doctrines of motive—attracted by “the beauties of holiness.”

The most obvious meaning of the third verse—this much abused and shamefully perverted passage—seems to be: Thy people shall be a ready, generous, and devoted people, in the day of thy power; that is, during the Gospel period, the ministration of the Spirit, the reign of the Holy Ghost. The day of Messiah's power, is the entire period of his reign, described in the text. It is the eventful era of his administration, as “Head over all things to the Church.”

The day of his power contrasts with the day of his weakness, and succeeds to that of his humiliation. It is the “lifting up of the head,” after “drinking of the brook in the way.” It is the grand interim between his ascension to the throne of legitimate empire, as Mediator, and the time when “spoiled principalities and powers” shall lie scattered in ruined grandeur at his feet!

The “morning” here, is beautifully represented as the productive maternal source of the dew, and the dew-drops at dawn of day, as the offspring of Aurora, or children of the morning. So Christ is represented as the great source of being and blessing, and we the children of his power and grace. His subjects are especially “the dew of his youth,” and claim affinity with his birth. As the generation of dew connects with the cloud and vapor of morning, so the assumption of our nature by Christ, his becoming an “Infant of days”—“God manifest in the flesh”—laid the foundation of our relation to him as his children.

This fine piece of poetic imagery, however, unequalled in its beauty and force, relates perhaps principally to the number of Messiah's subjects, and seems to intimate that the dew of his progeny shall be as abundant as the dews

proceeding from the bosom of the morning. Messiah shall be born to men, and men in return, born to God, shall repair to his standard in crowds as numerous as drops of morning dew. And, going back to the date of the great proto-promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and forward to the final apocalypse of his reign, who can number them? He only who marshals the dews and rains of heaven. The dew-drops of the morning—the rain of the seasons—the grass of the earth—the stars of heaven—the sands upon the sea-shore—these, are the inspired similitude of their numbers, and the only arithmetic by which we count them!

Already the Church embraces the most improved and improving parts of the world—the skillful in arts and the powerful in arms, the most distinguished in mental attainment and moral worth, the wealthiest and the wisest. And if not satisfied with this, estimate the millions centuplicated of Messiah's subjects, whose pavilions are already planted on the plains of immortality, add to these the millions now enrolled and yet to be mustered among the hosts of God, before the final triumph of Christianity. Let earth during that triumph number but thirty generations, of ten hundred millions each, and then count the throng, and find the place of their rendezvous!

FINALLY: THE TRIUMPH OF MESSIAH IN THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS ENEMIES, AND THE SALVATION OF HIS CHURCH AND PEOPLE. By his enemies, comprehensively, we mean those men and associations of men, whether taken individually or in masses, who counteract the general good of his subjects, and the welfare of administration. These have been invariably defeated or destroyed, in all ages. They have been undermined and circumvented by the force of truth and the progress of opinion, or more fear-

fully overthrown amid the struggles of passion and the explosions of violence. In all time, and wherever found, Messiah has subjected them to curse and rejection, ruin and overthrow.

His enemies of antediluvian memory, for example, were instructed in the principles of the Patriarchal religion. Enoch prophesied, and Noah was a preacher of righteousness among them. The Spirit of Christ visited and strove with them, while shut up in prison, for the coming wrath of the deluge. The long suffering of God waited for them. But they refused to repent. The flood came upon them, and we must leave eternity to tell the rest. Lot and family, doubtless, disseminated a knowledge of the true religion among "the children of the Plain"—the degraded thousands of the doomed Pentapolis—but "their sin came up before God," the thunder and tempest of Heaven dug them all a grave; and, after the lapse of fifty centuries, we look upon the "sea of death," and read the story of its origin, as the monument and epitaph of "the sin of Sodom" and cities of the Plain! The Genius of Prophecy, foreseeing the future idolatry and degradation of the nations of Canaan, placed them under the curse and ban of the Almighty, and their memorial perished from among men. The confederation of kings, headed by Chedorlaomer, that attempted the overthrow of the Patriarchal Church in the Plain of Jordan, were entombed in death, amid the horrors of a universal slaughter. Egypt and Tyre, Babylon and Ninevah, Jerusalem and Rome, remain, to this day, imperishable memorials of the wrath of Heaven. Look at the Jews—cursed, scathed and scattered, "a nation peeled and trodden down," crushed and trampled beneath the insulting hoof of an unfeeling world. Look at "the seven churches of Asia," and the cities in which they were found—their noiseless

streets, hymnless temples, and desolate altars. Look at Herod, Pilate, Julian, Maximian, Valerius, and the principal actors in the Neronian and Dioclesian persecutions of the Church—dark, gloomy and ghostly, are all our recollections of their madness.

Look at the first grand Italian Apostasy. Its progress was in character with its inception. Early in the fourth century, the tide of Imperial splendor, set in its favor under Constantine, soon crowded the Church, not with Christian converts, but with interested Pagan proselytes, and the transition was found at once easy and natural, from the worship of idols and the corresponding rites of Polytheism out of the Church, to the adoration of images, the deification of relics, and other kindred observances within ; and thus, the Imperial State-Church, succeeding to the primitive pattern, was soon defaced and degraded by abominations that distanced the enormities of the mythology, but late renounced in favor of the badge and baptism of a faith but little understood, and without practical influence upon the heart or life. In such a state of things, the corruption of the Church proceeded apace. Nor was it long until the world was every where sunk in the most degrading mental vassalage ; and, under the withering control of a most seductive and yet appalling despotism, ignorance and stupidity, fraud and cunning, were canonized, and worth and piety transferred from the cross and scaffold to their reward and crown in Heaven.

The arts and appliances of auricular confession and priestly domination, were, by a ready and facile commutation, substituted for the weightier interests of truth and piety. The Bible, as the sole charter of man's salvation, and the only rule of faith and action, superceded by the prevailing corruptions, was doomed to decay and disuse,



in the vaults of the Monastery, the dungeons of the Abbey, and dormitories of the dead. An ambitious and reprobate Priesthood, sought the road to preferment, power, and exclusive sway over the conscience and resources of Christendom, by all the debasing means and arts of fraud, force and simony, until finally a lawless, God-forsaken Pontificate, assumes infallibility without defect, and claims supremacy beyond control! The temple became the sanctuary of abuse, and the priest the sentinel of crime.

This state of things, calling so loudly for judgment and correction, continued to grow worse and worse, both as regards its extension and inveteracy, until the Reformers of the sixteenth century, in the true spirit of their mission, each arraying himself for the combat, as if an angel fought at his side, leveled the artillery of Heaven against the whole empire of this stupendous imposture, and saw the battlements of anti-Christ, and the entrenchments of his vassal millions, one after another, sinking before the victorious arms of truth and reason. The power of the Apostasy was broken, and its final destruction began to connect itself with the regular operation of cause and effect.

Look at the Arabian imposture. It seems to have been permitted only as a scourge for the correction of other evils. It is already fast working out its own evil destiny, and rapidly hastening to ruin; and, in due time, its predicted overthrow shall be realized on the part of the Church, and the ruthless domination of Mohammedan tyranny and Moslem fanaticism, now extending not only from Egypt to Khorassan, and from Bagdad to Belgrade, as a thousand years ago, but over the fairest portions of Europe, Asia and Africa, shall be triumphantly destroyed. The conquests of the Gospel shall return to the

East. Freedom and glory shall revisit the seats of primeval inspiration. Lost Judea shall be vocal with the hum of rejoicing millions. The last lingering Arab—the only remaining son of Ishmael—shall hail Messiah's scepter, or resist his curse in vain; and the once grand platform of the Oriental world, shall again become the theater of the most eventful destinies of man.

Look at the insane fanaticism of Infidelity, in the instance of the God-rejecting republic, France, at the close of the last century. Look at a gallant and powerful people—a highly civilized, a proud and lettered nation—throwing down the gauntlet of defiance at the foot of the throne of God, and boldly waving, as the flag of national distinction, the standard of atheism before his face! Look at millions, shrewd, artful, and malignant, leagued and banded in the shape of turbulent propagandists, for the extermination of all religion. Look at prince and subaltern, in this work of death—encyclopedist and pamphleteer, philosopher and demagogue, uniting in giving organic structure and form to impiety, elevating unbelief to the dignity of a science, and reducing blasphemy to a trade!

Of the work of judgment, in the progress and sequel of this terrible crusade, we need not tell you. The principal actors sunk, one and all, as if a glance from God had withered up their being. The minister of vengeance seems to have blasted their gaze with his accusing presence, and they perished before the rebuke of him in whose eye empire is a speck and man an atom! All this we have seen, and yet we fear the reckoning is but commenced, and that the future will exact still more fearful atonement.

Such has been, and such will continue to be, Messiah's treatment of his enemies. While, on the other

hand, his true and faithful subjects, as heretofore, shall always prosper. Under whatever severity of trial, they have always triumphed.

All possible means of oppression and torture, have been resorted to without effect. The ax, the cross, the stake, the fire, the amphitheater, and decapitation—these only threw a resplendent halo of glory around the ascending martyr. The invisible future charmed his vision, and the unwithering freshness of immortal joys animated the triumphant expectant. Every infernal project concerted to extinguish the hopes and being of the true Church of Christ, only amplified the sphere and augmented the number of her triumphs. The executioner beheaded one Christian, and ten new believers hallowed the place of death. A second was transferred from the flames to Heaven, and a multitude was present to consecrate the scene. A third sprang from the rack to a throne, and the convinced executioner avenged his death by following the example of his life! This state of things has distinguished the past. An analogous state of things now exists. And a corresponding train of successive events is foretold upon the faithful page of prophecy.

The Gospel is already published in more than two hundred languages of the vocal and reading earth. Every where, from sunrise to the ocean of the West, the nations of Paganism are beginning to share its light. The idolator of the Ganges, and the savage of the Pacific—the Tungusian wanderer beneath the Torrid Zone, and the shivering Icelander, amid his banks and bergs of eternal ice and snow—have caught the radiance of Redemption's Star, and, with tears of joy, are hastening to the Cross.

Spreading out the map of the world before you, and

from its Pagan, turning to its anti-christian divisions, you see the once Imperial Mother of Christendom's abominations, with impotent resistance, gradually relaxing her lawless usurpation of right, human and divine. Convulsed by earthquake change, fear is driving her to reforms and concessions, which shame and virtue urged upon her, in vain, for more than a thousand years. Slowly, but certainly, her leprous impurity is working out its own retribution, and the world's last gaze upon the "mother of harlots," shall leave her prostrate before the refulgent chastity of the bride of Christ!

The Greek Church, too, is slowly awaking from the torpor of ages, and, although destitute of primitive vitality, and shorn of her grandeur under the Byzantine Cæsars, she is still seen in her primeval homestead, Greece and its Isles, in her numerous Oriental Patriarchates, and throughout the Imperial Czardom of the Russias, gradually emerging from a sea of dreams and darkness tumultuous, into liberty, light, and life.

The imposture of Mecca, whose baptism is blood, and its eucharist slaughter, and whose gigantic form so long appalled and darkened the Eastern world, is fast nodding to its fall; and soon the crescent, no longer beaming upon the standard of bandit legions, shall be seen sinking beneath a horizon of oblivion, blood, and death. Instead of the Saracen minaret, the banner of the Cross shall float on the hill of Calvary, and throw the shadow of its folds over the tomb of the Redeemer and the homaged birth-scene of the world's redemption.

The great militant struggle we have sketched, is even now in a state of decisive evolution, and, in every direction, the advance of Messiah, resistless as the volitions of Godhead, is trenching upon the kingdom of

darkness. While we address you, disciplined and formidable columns, under the banners of Divine truth, are bearing down, with invincible steadiness, upon the territories of sin and death. Christianity, with antagonist aggressive power, is everywhere contesting the dominion of the human mind, by irresistible appeals to all the principles and passions circling within the vast vortex of human life, and on which character and destiny are made to turn for time and eternity.

On the one hand, we see the proud colossal forms of impiety and unbelief crumbling beneath her assaults; and, on the other, the Church in deep travail with the problem of reversion to primitive simplicity, and how she shall best realize the predicted amplitude of the coming triumph awaiting her, when her conquests shall be reckoned by degrees of latitude and longitude, and not, as now, by leagues and miles and tongues and tribes!

Finally. In glancing at the concluding fortunes, the last destinies of the Church upon earth, whether amid the shock of Apocalyptic revolution, or the bright and bloodless triumphs of Messiah's reign, robed in the majesty of moral dominion, and resplendent in the drapery of celestial beauty, the Church is seen passing through successive eras of improvement and perfection, each glowing with increasing splendor, until the bursting echoes of a world renewed, borne off upon the gale and brought up upon the breeze, shall revive the recollection, and realize the burden, of the hymn of Bethlehem—for the shoutings of the last harvest shall be the song that sowed the seed, "Glory to God in the highest!" Thought can go no further—emotion rise no higher. It is the last effort of language. The richest utterance of earth. And for all, with which God has blest

us, this acclaim is the most cherished return—and as blessing is the theme, so “glory” is the song! We cannot explain the more than thrilling, the rapture kindling, epithet. It comprehends the illimitable good within the gift of the universal God, together with the enlarged capacity of man to enjoy and publish it! Would to Heaven we better understood the meaning of the term! Would to God its sacred significance might make every utterer more a Christian! Would to God we could all unite and send it back to Heaven, as angels brought it down! Would to God, that, over earth and sky, on all the paths of sound, we could hear it rolling, like the full-toned thunder of Heaven, pealing in grand harmony, throughout all its camps, its courts, and its quarters!

## SERMON V.

DIVINE MERCY REJECTED—THE GROUND AND REASON OF  
PUNISHMENT.

“WISDOM crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my spirit upon you. I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.”—Prov. i, 20—32.

MAN, without whom and whose relations the Gospel would be unmeaning, in whatever point of view we contemplate him, is the most singularly constituted, as well as strangely and unaccountably endowed, being ever presented to the gaze of our astonishment. His relations to the past, his connection with the future, his coexistence and community with general nature, and all about him, conspire in rendering the philosophy of his being the true focal point of all human study, and his destiny the most momentous disclosure within the gift of science or Revelation. Whatever, therefore, relates

to the one or the other, must be matter of direct and impressive interest with every one who is not an outcast from the feelings of virtue and the enlightened impulses of humanity.

The subject we have chosen for your improvement, on the present occasion, is one of fearful and stirring interest. In its application, it is strictly universal and unconfined; and the humblest, as well as the most exalted, tenant of this earthly scene, is addressed and appealed to. It is, indeed, characteristic of the whole system of Divine Revelation, that it announces an ever-present, all-comprehending goodness—regarding the weak and the small as truly and benignly as the mighty and the massive, and proclaiming the watchful, patient condescension of Almighty greatness, as alike supplying the wants, and bearing the infirmities, of all. And not only disclosing the Divine nature as thus illimitable in goodness, but as being really and truly, at the same time, the Almighty foe of evil—of all sin and moral disorder throughout the universe—and ordaining, accordingly, a fixed retributive relation, and especially in the instance of man, between the future and the past.

In applying these preliminary truths to man, in his present dependent and related state, WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE TENDER OF HAPPINESS, MADE IN THE TEXT, TO THE VICIOUS AND UNREGENERATE. Man is born to the lofty ambition of an infinite good, and is never satisfied, never at rest, until he finds it. Happiness is his being's end and aim, and the pursuit of it, unless necessity intervene to prevent, will never be intermitted until he meets with something to suit and fill the immortal longings of the mind. Equally true is it, as we are taught both by nature and Revelation, that man is the object, not



merely of the Divine regard in general terms, but of Heaven's tender and special predilection, and that to Heaven alone, in every final sense, man should look for happiness. Thither, for this purpose and at all times, he should feel himself hurried by a rapid and irresistible movement.

If all that this world calls good and great, or regards as most essential, could make man happy, or give him contentment, the author of the text would certainly have been the happiest, the most contented of men. The son of a king swaying no common scepter, his earlier days were passed and associations formed, amid the splendor and attractions of a court. Long before the lesson of the text was penned, he had been seated in regal affluence upon the throne of ancient Israel. All that could delight or charm—all that could amuse or interest—all that could thrill the heart with rapture, or elevate the mind with the glow of ambition—would seem to have been his. He had explored every accessible field of knowledge, and every region of science, then known to man. Nature from her own lips had taught him her lessons, and even mysteries. History and study had made him familiar with the lore of the past, the wisdom of ages.

In emulous rivalry, philosophy and poetry sought to engage his heart and secure his influence. Authority and reputation were his, beyond all ordinary example. Wealth and empire were found at his feet, and ministered to his wishes. The luxuries of the East, from Babylon to Central Ethiopia, supplied his table and banquet. Joy and festivity, with all their appurtenant regalia, reigned in his palace and the circle of his attendants. Beauty too, as it bloomed amid his own Judean hills, upon the banks of the Nile and in the spice-groves of Sheba, brought him the tribute, which naught but beauty could

bring; the rose, with mystic significance, entwined with the lily; and love, with all the enchantment of its witching blandishments, became the banner of the envied monarch. Kings, queens, courts and nations, were ambitious of his favor—became the heralds of his fame, and proved true to the more than regal glory of Solomon!

Without any interruption for a long term of years, amid every alternation of external circumstances, the cup of enjoyment was brimming before him. Ever and anon, he approached and sought the heart's content in quaffing draughts deep and long—repeating the experiment again and again, and renewing the trial, as often as inclination or languor suggested. And yet he pronounced all to be “vanity;” and, finally, in the vehemence of disappointed ardor of search, humbled by experience and guided by inspiration, he reduplicates the charge—“vanity of vanities—vanity of vanities, all is vanity!” and concludes this grand lesson of instruction to man, by directing our attention to the sublime objects and unwasting treasures of revealed Religion, under the personification of Wisdom extending the free scepter of generous invitation to every human being in pursuit of happiness.

*Of this tender, assuming the truth of Revelation, we remark, First, it is sincere and credible, with regard to every human being. It is made by the God of truth and sincerity, in the language of truth and soberness. The very idea that God would make a faithless, mock tender of happiness to his own intellectual offspring, the intelligent creatures he has made, is too degrading, too undeifying, to obtain in the creed of any one who wishes to love and reverence the Creator.*

That God should make such an offer as this—an offer not intended to secure the salvation of man—is not only

infinitely improbable, but, in view of all we know of him, absolutely impossible. It would amount to an impeachment, and the direct dishonor of every one of his perfections, especially his holiness, justice, and goodness. It would dishonor his holiness, for there would be the absence of every thing like truth, and the reality of purposed deception, in the tender. It would stain his justice with dishonor, inasmuch as, upon this hypothesis, his word inspires hope, while every one of his purposes is big and burning with vengeance. He invites the sinner to his embrace and fellowship, at the same time that he is preparing for him the killing throes of eternal anguish, as the issue of his own appointment!

If the tender in the text be not sincere, instead of goodness or any thing like it, every act of assumed, apparent kindness, is the most refined, unmingled cruelty—the cruelty of a being whose want of mercy unfeelingly mocks our need of it—for it offers salvation in word, to those who, in deed and purpose, are already beyond the reach of it. Such views of the character of God, we are obliged to think, are worse than none, and to suppose them true, impossible—except under the perverting influence of the most blind and determined error. The sincerity and credibility of the tender, therefore, are every way entitled to the undoubting trust and confidence of those addressed.

*We remark further of this tender, that it is earnest and urgently impressive.* Jehovah is not only sincere, but plainly and deeply in earnest. If we doubt or deny this, we discredit the promises, the threatenings, the oath and the expostulations, of Heaven; all of which attest the deep and adorable solicitude of the God and Father of all, on the subject of human salvation. If in all these, Jehovah has not been sincere and in earnest, to the letter of his

assurances, he has treated man, so far as we can see, disingenuously, and with intention to deceive; by holding up to his expectations a beacon of hope, while the only radiance that gilded his path was intended to light him to ruin and lead him to hell!

If God be not in earnest, why do we read, and in cruel mockery hear, of his importunate "zeal"—his "tender mercies"—the yearnings of his "heart"—his "delighting in mercy"—his "relentings" kindled—and, in the strong language of inspired imagery, the "soundings of his bowels"?

Moreover, aware that man would not credit his word under ordinary circumstances of statement and asseveration, and by strange distortion would teach and preach, that he so delighted in the death of man as to consign uncreated as well as unborn millions to a perdition of his own choosing, he resists the ungrateful, the little less than blasphemous, imputation—deliberately swearing by the grandeur of the highest and greatest, and the solemnity of his own eternal throne, that he wills the death of none, but prefers the life, and has provided for the happiness, of all.

*This tender, accordingly, is universal and irrespective.* And the same evidence which proves the sincerity and solicitude of Heaven in the offer of salvation to one, demonstrates the truth and earnestness of God in the offer of salvation to all. If any one is precluded, we affirm, what all must see, that the recognition of such preclusion is not in the Bible. And who, we certainly may presume to ask, has made the discovery of some unrevealed book of fate, or sealed volume of destiny, containing the record? How, or by whom, has the truth of God in his Word been made of "none effect," by what is not there!

That God would offer salvation to those who, by express and eternal statute, are directly and forever excluded his mercy, is an inconsistency, a felt absurdity, that can never be reconciled by human or heavenly skill, without annihilating the essential distinctions between truth and falsehood and throwing down all the moral barriers between Heaven and hell. If "God cannot lie," every man has an available chance for salvation. If every man have not such chance, then the oath of the Creator is less veritable than the word of the creature, and the truth of his sayings, in every instance, must depend upon the superinduction and character of extrinsic proof.

The dark, gloomy, iron-hearted exclusive in religion, claiming a monopoly of Heaven's friendship for himself and party, may assault and belabor you with his syllogisms and demonstrations, to prove an intrinsic, eternal disqualification on the part of some, for the favor and approval of Heaven; but, to every dream or code of reprobation, not based upon the rejection of the Gospel, as a dispensation of mercy, the Bible opposes the most explicit denial of its truth, and the oath of God authenticates the imputation.

Happiness, therefore, immortal as the soul, and coextensive with the range of its consciousness, is the offered heritage of every child of man; and the happiness thus offered, is preëminently the supreme good of humanity, and the true wealth that, before every other, life should garner in its prime.

*This tender, further, is varied, without ambiguity in its terms.* Jesus Christ approaches you, as the great teacher and only Savior, with his light, his Word and his Spirit, and all the salient appliances of the gracious Evangelical economy under which we live. Heaven essays your conversion in the language of unquestioned authority—of

moral appeal—of urgent persuasion, and the most fearful denunciation. Every motive is pressed, every experiment applied. Heaven has no glories that are not unfolded, and hell no fires that are not kindled, to excite your hopes and alarm your fears, rouse you to action, and induce your surrender. Every redeeming element, every recuperative energy of your moral nature, is forcibly addressed and vigilantly appealed to. Naught but compulsion is forborne.

If it be true, as pithily remarked by one of the few Christian poets in our language or literature, that “Heaven but persuades,” while “almighty man decrees”—that man is indeed “the maker of immortal fates”—that he “falls by man, if finally he falls;” how equally and fearfully true is it, that should man fall, the provisions of God’s counsel and covenant in his behalf, shall be inscribed upon the majestic ruin, and that he shall sink to the hell he would not shun, with the rainbow of mercy gilding his vision, and the waters of salvation purling in his ears!

*This tender is special and elaborate, in relation to the motives and interests appealed to.* It is not only full and explicit, as it regards the all-pervading goodness of God, in view of your happiness, but equally in announcing your enchainment beneath his hand, for the purposes of punishment, should you reject this provision. The lines of this tender or invitation, have not only “gone out into all the world,” destined, like the equatorial, to girt the globe—but the most vehement reprehension and denunciation are appealed to, as equally necessary to accomplish the object had in view. And, accordingly, not only is the grace of God represented as universal and without limit in provision and proposal, but his severity challenges our fears, in the language of grave and

startling reproof, the most lofty and God-like upbraiding!

The dispensation under which we live, is rife alike with wisdom and warning. Infinite goodness has never slumbered a moment over the vast interest—the all-comprehending design—of bringing the scattered tribes of the faith, and “sinners of the Gentiles,” to the arms of mercy and numbering them with the family of God. But although the Gospel of God is thus bright and benign, to all who do not reject it; yet, to those who do, it is the herald of wrath in the last, not less than of love in the first, instance. We have here a junction of seemingly incongruous elements, goodness and severity, the mercy, and the holiness of God.

Nor is this strange or at all incredible; we meet with a similar exhibition of counteractive elements and antagonist impulses, throughout the economy of universal being, and their presence here need not surprise us. These principles lay the deep foundation of the vast superstructure of Nature, Providence and Grace. They constitute the true power of equilibrium in the intellectual and physical universe, and should be looked upon, in fact, the one as a productive, and the other as a conservative principle.

*But to return. This tender is fearful and momentous, in view of the hazards it involves.* Admonitions are upon you, uttered by the voice, written by the finger, and borne by the messengers, of God. And if that voice cannot be the pander of falsehood, that finger and those messengers cannot err nor yet deceive, God intends the final happiness of all who do not destroy themselves.

If it be true, that inexorable purpose on the part of Deity renders all the actions of our lives necessary and unavoidable, and man *ex necessitate* the victim of inevi-

table sequences over which he has no control—then, whenever you are called upon to reform, or be what you are not, the majesty of Heaven is seen sporting with the wretchedness of man. We cast the bare thought from us with abhorrence, as one with which we can never make friends.

It was not unkindness or unwillingness in God to save, but the sin and rebellion of man, that sunk the depths and kindled the flames of the retributive future pictured in the text. God has kindly, imploringly proposed to immortalize his goodness, in the recovery and salvation of every one of us. He calls to repentance and prayer, and proffers pardon and grace. He proclaims to all an original identity of interest in the Cross of Christ—a joint inheritance of Heavenly mercy; and thus accredited by promise, and assured by invitation, he tenders us confidence in himself, too strong for despair, and hope victorious over tears and death.

And yet how few, comparatively, accept this tender? Life's ever-shifting drama proves more attractive. Excited and fevered by its vanities and trifles, engrossed by other and adverse interests, and continually drugged with the irreflection of frivolity and skepticism, the tender in the text is looked upon as an extra-prudential or entirely expletive concern, which may or may not be attended to, as taste or prepossession may suggest. And hence the fearful issues to which the text directs attention.

II. HAVING GLANCED AT THE FACT, LET US ATTEMPT TO ACCOUNT FOR THE REJECTION OF THIS TENDER. We are, indeed, in veritable sadness, called upon to weep as we confess that this rejection is but too common and general. Millions, everywhere, throng the frequented haunts of vice and folly, while Life's neglected path shows, here



and there, a traveler. If not seen—if not constantly in our eye—could it be believed !

At the behest of Him whose claims we urge, “Maz-zaroth minds his seasons,” and “Arcturus guides his suns”—Nature, in all her vastness, steadily pursues her course ; but, when the Maker of man asks but the tribute of his affections, the homage of his heart, his children—unaccountable fatuity !—deny him the charity ! Such is the cold neglect, the Heaven-defrauding ingratitude of man ; such his ever-asking and yet never-sated appetite for crime. Heaven, it would seem, has no blessings good enough for him—no evil in store of which he stands in awe.

*And as a first and fruitful source of this rejection, we ask attention to the idolatrous love of things present.* With hopes, and fears, and aspirings, that relate to the invisible and the distant, man madly clings to what is seen and is held only by the tenure of the passing moment. With a kind of Epicurean morality, or rather madness, he constantly betrays his devotion to the good of the present hour, and turns from the, to him, dark and ebon hues of the remote and eventful future.

The grander objects of human hope and human intellect are overlooked, and the pupil of earth’s adversities is seen, strangely seen, hugging the fleeting nothings of an idiot-dream, with the most perilous self-security. This world’s imposing wares and gilded haberdashery, are to him of more value, than the imperishable riches of ever-during glory ; and that dread Being, who has thunders to crush and lightnings to scorch, and all the fearful elements and agencies of death and hell to punish his enemies, is less feared than the stupid derision or withheld patronage of, it may be, some boon companion in vice or favorite fool of fortune.

One here is the representative of all, and they are seen clinging to a sinking world with agonizing grasp, until, finally, they sink in death, an "abhorring" to all intelligence, and loaded with the increased curses of incalculable wretchedness. God, who made us, and will judge us!—what folly!—how utter the madness! Deluded thousands, self-misunderstood millions, are seen scrambling, snatching, and hoarding, in the vast stubble-field of this nether world, *that* on which, as an exclusive boon, immortality would starve to death!

This world has never been trusted as a source of happiness, without becoming a bootless cheat. Thus viewed, it is, at best, a paradise of brambles and thorns—an Eden of briars and thistles. In proof, you need only look at the mere man of the world—the thorough, purposed devotee of Mammon—isolated upon a solitary fragment of the universe, destined to perish, and yet grasping the perishable—without any warrant of help or hope from God—with no Bible but his ledger—no religion, save the philosophy of profit and loss—knowing no creed or code in morals, except to think of what he likes, and then trying to like what he thinks!

*Another cause of this rejection, will be found in dissipation of thought, as leading to a vicious life.* The worldly-minded million, the mass of our kind, seldom think of God and the moral relations of their nature. Heaven has epitomized the history of unnumbered millions, during a term of sixty centuries, in a single sentence—"God is not in all their thoughts!" The studied exclusion of serious thought and the seductions of unreflecting levity, are but too often successful in precluding the weighty and awful images and impressions of death and duty, heaven and hell.

The temper and habit, the vice of inconsideration, we

are now deploring, boasts the ruin of uncounted millions, and has so fearfully multiplied its victims, as to make moral goodness and Christian virtue sadly scarce on earth. The truth is languidly received, if at all, amid the senseless parade and seductive panorama of this world's temptations and vanities. Look at the almost imperceptible gradations by which they are beguiled to the verge of the precipice! Look at the children of folly—worshippers in the temple of earth's lying vanities—some, busy and bustling, hoarding wealth and accumulating the spoils of luxury; others, grasping with anxious reach at the air-blown bubble of fame; and others again, in the bosom of vacancy at home in the day, and at night sallying forth to the polluted revel or empty pageant, and, with a zeal shaming more worthy worshippers, pushing their maddened avidity for dissipation into the blush and beams of the returning day! Principle is prostrate, virtue in weeds, and vice claims unbridled license in all the details of a life without hope and without God. Serious thought and sober reflection, may occasionally enter the mind, and even reach the heart, but they remain not: they only make a kind of thoroughfare there, are entertained transiently, and then dismissed.

The history of one day—of one week—is the history of every day, of every week; and each is only redeemed by offering to God the wretched wanderings of a mind stultified and debased by the never-ending worship of the world—an insane idolatry of the gross, the palpable, and the sensual. The inevitable result of this state of things, is to darken and debilitate the understanding, not less than to dull and obtund all moral feeling. It renders you, at once, not only feeble and abortive in intellect, but low and odious in propensity, and, of course, hateful in character. Nor is there any end to the evil. Its tendency

is to accumulation. It is a salt-stream, every draught from which but augments your thirst for more. And, accordingly, of all the paths that lead to hell, those of dissipation are, perhaps, the most thronged and beaten, although none more certainly will guide you thither.

Would we could so present the subject, as to have it felt, as well as understood—felt, as some one says, not only “in the blood,” as in the ordinary excitements of passion, but “along the heart,” and amid the depths of its profounder emotions. What is life thus spent, but a huge, senseless vanity-fair, while a kind of conventional insanity, morbidly avid of pleasure and excitement, becomes the reigning divinity of the scene.

And yet we should insult these children of dissipation, did we fail, forsooth, to defer to the occasional exhibition of their religious opinions and feelings! Some vague general impressions, the result of accident or circumstances, and at best a mere parenthesis in the current of thought and feeling, are quoted and obtruded upon our notice, with the utmost assurance and complacency—although the practical effect might only remind one of a stray sunbeam finding its way into a cave of bats, and there working transformations you can readily imagine without any help from us! Such intellectual trifling, and playing the amateur, if not the fool, with the high moral interests of our nature, may do to quiet fear and repress apprehension in the children of ungodliness, but cannot possibly avail them in the hour of extremity or the day of final trial. If you would dissolve the death-spell of their self-security, and throw them upon the Cross of Christ for the hope of recovery—the truth of God and the appeals of the Gospel pressed upon them, must reach and strike them so as to break every bone in the soul!

*The next cause we notice, is pride of understanding.* Humility and self-denial are essential to Christian character. They are of the essence of religion in every subjective sense. The Gospel publishes, with a thousand organs, that the great edifice of Christian salvation can only be reared upon the wreck of our crucified nature. But the haughty intellect, the pigmy understanding, the dwarfish conception, of this world's philosopher, flatterer, or fondling, each proudly erects itself into a barrier against all the claims of Heaven, and, reckless of his immortal doom, glides on his way to death and hell, as if made for no other purpose and destined to spend eternity amid its outcasts.

The humility at which we have glanced, is a proper estimate of ourselves, and the transfer of our regards from the objects of self-love to the supreme excellence centering and terminating in things eternal, especially the high moral relations existing between God and man, and the eventful issues they desiderate. In true humility there is nothing inconsistent with the high-minded worth and dignified bearing so generally regarded as elements of human greatness. It comports and falls in with all the nobler and aspiring attributes of our intellectual and moral nature. It is the great regulator—the grand principle of equilibrium among them all. It is the mystic zone, binding in union the whole constellation of the graces and virtues. So far from rejecting, it improves upon all the more common and attractive virtues of good character: the prudence of Ulysses—the moderation of Scipio—the firmness of Palemon—the wisdom of Socrates. It gathers a halo of chastened, abiding glory around the courage of Paul, the energy of Peter, and the charity of John.

Pride of understanding, as now distinctively viewed,

is the opposite of humility, and has given rise to a very large proportion, at least, of all the controversy, quarrel, and litigation, by which the world has been divided into innumerable belligerent antagonist sections and factions. It has been, paradoxical as it may appear, the great patron of ignorance—the legitimate source of nearly all the debasing systems and inventions of quackery and empiricism, in whatever department of inquiry or pretension. And, as an elementary principle of crime, it has contributed, without limit, to the prevalence of infidelity and irreligion. The understanding is the great presiding attribute of our nature, and when, by any fatal misdirection, it refuses deference and submission to the will and laws of Heaven, the inevitable result is a vicious life. In the balance of the understanding thus perverted, all is wrong, or without interest, except self. The evil extends itself illimitably, seating vice, in a thousand forms, upon altars and thrones, and, through the long vista of ages, offering it the incense of deluded nations.

*Another cause, is indifference of feeling—insensibility.* The rejectors of this tender, refuse, or fail to see, through any other medium, or by means of any other optics, than those of passion and interest. The gulf is before them, but self-delusion covers the approach to it with the deceptive hues and inviting aspect of hope and fancy. They sit down in security and rise up to play. They repeat the process and experiment as occasion may offer or inclination suggest. This is, indeed, a fearful venture—a most dangerous hazard. It is the deceitful security of a calm on the bosom of ocean, while the insensible progress of the current draws the vessel to the gulf and gives it to the eddying deep!

Indifference of feeling, with regard to our moral re-

lations, follows pride of understanding—want of humility—in necessary sequence. Reject the truth and you will become indifferent to it. Religion will address and assault you in vain. The Bible opens its treasures and throws down at your feet the hopes and hazards of eternity, but it is without effect. The man of indifference, in relation to his eternal interests, courts the influence and clings to the demon of insensibility as his only resource—the guardian angel of his being. His heart is a pathless, irreclaimable desert, where God and good are forgotten and forbidden. What at first was partial, becomes, in time, a total atrophy of feeling, and ends in the heart's utter callousness and moral ossification.

This indifference, if not arrested, will imperceptibly terminate in utter obduracy, and blight, with final curse, the whole summer of the soul; and a lethargy that thus began in indifference will end in death. No means will avail to save you. Even the light of truth and Heaven, will fall powerless upon the cold dial of the heart. The rejection of Heaven becomes the choice of hell; and, you will find, that, as your life has been a lie, so your death will be a cheat even to yourselves. Such is the foredoomed conclusion of your career as the children of vice. Whether storm or calm attend your course, shipwreck finally will be sure to end it.

*Impatience of moral restraint, is among the impulses to evil, and leads to the rejection of which we are speaking.* If we except the strictly virtuous and self-denying, how impatient are the children of men of moral restraint of whatever kind. Rarely and reluctantly are they found treading the rigorous path of repentance and amendment, in a timely and hopeful return to God. They revolt from truth and duty as too restrictive of human

passion. The idea of an inexorable devotion of themselves to God and religion, amid the dissipations and distractions of life, proves utterly revolting to their peering and ambitious passions and projects. The present must be agreeable and saturnian, be the future never so fatal and disastrous. Life must be whiled away in reveling and mirth, although eternity be told in sighs and spent in groans. They resolve to move in a circle of gay and reckless companionship here, although hereafter they should be reduced to exclusive intercourse with the devil and his angels.

Now they reject the Gospel and vilely palter with truth and duty—not recollecting, it may be, that they are doomed to give everlasting evidence of their importance hereafter. Now they idly saunter upon the brink of the abyss, and gaze, with mingled emotions of curiosity and indifference, upon its rippled and varied surface, gay and grateful with sunbeam and shadow; but what know they of the movements of the deep, or what assures them that the tempest and thunder of its rage will have a distant aim instead of reaching them!

*Determined impiety should also, perhaps, be more distinctly noticed.* The height, the summit, of impiety, is not reached at once. The first essays of vice and folly are timid and misgiving. Gradually, however, they acquire a steadier step and firmer nerve. As sin advances, hesitation is overcome, and its movements and excesses increase in boldness, until it finally denies to Heaven the right of obedience, and claims prerogative to act at will. It is practically assumed, that “he who made the eye doth not see—he who formed the ear doth not hear.” Gratification asks for the rein and indulgence slackens it.



All restraint is set at naught, and a fiendish bravery is acquired in the commission of crime of every hue and size. Some of its myriad forms bear the signature of custom and fashion—others are without name or recital. Some have the countenance of a world estranged from God, and others no place even in the calendar of fiends. It is not, however, any part of our purpose to attend, in detail, either to the history or anatomy of crime—what we propose, is to fix attention upon the fact, that, among the myriad multitudinous sins and obliquities of our nature, but one excludes from the hope of reconciliation with Heaven, and this is, *the rejection of the tender* in the text. And where this charge attaches, all will be found involved in the condemnation it announces; and, although darkly and unnoticed, their doom, not less certainly, is steadily nearing in the distance!

*Avowed indifference, and infidelity in principle and practice.* This is the final step in crime—the last term of moral debasement. The infidel outcast avows his right to live as he pleases, and refuses, boldly refuses, any longer to discount his life and character with Heaven. He glories in unbounded latitude to sin, and dissolves, at once, all connection with a virtuous universe. His principles, if we would account for them in the light of Revelation, derive their currency from hell. His practices, viewed in the same light, bear its image, and thither his God-forsaken feet are rapidly tending!

At the feet, and before the face of his Maker, he has thrown the gantlet and waves the standard of defiance. Swayed by the counsel of the ungodly, he is fast hastening to the bosom of a bourn from whence there has been but one courier—the “smoke of the torment” of those who were left behind!

These truths may be despised and rejected now, but the last hours of the vicious and impenitent will avenge them as more important than all beside. Beset and periled in the very center of the dark Serbonnian bog of unbelief, they will find, too late, that no causeway has been thrown across it! Encompassed by gloom and dismay, as by an atmosphere—the curse of one part of their kind, and the scorn of the rest—girt with a hastening and terrible doom—reckless, joyless, aimless—the shadows of doubt and danger rolling up to Heaven like the dark mists of morning—bound by fate to the rock and vulture of the past—despair becomes the only pulse that throbs them on to death and hell!

The language of the text, typing the general and uniform language of the Bible, will account for the plainness and point of the appeal we urge. We wish to be judged by conscience not passion. Let the truth of God, as found in his Word, be the umpire between us. We may not decline the faithful performance of duty. We would, by a fearless and yet appropriate use of the knife, search and probe the body of sin—dragon-headed, huge, and horned as it may be—to the very bone. We would present it to you naked, quivering, disjointed and expiring! It is this monster, sin, and sin only, that has peopled earth with fiends and hell with men. To sin, then, we ask you to swear immitigable—more than Carthaginian—hate. No part of the task before us can be omitted or compromised. We should not only pierce the labyrinth but slay the monster, and, with his carcass, bury the slime and leprosy of ages! Such is the business—the duty of the Pulpit.

III. THE PUNISHMENT INCURRED. The laws of the universe are not more certain in their operation, than the punishment of sin. The same goodness that determines

the rewards of virtue, ordains the retribution and shall necessitate the doom of vice. God would treat his universe as ill, were he not to punish sin, as he would were he not to reward piety—and much more so, for the one would be a positive and the other but a negative evil. The one would license disorder while the other would be merely to withhold the recompense of virtue.

So sure, therefore, as God is good, is just, is true, *exists* even, sin must be punished. It is necessary to the stability and welfare of the Divine administration. Sin, in this fallen world of ours, is alike the parent of misery and the harbinger of ruin. It strikes its deadly poison at the root of all that is gay, and green, and pure, in human nature. It is the sure prolific principle of production in every scene of anguish and suffering. But the most appalling, the most unheavenly and fearful of all its consequences, is, it never fails to gravitate to hell, in the instance of the finally obdurate sinner: and of all the millions of its victims, not one has ever escaped—all, all, have sunk alike, and without hope, beneath the burden of its curse.

*Connected with the punishment in question, we notice, first, the curse of abandonment.* This may, and no doubt often does, take place, long before the convictions and feelings of despair exclude every ray of light, and the last lingering beams of hope and heaven shall confound their destiny with that of the finally lost.

They now, when thus “given over to hardness of heart and reprobation of mind,” even to the extent of “believing a lie that they might be damned”—they now become the children of perdition, and are hastening to the death and the darkness they madly braved during a life of crime. When God has tried the various experiments of

his mercy in vain, then the time for his justice to strike approaches. If he cannot magnify the freedom of his own choice in the salvation of the impenitent, he will illustrate the severer attributes of his nature in the doom rendered inevitable by its rejection. There is a point beyond which Heaven will not be provoked, and further forbearance would be unjust.

“Given over.” Fearful language—dreadful determination! God grant that, in our case, it may never be uttered or purposed! Would such language be employed—could it be, if men were from everlasting the reprobate offspring of God who made them? Fated to perdition before they were created, and therefore created for the purpose? Can it be believed, that the illuminations of heavenly light, gilding the scene of our earthly being, are given to men only as flash the flames of retribution upon the damned, to tell of naught but woe and doom and utter undoing!

The only reason Heaven assigns for the reprobation of any of our race, is their failure to “believe the truth” and because they “had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Man may assign a different reason; but, in the belief of every one, “let God be true,” and, by how far it is necessary to this result, “every man a liar.”

*Inquietude and insecurity of feeling.* The rising apprehension of a terrible futurity will arrest and appall the most indifferent. The prophetic visions of despair will chill them with their gloom. The angry tempest will lower, and the ghosts of murdered time and abused mercies flit before them. The spectral forebodings of the neglected future will disturb and invade their quiet. The remains of truth in the mind will vex, and the indignant murmurs of conscience harrass them. A stinging sense of insulted duty and neglected good, will corrode

and infuse the bitter foretastes of a long repentance beyond the grave!

What mean those indistinct and shadowy fears—that vague terror—that cold and creeping dread! Why that grapple with an unknown shade, as though touched by an unearthly wing? What mean those muttered curses to the troubled winds, as if not intended for the ear of Heaven or earth! Why such unwonted effort to offer up the now troubled moments of existence upon the altars of eternity? Agony, the most acute, renders life a burden and its vicissitudes a curse. When virtue and hope are stricken out from the solaces of existence, and time is rapidly working his bitter commission in relation to their uncompleted doom, it is only left them to look forward to the future with its deep-hoarded and gathering woe!

*Preliminary visitations of God's displeasure.* God having resolved to abandon to remorse and punishment the finally impenitent, although redeemed by the blood of his Son, preintimates this design, with fearful certainty, in the afflictions and compunctions of our guilty and degraded nature prior to death. Heaven and earth conspire to avenge the quarrel of his covenant and the insults offered to his wisdom and goodness.

Every hour and every element teems with troops of vengeance to punish and destroy. An elemental war, fatal to internal repose, is found within. Conscience and inclination are in mutiny. Passion is in a state of insurrection against principle, and even sleep becomes a hell of angry dreams, while the most fearful dismay and desolation of feeling tell them the worst has not arrived. Even the termless future, meting out its unresting ages of agony and shame, will only accord them what despair is allowed to inherit from the murdered hopes of the

past! They may turn to infinitude—may interrogate destiny—may appeal to the changes and chances of the one and the other—and yet all will be vain, and unprophetic of aught save the burden of the doom we are called to depict.

*Untimely resort to the mercy of God, and unavailing effort to conciliate his favor.* The tender of his mercy has been rejected, and the period of its exercise is past. The only medium of its conveyance has been foreclosed forever. Repentance now, in all its bitterness, can only teach the lesson that once it might have availed, but now cannot. God owes it to the unfallen and recovered portions of his intelligent creation, not less than to himself, that the rejectors of his mercy should be punished; and we are, accordingly, assured that destruction, as the wing of the whirlwind, swift and irresistible, is destined to overtake and involve them in ruin and overthrow commensurate with the hopes and interests they have thrown away.

Not that Heaven delights in the death and suffering implied. No such thought can be indulged for a moment. The whole doctrine of the text, of the entire Bible, puts it aside and spurns it as absurd and blasphemous. Is God said to “laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh;” let metaphor yield to analogy, and all will be plain. The scenes of judgment and the revelations of the future, will explain all. Look at the thunderbolt bickering in mid-heaven. Look at avenging lightning leaping from the angry depths of storm, and see the only “laughter,” the only “mockery,” with which Heaven will regard the impotence of crime!

Then, indeed, they will seek him early, and in earnest. Then they will cry and call upon him; but, alas! it will

be of no avail—it will only be, to hear the winds of hell take up the wail and bear it off to echo! Then they shall estimate their guilt by the price paid for its pardon, and fearfully shall their last moments avenge its rejection! Denied all earthly succor and bereft of heavenly sympathy, disavowed by nature and abhorred of God, which way will they turn for support, or, turning, find the object of their search?

Every thought, every emotion, having reference to the past or the future, like a ghost shrouded in its own formless horror, will be felt a vital weight struggling at the heart and crushing hope. Time itself will be but the viewless path of avenging justice, wafting on the fearful retribution. Even now, despite the busy engrossments of life, despair begins to pall their horizon on every side, like the rising tempest overbrowsing a troubled sea. Would to Heaven we could make you feel these truths—that, with the energy of a billow, the force of an electric flash, we could plant conviction of them in a thousand hearts at once!

*The calamity of the finally vicious and unregenerate consummated, in their hopeless subjection to the punishment threatened.* Now they reap the harvest of crime and gather the vintage of their folly. The award of judgment shall assign them a residence in hell, as the place of final evil. Hell, in the Scriptures, if we consult their analogy, combining plain statement and high wrought imagery, is represented as a given portion of the universe, occupied as its vast prison-house, for the perpetual confinement of incurably obdurate criminals in the kingdom and government of Jehovah. This fearful award is final. It is decisive of the fate of the condemned. It is conclusive of their destiny, and precludes alike all hope of review or reversal.

Of this *award* and the fearful circumstances of grandeur and terror under which it is made, we know not how to speak. Thought is inadequate—language powerless. The dread, appalling magnificence of the scene—the unappealable Judge—the multitudes, many and vast, spreading in boundless view—the dreadful sentence, compared with which the thunder-burst rocking immensity would be the music of a dream !

Its *issues*. The fate of a thousand battle-fields fought and lost, the banner of pestilence shedding plagues and curses on pallid millions, the wrath and ruin of an enraged equinox upon its howl and revel over earth and sea, leaving only wreck and desert in its track—*what are these*, compared with the death-pang felt forever without the power to die ! Now, all that was contingent in the grand economy of trial and compensation, becomes immutable and determinate. No hope survives. It is the last and most fearful mantling of desolation.

Then the lost millions who refused the call of God and goodness, will gaze without hope upon the pall of a past world and meet the issues and events embryoed by the line of action and the color of their conduct there. Then there will be a grand classification of moral elements—an unerring exhibition of the laws of character—by which the opposing multitudes, separated forever, become antipodes in doom and character—the tenants, respectively, of heaven and hell, by the intervention of a necessity more invincible than the diameter of a sphere !

*The duration of their calamity is without term or close—it is eternal.* Jesus Christ says of such, it would have been better for them “ never to have been born ”—never to have been. By which he plainly teaches, that they shall live, and yet be lost forever, and that the evils of existence will infinitely over-balance all the good they



ever enjoyed. Ages spent in hell, numberless as all Arabia's sands, would render existence a covetable blessing, an infinite good, if such centuries of suffering were to be succeeded by an eternity of joy. But all we know assures us, hell has no outlet, except for the "smoke of her torment," and the vision of the damned—as in the case of Dives, fixed upon the impassible gulf, and the good they have lost beyond it!

The period for virtue and amendment is past. No good is in reserve for them. And being thus unalterably vicious, they are of necessity interminably wretched, and their punishment at once hopeless and eternal. Words may not paint this fearful, this most transhuman of all the changes mind can undergo! Of all the undone within the range of God's omniscience, the exiled alike from human and heavenly sympathy by the fault of their own perverse determination, are the most undone. "I would, and ye would not"—"Why will ye die?" What a vision! Moving the pitying Heavens to expostulation—bowing the thrones of hell with remorse and apprehension, and leaving only man unmoved!

*A single additional glance at the peculiar misery of the finally impenitent, and some of the specific causes and circumstances of its aggravation, and we have done.* We need not repeat, how utterly language and imagination fail us. Who can chart the depths of hell, or map the dungeons of the damned! Look at the self-reproach of the miserable, and listen to the groans of the lost—their deep-struck compunction, and the self-accusations of guilt! Crimes that were once their delight, now become the objects of a loathing, that no length of time or hope of pardon can remove.

The guilt and shame of self-reprobation, compounded with the misery they imply, are now stamped upon their

fate in indelible characters, with no after-scene to vary the result. He who chose to be an habitual sinner along the whole line of his being, like but too many now before us, shall be an eternal sufferer. They chose cursing, and now they shall have it in all its dreadful repletion. It shall come into their habitations, in all the darkness and majesty of crowding waters. The scourge of the doom they set at naught, shall break them "breach upon breach," and lengthening duration only sink a deeper gulf and kindle a hotter flame.

Heaven has told you in language which, befitting its own lips, cannot fail to become ours, that hell is a place "deep and wide"—a "pit" of fearful enlargement—"bottomless," and "burning" with its quenchless "fire" and deathless "worm;" has told you of "blackness of darkness"—"weeping, wailing"—recrimination—"cursing and blasphemy"—a "lake" livid, heaving and glowing with "fire" and tempest, while the "breath of God," like a tide of "burning" sulphur, shall kindle and fuel the flame. All, according to the inspired picture, is living ruin, breathing torture, undying anguish.

Such are the wages of sin; such the end of sinners. Dreadful, indeed, must be the condition of each wailing culprit in this region of suffering; but infinitely more wretched, and unutterably worse, must be the condition of those victims of "many stripes," who wickedly and inveterately persevered in their rejection of the Christian religion, and, amid the beacons and warnings of her temples and trophies, and the multitude of her triumphs and achievements, took their random and unprotected way to hell, and must now waste the ever-lingering moments of immortal duration, in the bitterness of recollection and the agony of anticipation!

Upon the far-off temple of the living God, whose glory

and effulgence they were invited to share, and in which, as shown by special provision and invitation, they might one and all have lived, they may cast many a long and lingering look, but soon again their fated vision is fixed upon the images of self-destruction and the surrounding objects of despair, while to the blasted gaze of these hopeless and disquieted millions, wrecked in all the noble and lofty interests of an imperishable being, shall be exposed upon the pillars of eternity, traced by an immortal hand, the "end of sinners" and the epitaph of crime—they were slain by the turning away of the simple, and the prosperity of fools destroyed them! at every sight of which, the weeping damned, crushed with the burden of a fresh despair, return in groans the melancholy truth—*slain by the turning away of the simple, destroyed by the prosperity of fools!*

Would to God that truth and duty would allow us to reverse the picture! Would to God his unchanging purposes were not interposed in bar to such reversal! Would he had given warrant, to tell you of some date in eternity's coming years destined to close the night and conclude the darkness of this fearful vision! But the future glooms before, and the past returns in all the fullness of regret. No morning breaks—no star twinkles—no meteor gleams; nor does there rise, throughout the vast unfathomed gloom, the feeblest prescience of a brightening goal!

Once more, we throw down the fearful alternative of Heaven or hell at your feet, and ask for your decision! Will you choose life, and thus, even here, let faith's discerning eye drink in the vision of your names, sparkling, in characters of living sapphire, upon the immortal columns of the Heavenly Jerusalem!

Or, is death your choice? If it be, it only remains, that

we close our appeal, by pointing you to a doom, at sight of which immortality itself turns pale! Look, for here we cannot pause—look at perdition's dark and billowy sea, spread out in angry, unresting turbulence! Throw your eye athwart the lurid, burning vast—marshal your spirit's daring, and meet the doom you so madly challenged! Sneer now at the Heaven you will never enter, and call to the victim of each loaded wave, to tell you the value of your boasted choice! Here and now, however, there is nothing to debate or question. Which way you turn your eye, through all the rolling vast, instead of hope and succor, wailing millions, and yourselves among them, are, on every side, *thrown up and broken, a living wreck*, upon the burning strand of hell! God grant you repentance unto life! God grant you may baptize yourselves from the past, and that the rock to which you cling, may be the Rock of Ages!

## SERMON VI.

## GRANDEUR AND HUMILIATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

“YE know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”—2 Cor. viii, 9.

THE great substantive basis of all Christian effort, in view of the welfare of others, and the moral fortunes of the world, must be sought in the eventful mission of the Son of God, and the drama of its attendant revelations; and facts and details, connected with such effort, can only be regarded as the necessary exponents and credentials of the principles and interests involved in the great aboriginal mission of Messiah; apart from which, the world is without hope or symbol of recovery. The subject is interesting beyond all others, and would to God we could approach it, with mind and heart imbued and saturate with its reasons and motives! And yet, were it so, mortality might be borne down beneath the weight of its own aspirings!

The language of the text essays to express, what no expression can adequately reach: the stupendous, the unutterable condescension of the Son of God, in becoming poor for us—in his incarnation, sufferings and death, for the recovery of man. The event we are about to celebrate in our devotions, comprehending its nature and issues, constitutes what is indeed the mystery of mysteries; it is the most peculiar, the crowning dispensation of Heaven’s surpassing kindness to man; and presents us, in its meaning and application, with a length and a breadth, a height and a depth, utterly beyond the grasp of created conception, and in the depiction of which,

thought and language are alike impotent and unavailing.

Do you ask, then, why we presume to approach—to dissert upon such a theme? The answer is, for reasons infinitely urgent; we do it, because of what we are and what we would be. Feeble and sinful as we know ourselves to be, in our present low-thoughted and twilight sphere, the text brings before us a subject—a system of illumination and recovery—in view of which, we may embark our hopes and freight our aims, and feel in the confidence of truth and nature, that all is not a dream—feel, as the heart alone can feel, that if nothing else be true, Heaven, at least, will be found to be.

Originally involved in one common danger, all are here pointed to the same grand deliverance. It is a system addressed alike to the wants and regrets of time and the immortal ends and aims of the future; raising and directing us from what we are and have been, to the only message of hope and means of mercy.

We have said the event we are about to consider, is peculiar and striking; and, relying upon Divine aid, we proceed to explain our meaning. In every aspect, originally, the subject is unique in kind, and new and extraordinary in development. That the Creator of unnumbered, of all worlds, should, by the improbable means of poverty and suffering, become the Redeemer of one, and that ours; that he who held unlimited empire from everlasting—an empire, amid the splendor of whose interests and issues the part of it we inhabit, with all its grand and lofty dimensions, is shaded in the most humbling insignificance; that He should become the friend and patron of man—of an alien family—an outcast race—a fallen planet, with its lapsed intelligences; and that, too, under the most inauspicious and uninviting circumstances,

is an event that may indeed excite the wonder and awe of Heaven and earth—is one of those veritable mysteries of the Christian religion, beyond the comprehension of created intelligence in this state of things, and that we shall never fully understand, until we become acquainted with the provisions and arrangements, the themes and the contemplations, of eternity.

IN CONSIDERING THIS SUBJECT FURTHER, WE SHALL, FIRST, ASK YOUR ATTENTION TO THE ORIGINAL AND UNDERIVED GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST, ASSUMED IN THE TEXT. But, on a subject of such unearthly abstraction as to preclude familiarity of thought, how is it possible to render language appropriate? By the glory of Jesus Christ, we understand his nature and perfections, the essential grandeur of the one, and reflected splendor of the other. By his original and underived glory we mean, that his nature and perfections are without origination and without limit. There never was a time, in all the dateless calendar of the past, when the one did not exist and when he did not possess the other. His glory, thus considered, knows neither commencement, limitation, nor conclusion. It is one perfect, unbounded, eternal mystery of being.

If we do not, cannot comprehend these things, in the philosophy of their relations and data—the abyssmal depths of their nature and bearings—it is not because they are not directly stated and clearly revealed in the Scriptures. If the Bible be God's book, and Heaven has been true to man, in its numerous and explicit communications affecting the personal dignity of the Son of God, this plainly declared but not wholly conceived mystery—this incomprehensible fact, this unsearchable problem in the science of being—must be believed, must be credited.

The glory of Jesus Christ, further, is original, because Heaven announces its existence and assumes its display,

ere time commenced his flow, before the world began. From all the preëxisting years of eternity he was “the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” He has ever been the great, active, uncreated agent in all the dispensations of God to men. And, accordingly, in the mystery of the incarnation, and the great work of man’s redemption, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, appear, in energy and effect, to be coembodied in the person of Jesus Christ and to constitute the repletion of his humanity. And the same position and reasoning will apply to creation. We take, for example, the laws and causes of nature, whose long progression leads us back, by regular inductive sequence, to the great originating mind of the universe—the first Father of effects; and here, the mighty amplitude of these results being expressly and in every variety of language ascribed to Jesus Christ—here, we pause, amid a scene of unequalled grandeur and astonishment, to contemplate the original and underived glory of the Son of God, as the Supreme Ordainer—the Almighty Wielder of the whole—first creating and then fixing the laws and issuing edicts for the order and conservation of the universe.

Of the author of our redemption, it is affirmed in the text, that he was rich. He was rich in himself; and rich, also, in relation to the work of his hands, in whatever part of his universal dominion. *And first, he was rich in Himself.* To understand this adequately and comprehensively, unless our own views have strangely misled us, you must contemplate him, in conformity with the language and analogy of Revelation, as possessing all the perfections of Deity, in their entire plenitude and the utterness of their immensity.

His claims as Creator accredit this deduction beyond



cavil. As Creator, he is, he must be, an Infinite Spirit, possessing original, simple and unextended being; and his existence, as such, can bear no affinity to time or space. His duration must be one and indivisible; and space, at best however unbounded, is but the symbol of his all-encircling omnipresence. Thus conceived of, creation, in all its unmeasured amplitude, is, nevertheless, limited, and floats within the range of his immensity. He exists wholly in every place and yet not exclusively in any. Absolute infinity, in all its illimitable depths and expansions, presents nothing foreign to him. He is at home, perfectly at home, not only in every actual scene of being, but where the projecting compass of design has yet to circumscribe the paths of new created worlds, and where the strong-pinioned seraph, moving rapid as the light, can never, never reach! Eternity is but the term of his being. Omnipotence the strength of his will. Ubiquity simple coextension with his essence. Omniscience the mere comprehension of his ken. And immutability, but his eternal consistency with himself. And, hence, he is said to be rich. Rich in all the infinitude and permanence of unoriginated, boundless being. Rich in everything distinctive of Deity. In all the illimitable possibilities of omnipotence. The almighty vigor—the productive and sustaining potentialities of creation, providence and nature!

But to be more minute. *He was rich in all the limitless treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* He knew all things wherever found and however existing. And all things in heaven, earth and hell, and throughout infinitude beside, were in the same moment mapped before his eye. And yet, in the nature he assumed for the purposes of suffering and triumph, he submitted to learn, to be imperfect in knowledge and to increase in wisdom.

It must not be overlooked, however, that, in all our representations of Jesus Christ, we exhibit him, in every situation and aspect, as the same immutable, eternal person; and, any apparent want of unity in the titles, fortunes and characteristics attaching to him, must be accounted for in view of the fact, that, after and consequent upon his advent, he possessed two distinct natures—a mysterious duality of being, in the same, in his own original person.

*He was rich in power and might.* His were the almighty, unwasted energies of Deity. His power extends to all the possible, conceivable results, both of created and uncreated nature. Invincible in power, he was supreme in authority. Independent in existence, he was self-sufficient in ability. The universe knew no agency but his, and nature, in all its vastness, was but the index of his greatness. And yet, in visiting earth, he descended to the lot and the labor of weakness and want.

*He was rich in happiness—essential, unmingled happiness.* All its elements and manifestations were found in him. No incertitude of thought disturbed the repose of his purposes. No feeling of inquietude ever reached his bosom—no emotion of alarm or insecurity—and yet, in the hour of his humiliation, he felt too intensely not to complain, “my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” The weight of the grief he incurred, was alone sufficient to extinguish life, and, dying, he exclaimed, in language that moved the thrones of Heaven with dismay, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” He had rolled the mighty tide of life and rapture to unnumbered millions—to the crowded intelligences of all the worlds himself had made—and yet he became a man of sorrows, and, O how deeply acquainted with grief!

*He was rich in counsel, and plan, and corresponding*

*resources.* These were so infinite in number, perfection and fullness, as to preclude all idea of improvement by review or supplement. His will stood the eternal legislation of the universe. And equally rich was he in means and instrumentality to accomplish the ends proposed to himself. Amid the contingencies which operate their functions in the wide universe of consequences, he held empire, and, with controlling sovereignty, conducted all to the destined conclusions of his will.

*He was rich in the love and affection of those who surrounded him.* The circle of the morning stars and sons of God reflected the glory of his name and the splendor of his throne, while the elder children of eternity rejoiced in his goodness and lifted up his praise! And yet, he exchanged the homage and confidence of Heaven for the ill-nature, distrust and persecution of earth. His incarnation determinately subjected him to this. For, in order that he might appear as surety and advocate in behalf of man, it was necessary that he should become one with man both in nature and law, and, by consequence, suffering. And, hence, the lights and shadows of his history, as Son of man—God of seraphim!—made flesh and dwelling among men, and yet invested with regal Headship involving the control of universal being!

How irresistibly, therefore, does it follow, that, *He was rich in ability, not only to save the virtuous and good, but to subdue and destroy his enemies.* Know, then, that with him will and power are the same. We will not pause to prove or illustrate how he can make his enemies wretched beyond all others. You have only to seek them in the impassable circle of their fatal and accursed doom. In a depth from which none find their upward way. Those prison limits hemming in the evils of the universe.

The infernal vale, the darkened hemisphere of curse and crime; hiding the face of God, and where despair takes up its last abode, and finds its fearful home! We may not tell you how they are panged by the fierce rending of his wrath. We must not follow them, making the circuit of their gloomy orb, only that bitterness and regret may be renewed in anguish and dismay! Vain, indeed, would be the attempt; for, in what language, with what imagery, could we picture to you the undying worm of hell, imbibing immortality by preying on the anguish of the damned! No, the unwitnessed suffering his wrath inflicts, during ages of agony, must remain by us unnamed, unvoiced, and, alas! unsolaced too! And thus we find him rich in all that belongs to God—to goodness and to greatness—to being blessing and eternity. But he was not only distinguishingly rich in himself.

*He was rich also in relation to the work of his hands.* All was produced by him. He had a right of property in all. He exercised the right of ownership over all, and all things were referable to his will as the law of their being. And yet creation, in all the bewildering magnitude of its vastness, is but a beam of his creating power, a mere emanation of his almighty greatness. The celestial division and higher compartments of the universe were his. His, by right of creation, as his word attests. Thrones, dominions, principalities and powers. All the ranks, and lists, and files of the heavenly world. Earth too, and world's peopling the abysses of space. The grand planetary fabric, and the majestic stellar arrangements with which it is affined, are his also, all that rests, or rolls, or soars!

The infinitude and variety of his works and claims, render specification as difficult as you may feel it to be

unnecessary. What did not belong to him? His were the unlisted cattle dispersed upon a thousand hills: the beasts of the forest, the fowls of the air, and all the finny nations of the deep. His pencil colored, and his breath enriched, the flower. His strength gave stability to the hills, and his goodness enameled the vales. His was the hand of might, that kindled up the skies and outspread the glowing fields of Heaven. His the almighty mind, that first threw the outlines of creation over the rayless immense of darkness, and then intensely saw the grand gradual picture grow, until all this mighty wilderness of moving worlds trembled into birth!

In a word, he is the Creator of our world, and its sovereign, too; and the sovereign not less than the Creator of every other. And when we sum up the whole, how sublimely touching are the relations and aspects in which he is seen! Going back to the era and wonders of nature's birth, and forward to the hour and struggles of her dissolution, we see his name and rule uniting all. The fullness of Godhead, in all its manifestations, has ever been impressed upon his person and character. To him we owe the lofty functions of thought, and the living play of emotion—the proud achievements of the one, and cherished fruition of the other; while years, ages and generations, gathered into the grave of time and chronicled with the past, all publish his unwasting grandeur.

And thus, by an irresistible process of reasoning and induction, we reach the conclusion, that you are not to conceive, as the fable of many would have it, that Jesus Christ is merely the favored representative—the strangely invested and supremely gifted plenipotentiary of Heaven—but the embodied Shekinah of

Jehovah. His claims to Deity proper, as we have seen, are very different from what such a view implies; and, if we may so illustrate our meaning, are not to be resembled to the billow of ocean lifting its voice to tell the grandeur of the "vasty deep," but is not that deep itself. So far from this, rather, you are to recollect—you are never to forget—the fullness of Godhead belongs to him supremely and distinctively—belongs to him in all its distinguishing entireness and absolute eternity. And thus he was rich. Rich in himself—his own proper nature—and rich, also, in the possession of all possible, conceivable resources external to himself.

II. HIS SUBSEQUENT ABASEMENT AND HUMILIATION. And what a vision have we here! The light of the universe eclipsed and shining only in darkness! Eclipsed, too, amid the very uncomprehending darkness where it shone! He who had reigned from everlasting, in unchallenged supremacy and the illimitable grandeur of his Godhead—the glory of whose perfection had been the illumination of the universe, and the energies of whose nature were the guarantee of its preservation; He who had strewn the path of eternity with the wonders of Omnipotence, and lighted up the mansions of infinity with the emanations of his bounty; became a houseless wanderer in a world of penury and woe! He who was infinite, unmeasured, and unapproached in all his perfections, circumscribed (if earth dare use the language) the infinitude of his being to the dimensions of a man! He who had paved the Heavens with azure and strewn the earth with flowers—had given to the one their magnificent jewelry and robed the other in vernal loveliness—had not, in his humiliation, where to lay his head! Earth was his bed, and open Heaven his cover-

ing! He who owned the whole animal kingdom, as the common shambles of his providence, was dependent upon the hospitality of earth for "a piece of broiled fish and an honey-comb!" He whose were the whole fossil and mineral kingdoms, as a mere farthing in his exchequer, could not, when taxed by the minions of Cæsar, pay his tribute money until the sea brought him the sum in the mouth of a fish! The maker was more destitute than the made—the donor more needy than the donee—the giver than the beneficiary! His eternity was invested with time. His omnipotence put on frailty. His immensity was subjected to limitation. The ever-living began to be. The source of knowledge learned wisdom—and the fountain of life expired in death! He was found in the real substantive form and structure of a man, "born of a woman and made under the law"—and, in laying aside the grandeur and magnificence of his past eternity, in becoming man, he incurred, for the time, a relative and yet substantial degradation. The world's first gift to him, who came to save it, was a manger, and its last a cross! And in this way poverty was dignified by the choice of the Son of God, and rendered sacred by his participation.

Would you, then, appreciate his condescension in the midst of all this, institute the contrast between, and measure the distance from, the throne of God to earth! Look at the weakness and misery of his birth—the wants, the cares, and the inquietudes of his life—the shame, agony and torture of his death! How exquisite—how ineffable! He became "poor!" A word, how prolific of meaning! A word that, in the mystery and significance of its import, affects alike the heart both of God and man! A word that excites the sympathy of Heaven, at the same time it proclaims the

wretchedness of earth! Little, indeed, did earth dream of such revealings of God's mercy from the poverty of his Son, when over his failing humanity she saw the pale king of shadows proudly waving the scepter of insulting triumph! Yet this was but his passage from gloom to glory; and the very darkness in which we see him shrouded, palled and sepulchered, was but the night precluding a morn brighter than a universe of suns! While earth, all unheeding, turned away, the heavens bent thitherward to hear!

Would we could lift you up to the mighty conception! He met the stroke of Heaven's high displeasure in all the calm magnificence of thought and purpose, and flung the dying splendor of his eye, in pity and forgiveness, on his foes! Let us, then, in the common fellowship of sin and suffering, fold these rich revealments of his love amid the throbs of each deserted heart! Let us kneel, and, kneeling, throw around our fears the robe of his immortal purity! Hail him, then, ye perishing millions of earth, as becoming poor only to enrich us. Faith will solve the paradox and reconcile the contradiction. Man of sorrows—God of glory! Stricken, pierced—exalted, reigning! In this condescension, we see the measureless grandeur of Godhead lowered to the level of human conception, and gaze, with feelings without a name, upon the stupendous miracle of Justice administering the high functions of unyielding right by sacrifice, and receiving its most illustrious vindication in the death of the Son of God.

III. HIS GRACE AND CONDESCENSION IN BECOMING POOR FOR US. We had wandered from God and declined his protection without provocation. He had lavished upon us, in the primeval fortunes of our race, the exuberance of his beneficence and kindness. The bounties,



immunities and blessings of Heaven, were thrown about us like a wall of circumvallation.

In the original allotment of humanity, on leaving the hands of the Creator, a single prohibition limited the vast fruition of the human mind. There was but one forbidden territory, and that was overshadowed by a single tree, the fruit of which alone was forbidden to human taste. There was but one specific interdict, and that related to the bending fruit of this solitary growth amid the outspreading orchards of primeval paradise, and every where in perspective about, an endless scene of enchantment and delight!

But the erring, unhappy pair, in evil hour, put forth the hand, and, for the paltry gratification of a most unworthy curiosity, hazarded the incurrence of Heaven's fiercest wrath. Hence, their rebellion was not only direct and personal, but wanton and unprovoked—without any palliating preface or redeeming element. There was nothing to excuse it—not even the show of probable indemnity; and upon this fearful lapse our federal defection fatally ensued.

We need not tell you, that, in the paradise of his primitive location, where God communed with man and nature supplied his wants, all was fitness, charm and fruition—tending, directly, to promote his happiness in the garden of his innocence, and to secure even his organic existence to an illimitable date. All this is inferable from the fact, that the Creator, who alone knows what being and blessing are, modeled and finished man to his own liking; and when, afterward, he passed in review before the living God, no improvement suggested itself, and he was pronounced very essentially good.

And yet he sinned; and stranger still, God would save

him! His heart was fixed upon him in kindness, and his bowels of celestial tenderness sounded toward him! And how unutterably does the mystery deepen when the means are taken into the account! What an abyss of compassion is here—what an ocean of good will to man! What mind, though projecting thought with sun-beam speed and angel strength, can take its height? What line of mortal or immortal reach can find soundings in its depths? What measure of earth's boasted numbers or geometry can compass its length or describe its breadth? For the guilt of earth, dark and impenitent, life became to him an arena of contest and blood, and his sufferings and death, in the amount of their agony and soreness, and especially their value, connected with the ends and aims of government, are to be regarded as equivalent to the pretermitted punishment of all the offenders for whom he died.

His visit to earth was a mission from Heaven, which rendered his return and admittance there the fruit of a fearful conflict—the spoil of a hard-won victory. Would you understand this, in the utterness and intensity of its meaning, look at the dreary, the felt hidings of his Father's face, and listen to his meek but thrilling complainings of anguish and abandonment! Well may the laboring soul heave underneath the thought, "too big for birth!" He came the unknown distance from Heaven to earth. Confounding interval—mysterious transition! He passed, unheeding, the grandeur and array of Heaven's magnificent hierarchies—through all the wondrous grades and forms of intermediate being—through the wide waste of worlds, rich in the glory of a thousand suns, and made his home on earth—and in his death sternly combined the agonies of unequalled suffer-

ing with the heroic struggles of the most lofty determination!

And all to arrest a process moved in Heaven against the offender, and rescue the unhappy delinquent from an award of justice, that would have given him his dungeon and his chain among the damned, where the light of life and hope would have gone out forever. And allow us to remind you, that, having achieved all this for man, his unforgetting care and condescending sympathy, undiminished by the lapse of ages, continue still the same.

IV. THE MOTIVES IN WHICH THIS EXTRAORDINARY TRANSACTION ORIGINATED. And here language falters beneath the burden of its own meaning, and the proudest symbols of human thought are equally unavailing. Even the pencil of the celestial Raphael, hued in the dies of Heaven's brilliant arch, and grouping upon the moral canvas with the lights and shadows of eternity, could furnish, at best, but a feeble picture! Jesus Christ, himself, has more than intimated that these motives, in their manifestation, form a new era even in his own eternal round of years and action.

These motives, in the light of direct moral causation, existed without himself, and extrinsic of every thing personal to him. They related to us. They meditated our good. Our hopeless condition moved him to pity. He came upon the errand of our recovery. And this, too, when, wide over a world of sin and guilt, the starless night of desolation reigned!

Our sin, in the fearful aggregate of its relations and bearings, was infinite. The rain of a thousand summers, the dews of Heaven and all ocean's waters, could not wash it out. The domain of kings could not furnish the sacrifice required, nor the wisdom of the schools say

where it was to be found, or of what it should consist. Enthroned amid the grandeur of his hosts, and guided by the counsel of his will, he knew his poverty to be the only remedy, and saw it omnipotent to save. Hence he emptied—he humbled himself, and bowed low to the doom he had made his own.

And thus his name alone, first and finally, gave to man the hope of pardon. Away, then, with the slaughtering priest, the flaming altar, and the bloody libation: “A body hast thou prepared me,” says our Almighty surety, and millions of immortals have hailed, in this single sentence, the kind reversal of their doom.

The motives we aspire to, understand, therefore, are such as became the heart of God—the bosom of infinite compassion and perfection. We cannot analyze, we cannot describe them; but, failing to do so, we can, meanwhile, imbibe the temper and tenderness of Heaven by reflecting upon them. He saw us exposed to all the boundless horrors of a wrecked eternity. He was unwilling to display, as he might have done, his inflexible purity in our ruin without affording us the means of recovery; and hence the dispensation of kindness in the text—a display, of benevolence not paralleled by any other in the wide bounds of the universe or the evolutions of destiny. It is preëminently the *chef d'œuvre*, the chief display of God's mercy to man. It was a dispensation of kindness meeting us when most we needed aid, and meeting us with the very kindness, which, most of all, we needed. And here and thus we have the great and only law of man's return to God.

V. THE RICHES ACCRUING TO US IN VIRTUE OF THE POVERTY OF CHRIST. The original attainder, of which we have spoken, consequent upon the first transgression, was taken off, and man ceased to be held a criminal to

Divine justice. The deadly forfeiture was removed and the ransom set was paid by our generous and victorious representative. We were received into favor with God. His wide and universal welcome to those who had wandered from him, was thrown abroad over our world, and his beseeching voice was upon it. Provision, ample and efficacious, was made for the guilty generations of our rebellious, curse-devoted planet. The dread circumference of impeding guilt, severing earth from intercourse with Heaven, was thrown down and man invited to his native skies. Upon repentance and faith, as the grand terms of eligibility to eternal life, he is justified and renewed. The Urim of Heaven is imparted to the mind and its Thummim to the heart, and every perfection of Godhead becomes his guardian and his friend.

We share, as the furniture of the inner man, a rich constellation of graces, and display as the badge of the outer a catalogue of living virtues. The path of life spreads out before us refulgent with the footsteps of our Master, and resounding with the promises of his love. We overlook, from a lofty position, the spoils and trophies of subjugated nature and a crucified world. In the triumphant career of duty, this lofty vocation holds all our powers and passions in sacred captivity, while we look forward, with accumulating joy, to a happiness essentially coextensive with the high capabilities of our nature and boundless as eternity. In language God alone could use, or had a right to inspire, "all is yours." Not only the God-given grants and benefits already enumerated, but every and all other possible immunity and enjoyment.

Christians! what has goodness denied you? Does the field contain a flower, or the heavens a star, they

are yours—all that blooms below or shines above. It was for you he studded the heavens with their starry isles—damasked the clouds with their glowing crimson, and gave to earth its beauty and attraction! The Infinite mind felt sympathy with the joy not less than the sorrow of man, and it was for him—for us inhabiting earth and beholding Heaven—that he spread out the wonders and glories of nature, gorgeous, varied and ample, whether glittering with light or gay with mantling verdure. And these blessings, in the whole range of their comprehension, extend, by charter and tender, to the world at large, embracing its entire burden of families and nations.

The mission of the Son of God shall everywhere and unboundedly widen the dominion of moral excellence, and its light and influence be triumphantly extended and diffused wherever “heart shall beat or mind aspire.” Prostrate rulers and their enlightened subjects, the gifted and the dowered, the mighty and the noble, no longer appealing to the drapery of birth and fortune, or the sublime infirmity of misdirected ambition, shall every where throng the vestibule of the temple and the altars of our faith. The poverty of Jesus Christ shall not only fill earth with converts, but crowd the seats and thrones of Heaven with conquerors. The principles of devout allegiance, and the exquisite emotions of an approving conscience lost by sin, shall, in every place and nation, be restored to the bosom of man. Earth, heretofore and long the sad theater of curse and calamity, tears and ruin, shall share the sympathy and inherit the blessings of the world to come. Eden’s long lost and forgotten glories shall be restored to earth, and God, smiling on his new creation, shall bless it with the visions of his love, until mountain shall shout to isle,

and ocean thunder back to main, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ!"

Utopian and glowing as such a picture may seem to be, it is not the language of unguarded religious warmth, of pulpit extravaganza, but in strict accordance with the assurances of prophecy and the facts of history up to the present hour. Already the broad surface of the moral world, with its ten hundred millions of immortals, is mapped out into one vast missionary diagram, and, throughout all its sections, the question is working out its own solution—from Labrador to Good Hope, and from the Steppes of Tartary to the Caribbean Archipelago! Such are the riches accruing to man and earth, in virtue of the poverty of Jesus Christ.

But does the narrow-minded, short-sighted infidel start at this, and blinking up to a subject he does not understand, allege, in overthrow of all our faith assumes on the subject, that the system of redemption upon which we insist, is, by its own theory, limited to our world, and does not extend to others—to all—and cannot, therefore, consistently be of God! We reply, the objection is perfectly gratuitous, and is shown to be unsound and inapplicable by the whole analogy of Revelation. Let the infidel who thus cavils, he knows not why, it may be, except that it is his vocation to cavil, even at the grandest themes of human thought—let the infidel show, that other worlds needed this redemption, and further, that the correction of their rebellion would have comported, as did that of earth, with the asserted justice and vindicated rights of the universal Judge; and then, and not until then, will we pause to hold parley with the meager exceptions of his philosophy, or the beggarly abortions of his spleen.

The God of Christianity has magnified himself before the intelligences of all worlds, not by redeeming the un-fallen, it is true, but by furnishing proof, grateful to the Christian, adding to the joy of angels, and increasing the remorse even of the reprobate damned, that our planet, in its moral relations and the matter of its redemption especially, is directly implicated with the high concerns of a more extended dispensation, a boundless range of cause and effect, in spreading among the hosts and millions of infinity, the knowledge and effulgence of Jehovah's character and love.

VI. OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THIS DISPENSATION OF DIVINE GOODNESS. *We know this dispensation of the grace of God, from the testimony of his Word*, in which it is revealed with due and grave authentication. The Scriptures assume this knowledge, in behalf of Christians, and everywhere declare its attainability, as matter of direct and indispensable behoovement. By how far, therefore, we understand and credit the history of our redemption, by so far we know the grace in the text.

*We know it from the teachings and convictions of the Spirit of God*, whose heavenly lessons are received and bosomed by the heart's intelligence, as among the dearest and most convincing of our mental and moral perceptions.

*We know it from our own consciousness*, apart from which, we can know nothing. Without feeling, philosophically considered and universally applied—the felt relations of a proposition, for example—there is no knowledge of any kind—and the knowledge in question is peculiarly the heart's treasure—for God, who formed the heart, is teaching and training it for himself; and so considered, this Grace is a boon possessed, a felt enjoyment, and therefore known, or all knowledge is a dream and its name and its nature a cheat?



“*Our spirits,*” too, thus “*bear witness,*” *adjunctively* “*with the spirit of God,*” to the same effect. It is the joint result of heavenly impression, and the heart’s well-defined emotions in reply; and Heaven and earth are both in error unless we know this grace; for it is concurrently affirmed in the instance of the result, both by the agent and the recipient.

We know this grace, further, from *the unexceptionable testimony* of hundreds, thousands and millions, in different ages and parts of the world, from Abel to the present hour. Reject this testimony, then, in connection with the Divine, already noticed, reaching us, as it does, within the ordinary channels of admitted proof, and you at once and forever subvert the foundations of all evidence. Truth is a fable, and faith an *ignis fatuus*, that leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind.

*We know it from the Divine conduct;* for all these means and sources of the mind’s information on this subject, are coincident in issue. The great Head of the Church has made it a distinguishing provision of the covenant of redemption. The administration of this covenant has been conformed to it in fact, and it has cheered and sustained the faithful in all ages, as we trust in God it is now cheering and sustaining you.

*We know it from our own cherished experience.* Our successive consciousness, which constitutes experience, assures us of the fact. We share, not the occasional visits of heavenly influence, but its abiding presence, in greater or less degree, as it hallows the heart and adorns the life. ✓

*We know it from the certainty and uniformity of its effects.* A language all can understand, and, understanding, none deny. Character and conduct, in the better part of the church of God, have been modeled

upon and made to conform to it, and the interests of eternity are, by millions, fearlessly staked upon its validity.

*And, finally, it accords with the genius of the Christian Dispensation:* especially as a “ministration of the Spirit”—the reign of the Holy Ghost. This grace affects alike the heart and mind—was given to be felt, and is as certainly felt as given. To feel such gracious influence is to know it: not to feel it, therefore, is not to know it, and not to know this grace is not to have it. Thus it is in proof—in luminous evidence before the mind—that we know as Christians, the children of God, the abundant and abounding grace proclaimed in the text.

The question of the moral aspect in which we stand to God, is not one of unsettled conjecture or ecclesiastical arbitrement. We are not left, cruelly left, by the best of Beings, to pose and dream, and thus vaguely and darkly spell out a title to eternal life, amid the doubtful casuistry and unaccredited imaginings of a morbid, misguided sensibility; nor has it been left to the interested caprice, the usurping policy, or ghostly dictation of an arrogant, despotic Priesthood, to settle and adjust our relations with Heaven.

Faith in Christ, the conscious inhabitation of the Holy Spirit, together with the appropriate fruits, tell us what our relation to Heaven is, and entitle us to respond to the text, as one of the most momentous verities of our moral history. We know, in truth, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and undoubtingly triumph in the assurance of acceptance with him. Power of the Highest! energy of the Heavens! give this knowledge to the audience! Let it thrill through every chamber of the soul, and flood the heart with rapture!

FINALLY : WE NOTICE THE TONE OF SENTIMENT AND STATE OF FEELING THIS SUBJECT SHOULD INSPIRE. The grace in the text imparts to man, and implants in the mind and heart, those sentiments and feelings which, in higher degree and full perfection, glow and circulate about the throne of God. It peoples the soul of man with new thoughts and new affections, such as existed in his un-fallen state, when there was nothing to regret, and shall be prolonged in the Heaven to which he aspires, where God is all in all.

This subject, further, should inspire us with a *sense of our ignorance*, especially as it regards our moral relations and final destiny, unvisited by light from Heaven. It should teach us meekly to ask wisdom of God, and, guided by his word, look up to an Intelligence and Benevolence above us.

It should inspire us with a *sense of our criminal unworthiness* : reminding us that we have but too fearfully deserved a thousand hells without suffering one, and that, insanely wedded to the world, he threw open to us the gates and riches of heavenly commerce, and allured us by the wealth and grandeur of his throne.

It should inspire us with a *sense of entire dependence*—a felt and crushing sense of our real weakness and relative unimportance, at the same time that we are permitted to rely on Almighty strength, and know that all is well. In this way, humility best secures the happiness of man, and asserts the claims of Heaven upon the undoubting trust of a dependent world.

*It should inspire us with zeal and earnestness.* Without the one and the other, there is, there can be, no piety. The excellence of Heaven is immeasurably in advance of that of earth—that of the best of her children—but it is to be won ; and you should instantly throw yourselves

upon a career of emulation with saints and angels for the prize awaiting you at the close of the struggle.

*It should inspire and animate us with hope and comfort—* hope of Heaven and comfort on our way thither : the luster of your virtues on earth typing the splendor of your crowns in Heaven, and blending with the glories of immortality.

*Let this subject especially inspire us with gratitude.* To Heaven we are deeply indebted for goodness, multiform and matchless. But our motives to gratitude have received the measure of their fullness and immortality, in the great achievement of redemption. Let gratitude, then, warm our hearts. Let it flame on your altars and peal in your anthems. Let it rise as the incense of feeling, and reach the throne of the Eternal, as an exhalation more grateful than “Arabia sacrificed, and all her spicy deserts in a flame” !

But it may be you are still indifferent to this whole subject. If so, we must leave you to reflect, that, challenged by the throne of the universe, you refuse your homage ; and, by doing so, have deliberately placed in jeopardy all the interests of immortality ; and we can only weep your doom, every hour exposed to the fearful liabilities of a deep and dure damnation nearing in the future !

Not so the Christian, however. He has nothing to fear. Encompassed as he may be with occasional gloom, he still sees the glimpses of immortality breaking forth upon our twilight world. The night-flower of belief in his bosom blooms on, even in darkness, and yields its perfume. Rays of light are seen shooting athwart, and pillars of truth and splendor rising in the midst of, chaos ! With martyr trust and fearlessness he pursues his course, and we are left to admire his footsteps, as he urges his

way over the face of our world, in sympathy with goodness and grandeur, gladness and sorrow!

Such, then, imperfectly, are the moral grandeur and illustrious issues of the great mission we have attempted to explain and enforce, and we cannot conclude without asking you, one and all, what share you propose to yourselves, in restoring earth, by the diffusion of the Gospel, to friendship with God and the dominion of virtue? The means and methods are before you. The appeals to them, many and oft, you are familiar with, and among them we leave you to choose. You have it in your power to advance this great interest in a thousand different forms, and Heaven has drawn upon each one of you to the full extent of your ability. On and forward, then, to the store-house of God and the arena of action, resolved that you will distinguish yourselves by triumph in this great struggle, or die an army of martyrs in the attempt!

With regard to this great dispensation of the grace of God, we only add, that, in this life, though assured of the fact, the magnitude of this grace is known only in part. But, when in Heaven—the Heaven to which we tend—the ransomed and improved energies of an indestructible mind shall be let loose among the entrancing objects of an eternal world, and shall expatiate at will, with angelic ease and seraph buoyancy, over a widely extended scene of heavenly enlargement and deathless fruition—then we shall see, as we are seen, with unerring intuition, and know, as we are known, in the society of celestials, dwelling forever in the neighborhood of the throne of God, and beneath the embowering canopy of the Tree of Life, where millions of harps, strung to rapture, in unison complete, with one vibration, shall hymn redemption's theme and sound Jehovah's praise!

And what boon, we ask, within the gift of Heaven or the grasp of immortality, would not be poor compared with this! Words may not tell our meaning here; it cannot live in language. That mind alone where God is templed and his truth adored, can lift itself to the mighty conception. It is glory beyond the wonder of the heart. It is a dignity of which earthly fortune and state, so far from being elements, are too low and little to be even accompaniments! And whether we contemplate ourselves already in Heaven, filed and pavilioned around the throne of thrones, or on our way thither, what care we for the fame of heroes or the blood of kings; the renown of dead centuries or ancestry unknown; the founders of empire or the subverters of thrones! Noble in the heart's heraldry, and with names emblazoned in immortal registry before the throne of God, the trance that once made such trifles dear is broken, and all is lost in the consciousness, that smiles, reflected from approving Heaven, are wreathing the cup of human woe!

What have we to fear, although Chaos itself should be seen reveling amid the ruins of demolished worlds, and Time's last storm, howling to its close, shall wail the death-dirge of their passing away! when, amid it all, the faith and affection of the Gospel are still seen curling around the eternal columns of their strength!

Christians! what need we care, although on earth we were so poor and low we had nor purse nor pillow; so few and trodden down we had no power; and hamlets, huts and grottoes, were the places where we wept and prayed; if these are to be exchanged for a residence amid the jaspers and chrysolites, the emeralds and sapphires, of the heavenly Jerusalem!

What though soiled by the dust of toil, or damp with the dungeon's dew—struggling amid tattered want along

our lone and periled path—when even here we find ourselves invested with glory in the night of our being, and sustained by hopes guiding and pointing us to the temple hymn and the heavenly harp above, where the unfolding apocalypse of Heaven's eternal grandeur and loveliness shall introduce us to new worlds and laws of mind and morals—shall make us familiar with the inner mechanism and lofty movements of the universe, and where, with as few temptations to obliquity as Omnipotence itself, we shall find ourselves forever sphered and throned, above the reach and beyond the ravages of time, and chance, and change!

## SERMON VII.

## THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

“TELL his disciples he is risen from the dead.”—Math. xxviii, 7.

EVERY occasion like the present renews the recollection and conviction, that Christianity, in perfect analogy with the laws and operations of nature, has been, for a succession of ages, working out the solution of its own truth and mystery. And the present century is, perhaps, as striking and convincing in the number and force of its demonstrations to this effect, as any of its many, its eventful, predecessors.

It is true of Christianity, that, although it exhibits a most surprising multiplicity of elements and relations, yet it can only be viewed as one consistent, refulgent whole. There is everywhere the most perfect consent and combination of parts—a oneness, a wholeness, an uncompoundedness of character, sought for in vain among the works or the thoughts of man.

And among all the interesting facts, varied topics and magnificent compartments of revealed truth, mutually operating as coefficients in the production of Christian principle and the formation of Christian character, few, if any, claim an intensity of interest equal to that with which the inquiry now before us is invested.

It is true, the great fact we contemplate, and its immediate results, reach us, as everything of contemporary date must, mellowed and obscured by the dark hue of ages; yet it is possible so to elaborate and examine the subject, as to bring it vividly to view and present it in living picture before the mind. In attempting this, in part, at least, and however imperfectly, at our present



interview, we invoke no guidance but that of inspiration and good sense, and we deprecate no consequences not inconsistent with pulpit worth and the hope of contributing to the happiness of man.

The short sentence announced as the text, not less than the very summary, unpretending paragraph in which it is found, celebrates, in no equivocal way, and with the emphasis of full conviction, the *Resurrection of the Son of God*. The well known event of his death, and without which the language of the text would be unmeaning, had but recently taken place ; and it occurred in the accomplishment of the Divine purposes as an eventful expedient, upon the intervention of which depended the redemption of the world and its offered share in the coming glories of eternity. The evidence, however, of results of such magnitude and grandeur following upon the death of Christ, depended upon his resurrection. When, therefore, this splendid achievement over the powers of darkness and the hopes of hell had been realized, on the part of his followers, in the triumphant rising of the Son of God from the darkness of the tomb, angels felicitate the joy of the Church, by celebrating the resurrection of its illustrious Head in the language of the text, "Tell his disciples he is risen from the dead" !

It is the language of heart-felt gladness, of dawning hope and conscious triumph ; and we wish it to become the motto of your devotion on the present occasion. Now that the prophecies relating to the humiliation of the Son of God are accomplished ; the shadows and prefigurations of his death substantiated ; his decisive action with the powers of darkness over ; the righteousness of the law fulfilled ; the payment of the price of human redemption completed ; and the work which the Father gave him to do finished, and finished in the highest pos-

sible degree of perfection; we say to you—to the Church—to the friends of the Redeemer and the hopes of the desponding—He is risen! He is risen, and exhibits, in his own proper person, the stupendous fact of life recalled from the grave by Him who lives forever!

The gloom of bereavement, the night of sorrow, has passed away, and the scene that late was colored by the cloud of death, and held the hearts of thousands sad, is now everywhere mapped and glowing with the gushing radiance of morning—the rising glories of new-born hope! In the remarks we have to offer upon this subject, we select but two topics as particularly worthy your attention—FIRST, THE FACT, AND SECONDLY, THE PURPOSES AND RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

The evidence accessible in support of the assumed fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, admits, we are aware, of a much more extended classification; but, at present, we shall only notice it as *circumstantial and positive, in its general nature and more explicit bearings.*

We do not propose an extended elaborate argument, but barely a specimen—a miscellaneous exemplification of the advantages possessed by the Christian in any controversy that may arise on this subject. And it is more especially our wish to enlarge the views, increase the consolation and accredit the hopes, of the faithful, whose attention we may have while we address you.

When we propose availing ourselves of *circumstantial* evidence in support of the Resurrection of Christ, we intend to inquire, *how far the fact, as narrated, supports itself and is probably true, in its consecutive details, in view of the nature and fitness of things.* The second division of proof, will be an attempt to estimate *the amount of evidence existing, extrinsic of the fact, which can, nevertheless, be brought to bear legitimately upon the proof of its*

*occurrence.* This last class of evidence, is based upon the universally conceded fact, that that evidence which can be judged of by the senses, and which has been submitted to the inspection of multitudes, in every aspect and variety of familiar exhibition, and faithfully preserved and handed down to us in the authentic records of history, must be positive in its nature, and will be so regarded by every master of mind and the laws of evidence. Reject the truth of this proposition, and the deed invests universal history with the attributes of fiction, and the memoirs of all the successive actors in the great drama of human life become a fable and a cheat. The fundamental laws of human belief are totally subverted, and universal doubt ends in the ever-increasing fluctuation of all our hopes and all our aims.

*The circumstances of the case, then, we allege first, prepare the way, and strongly incline unbiassed intelligence to credit the assumption, that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.*

A reasonable presumption in favor of the fact, is, that Heaven had frankly and explicitly rested the truth of the Christian Religion upon its accomplishment, and it was accordingly typically announced in symbol, and also plainly foretold both by prophets and by our Lord himself.

Hence, agreeably to the instituted meaning of the ancient types and shadows—once constituent elements of a now defunct dispensation—Jesus Christ was not only destined to suffer in the significant rite of the Passover, but to rise triumphant in the first fruits of the harvest.

In the virtual sacrifice and miraculous rescue of Isaac upon Mount Moriah, we have preshadowed alike, the death and the Resurrection of Christ.

His confinement for three days and nights in the heart of the earth had been strikingly prefigured by the mysterious detention of the prophet for the same length of time in the stomach of the fish. Little indeed did the borderers of Israel, upon the shores of the Mediterranean, who heard the story, and still less the ill-fated mariners who threw the Prophet overboard, suppose that this circumstance, so trivial in common deeming, was to become big with meaning in the plans of Omniscience, by symbolizing the term of Messiah's exanimation, and the time of his revival from the dead.

The translation, in their case reversing the common law of humanity, of Enoch and Elijah, both illustrious personal types of the Son of God, had demonstrated the indestructible elements and final indissolubility of the human body, and preintimated, in no obscure way, its resurrection from the dead. And if extraordinary virtue, in conformity with the Divine arrangements, entitled these men to overstep the grave and reach the abodes of the blest without tasting death, it furnishes strong presumption, that the sinless humanity of our Lord could not be holden of death, nor long remain in the custody of the tomb. The pains of the one and the penalties of the other, were endured by him only as our surety, belonged only to a brief term—a single paragraph of his history; and when he had finished the great work of redemption, he resumed his life from the grave, to die no more.

That Jesus Christ should resume immortality amid the shades of death, and become the subject of a second birth from the inanition of the grave, was among the least equivocal intimations of infinite foresight—"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" the application of which, as originally intended, is, in the

New Testament, limited to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The same prophetic discernment had also said, with the most determinate significance, that He should enter the grave "free among the dead;" that is, not as a subject, but voluntary visitant, with the power and purpose of returning.

The unrivaled prophet and bard of Israel had, centuries before, predicted his death, and left it upon record that his life should not terminate in the grave, "nor his flesh see corruption."

He had said to the Church, the deceased faithful—"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise."

Hosea, as usually interpreted, had announced his revival from the grave on the third day after the great sacrifice of the Christian Dispensation, and he himself had frequently assured the Church and the world of the same fact, during his personal ministrations upon earth.

He had said he would rise, and that he would rise the "third day." The finger of prophecy not only pointed to the fact, that he should rise, but the dial of Heaven rested on the hour destined to witness his rising! If, then, he had not risen at the time and under the circumstances designated, by his own and Heaven's showing he had been a deceiver, and the falsification of his pretensions had been within the competency of the most unlettered discernment.

Again, the declarations of our Lord, the assurances of prophecy, and the anticipations of his friends, on this subject, were known and read of all men. And, accordingly, his Resurrection was vigilantly guarded against both by Jews and Romans, and every possible measure

of prevention had been duly adopted and effectively resorted to.

The authority of the Jewish Sanhedrim, with all its watchful spleen and hoary malice, was interposed for the safety of the body.

The Proconsular seal of the Roman Empire told the intruder that death would avenge its violation.

Sixty ruffian soldiers armed with spear and javelin, were present to do their duty.

His grief stricken disciples had yielded to despair and came not near his tomb. And, surely, calculating upon principles merely human, sixty living men, bred in a camp and inured to arms, could prevent the escape of one dead one—could they not? And yet, on the morning of the third day our Lord is risen! Now let skepticism account for the fact, and tell us how it happened.

Two angels, who had sped their delegated way from Heaven to earth, to reassure the trembling hopes of the Infant Church, announce his rising at two different times, as the express verification of his own assurances—“He is risen, *as he said.*”

It was attested by the convulsions and commotions of an earthquake, a kind of argument, by the way, intelligible to all, and resisted by none who witnessed it. Even the guard, in presence of the Imperial Labarum, felt that it was the avenging hand of God, which froze their blood with horror, paled their cheek with fear, and stretched them lifeless on the ground! For these very keepers or sentinels—a division of the Roman legion—sixty in number, stationed at the sepulcher, to resist the rising of the Savior, petrified with fear at the fact of his rising, sank powerless to earth, and “became as dead men.” And when they rose and fled, it was to tell, that

true his words of power had broken the stern empire of death, and encompassed humanity with the light of life!

Many of the saints that had been interred, perhaps, for ages, arose as witnesses from the untraveled bourn of the future—appeared in the palpable form of human beings in the streets of the once holy, but now accursed city—and offered their reproduced bodies, fresh from the grave, to the gaze of inquisitive thousands, as proofs of the fact, and a part of the spoil gracing his triumph.

As might be expected, the soldiers (the military guard) fled, and published everywhere the fact of the supernatural rising of the Son of God. Truth and conviction forced upon their understanding and senses so impulsively, made them honest for the time, and they told the story as the facts occurred, until they were finally bribed, but unfortunately too late for the success of the forgery, by their now defeated and confounded masters, to tell the most unfeasible falsehood—the most improbable lie that ever hung on the lips of sin or hell—that is, being well paid for it, they came into court and swore to a fact that should have taken place confessedly while they were asleep! And this too, although it was death by the Roman law for a sentinel to sleep upon his post, as we learn from Josephus, Tacitus, Dion and others. What would you think of a witness appearing in any well regulated court of judicature, and for a given sum of money, solemnly deposing in the name of God, that certain persons did thus and so while he was asleep! If witnesses of this description, thus pliant and purchasable, are necessary to the hopes and plans of infidelity—why, then, God preserve honest men from such an interest, for they certainly have no business with it, and are found, to say the least, in very questionable company.

The plain state of the case is this: the body is missing on the third day; and let the guard, *who are alone responsible for its safety*, account for its disappearance from the sepulcher. And let this be done in some rational, reliable way, without resorting to a fabrication so utterly unskillful and bungling, that, to believe it, a man must possess the previous qualification of mindless stupidity, or be so influenced by the sympathies of invincible prejudice, as to be unable to disbelieve anything that may happen to be told him, by his friends or his party.

This, however, allow us to say, it is not within the competency of infidel ingenuity to do, and can be done in no way except by yielding to the Scripture account of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Although the success of our argument does not depend upon it, we may be allowed to premise here, by the way, that, before the skeptic can discredit the fact of the Resurrection of our Lord, he must invalidate the truth and authenticity of the Christian Revelation, which circumstantially narrates and everywhere assumes this most momentous verity.

We will not mock the impotence, the hopeless inability, of the infidel, by asking him to attempt that, in failure of which his superior friends have felt their infirmity and were glad to retire. It would scarcely be generous, we know; and yet how can we fail to remind him of what awaits him, in a muster of the enemies and the arms of Christianity, in which—archangel fallen—the devil himself, with all his intellectual preëminence, has exhausted alike his skill and his patience, and the most illustrious, the first-born of his children, have grown grey and died in rage or the inertness of despair, from generation to generation, without effecting anything worthy of name



or notice. So certainly, therefore, as the Bible is true, thus inevitably has our Lord risen from the dead, and revived our sinking hopes by the acclaiming salutation: "I am he that was dead, but, behold, I am alive forever more."

Philosophical skeptics, however, apart from the historical question at issue, have objected, first, that the resurrection of the dead was a natural, or rather physical, impossibility. And if this be so, all must see that "Christ is not risen."

By others it has been urged, secondly, as a moral impossibility, not resulting from any of the known moral relations of our nature. And, if this be so, our Lord is still in the grave. A moment's attention, however, will satisfy you, that both these objections are absurd, viewed only in the light of philosophy, or tested by any allowable process of sound inductive reasoning.

And, first: The resurrection of the dead is not a natural or physical impossibility; for, certainly, he who originally produced, as admitted by the infidel, the human body from the dust of the earth, having purposed it, could as easily give its reproduction the same origin. Its reproduction from the dust of the earth, in the resurrection, carries with it no implication of impossibility not involved in its original production from the same source. The objection, therefore, proving too much, proves nothing, and, of course, furnishes the conclusion, that it is good for nothing.

Nor is it, secondly, morally impossible for God to raise the dead. Nothing is morally impossible with God but what is inconsistent with his moral character. But, in view of what data will the infidel assume, it is inconsistent with the moral character of God, or his purposes entering into the formation of that character, to raise

the dead? Would not the man subject himself to the imputation of mental fatuity, not less than moral lunacy, who would attempt to prove it?

Could it not be much more readily proved, that it is most revoltingly inconsistent with all that is known of the moral character of God, to decree the *death* of man without the hope or possibility of revival? This, as we reason on the subject, is the only staggering improbability in the case. All reasoning, therefore, against the resurrection of Christ *a priori*, as impossible, is to dogmatize without reason—is sheer, naked foolishness, without any mixture or semblance of sound philosophy.

We are now prepared, perhaps, to approach the chief argument of infidelity against the resurrection of Christ, and thus meet the anti-Christian disputant as we find him proudly fortified in his own favorite citadel. We allude to the grand argument of Mr. Hume against all miracles as incredible, and their assumption as foolish, because absurd—because inconsistent with the common experience of mankind. His argument, in all its force, is, that no evidence can establish a miracle, inasmuch as it is more probable that the witnesses would deceive, or might be deceived themselves, than that the Almighty would transgress or depart from the ordinary established laws of nature, for any purpose whatever.

In reply, we remark, that more than one important question is tamely begged by the sophist in the mere act of hypothecating and stating the objection—a rather suspicious start, or bad beginning, to say the least of it. The sophist assumes that the course of nature is tied down and controlled by definite, fixed laws, unalterable even by the Lawgiver himself who imposed them, and that all miracles are breaches, and, of necessity, directly violative of them. That the objection may

have any force, it is indispensable that the objector produce the code of which he speaks, and show that, beyond all doubt, miraculous interposition is precluded from the government of nature; otherwise, it may turn out that such interposition by the Lawgiver, in the suspension or modification of his own laws, may be one of the very laws of which the objector speaks.

God is the author of nature, and the sole ordainer of nature's laws, and whatever he may do, in the department of nature, cannot possibly offer violence to either. But, further, it is known and admitted, that the apparent deviations from established laws, in the career of the comet—the devastations of the whirlwind—the convulsions of the earthquake—the burst of the volcano, and so of the rest—are all really constituent parts of a regular system—the system of nature; and let the skeptic show, if he can, that miraculous interpositions are less so. The one is not more remarkable in the moral than the other in the natural world, nor can the truth of the exceptions, in any way, affect the undoubted verity of the general rule.

A miracle is an extra exertion of Almighty energy in the government of the universe. And, to say that God has not reserved to himself the right of such exertion, and occasionally acted upon the reservation, is a most illogical and absurd begging of the whole question, beside being foolish and irrational in itself; for it is the dictate, alike of reason and common sense, that the discovery and attestation of truths, infinitely important to more worlds than one, render the display of supernatural power at once reasonable and necessary, and, in a course of extraordinary events, such as Christianity assumes, natural and to be expected withal.

Grant that the argument in favor of Christ's resurrec-

tion turns mainly, though not exclusively, by any means, upon the testimony of the apostles. Yet, if we look at the evidence they furnish, and their manner of furnishing it, we shall be satisfied, first, with regard to their undoubted sincerity ; secondly, their obvious mental competency ; and, finally, their Divine commission. Deceived, themselves, they could not have been. The supposition is an outrage upon every principle of moral certainty.

They had been in constant and intimate intercourse with our Lord for more than three years ; and, therefore, knew him well beyond the possibility of deception, in this respect. No artful or ghostly process of legerdemain—no visual or phantasmagoric illusion—could possibly have deceived them, with regard to his proper personal identity. They saw him frequently, at different times, and each time under different circumstances, for forty days successively after his resurrection, with all the advantages of an intimate acquaintance of at least forty-two months before. He ate and drank, conversed and conferred with them. He wrought miracles before them. They handled his person and felt his wounds. And when he ascended, he did it publicly—in their presence, and before their eyes, and all in the broad daylight of Heaven. Anything like self-deception, therefore, with the apostles, or being themselves deceived, was impossible.

To say the apostles and other witnesses were rude, unlettered persons, and, therefore, not competent witnesses in the premises, is not less preposterous. Replying to the charge, in part, by pointing to the classic, immortal productions of a portion of them, as found in the Sacred Volume, it will be proper to remind you, that the most skillful naturalist would not be better qualified

to know and identify a friend with whom he had recently parted—say the day before yesterday, as in the case before us—than would the most unlettered plebeian or rudest commoner. No acquaintance with the laws of light, or the wonders of vision, would be necessary to enable a witness to swear to the well-known person of a friend repeatedly seen and conversed with in open daylight. Indeed, the further we prosecute the argument, the more decidedly does infidelity become the loser.

The objection just dismissed, having failed to answer its purpose, it is alleged, further, that the apostles, although not deceived themselves, attempted, and not without success, the deception of others. To urge this objection, is to say they acted without motive, aim or hope. You assume that men of sense, for all admit them to be such, labored, suffered and sacrificed, without the hope of gain or emolument of any kind, in the immediate prospect of the ax, the cross and the stake, only for the love of infamy on earth, and with the appalling certainty of perdition beyond the grave! For they knew, if they were deceivers, that it was in the power of every school-boy in Jerusalem to throw them back upon the bosom of the world, a pack of perjured villains; and all they knew of God and virtue, taught but too explicitly, that, for such deception, they must, through all the eternal future, be outcasts from the one and the other.

Having thus glanced at this principal argument, long regarded as the *chef d'œuvre* of infidel sophistry, we proceed to show, *that we have positive and indubitable evidence, that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.*

He was seen “alive, after his passion,” by scores and hundreds of persons, and these reputable for truth and

integrity, who knew him well, intimately and infallibly, for a term of years before and up to the very day of his death; and their testimony, in the face and under the eye of hostile millions, has been transmitted to us, from age to age, with every mark—all the distinctive signatures of authentic narration and historical probability.

If, therefore, the fact of the resurrection of Christ be not proved; then, to transfer and apply the reasoning as will always be done by the common sense of mankind, it follows, by inevitable deduction, that the world is without proof that the Cæsars ever reigned in Rome or the Ptolemies in Egypt.

The personal appearances of our Lord, to his friends and others, were numerous and striking. We know it has been assumed, in prejudice to the Gospel history, and plead in bar to the reception of the Christian argument, that Christ only appeared to his personal friends after his resurrection. This, however, though conceded too generally by Christian apologists, and greatly stressed by infidels, is not correct in whole or in part. And, in proof, it is a singular fact, that he first appeared to the legionary guard, who were present by the appointment of those who had crucified him. These watchful enemies were not only present, but banded, armed and sworn to prevent his escape, and yet, impotently, one and all saw him rise and disappear.

Here, then, were three score of his enemies, who saw the risen Savior before any of the disciples saw him, who were the first asserters of the fact, and first preached the astounding story to the amazed listeners of Jerusalem; and, in this respect, had the vantage ground of the whole school of the disciples; and, notwithstanding the incredible fraud they were subsequently bribed

to attempt—having it so perfectly in our power to detect and expose it—we are allowed to avail ourselves of *their original testimony*, given under no possible suspicion of improper motive.

As the Jews and Romans had publicly confided all to the military guard, duly appointed in the case, and had themselves declined all further connection with it, when the risen Savior appeared to the guard, he had triumphantly vindicated his mission *before the proper representatives both of Roman and Jewish authority*; and to have otherwise presented himself to his enemies, would have been a departure from the uniform course of independent and dignified action, by which his whole life had been distinguished.

But, again, our Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene at the sepulcher, on the very morning he arose, and under circumstances rendering this early and amiable disciple of his a most important witness.

On the same day, shortly after, he appeared to other women of the first Christian family, three or four in number, on their way from the sepulcher.

On the evening of the same day again, he appeared to Cleophas and another disciple, on their way to Emmaus, a small village some six miles from Jerusalem.

He appeared soon after to Simon Peter; and how instructive, how impressive was the interview! Guilt-stricken and degraded, sorrow for the past had rudely chiseled the unfortunate Peter into a statue of grief, until his risen Master forgave and reassured him.

He appeared to ten of his disciples in the guest-chamber at Jerusalem, rendered sacred by previous meetings for conference and prayer.

On the eighth day after his resurrection, the first Christian Sabbath, “he appeared to the Eleven.”

Soon after, he appeared to seven of the disciples "at the Sea of Tiberius."

He appeared again to "the Eleven, apart in a mountain of Galilee."

Under circumstances of unusual solemnity and distinction, he appeared to "the Eleven again," just before his ascension.

He was seen by "more than five hundred" in a "mountain of Galilee," long before placed in nomination by himself for this special purpose: and this exhibition of himself was looked forward to as the *public test* of the final authentication of his claims.

Yet, again, he appeared to "the Eleven" in Mount Olivet, who saw him rise refulgent from the mountain, until the opening heavens received him out of sight, and throned him whence he came!

He was seen by "James the Less." James the Just belonged to "the Eleven," often quoted before—was a member of the college of the apostles, and his testimony is merged in theirs. James the Less, therefore, comes in as a separate additional witness.

He was seen by Stephen, the proto-martyr, as he rose to Heaven amid a shower of stones, and the unmingled curses of the mob!

He was seen by Paul, as one born out of due time, not only on his way to Damascus, but when, afterward, the light of the "third Heaven" taught him the mysteries of his creed.

He was seen by John in Apocalyptic vision, as he gazed on the magnificent diorama of the past, the present, and the future.

Angels were present, and saw him rise. They afterward witness and publish his ascension, and predict his reascension to judge the world. And, as they were



careful to leave their testimony with men on both occasions by audible communication, it could have been for no other purpose but for us to make use of it, as in this argument.

The apostles go forth, and everywhere publish the story of his resurrection; and, in doing so, they do not seek a barbarous and uncultivated people, the sure resort of deceivers and pretenders, but they carry the tidings of their crucified and risen Master into the center of victorious Greece and triumphant Rome! Thousands, including the polished Greek and haughty Roman, are persuaded of its truth, and converted to God. The Holy Ghost descends in visible form upon the day of Pentecost. The vision of the audience of crowding thousands is dazzled by heavenly effulgence. The gift of tongues is granted, and the polyglotic crowd, in the mingled accents of not less than seventeen different dialects, publish the wonderful works of God! The lame leap, the dumb sing, the living die, and the dead rise—and, by every variety of miraculous display, we have confirmed to us the grand pledge of the world's redemption in the triumphant rising of the Son of God from the darkness of the tomb!

But it is objected by the oppugners of the fact and doctrine of our Lord's resurrection: We cannot believe the record, however accredited—no array of historical verity can command our faith—upon a subject so momentous, we cannot believe without ocular demonstrative evidence connected with the senses.

You mean, not that you cannot, but that you will not, believe, if you can help it. To say you cannot believe, proves you ignorant of all the fundamental principles of human belief, and especially, as connected with the laws of moral demonstration and historical credibility. You

have, for example, no ocular and, in your sense, demonstrative evidence of the existence and deeds of such men as Cæsar, Alexander, Hannibal, and Charlemagne, and never can have any. If you believe at all, it must be upon the basis of precisely the kind of evidence by which we prove the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

You have no ocular demonstrative evidence that our ancestors were of European origin—that there ever existed such cities as Ninevah, Babylon, Jerusalem, and Rome; nor can you ever have any. And yet no sane person affects to doubt either, unless, perhaps, a disciple of Hume or Berkeley (with whom doubting is reduced to a science, and taught as an art), who affects to doubt every thing, even his own existence—who has doubted himself into the belief that the Alps are a train of “ideas,” and a thunder-storm but excited “sensations.” And who, to be consistent, must of necessity doubt the correctness of his own doubting theory, and the ultimatum of whose philosophical certainty is, that our puzzled philosopher is really in doubt, finally, whether he has ever doubted at all or not, or whether there even be such a thing as doubt—which, after all, he sets down as doubtful!

In further reply to the exceptions of Infidelity, we remark, that, in support of the fact under notice, we have an accumulation of the most astonishing moral evidence ever presented in support of any other fact of contemporary date. We have the testimony of at least five hundred and eighty witnesses, who saw our Lord alive, after his resurrection—the most of whom, if not all, knew him well before, and many of whom had only been separated from him about thirty-six hours. Sixty of these were his sworn enemies, as we have seen; and, having been bought up, basely perjured themselves to

discredit the fact of his rising, which they themselves had first published to the world. Six of the witnesses—at least four—were from Heaven; and the remaining number were, with perhaps a few exceptions, his friends, and in his interest upon earth.

This vast mass of circumstantial and positive evidence, has come down to us in due historical form, and is fairly entitled to the undivided suffrage of the human understanding.

Add to this, that, to give every opportunity to his friends and enemies, our Lord deferred the destruction of Jerusalem, the scene of his triumph, for forty years after his resurrection. Had the destruction of Jerusalem succeeded the ascension of the Savior immediately, Infidelity would have pleaded, that war, blood-shed, and revolution—the sack of the city, and pillage of the country—earthquake, ravage, and conflagration—rendered it impossible for the history of the times—including especially the great event in question—to be written and preserved; and such an objection must have been felt. But, fortunately, we have no such objection to meet. Jerusalem stood in comparative peace and quiet for nearly half a century, and during this time the question of our Lord's resurrection came before every tribunal in the civilized world: was notorious in all Judea—reported to the Roman Senate—discussed at Athens and Corinth—became a recorded fact in history, and all without being contradicted by any historian, or other author of antiquity. The Jewish Rabbis and Pagan Annalists, unable to disprove, may be fairly considered as admitting the fact by the absence of all contradiction and, with a few important exceptions, the observance of studied silence with regard to the whole matter.

The general rule here, magnifies the importance of

the exceptions. The fact, that Christ rose from the dead, is distinctly mentioned by Josephus, as one of extensive notoriety and belief. It is expressly admitted, too, in the Jewish Talmud, although written expressly to discredit the claims of Christianity. And in the Acts of Pilate, transmitted to the Roman Senate, it is officially reported as matter of common publicity. Soon after, Pliny and Tacitus allude to the fact, and Celsus and Porphery concede it as historically true; while by his disciples and followers it was published everywhere—in the Synagogue, the Temple, the Pretorium—throughout Jewry, Galilee of the nations, and elsewhere. The banner of his cross was unfurled, and the trophies of his victory displayed upon the very spot where late the mob, the tree and the nail, held him to a cursed death.

The first preachers of Christ and the Cross shrank from no investigation or trial of their cause. They flung themselves into the arena, and bore themselves gallantly in the grand tournament of conflicting creeds and nations. They fearlessly confronted themselves with Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian. The Galilean, the Mede, the Parthian and the Elamite, stood horror-struck and confounded before them. Cappadocia, Pontus, Bythinia, Asia, Egypt and Pamphylia, bowed to the burden of their story. The throned opinions of immemorial generations sunk beneath the Divinity of their mission. The thunder of their rebuke shook the Acropolis of Athens, and crumbled the temples of Greece. They threw down the seed of eternal life at the feet of the Roman Emperors—the jeweled satraps of the East trembled upon their thrones of gem and gold; and, when they returned to review their work, they were saluted by the Church of God in the saloons of the Imperial household and the pavilions of eastern magnifi-

cence, while the effusion of His Spirit covered the islands of the sea with his glory, and regenerated the continent by its hallowed, all-pervading influence.

In a word, Christianity became the great well-head of moral discovery and ethical information; and the Pulpit, as the theater and symbol of its unrivaled ministrations, then, as now, stood out, not less the throne of taste and attraction, than the beacon light of immortality to the benighted children of earth and time.

The doctrine of the resurrection, therefore, is no longer a disputed problem. The resurrection of Jesus Christ has solved the mystery. The diffidence of hope and expectation that prevailed on this subject for ages is now overcome, and the clear light of infallible demonstration shines, where the darkness of despair late held its scepter and saddened the nations.

A poet of antiquity had pathetically lamented, that sun, moon, and stars sat, but rose again—that the vegetable race died in autumn only to revive under the vernal equinox—but that man, even the best of human beings, sank in death to rise no more! The revelations of Christianity, however, show the gloomy dirge of the hoary Moschus to have been premature in its touching lament. We have, as we have seen, the inestimable assurance, that, with the believer in Christ, the close of life is the dawn of immortality, and death the birthday of a new and nobler existence at God's right hand.

Addressing you, then, as Christians, let the fact and doctrine of Christ's resurrection, and the hope of your own, become the burden of your mission and the inspiration of your song. "Tell his disciples he is risen from the dead"! Tell his disciples; for to them the tidings will be supremely grateful. Tell them; for they, of all others, are entitled to know it. Tell them; for they

alone and at once will understand the story. Tell them ; for they will tell it to others. Let it be told to others ; for these in turn will become his disciples too. Ministers and disciples of Christ ! tell it to all ! Ever and aggressively break the repose of earth's dull ear, and pass the rapturous acclaim to the nations—*He is risen !*

II. IN GIVING THE SEQUEL OF THE ARGUMENT, IT REMAINS, THAT WE ASK ATTENTION TO THE PURPOSES AND RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ; OR THAT, WITH THE FACT, WE CONNECT THE DOCTRINE OF HIS RESURRECTION. How the resurrection of Christ connects with the interests of practical Christianity, must be obvious to every well-informed believer in its truth. Alluding to the resurrection of Christ and its concomitant results, St. Peter says, “And we are his witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” This co-witnessing agency of the Holy Spirit in every true believer in Christ, with regard to the fact and purposes of his resurrection, is a much neglected but most important view of the subject, and furnishes sufficient warrant for the aspects in which we shall have occasion to present it.

With regard to the first part of our subject, the learned and candid *Grotius* remarks, in a letter to the celebrated *Bigonius*, after a most careful and patient examination of the evidence in support of Christ's resurrection, “No one can withstand the credibility of so many and so great testimonies.” And, admitting the fact, who can fail to perceive the great practical importance of this most momentous verity, in the creed of the Christian.

The bold and eloquent *Luther*, descanting upon the words of our text, says, “The words, *Christ is risen from the dead*, should be everywhere inscribed in such large

characters, that we should be unable to see anything else, not even Heaven and earth."

With what distinctive preëminence especially does the doctrine of Christ's resurrection stand out in the writings of the Apostles, and how truly ought it to be the great theme of the Christian teacher everywhere, whether "in climes that burn with fierce, or freeze with distant, suns," instead of the but too common contention about creed, form and ritual, with the getting up and blazonry of which, Heaven has had much less to do than man.

Would we could suitably impress you with the high moral bearing of our subject. Take any number of facts you may, a thousand or less, coming to us athwart the wide waste of receding centuries, and what one reaches us so attested and exerting such an influence as the resurrection of Christ! What other event has crowded the mighty vista of the future with such sublime and stirring hopes, uplifting us from the degradation of sin and sorrow, and teaching us to aspire after sonship with God and intercourse with angels!

If Christ had not risen as truly as he died, the failure would have been the orphanage of hope and the bankruptcy of our being, in view of all the lofty issues and eternal destinies of the one and the other! Now, however, in preaching "Christ crucified," we point to the risen Savior. The antecedent truth implies the sequent verity; for, in the language of Heaven, furnished us by the finger of God, "Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the living and the dead."

Infinitely important, therefore, are the purposes and results of his resurrection. We turn suddenly from the dark back-ground of the picture—the garden, the cross and the grave—to gaze upon the coronation splendor of

the Prince of Life. When the dawn of morning broke upon the night-watch of the disciples, they felt that the whole heaven of their hopes was in ruins, and that the sepulcher of their Master was the grave of immortality! An hour after, they see the banner of life waving triumphant above the citadel of death!

Stupendous event! Then our nature took wing, in fact as well as prospect, and mounted with him from the tomb! Faith is triumphant in the retrospect, and the future spreads out before the eye a gay and happy scene. When, as the "great Captain of our salvation," the suffering Son of God had met and satisfied the last demand of justice—had entered, as our surety, the dark dominion of the dead—had rendered grateful the retreat of the tomb—had perfumed the grave for the believer, and planted the flower of Heaven's eternal spring in the moss of the sepulcher—then, then he rose, in spoilful grandeur, over the wreck of death's proudest hopes, and, in Godlike triumph, dragged to his ascending car the captivity of a dying world!

*The resurrection of Christ proves and publishes the truth and importance of the religion he came to teach.* His resurrection is the accomplishment of ancient prophecy—the fulfilment of the promise made to the Fathers, as well as the accomplishment of his own predictions on the same subject—in all which, his resurrection is made the test of the truth and Divinity of his mission. The fact, therefore, that he did rise from the dead, demonstrates, in a manner the most luminous and irrefutable, the Divine original of the religion he came to teach, and its truth is thus clearly and triumphantly authenticated by the public seal of Omniscience itself.

More than a thousand years before the death of Christ, prophecy had assured us, that, although he should fall



by the stroke of death, he should not remain in the grave nor his flesh see corruption. If, then, our Lord had not risen, agreeably to the testimony of prophets and his own predictions to the same effect, the high pretensions of revealed religion would have been disproved in the face of day, and her numerous oracles struck dumb forever. But the fact that he did rise, gives the impress of Divinity and certainty to the whole history of human redemption; and the problem of the immortality of our nature is thus reduced to an axiom by this crowning proof of the mission and Messiahship of the Son of God. For, without his resurrection, the credentials alike of the one and the other would have been incomplete; and, with such insufficient warrant, the bare pretense had been the ridicule of ages!

*The resurrection of Christ accredits his claim to the faith and obedience of the nations.* Ancient prophecy had announced him King in Sion and Ruler of his people Israel. But the ultimate substantiation of this claim stood intimately connected with his resurrection, and without it would have been void. Rising from the dead, however, as the divinely accredited Head and Leader of God's people, his claim to their submission and obedience admitted of no dispute, no uncertainty. His regal establishment upon the hill of Sion, his public and princely coronation upon the throne of David and over the house of Jacob, precluded forever all rational ground of doubt or disobedience.

Meanwhile it must not be forgotten, but borne in mind at every step, that, had our Lord not risen from the dead, the accursed ravings of the crucifixion would have been the motto of unbelieving millions in all coming time, "He saved others, himself he could not save." Infidelity would have said, not "If thou be the Son of

God, come down from the cross," but, "If thou be the Son of God," come up from the grave "and we will believe in thee." His resurrection, however, closed the mouth of unbelief and sealed the lips of hell, and both are made reluctantly to confess, "Truly, this was the Son of God;" and by how far this is now certain, ours has been, in his rejection, a most sad and damning divergence from truth and duty.

*His resurrection removed forever all idea of shame and scandal, defeat and overthrow, connected with the Cross.* The ignominy of crucifixion and the gibbet is last in the conception of simple suffering and expiation, and the stain of his humiliation is effaced in the triumph by which it was succeeded.

Obscure, indeed, was his life, unparalleled his sufferings, and most extraordinary "the decease he accomplished at Jerusalem:" yet all this no longer shocks the mind of the humble, ingenuous inquirer after God and virtue. We connect the fact of his becoming poor with the more impressive and important fact of his poverty issuing in the riches of many. We lose sight of him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, to contemplate the effulgent, the transcendent, display of his glory that followed. Regarding him only as the great Restorer of the hopes and Deliverer of the souls of men, the Cross of his humiliation, on which he bowed his head in achievement of the world's redemption, is, in the eyes of the admiring millions brought under its influence, converted into a throne of glory.

On the Friday of the Passover we see him agonizing, bleeding and dying, uncheered by his friends and insulted by his foes. The next Sabbath morning we behold him risen, beatified and triumphant! Look at the magnificent variety of pomp, circumstance and wonder, un-

der which he sprang from the lap of corruption to glory, honor and immortality! Death obtained a temporary triumph, it is true, but was soon victoriously foiled, and, upon the point of his own arrow, doomed to die. And the almighty Conqueror, having placed his foot upon the neck of the king of terrors, and everywhere subverted the empire of the grave, cries to his followers, the dead and the dying, "I am the resurrection and the life;" and soon—looking at ages in the light of eternity—soon ten thousand thousand tongues, from their myriad graves, in earth or ocean, shall echo back the strain, and hail with heavenly transport the author and the deed!

*His resurrection furnished evidence of his elevation and investiture, as Ruler and Judge, connected with the nature, design and grandeur, of his mission.* In his new character of Mediator, he was appointed to sustain the empire of the world and wield the burden of its vast concerns. His scepter, by special compact as well as original right, comprehended the worlds of Nature, Providence and Grace, and the boon or bounty of either is to be received as his executive gift.

In whatever sense he may have been "born King of the Jews and Ruler of his people Israel," the verification of such claim carried with it the implication of his resurrection, as essential to his high inauguration to the moral lieutenancy of the universe—the mediatorial sovereignty of Heaven and earth. And hence the day on which he rose from the dead was eminently the birth-day of that memorable enthronization which constituted him "King of kings and Lord of lords."

It was then he was clothed with the ensigns of heavenly royalty and assumed the helm of universal empire. Of sin, death and hell, he had already made fearful

spoil upon the Cross, and now he leads them captive. He had lately entered their territory as an invader, and now he bears off their chains and fetters in triumph to Heaven, there to reign until, planting the banner of his Cross upon the tower of conquest, he shall give the world to goodness and to God.

*It was reserved for the resurrection of Christ, to assert the efficacy and completion of his atonement and sacrifice.* These were made by his death; yet, had he not risen from the dead, the world would have been without evidence that such atonement and sacrifice had been made at all. The death of Christ, in ancient prophecy, not less than type and shadow, as we have seen, expressly anticipated his resurrection as the pledge and proof of the suitableness and sufficiency of his atonement for all the purposes of human recovery. And the resurrection of Christ is uniformly predicated of his death, in proof that it was an atonement for the sins of men. While, therefore, the death of Christ filled up the measure of atonement, the resurrection of Christ proclaims its efficacy and completion.

By Divine purpose and appointment, the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, all occur in established connection as antecedent and sequent. Hence, the high and benevolent offices of Advocate, Ruler and Judge, and the eventful executive transactions engaging his attention, since the gates of the Heaven he had left were thrown wide to receive him as God's returning Son and man's triumphant Savior, all connect directly with his resurrection, and, without it, would be but inconsequent and unaccredited assumptions. His resurrection was the seal of his Mediatorship, and crowned him Lord of all.

*The resurrection of Christ renders certain and infalli*

*ble the hope and prospect of our own resurrection.* That between Christ's resurrection and our own, as cause and effect, there is a necessary established connection, is a position everywhere plain and patent upon the face of Revelation. This is exclusively a doctrine of the Bible—is pure matter of Revelation, and is only found and cherished in the creed of the Christian. "Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." "Christ risen is the first fruits of them that slept." "First Christ and then those that are his at his coming." "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus shall likewise quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." "He that raised up Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus." "Christ hath abolished death." "By man"—the man Christ Jesus—"came also the resurrection of the dead." Christ is expressly said to be the "Savior of the body," which could not be without its resurrection.

Some further explanation may help us to a better understanding of the subject. We are members of Christ's mystical body, and we are such as embodied intelligences with all the substantial elements of humanity, and, surely, no part of that body, including the material not less than immaterial, can be lost in the gloom, the oblivion of the sepulcher.

In the case of those who believe, he saves human nature entire, as a generic universality, compounded of soul and body. The body is as essentially a constituent part of human nature as the soul, and is not less fundamentally connected with its identity and perfection. Man is composed of the only known substances in the universe—matter and spirit; and Heaven saves him, if at all, in the complex physiology of nature, in which he

was created, and stands out the mysterious type of universal being. Hence the redemption of the body is necessary to man's salvation; and without it, his being is wrecked and, at best, but one-half saved, while the other is lost. God-dishonoring thought!—may you put it far from you!

Our bodies, further, are “temples of the Holy Ghost,” and were purchased by the blood of Christ; and it is, therefore, declared by the whole analogy of faith, that they will not, cannot, remain in the grave forever. The original inhabitant and proprietor—the spirit of God—will, in their promised reëdification, restore them from the tomb; and, with our bodies thus restored, we shall be constituted pillars in the great, the imperishable, temple of eternity, “to go out no more.”

To demonstrate the connection between the resurrection of Christ, as the ordained determining cause, and ours, as one of the magnificent results flowing from it, many of the saints that had sunk into the slumber of their long and last repose, when he rose sprang into life with him, fresh in all the morning vigor of immortality. Lazarus and others were restored from the grave and bier, under the new dispensation. Enoch and Elijah were translated under the old, and at least two or three restored from death, all going to show that the human body is destined to survive the grave. And to remove all uncertainty, and everything like doubt, on the subject of its practicability and the Divine purpose to this effect, we see our Lord, in the sight of chosen witnesses, breaking the seal of death, and triumphantly vindicating the imperishableness of humanity, in its reintegration from the ruins of the grave! The promise of God stands fair and sure, and broadly pledged; and the grave, under his control, has already ripened a part of

the vast vintage to show that the rest shall be done in its proper time, when the great Head of the Church shall see fit to reap the harvest of the earth and gather in the vintage of the world.

Our revivescence, therefore, from the sleep of the sepulcher—the glory of our reproduced bodies in the resurrection—is not “the hope of worms,” as alleged by the aspirer after philosophic fame and sway, in the schools of pagan and infidel morality, but the well-accredited hope of reanimation, in immortal bodies, beyond the grave and above decay. We died in the first Adam—we live in the second; we sunk with the earthly—we rise with the heavenly. Christ’s resurrection is the pledge, the proof and the pattern, of ours. He rose, representatively, as a specimen of renovated humanity, and we rise in the regular process of moral causation—once children of mortality and tenants of the tomb, but now promoted to the birth-right of an inheritance imperishable in the Heavens—interminable as the being of God.

Such a train of reflection, however, by the law of contrast, compels us to pause and throw ourselves upon a very different scene. How unutterably wretched must be the condition of those not interested in the resurrection of the just! They reveled or slumbered in crime upon earth—they die without hope, and sink to the hell they thought it not worth while to fear or shun, only to find its angry billows surging about them in deep and undying murmurs forever! Heil! appalling, fearful term! Typing reality still more fearful! Although we find its synonym and ideal prototype in every language the world has ever known, what sign or utterance, so much abused, so little understood! As used by the scoffing levity or blasphemous irreverence of man, it may mean any-

thing or nothing ; but reaching us, as it does, from the lips of Heaven and the finger of God, with meaning all its own, what word in earth's or other vocabulary, was ever in travail with such dread significance ! Would we could give you some idea of the appalling attractions of the hell we depict ! Would that, for a moment, and a moment only, we could dip our tongue in the gall and barb it with the anguish of celestial bitterness, as we point your downward gaze to its deep and vexed abyss, without bank or bottom, and where, on every side, avenging destiny rolls its adverse tides against the unresting damned, not to amend or destroy, but only to meet and break, and roar and rise ! No help for the helpless—no hope for the lost !

But, we have other and more grateful reflections for you. Are you Christians ? Blush not at the high avowal—it is the highest style of man ; and, to the taunt or sneer of infidel indifference, let a life of piety reply, by pointing to the splendor breaking upon you as, arrayed in the similitude of God, you take your seats and rank in heaven !

*Let the subject we have discussed, reconcile you to the afflictions of life, however numerous, however depressing. Amid them all, your world is strictly within yourselves, and its openings look out on immortality. Amid the vexations and disquieting scenes of your earthly toil, say to the Redeemer, my God, my life, my way ! And, amid all the blendings of good and evil here on earth, forget not the stay of your hopes and the song of your pilgrimage—“ I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” This thought will illumine the darkness without and hallow all within.*

*Let this subject reconcile you to the approach of death, whether it be sooner or later. As Christians, you should*



fear no mode of death—no place of sepulcher ; for, in the prospect before you, life renewed springs kindling from decay. Forget not that death himself shall die, and the giant corpse of time lie buried in the grave of years, when you have just begun to live, and that the birth-shout of your rising shall be the dirge of their doom—the knell of their departed reign ; and that the only immortality of time and death, shall be that conferred by you in dying at their hands, only to survive them both ! Live, then, greeting life as God may give it, and yet awaiting death when he shall send it.

*Let this subject reconcile you to your long confinement in the tomb.* Christianity knocks at the gate of the grave and asks back her dead. The grave is our debtor, and Heaven will coerce payment. It is the treasury of Heaven for the preservation and reproduction of the human body. Long, solitary and undisturbed, may be the slumber, but when the trumpet of eternity shall pour its thrilling thunder into the deaf, cold ear of the sepulcher, your God-created forms shall spring to life immortal and renewed, and this body, that in which I speak and you hear, constructed by the hand of God upon a model suggested by his wisdom, shall lift aloft its changeful form, and “soar and shine another and the same.”

*Recollect, too, we sink in death, in the sure and certain prospect of a joyful resurrection,* when our bodies shall be raised, re-molded and rendered immortal in the kingdom of God. When our glorified humanity shall receive the abiding impress of the seal of Heaven, and be decked with every beauty and every splendor befitting the heir of an immortal crown—the tenant of eternal mansions and celestial scenery, every where mapping to the eye, in living myrioramic picture,

the combined magnificence of all the worlds of God.

*We cannot close without asking you to reflect upon the bliss attendant upon this final renovation of our nature, in the kingdom and habitations of the blest.* Christains! this is a thought that swallows up mortality and bids defiance to the grave. It is perfect immunity from all evil—the actual fruition of all good. It is to be insphered in realms of light and life—empalaced in the mansions of heavenly beatitude. It is the perfection and perpetuity of bliss, where God is, all in all, pouring the light of salvation, and the radiance of eternity, upon the millions of his chosen.

But, in describing the heavenly state—the celestial world of light and life—thought, language and images all fail us. It is a theme too high for conception, too grand for description, too sacred—too ineffably sacred—to admit of comparison. The grandeur of *nature* and the glory of art, the dreams of fancy and the creations of poetry, all fade in the vision. Admiration no longer hovers over the elysian fields of Virgil. Homer's sparkling rills of nectar, streaming from the gods, woo our thirst no more. The bright Blandusian fountain, and the magnificent vale of far-famed Cashmere, lose their splendor. Even the paradise of Milton, with its trees and its rivers, its fruits and its flowers, its hymns and its harps—a living landscape with its vernal diadem and voiced with melody—dwindles into sterility! And, until we die to share the ripened powers of immortality and heir the thrones of Heaven, we can only say, that interminable spring shall bloom upon the scene and chase the winter of affliction by its smiles! We feel how utterly language sinks beneath the majesty of the subject—but let the infirmity be eloquent of its praise; for who can sustain

himself when every thought bends and breaks with the burden of its own meaning!

We would, but cannot, tell you of the place to which we go—the home of our Father—the residence of his family—the central abode of final virtue. The august vision makes us tremble as we gaze, and the sublimest reach of human thought can only point, feebly point, to its deep foundations and God built stories—its rainbow coverings and sunlike splendors—walled with adamant and paved with sapphire—crowded with the redeemed, and God in the midst. The high circuit of eternity, the scene of improvement, and the boundless roll of ages—the only key to the evolution of its wonders!

## SERMON VIII.

## THE LAMB OF GOD SEEN AND SOUGHT.

“BEHOLD the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—John i, 29.

WHEN the great prophet of repentance, the immediate harbinger of Messiah, found himself, at the ford of Jordan and elsewhere, surrounded by a crowd of anxious immortals, he contented himself, on more occasions than one, regarding it as the sum of his vocation, to point them to the “Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world;” and, under whatever circumstances of distance and disadvantage, relying upon Divine aid, we humbly essay to imitate his example.

The human mind is ever and restlessly breaking loose from the present and the perishable about it, and grasping after something in the distance; thus attesting its own dignity, and furnishing prophetic assurance of its intended destiny.

Search after happiness, is the great law of human life. Any attempt, therefore, to present you with a cup, in which disappointment and death can mingle no new anguish for the future, must, at least, be regarded as laudable; and may we not assume, that there is no man, bowing to the humiliation of his lot on earth, who will not find reasons, stronger than all contradiction, to defer to every such inquiry with at least honest solicitude.

It is not more certain, that intelligence controls the order of the universe, than that Christianity, with its principles and relations, is, beyond all others, the religion of research. If, then, we would be religious

to any purpose, in view of the Christian system, we must inform ourselves on the subject, both as it regards faith and ethics—what we are to believe, and what do.

And, further, if it be in any sense true, that the riches of eternity alone can ennoble the poverty of time and indemnify suffering humanity against the evils of earth; then it will follow, that every topic connected with the lofty theme of human hope and human destiny, becomes at once a question not less of practice than of faith—requiring us to do, as well as believe.

Hence the subject on which we address you, although common and familiar in the pulpit, is an infinitely momentous one, because it furnishes the only adequate, the only impulsive, elements and motives of Christian character and conduct. And, after all that can be said of opinions, parties and rituals, a good life is the essential staple of Messiah's kingdom as found on earth, and should be mainly insisted upon by all his ministers in all their ministrations.

And we are thus led to the conclusion, that, viewing man as a child of transgression, an alien from God and virtue, inheriting the curses and the issues of crime—and all men as occupying the same level of helplessness and destitution—there is no question in the wide range of human inquiry so vitally connected with the best interests of his being, as that which reveals the method of his recovery and accredits his hopes of immortality.

Christianity is not, as but too many have vaguely supposed, a mere cabinet of curious and unimportant mysteries—an abstract dramatic exhibition of the mystic and the marvelous. All its facts, doctrines and duties, point to the Cross of our redemption, and publish, in lines

of light and with heavenly, heart-moving urgency, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

It is one of the peculiarities of our religion, essentially identified with the history and the hopes of Christianity, however inconsequent and out of place it may seem in the eye of worldly wisdom, that we look for redemption from one who was crucified, and expect immortality at the hands of him who was once overcome by death, but who is now armed with the power of a conqueror and covered with the glory of triumph, without limit and without end—wielding with unchallenged supremacy the scepter of dominion over death and hell.

And can such truths fail to attract? Is it possible we can fail of an audience, an attentive hearing from you—from any, the most indifferent even among you—when we ask you to behold the most illustrious personage, and contemplate the most interesting character in the whole range of being, intelligence and action? When we ask you to behold the Son of God—the world's deliverer—in his person, his advent, his offices, his actions, his sufferings, his death, and his love—embarked upon the mission of human redemption, and working out its fulfillment by means heightening even the grandeur of the end?

If the dignity of his person as God, the line of his ancestry as man, the mystery of his incarnation as both—the glory of his offices, the luster of his actions, the extremity of his sufferings, the merit of his death, and the miracles of his love—do not arrest your attention and induce you to behold him, in the language of the text, then, indeed, so far as you are concerned, has our ministry failed; but we vindicate our mission by reminding you, that the cause of such failure must be referred, for final adjustment, to the fearful disclosures of the

coming judgment—the weighty retributions of the everlasting future.

Aiming less at direct formal argumentation, than practical statement and the necessary inferences, we shall avail ourselves of the former only in the proportion the latter may render it necessary; and, while we are reminded on the one hand, that, by such a method, truth may not be the less vulnerable to assault, we shall not forget, on the other, that it is always possible for a fault-finder to question a position, or cavil at a sentence, without having succeeded in the overthrow of a principle, or the invalidation of an argument.

The views we propose, have been derived from the Bible; and, as we believe, upon the plainest and soundest principles of allowable exegesis; but, if inconclusively, certainly with no more intention to deceive others than wish or willingness to be deceived ourselves. We are pleading the cause of no human creed, nor do we ask the protection of any. We do not invoke the sanction, nor would we give a cypher for the indorsement, of a party.

We are not sitting in assize upon dissentient creeds and denominations. We say nothing of Trinitarian or Unitarian, as the signal terms of sect and party, dividing upon this question. So viewed, both are of human origin; and we are not here as the advocate or judge of either. To God, they stand or fall. The one frequently appears as flippantly familiar with the mysterious unity and tri-personality of the God of Revelation, as with the nature and properties of a triangle; and the other dissects the character of Jesus Christ as irreverently, and with as little ceremony, as that of Socrates or Confucius. We do not battle for mere signs and terms. We return to the Bible.

That we may suitably and availably behold the Lamb of God, it is necessary that we notice him, as do the Scriptures, so as to include and classify his most important claims and relations. ESPECIALLY, I. WITH REFERENCE TO HIMSELF: II. WITH REFERENCE TO THE NATURE AND TERMS OF HIS RELIGION: III. IN VIEW OF HUMAN CONDITION: IV. HUMAN CHARACTER: AND, FINALLY, IN VIEW OF REASONS AND INCENTIVES CONNECTED WITH ACTION—THE DOCTRINE OF MOTIVE AND ENCOURAGEMENT. And,

1. WE CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THE SON OF GOD, IN HIS PERSONAL AND RELATIVE ASPECTS, AS OUR GOD AND SAVIOR. Behold him, then, as he exists in himself—in his original and preëxistent state—in the bosom, and possessing the glory of his Father—reigning resplendently in the pavilion of his own residence, and in the multitude and succession of his goings-forth, everywhere ministering to the gladness of his creation and the glory of the universe.

In this view of him, our convictions assure us we cannot be mistaken. The testimony of God has legibly inscribed on his signet, “King of kings—Lord of lords;” “Jehovah sent by Jehovah to the nations;” and all the evidence we have is to the same effect. The journal of creation, the volumes of Providence, the records of redemption, all unfold the dignity of his person not less than the wonders of his love.

Would you behold him, then, as he should be beheld, you must consult the record of his titles, the history of his deeds and doings; you must read and ponder well, as the evidence of his claims, the annals of his own right hand and outstretched arm. Before you consider him as visiting earth upon the errand of human redemption, you must contemplate him enthroned from everlasting in supreme grandeur in the heavenly places: you must



look to him as creation's author and end—the sum and the soul of life, light and enjoyment—in whom we live, move and have our being: his presence pervading and surrounding all, and his energy, directly or remotely, giving birth to every motion and every action. We speak here, however, of the abstract properties of being and action, and not the moral aspects in which they are found to exist, in the instance of voluntary moral agents.

We look upon Jesus Christ as the God of nature, providence and grace, and award to him the preëminence of moral dignity beyond limit and without comparison—regarding his preëxistence as uncommenced, and, of course, ascribing to him the self-sufficiency and majesty of Godhead, in all their grandeur and independence. We look to him as producing the amplitude, wielding the energies, and controlling the fortunes, of creation—creation not only in its boundless amplitude, but in all its minuter details. He grasps universal nature in his single hand. He weighs the world's foundations. Above, about, beneath, his workmanship includes and incloses all. If we turn to the burning fountains of the sun, or look at those immortal lights that live along the sky and nightly adorn the hill of Heaven—He kindled them!

If we descend to earth, it is to find it robed in beauty and rich in bounty. Here he penciled the flower, stained the blade, decked the plumage, veined the onyx and streaked the zebra; while the vast universality of things, the boundless congress of nature's nameless varieties, all received from him their moldings, their carvings and their colorings.

Nor should these claims be accorded him in the vague generalities or more precise registers of our faith merely, but the weighty, the momentous truth, should be

wrought into and receive amplification in all the manuals and exercises of our devotion. We should think and feel, as well as say and assume. How prone are Christians to conceive of Jesus Christ as a limited, local being, and of his administration as provincial and temporary, instead of regarding him as the center of the great moral system, himself the end and reason of all he says or does, requires or forbids. As truth allows, so duty requires, that all our conceptions of Deity apply to him. For, to use the words of St. Paul, alchemizing and concentrating the strength of all language in a single sentence, "He is *all in all*." And beyond this assumed universality of being, this grand totality of supreme excellence, Heaven could say no more; or, saying more, had not been understood by earth.

How truly is he the supreme, approachless source and cause of all that's great and good! His essence is everywhere; and yet space and place do not terminate that essence. He is above the heavens and beneath the earth; and yet high and low, distant and near, bear no relation to him. He penetrates all substances, but is mixed with none. He is here and elsewhere, with the same concentration of energy. He comprehends without succession of thought: he wills without the intervention of variant motives: he knows without learning: he feels without passion: he loves without partiality: is angry without rage: hates without revenge, and repents without change. Time with him has no succession. The past is not gone, the future is not to come, nor does the present connect the two. "I AM," dials his relation to each. And thus, claiming the signature of absolute existence, an eternal now—the exclusive property of Godhead—forever lasts with him.

In fixing his eye upon eternity's long and boundless

calendar, one day and a thousand years are the same. Duration, in all its overwhelming calculations, is with him a simple unit—a period one and indivisible! And thus beheld by faith, he is pervadingly present wherever the orbs of creation or the islands of light float through the universe; marshaling suns and systems without name or number, filling with life and gilding with light, myriads of worlds, untraveled by the wing of seraphim, unvisited by the thought of man!

His infinite being, therefore, blessing and bounty, should always engage and engross our attention, affection and gratitude—our confidence, our hopes and our fears: And whenever the inquirer shall approach our altars, as here and now, let the inscription there publish our estimate of the Lamb of God, “Him first, Him last, Him midst and without end:” “God with us;” so fearful and yet so kind, so invisible and yet how manifest! Such is the Lamb of Atonement—the great Christian propitiation—and in this way we point you to a Rock able to bear up the burden of a foundered world!

*Behold him made flesh, dwelling among men and claiming earth his home.* How vast the condescension; how august his loveliness; how majestic the humiliation displayed in this event! The glory of Heaven and the virtue of earth—the grandeur of eternity and the worth of time—all unite in his person. Goodness and beneficence mark his life, and the path of his humanity is everywhere strewn with the evidences of his Godhead! Pre-announced by signs and wonders, a concert of angels, lining field and firmament, celebrate his birth! A voice from “the excellent glory”—a voice whose thunder-tones had not been heard on earth for ages long—signalized his baptism at the Jordan! Tables in the desert, spread for the accommodation of hunger-stricken thou-

sands, are covered with bread and fish of his own creation! Vegetation yields to the power of his word! Health and sickness obey his voice! Tempest, wind and tide, take their orders from him; even the billowy uproar of storm-tossed Galilee became silent at his presence, bowed and retired! At his approach death and the grave dropped their chains and let go their prey! The brokers of the temple fled at the shaking of his scourge! Devils, terrified at his rebuke, left their possessions to the reign of reason, religion and truth! Principalities and powers felt the vengeance of his cross, while rocks and hills and graves published the grandeur of his person!

We see the line of his ancestry spread out from the Garden—the Eden of man's innocence—to Bethlehem, the mother-city of the tribe of Judah and house of David. It stretches from Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to Judah, from Judah to David, and from David to Joseph. Of his deity, as "God manifest in the flesh," we have, perhaps, already said enough. The vast valley of vision is everywhere filled with the monuments of his glory, and the pages of God's testimony burn, and glow, and blaze, with the demonstrations of his uncreated excellence.

In view of all which, he becomes our better representative, the Heavenly Adam, from whom we derive a more ennobling inheritance. In a time of infinite need he put forth his hand to break our fall and afterward to restore us from it. He is, indeed, the only restorer of the hopes and deliverer of the souls of men. And, in order to this, he held the splendor of his natural, his original perfections, in abeyance, as he came and dwelt among his children amid the homes of earth. His life exemplified the value of piety and the force of virtue.

During a life of unsullied excellence and unspotted purity, he spent the night in communion with God and the day in charity to man ; and left not the world until he had sown in its bosom the seeds of millennial reform and enduring glory. And, in his own proper time, Heaven and earth shall “see of the travail of his soul,” until the one shall copy the example and rival the excellence of the other !

*Behold him making his soul an offering for sin.* Angry majesty yields to the plea of his sufferings, while he negotiates the redemption of criminal, perishing millions. Heaven looks on in astonishment ; the foundations of the world misgive, and the pillars of creation tremble, while justice, in the liquidation of its claims, metes out to him the measure of a world’s deservings.

The fearful, the august, ceremony of offering himself a sacrifice for sin, commenced in the garden, and is emphatically styled his “agony.” Here the offering of himself evinced that his person combined the altar, the sacrifice and the priest. Here the weight and fire of Divine wrath began to weigh down and consume the sacrifice ; and had the weight and fire of this wrath rested and seized upon the world of criminals for whom he died, that world, in the language of inspired imagery, would, in every moral sense, have been ground to powder, if, indeed, the visitation had not blended the melted earth and boiling ocean, and transformed this fair creation into a wide, a waste, and a burning hell.

Under the imputation of the iniquities of us all, we see him covered with a cloud of infamy, looking forward to the pangs of crucifixion, and exhausting the penal cup of all its curse and bitterness. Wounded, bruised and oppressed, in every member, every nerve, and every sense, still he suffered and still he tri-

umphed, until his atonement was finished, accepted and rewarded.

Universal nature relented at his sufferings, and God's creation murmured at the cup he drank. These were not the sufferings of a mere man. Did the mountains ever tremble at the death of a man, or the rocks divide at the crucifixion of a martyr? Would such an event have silenced the harps of Heaven and spread dismay through all the depths of hell? No: illustrious was the sufferer and Godlike the victim, or nature would not have awoke in anguish thus to publish the Godhead of his person and the glory of his Cross.

Then it was his "right hand, the right hand of Jehovah, did valiantly;" for the death of our Lord was not a defeat—he yielded up the ghost triumphantly; and the act, jeered by the infidel and scorned by the fool, dissolved the gates of hell. As man had fallen by the malice of the devil, so he was to be restored by the merit of the Savior; and thus he displayed the Divinity of his wisdom by making a way for our escape where he found none, and where *we* never should have found any.

Our Lord died not like the illustrious dead of mortal memory. The death of him of Utica, for example, was said to be the orphanage of Rome. But, instead of gloom and despair, the sacrifice of Calvary was the hope of the world, and threw the illuminations of immortality over this vast sepulcher of souls!

This event, in a peculiar manner, magnified the Divine condescension. There was an apparent conflict between the Divine attributes. Even Heaven itself seemed to be divided upon the question of man's recovery. Mercy, for example, inclined to save, but Justice interposed for satisfaction. Mercy inquired, Will not God be kind

to the misery of man? Justice replied, Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Mercy urged, Shall man lose the friendship and fruition of the Creator, and He the service and subjection of the creature, merely because the malignity of hell, in evil hour, triumphed over human credulity? Wisdom submitted, Shall sin, which provokes the execution, secure the abrogation of the law? Majesty interposed and plead, That it did not become infinite greatness and purity to treat with defiled worms, with polluted dust, on any terms. Holiness shrank from the touch of moral pollution, and exclaimed, "Can God behold iniquity"? Eternal Truth quoted, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" while unbending Sovereignty filed its angry claims and plead for execution!

The sublimest spirits in Heaven were at a loss how to solve the difficulty. The human understanding, with all its intellectual reach, was staggered and confounded. In this fearful exigence, however, Mercy prevailed; for Wisdom, interposing, suggested a Mediator, the arbiterment of a daysman; and this method of recovery prevailed without prejudice to any of the Divine perfections, and reconciled Godhead broke forth refulgently in the salvation of man—"full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete."

Mysterious adjustment! stupendous arrangement! To save man it became necessary that God, in one relation, should overcome himself in another. Legal not less than moral barriers opposed the result, and both had to be removed, so that "the goodness and severity of God," the Divine justice and mercy, might appear to equal advantage in the great transaction of the world's atonement.

Two principal relations belong to the Mediator—a

“gift” from God to man, and yet a “sacrifice to God” for man. He must be capable of the sentiments and affections of both parties. He must have a common interest in both. And, as “God manifest in the flesh,” he secures the grand complex result without detriment to either party. The rights of Heaven were sustained, and the interests and wretchedness of earth consulted at the same time.

But it would require a mind of more than human, of archangel vigor, to explicate fully the dignity of this mystery, and we must not attempt it. And hence we leave the more inscrutable reasons and maxims of the Divine conduct untouched, that we may have the consciousness of leaving them untarnished.

*Behold him, in his triumphant elevation, at the right hand of God.* The rays of glory began to encircle him when he rose from the tomb: and now, enthroned on Heaven’s eternal hill, he reigns the God of being and blessing, and all that lives, or moves, or thinks, or feels, is at rest or in motion, is subject to his sway.

His sacrifice had prevailed; and, in the odor of perfection, “as a sweet smelling savor,” had come up before God. He is now no longer under the curse and on the Cross, but throned and crowned and sceptered. You no longer see his mangled body, his disfigured person, the cloud of his sorrows, and the obscuration of the Sun of Righteousness wading in blood and shining in darkness. No longer are his sufferings the diversion of the wicked and the joy of hell. You are not now called upon to witness the pain of the scourge, the furrow of the lash, the insult of the reed, and the anguish of the thorn; the mockery of the knee and the prayer of hell, echoed by the roar of millions, though all the voices of Jerusalem, “His blood be on us and on our children.”



We do not ask you now what meant the disastrous gloom of the heavens, shedding remorseful terror on the myriads of gazers below! We do not now point you to preternatural eclipse and horror, falling on rushing thousands, as they hied down from the mountain to bury themselves in the common curse of Jerusalem!

In the midst of all these scenes—cruel, strange, magnificent and sad—he continued constant as goodness itself, firm as the mountains of Judea, amid which he had been enthroned for ages, tranquil as Heaven, and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Scorn and mockery, shame and spitting, stripes and thorns, nails and death, the wrath of his Father and the curse of the law, these are exchanged for a scepter comprehending universal dominion and the issues of destiny. Having accomplished the work of our redemption and resumed his life from the grave, with clouds for his chariot and angels his attendants, he mounted Heaven's "infinite steepness" and threw the sublimity of the universe into shade, while deeply on the drinking ear fell the farewell tones of his parting benediction, and the glory-smitten disciples stood gazing, anxious to wing their own rapture, in the track of his ascension! This majestic ascent, this triumphant passage to glory, seated him in the Heavenly places and subjected the world to his sway.

The jurisdiction of Jesus Christ over man is founded upon his right of property in man; and this right was created by the fact, that he not only gave being to man, but afterward redeemed him, and by means, too, the most extraordinary—the Lord of life and nature becoming subject to the laws and vicissitudes of the one and the other, by the assumption of our common humanity.

What a magnitude of cost and difficulty to overcome!

How are we lost in contemplating this mysterious—such darkening condescension. In the obscurity of his humiliation, as the “Branch” of patriarchal affinity and prophetic announcement, he grew up unobtrusively, “like a plant out of dry ground ;” but subsequently he rose and spread like a lofty cedar, overshadowing courts and thrones, and affording shade and protection to the faint and the weary of every wing and every clime !

When the illustrious sufferer bowed his head in mighty agony and gave up the ghost, the thrones and dominions of evil recoiled with dismay ; the principalities and powers of darkness were signally and victoriously routed ! His crucifiers fled from his cross as from the cry of a defeat—the ruin of an enterprise ! Heaven looked on in joyful astonishment ; earth trembled at the fearful visitation ; the secret chamber of the God of Israel tore its own vail, as in conscious horror, and bared to the eye of the awe-struck priest the desolate cherubim and departed glory of the temple ; while hell, in all her dungeons, felt the thunder of the shock, and flamed fresh with the wrath of the Lamb !

What must have been the feelings of the panic-stricken disciples when he lay in the grave ? His resurrection involved the interests of all our race, from the first progenitors of our kind down to the last succession of posterity. It was a period of gloom, during which the hope of a perishing world hung trembling upon the point of agonizing suspense. But when he burst the barriers of the tomb and ascended to glory, Heaven became the place of his enlargement, and the throne of the universe the seat of his empire !

*Behold him the light and the guide of his people—the way, the truth and the life.* Heaven’s pure intelligence shines upon our path through him, and his ministrations

illuminate the dark and dreary intervals of human suffering and earthly pilgrimage. If we sit or walk in darkness, he is our light; if we stumble or fall, he is the lifter up of our feet; and to all our desponding fears he stands forth preëminently the light of life. He is the great center in which all the rays and lines of Revelation meet, as in a focal point, and thence, diverging, furnish their blended radiance, their overpowering effulgence!

Listen to his lessons of heavenly wisdom in the temple, the synagogue, the desert; by the wayside and on the sea-shore; and especially hear and heed him when he makes Mount Olivet his pulpit and sheds immortal instruction on the nations of earth. God himself, upon the mount of transfiguration, proclaims him the Lawgiver of the universe: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." He is the source of heavenly effulgence to a benighted world; a sun that warms as well as shines; that burns as well as brightens; that shines by night as well as day: a sun that, rising from forth the cloudy throne of the invisible God, broke the night in which we had wandered long and far, with rays that, bright beyond all earthly splendor, gush livingly on the heart and give its hopes and ties to God!

*Behold him the strength and protection of his people—of all who trust in him.* Although few and feeble, exposed and trodden down; although loved and prized by him alone, it is enough. No evil, no calamity, no affliction, can finally injure them. Thunders may peal above and lightnings dart athwart your path; the tempest may beat and the floods roll on, but the one shall die away in accents of peace, and the other expire in the radiance of hope; while the tempest and the flood, resisted by the rock, shall return to their place, powerless as the foam-born bubble that breaks upon their wave.

From the height of Heaven he stoops to your embrace and infuses strength into your weakness. Complete in him, you too may "excel in strength." By nature you are lower, but by alliance higher, than the angels. In purpose, therefore, repose confidently, and in action stand fast. Let not your subtle and industrious enemy seduce you by policy or overthrow you by open battery. Remain in the hands of Christ, and then you occupy an inviolable sanctuary from which no enemy can ever take you.

With your hope in him and your hold on Heaven, you have nothing to fear. You rest secure in your place, like the deep-seated mountain rocked by the thunder and washed by the cataract, but still breasting, unmoved, the strife of the storm and the roar of a thousand torrents! Such is the God-vouched destiny of those by whom the Lamb of God is seen and sought, as urged in the text.

*Behold him in his Church and among his people, to receive those who are without.* With the fondness of a father bereaved of his children, he stoops to your embrace and asks you to return. He bends in pity over your path. He paints virtue in the colors of immortality, and darkens the alien shades of hell, that the one may win and the other deter you. Into one ear he infuses the melody of Heaven, and in the other pours the groans of the damned, that the one may thrill you with bliss and the other freeze you with horror.

Wherever he infuses his light, is the glory of Heaven; and wherever he inflicts his wrath, is hell without the company of infernals or the staples of fire and brimstone. These are truths which are everywhere taught in his Word and found in the hand-writing of his Spirit.

And, finally, to remove all fear, distrust or doubt, and

falsify forever the worse than infidel assumption, that some of you were only created for death and hell, he interposes his oath, and, with blended majesty and kindness, invites you all to come, to look, and live. God grant you the beholding, the appropriating power of faith, that the Lamb of God may be seen and sought, before it becomes your involuntary destiny to repent without pardon, and believe without hope.

Faith, in these great truths, like the eye in the telescope, surveying the expansions of distant space, places infinite perfection within the reach of human conception. The doubt and dread repelling us from the Creator are removed by the Redeemer; a high moral pathway is thrown up and open from earth to Heaven; and, amid the living wonders of the one and the other, the God and Father of all so descends from the stupendous immensity of his nature and workmanship, as to be found in individual, personal association with man, in the endearing relations of creation, providence and redemption. And, in this way, the crowning mystery of our faith, to which we point you, presents the mingled grandeur and condescension of Godhead, in living picture before you, in the person of his Son.

II. BEHOLD HIM WITH REFERENCE TO THE NATURE AND TERMS OF HIS RELIGION. The religion he taught, unperverted by human taste, passion and interest, is a subject but too little understood, even among the baptized thousands of modern Israel. It is a subject upon which all need additional instruction, in view of its appropriate influence. Behold him, then, taking away the sin of the world, not only by an original deed of expiation, but by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Without the latter, as an essential element in the great system of human recovery, the former never was

intended to save you, and can afford you no ground even of hope.

*Look to him, then, by repentance.* Ask him for the sweet remorse which makes you hate your sins. Ask him to infuse into the current of your feelings the worm-wood and the gall of penitential regret, that you may look on the ways of sin and the gates of hell for the last time. Every day you live without repentance, say, with the startled Emperor of antiquity, "I have lost a day," and resolve, with the blessing of God, you will never lose another. We urge the repentance which will make you hate the stain of sin worse than its punishment, the hell to which it leads—that will make you love the angel Religion, even more than her dowery, the heaven within her gift.

*Look to him by faith.* Of faith he is "Author and Finisher." Ask him for that which will point your wounded spirit to the only healing hand that pours the balm of life, and will turn your sight undaunted on the tomb. Faith, that will say to the winds and the waves of conscience and a troubled spirit, "be still;" and the lake of the waste, in summer stillness, is not more calm than the hushed emotions of the late tumultuated heart.

*Look to him in the faithful performance of duty.* Have you, with the penitent Magdalene, washed his feet, as the good Chrysostom says, with the tears of repentance? remain and wipe them up with the hairs of obedience. Go to him with a heart broken by the thunders of his law, and he will bind it up with the solace of his love, and restore to your disordered nature the health of life and hope. Let your life be one of high and unbending integrity. Abjure vice in all its forms, and aim at the purity of the heavens—not less inflexibly firm to the

hope of immortality, than unyieldingly loyal to the honor of God.

*Look to him in his Word.* Learn here the lessons of wisdom; study here the science of salvation, unfolded in lines of light. Bend here an attentive eye, and the beams of Heaven's own day-spring will break upon your vision and linger on your path. Study well and faithfully the pages of this celestial treasury. Virtue will be strengthened—sin will be weak, and even "devils infirm." Might will be infused into means, and the end before you glow with immortality. The springs of the Stagyrite and the fountains of Plato go dry, but here is a stream that, welling from beneath the throne, shall everywhere gladden the city of God upon earth, and lave its center and circumference above.

*Look to him by prayer.* Prayer is a characteristic without which piety is never found. Without it the very existence of the other virtues of Christian character is impossible. It is man in humble, earnest negotiation with his God. It is the moral nerve, quickening the muscles of the soul to approach him. It is the bond and term of intercourse with Heaven, and the vehicle of transmission for its blessings. If your prayers go to Heaven, laden with sighs and stained with tears, they return accompanied by angels and freighted with blessings. That we have earth to kneel upon and Heaven to appeal to, is the proudest distinction of man; and he who does not estimate its priceless value, who refuses to pray to God, has atheized his being and declared himself independent; and if he do not find himself in the place of the Devil and his angels, Omnipotence will have failed in the purpose of circumventing and placing him there.

*Look to him in the ordinances of his house, and proper attention to all the means of grace.* Without such observ-

ance you forfeit all hope of the Divine favor. Let your baptismal vows be a standing lecture to obedience. Let the sacrament of the supper, the memorials of our redemption, point you to the Lamb of God. Let the hour and place of private devotion—of family oblation—social prayer, and the worship of the congregation—elevate your affections to “things above,” and direct your anticipations to the durabilities of an eternal scene of heavenly enjoyment.

*Look to him in the practical, prudential regulations of his Church for the extension of his Kingdom, and the diffusion of piety.* Look to him by a noble ambition to extend about you the gifts of God, anxiously essaying to bless all as he has blessed you. Open the sources of eleemosynary aid—unlock and scatter the revenues of benevolence. Feed and clothe the Lord of the poor in his representatives upon earth, and recollect that the “accursed” and doomed of the last day, are those who grudged the cost of mercy here.

III. LOOK TO HIM WITH REFERENCE TO HUMAN CONDITION—YOUR EARTHLY DESTINY. *Look to him in prosperity and affluence.* Do this, lest your giddy height should prove the means of your fall—lest “the pinnacle of the temple” should become the theater of temptation, and an “exceeding high mountain” the birth-place of covetous ambition. Man, however elevated by accident or fortune, remains, in the humbling language of the Book of Job, but “dust and ashes” still; and the higher he is raised by prosperity, the more apt will he be to be blown away and scattered by the winds. A sight of the Cross, however, and the self-crucifixion it implies, will give him his appointed level, and enable him to keep his proper equilibrium.

*Look to him in adversity,* lest you faint by the way and



fall a prey to despair. Should he "break up the fallow ground" of your heart by affliction, it is in order to fruitfulness and fertility in virtue. Does he hold out the rod to you, submit, and with it will be borne to you the cup of salvation. Does he surround you with tempest and gloom, it is to show you the rainbow of mercy and the radiance of hope. No angle of the universe is too minute, difficult or obscure, for his gracious notice and support. The meanest localities of earth have been the theater of heavenly emanations, and richly consecrated by intercourse with God. Witness the obscurity of the Savior's birth-place, and the revelations of desolate Patmos.

*Look to him amid the activity and enterprise of life.* Lay all under contribution to promote his glory. Let every action of life meditate the good of the soul. Let all your movements invoke his protection, and all your doings hallow and herald his name. Wherever you are, and whatever you do, imbibe his love and publish his praise. Let sin be, with you, an abjured, a crucified and expiring tyrant.

*In all your afflictions and sufferings,* let the smile of resignation meet his eye, and secure his approbation. Be actuated by the same principles of filial regard—the same alacrous feeling—whether bearing ill or doing good; and, in every vicissitude of fortune, hush the tumult of passion by the motto of faith, "My Father does it all." The Cross, once truly beheld, will become a part of sight, and your devotion and solicitude will cling to it, as the morning star of memory, in all your toils and sorrows.

*Ye poor of the earth, do ye look to him.* Allied to the Man of Sorrows by the tie of suffering and the claim of want, look to him, that you may be rich in faith, and co-heirs with his children. The poor are born to suffer:

and in this respect alone, perhaps, are seldom, if ever, deprived of their natural inheritance. Yet you, ye poor, he delights to bless. You, he will cherish in the high places of his affection and favor, and extend to you the choicest predilections of his heart. Although he is returned to the bosom of his Father and the adoration of the celestial hosts, yet is he still ever mindful of you. Despair not, then; he who listens to the cry of the outcast raven, and gives even to the thirsty worm its dew-drop in the moldering spaces of decay, will not, cannot, overlook the wants of the most needy of his children. In that you are the more needy, he cares for you with the deeper emphasis of kindness.

IV. LOOK TO HIM WITH REFERENCE TO CHARACTER—THE MORAL ASPECTS IN WHICH YOU STAND TO HIM. *Ye penitent, do you look to him*, assured that every emotion of Godly sorrow that saddens your brow will cast its shadow to his throne. Does the tear of sorrow tremble in your eye—does the sigh of contrition heave your bosom—go to him with both, and he will dry the one and suppress the other, and fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Although Heaven is the theater and witness of his elevation and glory, yet you it is his pleasure and purpose to bless—and the visits of his mercy are to the “contrite,” in whatever part of his dominions.

*Ye tempted and disquieted followers of his*, do you, too, look up. Gather around the Cross and catch the healing streams of salvation. Bare your bleeding bosoms to the compassion of your great High Priest: say to him, here is a broken heart, bind it up—here is the smoking flax, revive, O, revive its feeble flame, for it flickers to decay!

Do this, and you will find a heart-cheering glow of tenderness and trust floating over the whole of your

conscious being. Go to him with a heart throbbing only with the pulsations of buried sorrow and martyred affection, and soon, in that heart, shall be enshrined the bright and burning thoughts of peace, together with the warmth and ebullience of the most grateful emotion.

*Let the widow and the orphan look to him.* The widow and the orphan! Prayer and piety blend with the very terms; and we introduce them here because condition seems to give them character. Let them look to the Lamb of God and sue for his protection and tenderness. Let the heart of the one, Heaven having husbanded the question of her happiness, "sing for joy," and the other rise up and, wiping the tears of orphanage, say, "My Father!"

Thus let "the blessings of those who are ready to perish" surround and encircle him, and, comprehending every sphere and retreat of piety, let the day praise him and the night bring him glory, in the love, joy and obedience of regenerated millions, the next world's goodness and gladness being everywhere imaged forth in this, and the children of misfortune here looking forward and tending thither, rich in faith and full of boundless aims!

And most sincerely do we rejoice, that we are allowed to extend our appeal to more numerous classes of our kind, and those of a very different character; and we would continue to press and vary it further, by urging the *impenitent*, the *unbelieving*, the *careless*, the *profane*, the *abandoned*, the *wise of this world*, the *worshiper of Mammon*, one and all, to look to the Cross and ask Heaven to melt down their frozen hearts into the current of repentance, that they may abjure the infidelity of their opinions and the atheism of their lives, before the loss of all good and the inheritance of all evil, the per-

dition of the fool and the immortality of devils, shall give them their final estimate of a life of sin !

By the eternal weight of motive involved, we urge, they would ask Heaven to save them from the hated insensibility we deplore, before their feelings are iced and cursed into total indifference, and all within becomes a wintry waste, perished and irrenovable.

Is the world, indefinitely, the object of ambitious regard, and is it here you offer incense and repose your hopes ? Reminding you how fearfully you are without warrant, both with regard to the god of your idolatry and the hopes and chances of the worshiper, unknowing how soon the one shall be burnt up and the other lost, we hasten to recall you to the Cross of Christ, as the symbol of the only inheritance worth the ceremony of its title-deeds, a treasure that would pauperize earth's proudest hoarder, rounding his millions or counting the rental of the Indies ! With all the ease and sufficiency this world can give, vast is the chasm between your wishes and your destiny. Fatally, indeed, will yours be found a bootless path ; but, having rushed upon it, if you refuse to return, it only remains that the eye hang over the dread dismembering gulf beneath ! When, too late for change, you will find, alas, that a life of blind and brutal fruition, with all its charms and appliances, is unable to still one agonizing throb in death, or melodize a single groan of despair !

These are, indeed, the shades of the picture, but belong to it as properly as its lights. The motives of the Pulpit must excuse its plainness. Compromise here would be a shameful surrender of duty. We see the banned cup of pleasure at your lips, and shall we not dash it ! We find you slumbering beneath the upas and avalanche, and shall we not alarm you ! We see you

drifting upon the last plank of your shattered bark, with the death-storm driving before you, and may we not expostulate with the plainness of truth, without incurring the charge of unbecoming rudeness or want of taste! With regard to many of you, if you do not reform soon, infinity to one you will never do so! And how much better to save you, if possible, even at the expense of your approving regards for a time, than to see you finally heiring the recompense of crime, where no Thermal waters nor Lethean draught can wash out the stains or quench the burning memory of the damned!

FINALLY : WE URGE UPON YOU MOTIVES AND OFFER YOU ENCOURAGEMENT. *Behold him, then, as King of nations and Lord of the hosts of Heaven*, enlarging the diameter of his Church and extending the scepter of his dominion to the utmost bounds of the world of man, hastening the destined renovation of earth to its long lost grandeur, when every heart shall beat high with life and hope, and the songs of salvation float on every breeze.

Ever since his Humanity left the tomb clothed with glory and was borne to the heavens, he has been faithfully managing the vast affairs of his kingdom so as to bring the utmost possible glory to God and good to man, and he will continue to do so until, with the earth-darkening cloud for his chariot, the lightning his spear, and the thunder his battle shout, he shall re-descend to judge the world.

Personally, he has disappeared from earth ; but invisibly, yet really, he is still in our midst, with his Spirit to guide and bless, while the Word of his testimony is always before us, like a pillar of light amid the desolation of life and the waste of ages, ever radiating to the distant horizon about, and destined to enlarge the circle of illumination, until Heaven and earth shall be synonyms

for the same reign of righteousness—the kingdoms of this world having become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.

*Behold him as he may be beheld—as others have beheld him.* We will not calumniate Eternal Goodness by asking you to do what some fated inability renders impossible. We ask you to do what you can, and ought to do, without delay. Heaven will never withhold, but always afford, the necessary help. We ask you to behold him as “Abraham saw his glory and was glad.” Behold him as he was beheld by patriarchs, prophets and apostles—as he was beheld by the acclaiming disciples when he rose from the grave and the mountain—as he was beheld by the Heavenly hosts on his return from the achievement of our redemption. Listen to the joy of enraptured millions, while, in the presence of the throne, they heard him exclaim, in language that filled Heaven with the gladness of the “new song,” “Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;” and heard, too, other unearthly sounds—the voicings of immortality—harp and trump, and song and shout, rolling back the acclaim, “Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood.” We ask and urge you to behold him, then, not walking the earth unattended, as once he did, but in regal enthronement, “above all principality and power,” and receiving the homage of a kneeling world!

*Behold him in your midst.* This you may do, for the same moment of duration finds him in this and every place. Near or remote, as it regards us, is neither with him—he reigns alike with regard to both. It is he who touches and melts down your heart: it is he who brings that sigh to the birth and swells the rolling tear of pious grief: it is he who smites that Pagan knee with weak-

ness and makes it bend in prayer : it is he who whispers to you by day that all is not right, and tells you by night that you are not safe : it is his Holy Spirit that makes you feel religion is not a tale of superstition, nor hell the fabled dream that fools affect. God grant, in the burning language of prophecy, if you refuse to behold him in your midst, that “the stone may cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber answer it”!

There is another aspect in which the Lamb of God should be beheld. It is one of fearful bearing and dread attraction :

*Behold him in the overthrow and punishment of his enemies.* What of the Jews who condemned him to death? Where and in what position and repute do you find their once haughty name in the book of nations? Where and what of the Romans, his crucifiers, and afterward, in his followers, his persecutors? In the mighty seat once wielding the freedom of national birth-right and the empire of the world, what “succession” have we not had of dark and gloomy incumbents, covered with blood and murder and abandoned to intrigue and rapine! How long will the trodden down millions of unhappy, degenerate Rome, endure the oppressions of the “triple crowned Legate”—but not of Heaven—reigning a hated usurper in the palace of the Cæsars!

Ask the angel of death for the names and number of those whose refusal to “behold the Lamb of God” has already given them habitation and place among the outcasts of eternity! Enter the deep and the dreary tracts of final abandonment from God, and take the census of those who have felt the thunder of his power and perished at his rebuke!

If you do not behold and seek him here, you must inherit your vicious choice in the rejection of him hereaf-

ter. Almighty justice will mete out to you, not the common irrevocable curse of those who perish out of Christ, but the infinitely greater, the aggravated damnation, challenged by the formal, deliberate rejection of offered salvation. Even the mercy seat of Heaven will rise up to blast, and the blood of sprinkling seal your ruin, and quicken the flames of retribution! Because, when tendered a thousand and a thousand times, and in as many forms, you refused his salvation; and the single reflection, the bitter recollection, that you might have been saved, will barb with keener anguish the memories of remorse, while the once beseeching appeal of the Judge, "I would and ye would not," will be remembered only to intensify the bitterness of regret and render immortal the despair of the damned!

*Behold him now—it may, it will, with many, soon be too late.* We all know the transitory nature, the sad discontinuity, of human life. Rapidly, with every one of us, the shadows are changing upon the circuit of the dial. In a little while it will be "earth to earth" with every one of you, and the dust of the church-yard will press upon your cold and unpalpitating bosoms. The prostrate frame, the swimming eye, the faltering tongue, the sinking pulse, the mantling gloom, the last gaze and expiring groan, will tell you all is over! Death, with unpitiful cruelty, will thrust his cold iron deep into the heart, and, parting with all you lived to love and cherish here, eternity receives you, stained with the unexpiated guilt of having refused to behold the Lamb of God!

And why—Heaven and earth, with a thousand organs, and with all the regret of defeated kindness, urge the expostulation—"why will you die?" Even your reason, to which you appeal as beaconing the path of your pilgrimage, must infer his right to be beheld, and en-



force the duty of timely attention to his claims. May the grace of God prevail with you so almightily as to induce you to behold the Cross of Christ and live! But if you still refuse, then we leave you to fasten an eye, never to be closed, upon the fearful reality, the appalling definitiveness, of your doom!

*Behold him while you live and when you die.* Amid the vicissitudes of life and in the arms of death look to *Him*. And here, Christians, we address ourselves to you. Pilgrims hailing a distant bourn, your path lies homeward. And will you tremble with your feet upon the threshold of your Father's house! Death is but a point between the future and the past, and to you is but the crumbling of your prison walls, while the blended light of receding earth and approaching Heaven is gilding the last hours of life's eventful struggle. Faithful to him, firmly militant for God and good through life, you look forward to Heaven as your country and residence. He has only preceded you to prepare mansions for you. Let your hearts and hopes, then, ascend with your ascended Savior, who, as your great precursor, having led captivity captive, despoiling death and hell of their dominion, is still heard cheering you upon the path of life, in language that at once renews the assurance and solves the problem of immortality, "Because I live ye shall live also"!

Almighty Godness grant you may so behold the Lamb of God in this world, that you may be elevated to the highest summit of heavenly grandeur in the next! beholding the throne and equipage, and finding yourselves encircled with the glories of the Lamb, where even the intellectual eye, fortified for the immediate intuition of the infinite God, and conversant with celestial objects, shall be astonished and confounded by the overpowering brightness, the imperishable splendor, of the vision!

And now, amid this scene, everywhere wreathing and mantling with beauty and magnificence the fields and the temples of eternity—now that the redeemed of one world have conquered by his blood, and the unfallen of others been confirmed “by the word of his testimony”—now, from the one and the other, the ranks and tribes of peopled immensity and the distant places of the universe—let the extatic acknowledgment roll in and be borne upward to his seat, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain”!

## SERMON IX

CHRIST CRUCIFIED, THE GREAT DISTINCTIVE BURDEN OF  
CHRISTIAN PREACHING.

“DECLARING unto you the testimony of God—I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.”—1 Cor. ii, 1, 2.

SUCH is the text of our reflections for the coming hour. And unless a misapprehension of the truth has so colored our estimate as to involve us in utter self-deception with regard to its meaning and application, no language can express, no limits define, no depth of penetration fathom, the deep and intensely absorbing interest of the subject on which we address you.

No form of language, or association of thought, is equal to the grandeur of the theme or the range of its comprehension. It is a subject blending the hopes and the fears, the interests and the associations, of divided worlds—all that is good or grand in this, with all that is grave or awful in the next.

To amuse or please you, therefore, meet your wishes or deprecate your disappointment, is no part of the business of the ensuing hour. A simple wish to profit and subserve the interests of a pure and lofty piety, has alone motived the determination and given birth to the resolution the text avows. Declaring unto you the testimony of God, we determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And, if God will but glorify our subject, by leading you to regard it as the great beacon-light of your immortality, we ask no other boon.

IN PROCEEDING TO A SUMMARY CONSIDERATION OF THE

DOCTRINE OF THE TEXT, WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHICH IT SPEAKS, AS PECULIAR AND DISTINGUISHING IN ITS KIND, AND THEREFORE NOT LIKELY TO MEET THE APPROVAL OF THE AGE IN WHICH IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED. The position of St. Paul, and the aspects of the religion he preached, were alike peculiar in relation both to Jew and Greek. At the time the words of the text were penned, the Apostle had in his eye the haughty Jew and philosophic Greek, both of whom, from the appeal of different motives and interests and the impulse of variant feelings, conspired in the prompt rejection of the Christian religion, whose most prominent truth is that of salvation by the Cross of Christ.

For this identity and yet dissimilarity of motive and impulse, the true grounds and reasons are to be sought in the analogous and yet very different character of these distinguished ancient races, at the period of their history now in question. The Jews, as the chosen and peculiar people of God, accustomed immemorially to a succession of prodigies and wonders, the high hand and outstretched arm of Jehovah manifest in their own supernatural fortunes and extraordinary history, and long and perversely misguided by the hopes of a merely national deliverer, stumbled most strangely and inconsistently at the idea of a crucified Messiah as the medium of interposition between God and men.

Surprising and unexpected, however, as the blindness or oversight may appear, they remembered not, it would seem, that their fathers, stung by scorpions in the wilderness of their exodus from Egypt, were healed by the vision of the brazen serpent, elevated expressly in prefiguration of him who was afterward to be "lifted up from the earth."

They overlooked the plain and obvious conclusion,

that, according to their own prophecies, numerous and explicit, Messiah was first to suffer amid fearful scenes of abasement and trial, and then, having been made perfect by suffering, to "lift up the head" and enter into his glory.

Blinded by prepossession, they saw not that their own instituted types and sacrifices, and all their legal purifications, were full of a suffering Savior, whose triumph was to be the reward of his sufferings.

They seem not to have adverted to the predicted fact, that Christianity, as taught by Christ, was in fact the religion of their fathers in its last, its best, and most engaging form; and that the wonders of their national story—the redemption in Egypt, the passage of the sea, the pillar of fire, the flaming mountain, the descending manna, and the streams of the rock—were all in attestation of the hope, and in anticipation of the glory, of Messiah's day and reign.

The necessity of specification, indeed, seems to be entirely superceded; for the Jews, in a body, as an entire people, had been a confederate nation of prophets, cherishing and announcing, by all their ceremonies, symbols and institutions, the approaching manifestation of the Son of God.

The doctrine of redemption by the Cross of Christ had, by the prophets themselves, been made the center of faith and ethics, and was, even then, a current strongly set, and drawing into it all the events and issues of time and space. It was looked upon as pregnant with high moral ends and bearings, and as exhibiting the impress of the prescience, the wisdom and the benevolence, of God—while all the aims and interests of nations and empires, in the long roll of ages, were destined to bow to its mighty designs!

Why, then, it may be asked, did the Jew reject Christianity? Simply, it would seem, because his religion, subjectively considered, was but a corruption of the religion of his Fathers; and the surpassing, unlooked-for purity of the Christian system, proved utterly revolting to the partial eye and jaundiced vision of a systematic, incorrigible bigot.

Such was the revolt of superstition. And now let us examine the recoil of philosophy, and mark the results of both. The Greeks, haughty in science and the distinction conferred by letters, and seeking wisdom and preëminence in kindred pursuits, had only to hear of a crucified sufferer as the savior of men, to reject the absurd, unlikely doctrine of salvation by his Cross—with them the symbol and the seal of infamy—as fraught with weakness and folly.

Hence the Jew and the Greek, alike blinded and malignant, were mutually prepared for the rejection of Jesus Christ and him crucified. It was the rock of offense with one, because innovating upon his intolerant, exclusive bigotry; and an object of contempt with the other, as unworthy his superior social polish and civic ambition!

The apparent paradox of life resulting from death, in the light of cause and effect, although in close analogy with well known natural phenomena, was a position in the face of which the groveling Jew and lettered Greek cast the frown of unmingled disdain—the scowl of a most determined rejection. The grand reason of all this, whether viewed in the light of reason or Revelation, was, “they knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God.”

Ignorant of the character of God, as revealed in his Word and in his works, and darkly blinded with regard

to his will and purposes, they vainly endeavored, by the finger and aid of human science, relying alone upon their own sagacity and information, to trace the alleged connection between the Cross of Christ and the recovery of man ; and did not perceive that it depended solely upon the pre-appointment, the will and arbitration of Heaven, above the unaided reach and beyond the discoveries of erring reason—and hence their rejection of the Gospel.

The Greeks, further, were a people emphatically devoted to learning ; and, giving it body and condensation, form and drapery, it became the god of their idolatry. Numerous circumstances favored such a result.

The insular position and maritime relations of their country, geographically, as well as by the laws of taste and habit, separated from all other nations, together with the liberty and independence, and the consequent activity and enterprise, which are known to have flourished in all their states and provinces, were circumstances highly favorable to the successful culture of genius and science, as the gifts of nature and art.

A mere glance at facts of such historic note will be sufficient. The Greeks had early received letters from Egypt and Phœnicia, and after their enthusiastic seizure and appropriation by themselves, they gave them to the world. Their far-famed attainments in the whole range, the varied encyclopedia of the then arts and sciences, had attracted the attention and commanded the admiration of all surrounding nations, until, finally, the name of Greece had become imperishably connected with all the glory of classic fame. And thus proudly fortified in the splendor and fascination of this world's wisdom, which bounded their hopes and their vision, it was not at all likely the fastidious, philosophic Greek would willingly,

or without debate and hesitation, submit to the humbling doctrines of the crucified Savior of men.

Add to this, their many religious mysteries and solemnities had, with the progress of national advancement, been successively adjourned from consecrated woods and groves to splendid fanes and temples, everywhere dotting hill and vale and shore, both of peninsular Greece and the islands of her unrivalled Archipelago—structures, the magnificence of which casts into shade all the slender imitations and boasted glory of modern architecture. And hence, again, they would be the less likely, from this as well as other circumstances, to appreciate the character and conform to the religion of one who had not, by civil title, where to lay his head, and the ritual of whose religion, typing the true and the heavenly in every other, was simple and uncostly.

Such were the state and taste of Jew and Greek at the time Paul penned the language of the text. The one was devoted to religious pomp, external parade, and legendary tradition—the other gloried in intellectual prowess and philosophic attainment; and both were quite too stately and self-sufficient not to incur the hazard of immortal loss—all the evil the hell of Christianity involves—rather than not find the way to Heaven themselves, unled and uninfluenced by others.

One would have supposed that the infinite desirableness of salvation of all, viewed as a question of direct and most imperative behoof, would have induced Jew and Greek gladly to embrace the Christian system, upon a comprehensive examination of its singularly striking evidence. But, so far from this, they utterly refused the subject any examination at all, of whatever kind, except by the standard of their own ignorance and prejudice; and this, too, amid all the boasted light of



nature, relied upon by the Greek : and, although, in the instance of the Jew, every vision from Heaven—every preliminary movement of the chariot of God for four thousand years preparatory to the presence and message of his Son, as since made known to Jew and Gentile—had been a solemn attestation of the doctrine of Christ crucified, as the sum and the substance of the Christian redemption for which they waited, and alike the theme and the reason of the apostles' ministry and martyrdom.

Such were the prevailing prejudices of Jew and Greek at the date of the text ; and upon these and the claims of the new religion issue was joined, and St. Paul, in the language of the text, aimed a blow (and it was one of death and overthrow) at the root of both these mischievous, worldly systems, and reveals the startling, mortifying truth, that peace with God in this, and the rewards of happiness in the world to come, are not to be sought upon the grounds of personal merit and social distinction, as vainly dreamed by Jew and Greek, but through Jesus Christ and him crucified.

This was the grand, distinctive truth constituting the life and soul of his ministry. It was the distinguishing staple of his newly adopted creed. The Gospel of the Crucifixion was, in his eye, not only invested with a lofty preëminence over Jewish dogma and Grecian dream, but, in fact, in the unmeasured reach of its elevation and grandeur, supremely ecliptive of all other creeds and systems. And, although he came into church "loaded with Egyptian gold," the treasures of both Eastern and Classic lore, yet, in his estimation, this proud accumulation of mental accomplishment was lighter than dross in comparison with the majestic simplicity of the Gospel truth.

And, accordingly, with the Jew and the Greek, it was

not the wont of St. Paul to compound or temporize. Wherever he presented himself, preaching the Cross, the movement was marked by struggle and conflict. He threw into their assemblies the elements of a conflagration. His deeds were those of lofty daring. His energy—his majesty—his impressiveness of appeal—roused into action the sterner-bent and master-mood of mind in Jerusalem and Athens, Ephesus and Corinth. The Priesthood everywhere felt the thunder of the shock—and the sympathy of the convulsion struck dumb the schools of philosophy!

We have said the rejection of Christianity, by Jew and Gentile, was from very different motives—from the impulse of feelings essentially diverse in kind. The Greek, as a pagan, knew nothing of any direct, authentic communication from Heaven in the shape of a revelation, and the proposition was by him rejected with disdain, as a dream of superstition. Hence, by a single step, Christianity was rejected by the Greek as utterly incredible—as sheer, unmitigated foolishness.

Not so the Jew, however. The Jew admitted the fact of a supernatural communication from God to man, and its miraculous attestation by the interposition of God. But he denied the reality of such revealments, and the Divinity of such proofs, in the personal ministry of Jesus Christ, and ascribed the God-like wonders of his life and ministry to other causes—causes at once inadequate and altogether unaccountable in their admitted connection.

In coming to this conclusion, however, the Jew met with serious and alarming difficulty. He was resolved upon the rejection of Jesus Christ and the dishonor of his mission, and yet he saw the hand of God visibly, fearfully connected with that mission. Thus, he hesitated, delayed

and reasoned. Now yielding to the impulse of irresolution, and then, again, for the purposes of reassurance, addressing himself to a calculation of consequences; until finally, judicially blinded and left to himself, he met the Greek upon the ground of a common hostility, and both together stumbled over Christianity, and learnt, alas! beyond the reach of doubt, the lesson of its truth in the hell they had mutually set at nought, as a Galilean dream, unworthy the creed of the one or the philosophy of the other.

II. LET US NOTICE THE MORE SPECIFIC ENDS AND BEARINGS OF THIS KNOWLEDGE; AND, IN ORDER TO THIS, WE ASK YOU TO CONTRAST IT WITH A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE STATE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, AT THE TIME OF THE COMING OF CHRIST. We can notice a few material points only. It is clearly evidenced by a great variety of proofs, that all the various forms and modifications of Idolatry, Polytheism, and Image worship, throughout the world at the period in question, were but corruptions—grossly distorted copies and imitations of the true religion, as it originally existed in the family of Noah.

It is with perfect ease, and no small degree of accuracy, that, appealing to analysis and induction, we trace upon the page of history (uniting sacred and profane, and including the heroic-poetic cycle) the declensions in faith and piety, and the knowledge and worship of the true God—the God of Revelation—from the Noevan age down, say, to the theogony of Hesiod and Homer, and the more sensuous mythology of the Hindoos (nearly coeval with that of Greece), until finally, amid the absurd frivolity, the debasing puerilities and the all-engrossing mummerly of Pagan Idolatry, in its myriad forms, the recognition and worship of the one true God had become

everywhere extinct, except within the national precincts of Judea, and, perhaps, a few contiguous countries.

The majestic and showy tree of human knowledge, as in the history of our first ancestors in paradise, had led to the exclusion of the Creator and his claims, by the substitution of its fruits and engrossments, for the weightier interests of truth and piety; while the traditions of the Jews, and the philosophy of the Greeks and Orientals, had, by their haughty pretensions and lofty dictation, well nigh fabled the God of the Bible, together with the truths and ethics of all his earlier revelations, out of the world. Indeed, within the range of the Atheistic negation of which we speak—in view of all practical results—the exclusion was complete. “God was not,” in any veritable sense, to any available purpose, “in all their thoughts;” nor was he truly and honorably recognized in any of their bastard systems of philosophy or religion.

Accordingly, we learn, that the grandsons of Noah early branched off into separate families and nations, each increasing, however dissimilarly, the corruption of the primitive religion, and gradually forming its own peculiar system of Idolatry, until, in a few ages, Classic Greece had her thirty thousand gods; Imperial Rome, according to Varro, eighty thousand, and, according to others (at a different period, probably), three hundred thousand; while the nations of central Asia boasted a rabble of divinities numbering three hundred and thirty millions!

God of mankind! What lunacy! What utter fatuity! The worse than stupid folly of all this parade of *godhood* among the nations of the earth, at the date in question, must be felt by all, and no proof can be necessary. The veriest devotee, living as long as Methuselah, and

with the industrious sagacity, were it possible, of a whole school of Aristotles, might have died and perished in the hell he sought to shun, before he could have learned the name, shape, color, or claims, of one-half of them; and, by this time, the other half would have needed the kindness of indispensable repairs—been given to inevitable decay, or blended in undistinguishable putrefaction.

Hence, how commandingly urgent was the call for a corrective dispensation! And, accordingly, the preaching of Christ crucified among “all nations,” beginning at Jerusalem, was designed to remove these abuses, and thus restore and re-promulge the patriarchal religion, itself of celestial origin, and now, as originally intended, made perfect in Christ. It contemplated the utter demolition of the myriad forms and entire system of Pagan Idolatry, and the thorough expurgation of the Jewish religion, with all its surreptitions and extra additions. The burden of its mission was the recall of a world long gone astray from truth and virtue—the return of our fallen planet, which was seen in dreary alienation, floating darkly amid the fairer forms of God’s creation.

You will perceive at once, that, with the state of things we have described, the knowledge of Christ in the text contrasts most strikingly and vividly. The lofty strains of Jewish bards had rendered the long looked for Messiah, significantly “the desire of all nations;” and, in the plainest dress and richest colors of the celestial pencil, he stood forth upon the page of prophecy fairer than the children of men.

And when he came, the unerring description of the heaven-guided Seers, was more than answered. All nature, with quick discernment, made haste to do him honor

and own and crown him God of all ! The mountains bowed at the approach of his footsteps, the valleys rose at the sound of his voice, and the ocean billow flung at his feet the homage of its thunder and its strength !

We have already noticed the unnatural alliance between superstition and philosophy ; or, if you will, the separate yet coincident hostility of each, to the Christian religion. And we repeat, it was against all this vain and empty parade of superstition and learning, pregnant with the most mischievous anti-christian issues, that our Apostle puts himself in arms and publishes the burning challenge, “ Where are the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world ? ” “ hath not God,” in the gift of his Son and the revelation of his Will, “ made foolish the wisdom of the world ? ” This single sentence placed under the ban of the Cross the magnificent trappings of Jewish pomp, and shattered the gaudy prism through which the Greek had for ages gazed on the glories of Pagan Mythology !

And with such a text, who can be at a loss for the comment ? You may flourish the dogmas of superstition in the synagogue, and sport at will among the plausibilities and fascinations of this world’s wisdom—philosophy, falsely so called, boasting its retreat at Athens, and extending its dictation to confederated Greece : but I am determined, even in polished, Imperial Corinth—as upon the Acropolis at Athens—to know nothing, as the crowning excellence, the grand morality of my ministry, “ save Jesus Christ and him crucified ; ” and this I shall do in my preaching and ministrations among you, although in your estimation—the judgment of this world’s wisdom—it be done with unskillfulness of manner, and even in a crucified style ! The hero of the early drama of the Gospel, upon the theater of the Gentile world, gal-

lantly resolved to rise, and cleave the heaven of revealed truth to its zenith, if he had to do it with a crippled wing!

Such was the noble, the heroic resolution of our Apostle. A resolution alike worthy of St. Paul, his coadjutors and successors, and without which our temples, our altars, and our solemnities, whatever may be their parade of signs and symbols, become a cold and a heartless desolation!

Where is the wise, where the scribe, where the disputer of this world! Can you resist the imagination that before the Corinthian crowd, Paul varied and amplified his appeal? We can almost hear its startling echoes, as it rang through crowd and portico, column and temple! *The arts and sciences* have their value, and the world will appreciate their worth and use, but Christianity is above all estimation. *Language*, with its attendant associations, may blend in one community individuals, families and nations; but religion, as taught by Christ, unites us to God, and makes us heir the thrones of eternity. *Philosophy* may amuse and improve you in the regions of abstraction. *Poetry* may wrap you in the intoxicating dreams of sentimental perfectibility; but the religion we teach, will elevate you into fellowship with God and throne you amid the grandeur of his hosts. *Astronomy* may lead you sublimely wandering over the tracts of infinity and the territories of space; but Christianity, overlooking the inferior places of creation, will conduct you to the home of God—the pavilion of uncreated excellence—where goodness and eternity, God and his people, meet in final embrace to part no more. *Agriculture*, with its kindred arts, may supply you with bread, and sustain life for a season; but this religion secures your immortal welfare and identifies your happiness with the

roll of ages. *Architecture*, the glory of Greece, and especially of Corinth, may afford you shelter from the heat, a covert from the storm, and proudly minister to the gratification of ambition and taste; but religion, eldest daughter of Heaven, fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, cherishes for you the promise of a residence in the God-built chambers of the celestial world, whose refulgent splendors shade in darkness the proudest stories of the Heavens!

Such is the surpassing excellence, the overpowering præminence, of the Gospel of Christ. It not only rose above the age that witnessed its first promulgation, but it carried the age along with it. It came to man, big with the hopes of illustrious promise and triumphant deliverance.

Wherever it prevailed, the altars and the incense of Paganism—the whole heathen Mythology, with all its Jove-born dignity—became a ruin and a mockery. Philosophy was despoiled of its dreams—superstition fled in horror from the ruins of her broken scepter. The arts of Greece and the arms of Alexander were dismantled of their attraction, and Christianity is seen issuing her mandates from beneath the shadow of the pyramids, and dictating the law of life in the palace of the Cæsars!

III. LET US CONNECT THIS KNOWLEDGE WITH THE PROPER SUBJECT OF IT IN THE TEXT—THE CLAIMS AND RELATIONS OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED. On this subject the Scriptures are the only source of information. Here only we learn his character, and all or nothing is true with regard to him. Here, however, the high and exclusive distinctions of Deity—the essential and immutable designations of God-head—are awarded him; and if he be not what this language assumes, to our conception, the Bible is a cheat, and the creed of the atheist becomes



the motto of the Christian, "there is no God." For many of the most lofty and distinctive descriptions of Deity, found in the Bible, relate to Jesus Christ; and if these mean nothing, the rest may mean nothing also.

But a truce to the semi-infidel supposition. The doctrine we assume, the God-head of Messiah, is the great corner-stone of the Christian fabric. He is before all, and above all. He claims nature, men and angels, as his workmanship. He gives law, as he gave birth, to his intelligent creation, and his will is the sole basis of all the statutes of his kingdom.

Hence he is, alike, author of nature and sovereign of the world. But, in tracing the connection between the one and the other—his essential nature and sovereign character—we are compelled to feel, how truly it is possible for thought and language mutually to impoverish each other. Both are in labor to become significant of his claims, and yet at best can be but feebly eloquent of the grandeur of our subject.

*We must not overlook, and yet we cannot dwell upon, his advent.* Atonement was the burden of his mission, and without his incarnation, that atonement could not be rendered. His assumption of our nature, was the basis of substitution, and essential to his mediation. Hence, without his advent, the analogy of Revelation pronounces our original defection irremissible. Reparation must be made to Heaven, indemnity secured, and dignity restored to the law, or man cannot be forgiven. And for this event—the advening manifestation of God's Messiah—so illustrious with hope and promise—heaven and earth were both in waiting, and God and men looking to its issues!

No marvel, then, that his long promised advent was hailed by the faith and piety of earth, as the dawn of

happier days and better things—the fullness of our hopes!

We cannot dwell upon his character, as a moral Teacher—and yet with what intensity and incomparableness of value is it invested! Infinite perfection was his text book, and the universe the store house from which he drew his illustrations. His mission and his unction were both from God, and all his portraits were colored in the light and derived their force and vividness from the distinctions of eternity!

How grandly initial and comprehensive was everything he said! He met the children of earth with the greetings of a deliverer. His lessons (always given with the authority of a well-advised wisdom and the earnestness of a deep and yearning interest), rightly understood and faithfully applied, are felt to be the only true evangelism known among the creeds of earth.

*We cannot dwell upon the temper and conduct of his life, preparatory to the one great oblation of Himself.* His whole life was a conflict—a course of humbling preparation for the cross. When he addressed himself to the task of our recovery, the vast panorama of suffering and death was spread out before him. All was index and preintimation of the great trial awaiting him. Toil to begirt and trial to gloom, lay vistaed before him in the mighty, the august future.

But amid the war and darkness of his path, he displayed a temper and resolution which no vicissitude could reach or change. Amid the struggle of hope and the pause of emotion, a sublime unmovedness of purpose sustained him, until, in the progress and evolution of the fearful struggle, the garden and the cross awakened the raptures of eternity, and the hopes and fortunes of a

world without God, were seen paling before the radiance of the neglected star of Bethlehem!

*We cannot omit, nor yet dwell upon the final scene of his sufferings.* How speak of the depths of a nameless anguish—of the sunk and wasted victim—of the shudder and darkness of recoiling nature! Ask us not to explain. For Revelation itself, with all its fullness of light, seems humbled by the concession, that, on this subject, even an angel's reach of mind, bent on inquiry, asked for thought, and Heaven itself grew dumb with awe in gazing on the scene!

How could the guilty offspring of transgression approach God without a mediator? What heart smote with the intuition of crime, dare dream of this? In vain are the nations seen piling oblation—whether upon their own artificial, or the lone and more august altars of nature. The awakened and anguished heart, sickens at the sight; and, turning from it and losing sight of all beside, fixes on the Cross! Faith knows no other Priest, no other sacrifice. It is here avenging holiness bends awfully to meet the redress it claims.

In this last scene of the great sacrifice, what an utterly unexampled accumulation of anguish and trial, desertion and agony, are we presented with? The almighty sufferer, generously throwing himself into the dread Thermopylæ of man's moral destiny! Never did the sight or thought of man or angel meet such a scene before! It was a scene for which no language or likeness has been provided! How God-betokening are all the accompaniments of the scene! The cloud of vengeance ominously arching the Heavens, grows deeper, broader, darker! Insult and torture make up the calendar of his final hour! The shuddering hill, from which, as from the altar of atonement, he pours his blood;

stands beneath its burden, the trembling throne of desolation! The angel of death is present, hovering over the curse and crime, the guilt and doom, of earth.

In this fearful assessment of human guilt, the justice of Heaven launches a frown, which tells of death and worse than death to man, but the challenge of the Cross arrests the descending stroke, and, disarming the wrath of eternity, unbars the gates of Heaven to the believer. Here is the title of the Cross to the admiration and confidence of a fallen world! Its satisfaction so far counterweighs against the sin of millions, as to bring them within the range of its compassion and influence! We perceive that "the redemption of the soul" was as difficult and costly, as it was needful and "precious." And we can only add, that so much is our salvation of grace, that even the bliss it confers is humbled by the thought—assured that "never, never, until now, did God look down on man and error with a brow so mild!"

With the Jew and the Pagan all this was a paradox, and it may be such with you. But, if an apparent one, with St. Paul, it was one whose verity precluded doubt, and whose sublimity reconciled the contradiction of its parts; for, in conforming the futurities of his faith to the facts and agency which gave it birth, he saw, in the death of Christ, the never failing pledge, that death himself should die—and die, too, when immortality was young, and its heirs had just begun to live!

*All these views are confirmed, by the triumphant conclusion of his visit and mission upon earth.* By the resumption of his own life from the grave, he gave proof of his power and purpose to bestow life upon others. By entering the grave, not as a captive but triumphant invader, he rendered peaceful the retreat and sweetened the slumber of his followers, until the reproduction of the

human body from the dominion of death, shall invest the sinless millions of the faithful with glory, honor and immortality.

When he rose, death and the grave yielded their invincibleness and dismissed their horrors—and the Christian finds himself encircled with glory in the arms of the one and the mouth of the other!

*His ascension dispersed the gloom of the Church, and reassured the heart and hopes of Heaven and earth.* Then it was he pioneered the way and marked the path of ascension for his followers. Then it was a full burst of harmony, the joy and homage of rejoicing millions, pealed from the temples of eternity, and the echoes of immensity brought back the acclaim: “The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, hath prevailed to open the book and to unloose the seven seals thereof!”

And what more can, or need we say? If we die, it is to be with Him. If we live, He will be with us! And has earth a proud aspiring, or broken-hearted sorrowing child, who could wish a better, or would ask a different destiny!

IV. LET US BRIEFLY CONNECT THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED, WITH THE CONDITION AND WANTS OF MAN. *It is this knowledge first conducts the human understanding to the just apprehension of the principle and promise of immortal life.* It is the grand mirror in which the manifestations of uncreated excellence, are reflected to the eye of faith. It is here and thus, the Divine purposes are seen, in the dawn of their manifestation, as the pledge of their full and unclouded display.

*From this knowledge a heavenly influence radiates, to restore the nature and reassert the dignity of man: a result the combined wisdom of Egypt and India's lore-*

lit temples, and all the illumined groves of Greece, could never produce.

*It is by means of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified, that Christianity enthrones herself in the heart, enshrines herself in the life, and plants the pavilion of her last abode in Heaven.*

*This knowledge leads to a living, sensitive jealousy of the Divine honor, and proper active commiseration of human want. It prompts to the assertion of the one, and the relief of the other. It everywhere plants the Cross amid the avenues of society, the collisions of passion, and the highways of human pursuit; and, at every approach of evil, its potential interposition is appealed to.*

*Deny this doctrine of salvation by the Cross of Christ a place in your creed—expunge it from the charter of our common hope—and, in every moral aspect of the deed, you invest the Heavens with gloom, and, with you, the light of life, retiring in darkness, goes out in dire eclipse! You replace at the entrance of paradise the angel of death. The trees of righteousness wither, the flowers of Eden fade, and the river of God is dried in all its streams! We invoke—we conjure you—spare, venture not, upon the murderous, the paracidal deed! Sever not the only tie that allies man to God and binds earth in communion with Heaven! Present us not with the desolate hope, the appalling vision, of a Fatherless world—an orphan universe—“without hope and without God.”*

But, we will not dishonor the truth whose cause we plead, by a deprecation of its possible overthrow. No. The citadel of our faith, amid all the fearful vicissitudes belonging to its story, founded upon, is seen rising from, the Rock of Ages, fraught with the thunder of Omnipotence, and hailing the hopes of a confiding world!

Even the malignity of hell must be too enlightened to dream of more than a temporary obscuration of this illustrious truth, which, like the covenant bow of promise, is everywhere seen, gilding, to the eye of the mourner, the tempest of God's retiring wrath!

It may be foolishness with some, and a stumbling block to others, even after eighteen centuries of trial and demonstration. Many may still unite in the sad, the damning mistake of disowning its value; but, let every one who hears us—such at least is our prayer to God and appeal to you—let every one pledge himself a martyr to the issue, that there shall throb at least one heart in the wide waste of human woe and want, that will not yield the point of its importance. And should wisdom and learning, creeds and churches, codes and nations, abjure it—then, deep in the bosom of that lone one, memory (bear witness Heaven!) shall become the ivy of the desolation, and around the dear, though world-deserted ruin, each wish of that heart shall entwine itself “verdantly still!”

The knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified being the sum and the substance of the Gospel, the fact of the present existence and diffusion of Christianity, furnishes the most conclusive evidence, not only of the reign of Jesus Christ as assumed in the Bible, but of the Divinity of its own origin in addition.

In every age and under every trial, Christianity has steadily asserted her supremacy of control and influence, brightening and expanding from the earlier types and first intimations of prophecy—but eminently after the resurrection of Christ—into larger and final accomplishment: the grand ulterior consummation at which she aims as the Alpha and Omega of a regenerated world.

With sin and ignorance, earth and hell, she has maintained a conflict which has grown keener and keener with the lapse of centuries. In this conflict she has withstood and disarmed, for ages, the brutal, impulsive malignity of barbarism, and the more facile and effective tactics of civilization.

As by the "preaching of the Cross" she sent her "lines out into all the world," the continents of the earth and the islands of the sea alike refused her law and swore hostility to her spread. Wherever her voice was heard, it was the signal of struggle and warfare. Deep and dark was the opprobrium which rose up before and about her. The world met her mission and movements with disdain. Nations jeered her claims. The scowl of kingdoms resisted her approach. Everywhere reproach and derision were upon her path. She suffers the last oppression of the world. And yet she lives! And a flame thus living, upon the very bosom of the deep, assailed by every wind of Heaven, yet rising above and shedding its effulgence on wave and element, everywhere battling against its existence, and with every form of resistance still enlarging the circle of its radiance from age to age, must be sustained by Heaven's own fires, and rendered immortal by the breath of God!

*Finally.* Still lingering at the foot of the Cross, with the deep-seated, impulsive power of a grave and irresistible conviction, that, without an interest in the Gospel of the Crucifixion, eternity is lost to man and its hopes a curse; gazing on the vision of its excellence and listening to the echo of its triumphs, sublimely borne upon the wings of ages; the question recurs, What part will you take in the acceleration of its spread?

Will you blend your hopes and your destiny with its



fortunes and its claims? Will you now and irrevocably strike for its glory, and do or die in the conflict? Will you perpetuate the impulse already given, to the extremities of the earth? Will you combine every element of success and all the means of varied assistance, by an action without blank or pause, full, systematic and continued, until the accumulated and confluent resources of the Gospel shall in every place be brought to bear upon the moral conquest of the earth, and the glory of the Cross burst forth effulgently upon the nations ripening for and expectant of the change; like the regal brow of the sun, high in Heaven, endiademed with light and rolling his bannered splendor to the gaze of all!

The subject is with you. God grant that its burden—the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified—may elevate your affections, your hopes and your aims, to things above! May it open up and render abiding, living intercourse, between you and the world to which you aspire, until the conclusive awards of the final judgment shall assign you the glories of deathless beatitude, in Heavenly places about the throne of God; and, in furtherance of the majestic designs of the Cross, give impulse and extension to the knowledge of its achievements, commensurate with the expansions of thought and feeling, as, in the range of their combination, they influence all intelligence and give character to the whole unbounded universe of mind!

## SERMON X.

## THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY OVER DEATH.

“AND I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, There shall be no more death.”—Rev. xxi, 3, 4.

[To Mrs. D'Arcy Paul, Petersburg, Virginia :

MY DEAR MADAM—Some time since, when in Petersburg, and sharing the hospitality of your house and family during my stay, I found you so deeply afflicted on account of the recent death of an interesting son, in the prime of hopeful youth, that, called upon on Sabbath to occupy the pulpit of the church in which you usually worship, with the view and hope of affording you some relief and consolation of feeling under the deep trial by which you had been borne down, I selected and preached the following sermon on the *Triumph of Christianity over Death*.

The many virtues and the Christian death of your son—not to overlook the noble CHARITY he founded, by requesting and obtaining from his father the sum of twenty thousand dollars, with the addition of suitable grounds, for the *establishment of an Orphan Asylum* in his native city—must be to you sources of consolation beyond any earth can offer. The following thoughts on death may enhance your estimate of these, and at the same time direct attention to others. For these reasons, and others, to which I am sure you and your excellent husband would not allow me to allude more particularly, I ask permission, my dear Madam, to *dedicate this discourse to you*.

Your obliged and faithful friend,

Sept. 21, 1849.

H. B. BASCOM.]

THE text assumes that death is an evil, and the assumption is authenticated by the universal experience of all men in all time. Death is indeed an evil—an adverse destiny—with which every child of humanity has to grapple sooner or later. Death is one of the great facts of our being—a law of our nature ; and, however solemn may be the thought or gloomy the reflection, it must, with every one of us, come to this, even this, at last. Heaven has interposed no alternative, and we

must, despite all hope or fear to the contrary, indulge the fearful conception and surrender ourselves to its appalling certainty.

The subject is one of such thrilling and overwhelming interest, we know not how to approach it. With regard to the mere fact, we are without doubt or hope; and yet how strangely does feeling lead us to inquire even where conviction affirms!

Is it—we cannot help asking—is it true of man and earth, that death is the dark and inevitable lot of all—that it is not only a doom the past has braved, but as certainly one that the future shall: that all, all must die—must sink in death nor leave survivor nor heir to the wide inheritance of earth? Is it true that the quiver of death is not emptied nor his bow unstrung—that even the living are but stragglers from his fold, a fold already embracing the unreckoned millions of dead mankind? Is it true that generation after generation is found successively placing, by unerring transmission, the keys of the tomb in his proud and conquering hand! Must it be felt, at every step, that we live in the shadow of the future—that to-morrow walks in the guise of day, and that life itself is but the journal of death! Are we, at best, but mourners in the funeral train, and does death, like the personified Calamity of Homer, tread our wasting hearts, while no sound is heard from his footsteps!

If these things are so, and every trial of doubt is but to find them true, what must not be the appalling fear and transcendent hopes they bring into play. Here is a subject involving, not the interests of personal consequence, or the destinies of civilization—not the tenure of earthly good, or the dreams and blazonry of human ambition, but the fundamental laws and wants—the essential elements and issues—the most interior and

touching relations—the eternal allotments of humanity ! Such is the subject, and such our relations to it.

If, then, the ordinary scenes and interests of life's drama fail to turn our attention to the future, its catastrophe cannot. If the mirth and madness—the tears and triumph—the holiday of youth and the apathy of age—pride of intellect and prostrated purposes—pomp and poverty—rapture and anguish—so strangely mingled in our path, do not teach us the moral of our being ; then we turn to death—we appeal to the tomb—to the urned ashes of the friends we have lost—to the lesson of buried centuries, and the dead dust of ages !

Do you ask after the purpose of the appeal ? it is, that we may point you to that part of your natural inheritance of which death cannot deprive you, the heirship of an imperishable destiny, when mortality and the grave shall be recalled but as parts of the history, and among the antiquities of a former state of existence, occupied as a theater of action and responsibility.

In this way, Christianity in theory, and religious feeling in fact, exhibit a happy admixture of counteracting elements—one while burdened with sighs and tears, and then rising and swelling in the loftiest strains of celestial triumph. And, with these, the one not less than the other, we have to do on the present occasion : “ And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, There shall be no more death ” !

In asking attention to the significance and application of this very interesting announcement,

WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE ORIGINAL, RELATIVE CONDITION AND DESTINATION OF MAN. After that God had created the heavens and the earth—had given to the one their grandeur and the other its beauty—he proceeded to the creation of man. But, as man was to hold so distin-

guished a rank in the dignified scale of his unequal workmanship, in the wide range of being, action and destiny, Infinite Wisdom paused to deliberate, and the Eternal Three proceed to his formation in council: "Let us make man in our own image and after our likeness."

From the circumstances and manner of his creation, we infer, that man was destined to be chief of the works of God. Uniting in himself, alike, the nameless diversities of mind and the endless modifications of matter, he is, perhaps, altogether the most surprising effect of creating power—of omniscient skill; and, combining in himself the most remarkable phenomena, and occupying, as he does, a position in the center and amid the harmonies of the universe, man may be regarded as a living type of the worlds of matter and of mind.

At the time of his first introduction amid the enchanting scenes of a new-created world, man was constituted the high priest of God's creation surrounding him—the herald of his being and perfections. The multiplied phenomena attendant upon his original formation as a compound being, consisting of soul and body, stamped upon him the signature of his value, and proclaimed his title to preëminence amid the universality of things about him.

Placed, in his primitive state, at the head of God's visible creation—intellectual, immortal man went forth in the image of his Maker, the legal representative of Heaven and earth, the lord and proprietor of all he surveyed. His soul a simple, immaterial, uncompounded principle of life—derived by direct creative impartation from God himself, and intended for immortality—was naturally and necessarily indestructible; and any tendency to decay, that may have attached to the constituent

parts of different elementary tendencies of which his body was composed, may, and, it occurs to us, must, have been counteracted by the special provision which had been made for the perpetuity of the organic division of his being, upon condition of obedience and fidelity to the God of his existence and blessings.

This tendency of his material organization to decay—it being philosophically certain that the different ultimate constituents of which his body was compounded would, by the law of affinity, seek their primitive abodes in the elements from which they were originally taken: it is probable, we say, this tendency was counteracted, not only by a well known law of the vital functions in the case, but by the specific influence of the “Tree of Life”—so denominated because of its life-perpetuating, its death-preventing properties, and to which man had free access, exclusively in view of the continuity of his being as a denizen of earth.

That such were the instituted use and resulting efficacy of the Tree of Life, is fairly inferable from its subsequent interdict. Forfeited by transgression, the Tree of Life was banned and guarded by “helmed seraphim and sworded cherubim,” “lest man,” in the language of Heaven, “should put forth the hand, eat, and live forever”—which language would be false, as well as unmeaning, unless this tree possessed the life-sustaining qualities ascribed to it.

The Tree of Life was the only one, in all the Garden of God, interdicted in consequence of sin; and hence the presumption, that it must have possessed the power of continuing a life forfeited by crime. Be this as it may, the means to guarantee the immortality of man, even as a physical being, were every way adequate—were within his reach and easy of access. Sin separated

him from these means, and death, as the inevitable result, followed their loss.

It would seem that man, originally, was physically and relatively constituted very much as we are ; although man has doubtless deteriorated greatly in point of natural strength, dignity and beauty. This inference with regard to the original, compared with the existing physiology of our nature, is clearly deducible from the fact, that nutrition, by a periodical participation of food other than from the Tree of Immortality, was necessary to the functionary mechanism of life, and an essential condition of its perpetuity : “Of all the trees of the Garden thou mayest freely eat,” save one—the fatal “Tree of Knowledge.”

Again, that man possessed the social susceptibilities and passions of our nature, and had personal wants and appetites, as now, is not less clear from the command, “Multiply, and replenish the earth.” And hence, we may add, there appears to be nothing unlikely in a participation of the Tree of Life, not as ordinary food, but as the Heaven-appointed means to secure the perpetuity of the human body ; for such participation of the Tree of Life seems to have been an extra-provisional arrangement or contingency essential to his physical immortality : and the loss of this provision is noticed by Revelation as a most eventful speciality in the natural history and moral destiny of the human race.

The power of adhesion, in conformity with all the laws of organic matter, would, in the instance of the human organization, tend to counteract the influence of gravitation ; and the efficacy of the Tree of Life, as we have seen, and, perhaps, other unknown causes equally effective and salient, must have resisted the dissolvent qualities of the atmosphere, and other kindred agencies,

in their well known action upon the human body, and thus render its physical immortality at least a possible contingency.

Thus we see man exempt from all moral evil and natural imperfection. We see him the sum and the center of all earthly beauty and terrestrial accomplishment, and a great variety of causes conspiring to promote his longevity even to an indefinite term. And, on this general topic, it only remains for us to reflect for a moment upon the dignity and moral purposes of his being.

Created in the image of God, and pronounced good—very essentially good—by the best, the unerring Appraiser of things; possessing the high and discriminating attributes of intelligence, volition and sensibility, together with all the ennobling capabilities of an intellectual and moral nature; claiming alliance with the throne of God and the hosts of Heaven—had man continued in his primitive state of allegiance during the period of his eventful probation, he would either have been continued on earth as a district of God's un-fallen creation, or removed to a nobler abode to celebrate in hymns of lofty devotion, and otherwise honor and publish the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and, especially, the depth and grandeur of his condescension, throughout all duration.

One thing is certain, that, however disposed of as to the locality of his being, he would have remained in a state of approving association with the God of his being and all his happy, intelligent creation. Such, then, scarcely lower than the angels by birth-right, was man, when the chosen, the virgin soil of Paradise was first pressed by his foot, and its fruit plucked by his hand; and while he remained steadfast in his primeval innocence, he seemed only created for bliss and formed for delight,



sharing, gratefully and securely, in all the high dispensations of a Father's love and a Father's care.

II. BUT THE PRIMEVAL FORMATION OF MAN, HIS HAPPY LOCATION AND CONSEQUENT HOPES, FORM BUT A SMALL PART OF HIS HISTORY : WE MUST ATTEND, ALSO, TO HIS REVERSED MORAL CONDITION AND ALTERED CONSTITUTION. "Man, being in honor, abode not." He sinned. He is fallen. And this fatal chapter in his history will next claim attention, while we reflect UPON THE SUBJECTION OF HUMANITY TO THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH.

We are now compelled to essay a more gloomy, or rather totally different, picture. A picture at which "man's historian, though divine, might weep"—a paragraph the recording angel would gladly have blotted and given to oblivion. Man, like the angels of fallen memory, "kept not his first estate." He fell by sin; and the anguish of millions, for ages uncounted, has dirged the melancholy truth, that "sin brought death into our world, and all our woe"! A truth how sad, and sadly told, in the destinies of humanity! A fatal verity, giving birth to grief and suffering of every shape and size on earth—exciting sympathy in Heaven, and voicing even the dungeons of the damned with the groans of the lost!

Fain, God knows, would we finish the portrait as we began it. Fain would we end in Heaven a story that began in Paradise, its early and most significant type. But we must not, we dare not, compliment the poetry of feeling and fancy at the expense of truth and duty. Man sinned, and by his sin placed himself beyond the reach of those causes which, until now, had operated to secure his immortality.

Divorced from the Tree of Life and all those benignant means ordained of God to perpetuate his being,

his natural tendency to dissolution and decay was left, fearfully left, without check and without control.

The moment he sinned, therefore, death became a part of his physiology—became matter of organic necessity, as well as positive punishment and arbitrary institution. The first obituary ever recorded, told all that has since been chronicled of death and the grave. The announcement of the death of the first man as the federal head and representative of his race, was the prophetic record of the doom of living millions—“And Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.” This sentence is the first line, it is the caption of the world’s epitaph. Death now claimed the earth as his empire and mankind as his prey; and, in the midst of a world on which the eye of God once rested with rapture—where all was beauty to the vision, music to the ear, and luxury to the heart—in the midst of this fair world, in the spring of its glory, death erected his throne and spread his insignia, and, in the execution of the sentence, “dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return,” he has successively plundered earth of her families and time of his generations, and relentlessly dragged to his chariot wheels the conquered millions of man. And having, up to the present generation, housed them all in the grave, he now waves his dark banner in gloomy triumph over the undistinguished ruin!

In this way, my audience, you and I and all the world have become mortal. We have all been shipwrecked upon the same sea, and by the same wide wasting tempest. Nor have we yet to learn, what is but too fearfully proved by the death of more than twenty-five hundred millions of human beings every century, that, at best, the “span” of human continuance upon earth is short, and death inevitable. Nevertheless, hope has been left

us, and if we live as we should, death is an appointment of infinite benignity to man—an appointment every way as good as it will be found to be wise.

Yet, with all the innumerable indications of mercy and benignity that surround and sustain us, it must not be forgotten, that we are under a partly penal dispensation. Our present state is one of discipline and correction. The infliction of the more dreadful elements of the curse has been graciously remitted. But still, for the purposes of improvement, our own good, Heaven has connected with our preliminary state of being upon earth, the parental chastisements of a judicial hand.

We know, we feel, we are anticipated by you. The associations of the subject, of the hour; the recollections of bereavement; the yet bleeding wounds of grief and memory—have already told our message! We not only suffer—it may be long and intensely, and often without witness or sympathy—but all, all must die. For six thousand years earth has been the sepulcher of life to its busy, bustling millions—the vast burying ground, where now molder the children of ages in undistinguishable equality!

The rolls of mortality, the chronicles of the long-lost dead, and the epitaph of departed grandeur, these alone constitute full one-half of all our learning and all our recollections! Although less observant of it, we have as much to do with death and the dead as with life and the living. Where is it we do not meet with the ashes of the dead, with mementos of the departed, and are not thrilled with memories of *those that were!*

However unheeded by many, the boundless unmitigated ravages of death are known to all. How many in this careless, reckless world of ours, and especially in the elder divisions of it, trample upon the long-decayed

bodies of their ancestors in the streets and fields! How many tenant them in their houses and dwellings! How often does the modern rival of Cicero and Demosthenes, in his hurried passage from court to court—or the careless ecclesiastic, as he wends his way from the study to the pulpit—tread heedlessly on all that remains of the tongue of him, after whom he copies his eloquence, and upon which listening crowds and senates once hung with rapture! How often does the chariot of the peer and lordling, the vehicle of the gay and the giddy, roll over the heads of those who once enjoyed the whirl as they do! How probable that the dust which soils the foot or annoys the fastidious vanity of the present beauty, who, at palace, mansion or saloon, amid all the voluptuous intoxication of waltz or quadrille, is seen offering incense to the divinity of her own passions, may once have bloomed upon the bosom, or sparkled in the eye, of some earlier Hebe, as fair and as fascinating as she! The very walls of the apartment where you riot, heedless of your random descent to death and hell, may be decorated with the dust of those who once rioted as you do! And others, in their turn upon the stage, will soon crowd and elbow you into oblivion, as you have your predecessors!

Now, indeed, every nerve, every artery, every sense, may be flooded with life and gladness; but soon, time and disease, decrepitude and death, will weed and waste you all away! And can you be careless, when the scales of life and death are thus seen quivering in their final poise!

Where now are the bustling millions, that, like tumultuated atoms in an expanse of sun, once crowded the streets of Ninevah, Babylon, Jerusalem and Rome? They *were*, and *are not*; and this is all we know of them!

Learn from this, then (for all are typed by these), that, ere it be long, desolation will walk the paths and streets of your now populous domain or city. For life, to change the imagery, is a sea, and every human being has to sail it ; all must essay its navigation, and all, sooner or later, are destined to be wrecked upon its bosom ! Even those who hear us now—God of the living and the dead, how solemn the thought !—may be listening to the last nearing wave, that shall reach and settle over them forever !

But, gratitude commemorate the kindness, we need not despair. Heaven has everywhere shed its effulgence over the death-fraught tide of time, and there is a plank, the last resort in the shipwreck of life and hope, to which we may cling, secure of escape, and assured we shall soon be stranded upon the immortal beach of the heavenly world ! Thus fearfully is it true, man has to die. It is thus death treads out empire and extinguishes the light of earth.

Death, however, does not conclude the history of man. Though mortal, he is still illustrious. Notwithstanding all we have seen true of man's earthly lot, death does not conclude his history. He is a being highly capable and strangely gifted. There is a relative majesty, a kind of immensity, connected with the human mind, and coincident with human immortality, and this relative greatness never dwindles except in comparison with the infinitude of God himself. Nature and Providence assert the argument, and redemption and the history of man prove it in a thousand forms.

If we begin with God, guided by our only accredited notices, man is the third grand link in the descending scale of greatness. Created "in the image of God," with rank and dignity but "little lower than the angels," he wields a mighty influence over both matter and mind,

over more worlds than one, and has occasioned more effort and controversy, and graver conflict in the moral government of God, than any class of beings of which we have any knowledge.

Take man, even as known and communed with by us, and you will find him as truly of celestial, as he is certainly and sadly of mortal, mold. "How poor, how rich, how abject, how august, how complicate, how wonderful is man!"

Amazing counteraction of adverse elements! Living, he dies! dying, he lives forever! Mysterious, indeed, are God's appointments!—the discipline and vicissitudes to which he has subjected man! "An angel's arm can't snatch him from the grave—yet legions of angels can't confine him there!" Adorable paradox! astounding antithesis! soon we shall see its consistency and comprehend its force.

But to return. Let the fearful inevitability of death—rendered still more fearful by uncertainty, as it regards both time and manner—claim our reluctant attention a moment longer. Man must die. In the midst of life we are in death. Death inhabits all things except the thoughts of the dying, here and elsewhere. The ashes of the dead! What do we know of their presence and mission—their fearful coextension with things about us? They adorn our highways, fatten our fields, vegetate our flowers, supply our tables, float in the cup of the reveler, and "support the dancer's heels!"

Whether in the unimpaired vigor of youth or showered over with the hoary frosts of age, we are alike liable to the sudden and unsparing stroke of death. Children of mortality—of the dead and the dying!—think not you are the tenants of a castle of brass or palace of adamant, and therefore secure. No: you are but passengers upon

the perilous, the storm-tumultuated ocean of life, and embarked, too, in a vessel of reeds and rushes. Your frail bark is now, it may be, gaily careering over the billows, impelled by the gentle yet swift winged breeze; but the concealed rock, or lowering tempest, will soon arrest you, and the dreadful gurge, despite the recoil of nature, will claim you as its wreck!

You are all being borne forward, resistlessly, in the great caravan of hours and days, of weeks and months, of years and ages, toiling on to eternity!

And can it be that you require proof, where all is demonstration? We know not where to begin. Turn to the high places of the earth, the seats and scenes of sceptered greatness and palaced grandeur, high-wrought festivity and luxurious gratification: are they secure?

Look at the proud hopes and clustering laurels of the mighty *Julius*—prince and pride of all who bore the unmatched name of Cæsar. But, in an instant, the fatal dagger of the inexorable Brutus, sent him from the throne and senate to the grave! Look at imperial Belshazzar, in company with courtier and courtesan—the élité of his empire, from a hundred and twenty different provinces—quaffing wine to his gods, in vessels plundered from the House of Jehovah, amid proud and gallant revelry. But in a moment his garland withers, his pomp and his viols desert him, a mysterious hand writing traces his damnation on the wall, “and in that night was Belshazzar, the King of the Chaldeans, slain.”

Multitudes are subject to the same law with individuals. Look at the rich, voluptuous cities of the Campagna—the luxurious Pompeii and Herculaneum especially—with the rival myriads of their pleasure-loving, vice-devoted population. Dreaming nought of evil, and only

of naiad and song—Hybla's thyme and Tempe's violet. Look at them silent and at rest, at the foot of Vesuvius, where sleep had thrown its deep oblivion over the exhaustion of passion and pursuit. What more likely than that the future would be as the past? What more sudden and unexpected than the breath of the volcano, as it hung above and the distant thunder began to hurtle in the Heavens! What more unlooked for and startling, than the dirge of the burning blast, as the dreaming cities awoke to consciousness and instant destruction. Imagine, if you can, the struggling rush, the living surge, the crushing conflict, the shriek of despair, the choked agony, as palace, shrine, fortress, dome, hall and amphitheater, with all of life they held, were sepulchered in a sea of flame and lava!

The least thing, "less than the least," in the hand of God, is sufficient to deprive you of life. Small indeed, if we can suppose any, is the instrumentality required. Pope Adrian lost his life by a knot. A distinguished Roman counsellor by a hair. Anacreon, the famous Greek poet, by the seed of a grape. A mushroom deprived the Emperor Charles the Sixth of life, and, as history tells, changed the destinies of Europe. Attila, "the scourge of God," met in a bed of luxury the death he had fiercely braved in a thousand battle-fields. A draught of water, a grain of sand, an exhalation, or a night's debauch, are frequently, but too often, sufficient. Support me, then, "Power of Powers supreme," in view of that tremendous hour! Angel of my birth and path, be near; Great Intercessor leave me not! for, in a moment, the harps of Heaven may ask my hand, or the groans of the damned wail the dirge of my destiny!

Alas! how sadly true, that death, at best, will soon arrive to all. Soon, too soon, you will be in the land of



silence, where no emulous project will heave the bosom, and no creative fancy rekindle the extinguished fire of the eye. Recollect, also, that death is not more certain than succeeding immortality. Forget not that the soul will live when the pulsations of the heart are still in the grave. And that as you sow in the field of time and trial, so you will reap in the great harvest of eternal recompense.

Would to God we could move you to reflection and feeling! Would we could give you an intuition of how rapidly your dying moments are dropping into eternity! Already your shadow begins to darken the dial of your doom! Already the banners of death are waving in the night breeze about you! Life's green tree has received its death-blight, and even now its seer and faded leaves are bickering in the blast!

While we address you, you may feel the pale shadows of the sepulcher settling on your brow! The bloom of the earth and the beam of the sky are retreating from your vision! The graves of affection and friendship are thickening round you! Everywhere may be seen at rest our mother earth, with her dead children in her arms!

In this state of things, it remains that we betake ourselves to the only remedy left us—that is, seek preparation to meet death with heroic firmness and know that thus “to die is gain.” Children of sin and sorrow as we are, we need not die without hope, unless we so decide by our own criminal choice.

Fallen and wretched as we are, we may yet meet death in all the glory of unsubdued triumph. Suffering his pains and feeling his grasp, we may say, “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; though I fall I shall rise again.” Relentless death, where is thy sting?—vo-

racious grave, where thy victory? Sin alone can edge the sword of death and barb his arrow's point. But the Christian calmly interrogates the one and the other, in the language of triumphant challenge, Land of darkness, where are thy horrors?—king of terrors, where is thy spear? and echo, from the dismayed sepulcher and insolvent tomb, cheers the heart as it repeats the triumph, "Where are they!"

Death, then, is not a loss to the Christian—but an exchange. Heaven takes with one hand but gives with the other. We plant in death, the harvest follows. We recover in death what by life we lose. Death is but the means of preferment and fruition, securing perpetual immunity from tears and trial, grief and parting, care-worn hearts and blighted feeling.

Here we see in the most perfect, in eternal consistency, the goodness and the severity of God. We die, it is true, but the light and hope of Heaven falls in full and cheering beam upon the dark scroll of human woe!

III. THE LANGUAGE OF THE TEXT IS THAT OF PROPHETIC GRATULATION IN VIEW OF THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY OVER DEATH; AND WE NOW ASK ATTENTION TO THE NATURE AND DISPLAY OF THOSE PECULIAR PRINCIPLES, FACTS AND CONVICTIONS, GIVING BIRTH TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE TEXT. The announcement of the text is to be regarded, not only as an abstract truth, but especially as applied to the Christian and appropriated by him. It brings to our knowledge and notice the revelation and bestowment of a peculiar treasure; a treasure peculiar to the Christian—the Christian Revelation—the "Gospel of the grace of God," in all its fullness and efficacy. It is a treasure unknown in the calendar of kings, unkenned in the philosophy of the schools. No vision of fabled gods, of Eld or Elfland, brought it near. Pythagoras sought

it in the groves of Crotona, Plato upon the Promontory of Sunium, Socrates on the Acropolis at Athens, and Cato in his retreat at Utica. It was the great moral desideratum which kings and prophets waited for and sought, but never found. Debated among sages and dreamed of by the Muses, it was still an unfound treasure.

Immortality, in every full and proper sense, is a discovery of Christianity. It is to man the grand Eureka of the skies. The Angel of the future brought it down—the rays of Heavenly illumination wide diverging as he came and imparting their radiance alike to the abodes of life and the gloom of the sepulcher. The history of nations and the records of all time sustain the testimony of the finger of God, that “life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel.”

Here is the charter of our hopes and the source of their origination. Here is the foundation of that citadel which the fall of the universe cannot shake nor the waste of its ages impair. It is this associates the attributes of God with the feelings of men. The mind gradually expands with its elevation, until, imaging forth the beauty and grandeur of the Almighty, it mingles with the universe!

Until this revelation of the Divine will, wide over a world, without hope and without God, the starless night of moral darkness gloomed. Futurity, with its visions of grandeur, was to man an unknown void—an appalling, impenetrable gloom. Death was the dark period of human existence, and all after, an eternal, dreamless sleep. The grave, instead of being the treasury of Heaven for the preservation and reproduction of the human body, was the great, the damning extinguisher of human hope and human happiness.

During these ages of doubt and gloom, the destinies of the universe seemed to tremble in the balance, and man everywhere groped in darkness—soul-sickening, hope-excluding. It was the death of Christ, fulfilling the purposes of his advent and life, that gave birth and tone to the hope of recovery. It was then the world received the elements of its regeneration. Here misconception seems to be impossible. All nature bore testimony to the majesty and immensity of the achievement. In a manner unwitnessed before or since, earth espoused her Maker's cause against the revolt of her children; the indignant Heavens took up the quarrel of his wrongs; the astonished grave gave up the wondering dead; and shuddering hell, even, murmured her sullen but admiring homage!

*That this revelation of the will and mercy of God, in relation to our fallen world, may be available to the purposes of human recovery, there must be corresponding conviction and effort on the part of man.* Faith in Christ—an appeal for mercy to the blood of the everlasting covenant—forgiveness sought on the ground of atonement—the world's redemption by Jesus Christ—prayer for the light and help of the Holy Spirit: such faith and appeal are indispensable. Revelation everywhere makes faith especially the grand distinguishing condition of eligibility to eternal life.

Faith to this effect implies a just apprehension—a discriminating appreciation—of the character and perfections of God, as essential to its very nature. The history of redemption and the administration of the Spirit, must be understood, felt and relied upon, as veritable facts. A sense of ruin and thirst for recovery must give to the soul new hopes and higher aims. Repentance, turning to God, acceptance with him and perpetual search

after him, must color and dignify the walks of life. And thus faith becomes the grand medium through which Christianity sheds its select influence upon our fallen nature and prepares us for death.

It is the only preparation for death known to Christianity; and every opposing theory, sanctioned though it may be even by the canonized formula of the most lordly Leviticum, must be spurious and apocryphal, unless we treat the Bible as a lie and a cheat. The work of grace—of God—in the heart of man, can be accomplished by no ceremonial observance. No external rite, ordinance, or ministration, necessarily implies it. There is no fixed consecutive connection between the one and the other. Judas, divinely accredited as an “apostle—one of the twelve,” and of course at the head of any “succession” you or I or aftertimes may boast, may commune at the table of the supper, where the Son of God himself presides, and yet be “a devil.” Simon Magus may be baptized by apostolic hands, and so “born of water” as none of you ever can be—that is, by the office of an inspired administrator—and yet remain a graceless Pagan, “in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity.”

No merely physical process implies moral renovation. This is a Godlike achievement, beyond the power of even baptism or the supper. No external means can effect the transformation. The boasted claims of priesthood, the virtue of the ritual, the efficacy of ordinances, all fail. You may seek purification in the Jordan or the Ganges, and only be washed to fouler stains. You may appeal to Arbana and Pharpar, and all the waters of Damascus, and the leprosy remain unpurged. Life, were it possible, might be spent in genuflection and rehearsal before priest, shrine, book, or image, or in the caves of ocean,

performing baptismal ablutions at the roots of the sea, and yet the cleaving curse have hold of you! The blood of atonement and the energy of the Heavens in its application, alone can change the human heart; and whatever is offered in substitution, abjures and blasphemes the only religion God has provided for our ruined nature.

*Another element in this preparation for death, will be found to be the love of God and of our kind.* Love to God, in all the freeness and fullness of a devout affection, must become the sovereign passion of the soul. Love, as a common passion, philosophically considered, subdues the fear, and is hence said to be stronger than death. And this view of the subject accords with fact and history. Who is it that would not seek an object supremely beloved, although his heart's blood should ebb in the effort, and the vital current stand still at its source?

Even the love of country and of kind, how often has it urged on thousands, amid the din of battle and the groans of the dying, seas of blood and fields of carnage, to rescue the one from danger and vindicate the injured rights of the other! What, for example, did the brave Leonidas care for death, when he immortalized\* the Passage of Thermopylæ by a courage seldom equalled and never surpassed! What did Hannibal care for death, when his armies hung, like the tempests of Heaven, upon the declivities of the Alps! What did Alexander care for death, when he leaped into the Granicus with the banner of Macedon waving over his head! What did Cyrus care for death, when, in his scythed chariot and surrounded by his spearmen, he rushed forward to battle and danger, glory and conquest! What did the heroic Prince of Naphthali care for death, when, at the siege of Jerusalem, he "spurred his barb up the mountain paths

of Galilee," to meet the incursions of the Roman Eagle!

And if love in these and kindred particulars—in instances of merely earthly interest—can do so much, what is it love to God, the supreme good, cannot do!—God, who is greater than greatness, stronger than strength, wise beyond all wisdom, and better than goodness, however modified by human conception—and especially when, with supreme regard for God and human kind, the whole soul is imbued with the temper of Heaven and fired with unearthly abstraction and the love of immortality! Such are the hopes of Christianity—such its triumph over death!

It is thus, amid the last throes of expiring nature, the Christian wreathes himself with the garlands and appareling of immortality, and might almost weep that God will let him die but once! It is thus the spirit leaves the body, assured of final reunion, as calmly and sweetly as the dying winds of Heaven expire in the last-heard murmurs of the Eolian harp! And the impress of its peace and its triumph is left as a signet upon the clay-cold features now slumbering in the repose of death, lovely as the expanse of jasper waters, seen by John in the apocalypse of Patmos! Can this be death!

IV. LET US NOTICE IN WHAT WAY, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, THE MINISTRY OF DEATH MAY BE REGARDED AS SUBSERVIENT TO THE HOPES AND PURPOSES OF CHRISTIANITY. Death, in the language of philosophy and the parlance of this world's morality, is a debt we owe to nature. In the language of Revelation, and as suggested by the analogy of the moral government of God, *it is a debt we owe to the retributive justice of Heaven*, and is the last act of obedience we can perform by suffering the will of God, and

the last God requires of us. It is an appointment partly punitive and partly gracious.

In the instance of the Christian, on the one hand, it exhausts the unremitted part of the original curse—and, on the other, frees him alike from probation and peccability, the multiform ills and disabilities of his material nature. Thus the Christian, by dying, discharges the last debt of suffering and resignation, avails himself of the infinite good in prospect, and death to him becomes the path and condition of entrance upon a widely extended scene of Heavenly enlargement. Death, in a word, restores to him his original birth-right—the unconfined improveability and immortal destiny awaiting him beyond the grave !

*Death puts a period to temptation and defection, affliction and sorrow, as it winds up the history and concludes the drama of human trial.* Temptation and defection no longer mislead and depress. The world's seductions and the sway of the passions are at an end. Sin and sorrow are no more. Death becomes the medium of transfer to a state and scenes of unsuffering life and undying glory at God's right hand.

Not that death can in any way destroy sin, or annul its consequences ; but, in removing us from earth, it terminates the conflict between sense and faith, infirmity and duty.

The vicissitudes of earthly trial are exchanged for Heavenly recompense, and subside in the rewards of eternal fruition. Then it will be seen that the afflictions, the thousand ills of life, were but the disguised regards of Almighty goodness, the shadows of Heaven resting on the vision of earth ! Then it will be known that the noblest lessons of Christian virtue are to be learned amid the clouds and storms of life, and that the loveliest



flowers that bloom in the paradise of God, were watered by tears upon earth, as the nursery of virtue to man.

Nor is this picture more beautiful than true—but a Parnassian dream, or the mere hyperbole of feeling : for, even here, we know, that, until death shall terminate the trial and triumph of virtue, hope kindly irradiates, with more than rain-bow hues, the gloom of sorrow and the tempest of grief.

*Death places the good of earth beyond the reach of the vanities and disappointments of life.* We go—God-like thought!—where real and apparent are the same. Where reality itself is less unreal. Where the veriest vanities are vain no more. Where existence shall never again be billowed high with human agitation, nor exhibit its myriad unsubstantial images of air, its melancholy illusive ghosts of dead renown and blighted hope ; but the manifestations of immortality bound forever the vanities of this life with the overwhelming realities of another and a better. For the elements and interests of both are now seen, for the first time, in actual realization and triumphant display. The immunities and resources of immortality preclude disappointment. All is triumph and beatitude.

*Death under the circumstances we assume, demonstrates the power and efficacy of the Gospel.* Look with what unreluctant grandeur, in the felt embrace of death, the Christian yields himself to God ! The angel of hope and death is present to guide and console. A well-defined consciousness of immortal life absorbs him ; and, in dying, he feels that he but casts earth's throbbing dust aside to put his diadem of deathless glory on.

He is done with earth. With him all is elevated and extra-mundane. The heavenly mansions sweep in his eye, as the promised sequel of the tears and darkness of

earth! As he passes the cold and turbid river of death, he sees the splendors of immortality streaming abroad and investing his home!

*Death is necessary to the redemption of the body, and the final perfection of human nature.* It is of death only we can predicate the superinduction of a renewing change by the resurrection of the body from the lifeless bondage of the grave. Would you then share the intelligence and happiness, the grandeur and perfection, of Heaven, as it regards the entire of your nature: you must first die, die to acquire the capacity to do so!

Deem not, then, the dispensation an unkind one, and hard to be borne, which sows your bodies in death as the seed time of life, in order to their reproduction and immortality in the harvest of the resurrection, where, invested with celestial qualities, free from all corruptive change and ungrateful vicissitude, they shall shake off the power of earthly gravitation, and soul and body, reunited in immortal wedlock, shall resume their stations respectively, and, entering upon an interminable career of improvement and recompense, splendor and enjoyment, shall maintain reciprocal empire forever!

But, what shall we say to those, in the dark and rayless vacancy of whose unbelief the world is without God and the grave without a resurrection! As they retire from the former and approach the latter, the last glimmer of light recedes and they tread on the confines of utter darkness!

Their cold and moonlight views of truth and duty, or hellward proneness to vice and crime, as the case may be, avail them not now. With avenging chastisement, these live the eternal ulcer of memory! Name them only to the dying disciple of infidelity, or the unthinking wanderer from God and goodness, and the invading

reminiscence comes athwart the current of his intuitions like the passage of a thunder cloud over a wreck-strewn beach! His whole horizon darkens into gloom, while the blasting creations of almighty fear are felt, presaging the bitter, unresting doom of the damned!

*Finally. Death shall introduce the Christian into Heaven—the august pavilion of the Infinite God and the home of his children.* Here, however, we need not remind you, the language of earth and the conceptions of mortality fail us.

Words may not tell how the triumph of eternity shall break the trance of time, and array the millions of God's elect in his own immortal likeness! How the dwellers in the Heavens, and the tenants of celestial scenery, shall look forth upon the bright investiture of undecaying light and love! We cannot describe, and why attempt it, those illimitable fields of wisdom, light and discovery, which lie, in rich and exhaustless reversion, beyond the grave—those regions and scenes of grandeur and astonishment, where the spring of immortal life, spreading in boundless beauty and diffusing eternal freshness, shall display its unfolding bloom amid the living melody of harp and hymn, or, in verdant stillness, throw fresh enchantment over the fields and plains of Heaven!

Thus we trace the path and progress of the Christian until we see him retiring in death, tranquil as the moon moving through the deep, still ocean of Heaven—like the magnificent sun of summer setting slowly and serenely amid the blessings of a grateful world! With him the pilgrimage of life is now closed and futurity opens to his eye the radiance of a sublimer state of being, amid the successive splendors of which created vision is lost in endless perspective: and, assured of a final and triumphant revival from the grave, we must now ourselves

die, to finish the picture and comprehend our own meaning!

And when we do, and the inevitable death-lot shall throw our thrilling gaze athwart the gathering gloom, God Almighty grant, that the heart's pervading consciousness of the triumph of immortality over death, may *still its anxious throbbings forever!*

## S E R M O N   X I .

## THE JUDGMENT.

“AND I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of Heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind: and the Heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places: and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”—Rev. vi, 12—17.

AMONG all the results of created intelligence, few, if any, are more remarkable than the well settled, universal conviction, as it regards man, that another and very different state of things is to succeed the discipline of earth, and that the intellectual and moral structure of his nature necessarily implies, as consequent upon the present, an after-stage of being and expansion.

The destiny of man most clearly indicated by the lessons of nature and Providence, is one of endeavor and reward, trial and recompense. All the tendencies of our nature, connected with the present and the future, and the entire moral voice of the irretrievable past, are to the same effect.

The opinion has prevailed among all men, in all time, and we believe with absolute universality, that, what we call life, is but the porch and infancy of being, and that humanity, even at the mouth of the grave, is entering

upon a new career of action and development. Toward this grand point the human heart has always trembled with prophetic intuition.

With millions of the children of earth life has been comparatively an Eden of satisfaction and enjoyment. With millions more, however, it has been a theater of calamity and suffering. Still the result has been the same, and all thoughts of all men have turned to the future and found a common home.

And among the indications of nature and Providence and the disclosures of Revelation connected with the future, is the doctrine of the text about to claim your attention: not as a sublime intangible abstraction, but most momentous verity, comprehensive of issues making up the heritage of immortality to man—issues too vast to be spanned by space or weighed by worlds, and accrediting the hopes and fears of humanity in all time and among all its tribes.

The language of the text is big with the burden of destiny. In the chapter of which it is a part, prophecy points successively to the regal, imperial establishment of Christianity, under the scepter of the later Cæsars; to the introduction and tyranny of the Papal supremacy—the great Italian Apostacy; also, to the subsequent prevalence of infidelity consequent upon this defection, and the universal war thence excited, terminating in the irretrievable overthrow of all power and policy opposed to the true, in contrast with the anti-christian Church, and ushering in the long promised empire of Christ and his saints—the final dominion of truth and piety.

But the vision does not stop here. Earth's later generations and the revolutions of centuries, and especially the eventuations of Providence by which they are distinguished, all pass in review before us, until we reach

the closing age of the world, and gaze on the appalling scene of its final catastrophe!

We cannot, however, examine this subject, in its direct and ultimate bearings, with profit to ourselves and honor to the God and Judge of all, without some preliminary views of human nature, and the moral relations predicable of man, in the light both of philosophy and religion. A glance at this topic is all we can attempt in this connection. Hypothetically, then, to examine the subject by an analysis of the principles involved—God, as the independent, all-sufficient Creator, might have made man originally upon the basis of either of the following arrangements.

And, first, he might have created man, as some philosophical systems and church creeds assume, with the purpose of overruling and forcing all motive and action, and thus coercing him into compelled conformity to his will, directly substituting his own power and purpose for the self-agency and moral freedom of man, and being himself the only and supreme controller of all the faculties and functions of his nature.

Or, secondly, God might have made man, as infidel philosophy assumes, and left him under the sole and absolute direction of the powers and inclinations he had given him, without counsel or command, check or aidance, of any kind, leaving him entirely to the tendency and driftings of his own nature.

Or, finally, God might resolve upon a plan of creation and constitution of nature, with regard to man, uniting, what, perhaps, most men have agreed to consider the advantages of the preceding alternatives, and excluding what, by the same rule, must be deemed their disadvantages. That is to say, creating man essentially free as a moral agent, and yet not leaving him to himself, but ex-

tending to him counsel and aid, mental illumination and moral influence.

Had man been created in conformity with the first hypothesis, he had been, so far as we can perceive, a mere machine ; and God, by consequence, as the framer and mover of the mechanism, would have been alone accountable for whatever *he himself did by means of it*.

Had the second supposition been the basis of our conformation, man, from his highly complex and superior organization, and yet limited intelligence—from the ever restless activities of his nature, and yet liability and proneness to err, and thus mislead himself—would have been infinitely likely to become a source of mischief to himself and injury to the moral system of which he was a part.

The third supposition, therefore, is the only one of the three which wisdom and benevolence would be likely to suggest ; and it is entirely certain, from the light of nature and the testimony of Revelation, that upon this plan man was created, and is, accordingly, responsible.

God is preëminently a free moral being, and man was made in his image ; and hence the intellectual freedom and self-determining agency, the undoubted moral relations and consequent accountableness, of man.

In view of which, according to the Scriptures, “ God has appointed a day, in which he will judge the world ” of men “ in righteousness.” Hence, “ The day of Judgment,” “ The last day,” and “ The great day,” of the text. And would we could direct attention to this day, not only with the reason and argument, but with the ardor and earnestness, the importance of the subject demands ! Would we could make it stand out to your conception, in the firmament of truth, in its own isolated grandeur—shining apart, and in peerless attraction, as



the grand, yet fearful, cynosure of our hearts and our hopes!

To such deference and distinction, the judgment of "the great day" is obviously entitled. For the whole system of Revelation, sustained by the light of nature, is a compacted prophecy of this day—a copy and analysis of its reasons—an essential presentiment of its final issues!

APPROACHING THE SUBJECT MORE DIRECTLY, WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, AS A FIXED AND DEFINITE PERIOD, A GIVEN EPOCH, WHETHER AS IT REGARDS THE DIVINE ADMINISTRATION, OR THE HISTORY OF MAN. It is a day to which the laws and measurements of time, the antecedent and posterior relations of duration, apply as strictly as to any other day or dated division of time whatever.

It is preceded by the days and years of this world's calendar, and succeeded by those of another—of eternity. The Scriptures everywhere, and constantly, speak of it as having reference to the past, as engrossing, when it shall transpire, the consciousness of the present, and as impressing the character and immutability of its decisions upon the future. It is uniformly represented as approaching—drawing nigh—nearing us by the lapse of duration; and, in the language of the text, is said to have "come"—the angel of prophecy turning your arrested gaze to the last great act of the drama!

It is a day to which all others refer prospectively, and before which all others shall pass in review. A day preceded by action and events having a bearing upon it, and to be followed by others upon which it shall be brought to bear forever.

And, hence, it should stand high in our hopes and sink deep in our fears! If we are the friends and disci-

ples of the Judge, it should lesson us into a love of his appearing. And if not, it should impel us to "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" of the Judge. And this, because it is not only the last, the dying day, of this great world about us, with all its splendid garniture of light and life—but also a period, a process, that shall make inquest for the deeds of every day, and the thoughts of every hour, of our responsible being: and shall receive its hue and character to all the judged, accordingly as their lives and principles have been allegiant or rebellious, in relation to the Judge and the law upon which judgment shall proceed.

Without such a day for the purposes of judgment, all other days of our rational being would be without meaning or significance that would distinguish the possessor from a brute. All responsibility implies trial; trial necessarily anticipates judgment; and judgment, of necessity, involves the order and method, the time and process, of final determination. Without such judgment, therefore, man cannot be considered an accountable being.

If, as assumed by both reason and Revelation, man be of more importance in the scale of the Divine workmanship, the lofty range of created nature, than the merely physical elements and masses and the insentient organizations about him, there is nothing *a priori* improbable in the doctrine or fact of the judgment assumed, although it involves the destruction of the world; for earth and time must be considered as inservient to man's more exalted destiny.

The subject, therefore, should be met and examined by you, not with that kind of alert spasmodic excitement, which but too often attends its presentation from the

pulpit, but with the interest inspired by the sober magnificence of so momentous a verity—ever bearing in mind, that, for nearly six thousand years, God has been signally summoning the attention of man to its high designs!

Whatever may be the fearful and dismaying prospect of the almighty procedure of judgment, as strange and incongruous, can any one doubt—not to call attention to other sources of probability and belief—that God can, in one day—the great and general day of judgment—review, with omniscient accuracy, the effects originating in the creation of a single day? The Divine time—that occupied by the Creator and Judge—is the same, in Scripture phrase, in either case. Nor do we perceive any reason, why longer or shorter should be predicated of either.

Such an event as Creation, or the Judgment, may well task the powers and faculties of belief and comprehension; but it must not be overlooked that the miraculous, to our conception, is the characteristic of all the Divine creations and achievements, and that his agency is always to be regarded as an inexcludable part of nature, in whatever division or disposition of his workmanship. In this sense, and so viewed, all is miracle and wonder; and even life or death is as invincibly mysterious, as any thing connected with the Judgment.

What originally more stupendously absurd to human conception, than that death, the inert and powerless, should subdue life, the living and the active, and extinguish alike its functions and its energies! And how much less miraculous does it appear, that life should finally triumph over the ravages, and subvert the dominion, of death! The period of this triumph is the Judgment: “All that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.”

It is not only fixed that the judgment shall occur, as an eventful transaction, infinitely fearful in process and issue, but the time of its occurrence is settled by absolute pre-determination and special arrangement; and it is a day, therefore, not to be averted or postponed by any possible propitiation whatever. In the history of human consciousness it will arrive, continue its term, and, finally, be past.

II. WE NOTICE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT AS A MOST EVENTFUL PROCEDURE—A SOLEMNITY WITHOUT PARALLEL IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF DEITY, BOTH AS REGARDS ITS CHARACTER AND ITS RESULTS. Of this is it possible any one can doubt? A day destined to cancel the laws of the mingled elements and dissolve the existing relations between Heaven and earth! A day concluding the duration of this world's existence and placing its inhabitants upon the threshold of another—everywhere subverting the empire of the grave and re-producing its captive millions for the purposes of judgment! Such a day cannot be conceived of, without sober interest and awed attention.

The arrival of a day which shall wrap the universe of man in writhing distortions and dash to pieces the structure of nature about him; in which the vaulted atmosphere shall be convulsed and earth severed to her center; when the varied scenes of human life and earthly interest shall disappear at once and the light and glory of the Heavens be extinguished in darkness!—such a day is, indeed, an appalling scene, and not to be looked upon, even in prospect, without dismay!

Hence Revelation depicts the judgment of the last day, as a crisis more awful than thought can reach or language paint—the catastrophe of evil, not less than the consummation of good, to the attendant millions of Heav-

en, earth and hell, present for the purposes of judgment.

This day, terminates alike the dispensations and dealings of Heaven in relation to our fallen planet. All contingent relation, all covenant connection, between God and man, for the purposes of amendment, are at an end, and cease forever. The course of human trial, as well as of nature, is fulfilled ; the dispensations of grace have expired, and the circle of God's Providence is completed. Man, as it regards trial and virtue, has passed his transition state. Probation belongs to the past, not the present, or the future. Unalterable necessity and changeless fate, have received their seal, and commenced their reign ! And thus the day of Judgment is not only a most eventful epoch in the annals of our revolted planet, as the great homestead of humanity, but such in the higher history and destinies of mind and the eternal sum of ages.

Do you doubt, as often suggested by infidelity, whether such an event will occur, and especially whether such a destruction connected with our world, as the present local destination of man in the universe about him, awaits human consciousness ? We must, for the present, refer you to the indications of nature, the common conviction of ages and nations, and the more conclusive disclosures of Revelation.

The conflagration assumed, implicates the destruction of our planet only, and that of the heavens, so called—its dependencies, in immediate connection with it—applying only to form and order, not its solid contents, and without involving any other member of the planetary system, much less the entire community of the stellar and planetary hosts, as many have supposed. And to such a view of the subject, even physical science inter-

poses scarcely an improbability. Indeed, many of its inductions render it certain.

Are not the elements of instability and change, decay and dissolution, visibly and veritably at work, from the center to the circumference of our globe? What meant the violent disruption and ruin of earth, by a deluge in the seventeenth century of its inspired history, incontestibly demonstrated by its superior and hidden strata, and unconnected with the more primary facts of geology, throughout its entire extent, as known to man? What mean your earthquakes and hidden volcanoes, with their seats of action deep beneath sea and land, and often giving to one the place and character of the other? What mean your severed continents, and islands upheaved in the bosom of ocean, with their frowning battlements of rocks and hills? What mean your subterranean explosions, shaking earth and ocean, and your more than two hundred burning mountains, dotting the map of earth with their lurid glare and desolating lava? Look at these beacon lights of the conflagration we assume—these safety-valves of the internal fires of a devoted world—and cease to slander truth and nature with your absurd infidel dreaming and daring.

In all time, and among all nations, the conviction has been common, floating alike upon the lips of the wise and the vulgar, that the world was to be destroyed by fire. It is found in the only record we have of antediluvian story. It was assumed by the Hebrew, the Chaldean, the Egyptian, the Persian, the Greek. The Stoic and the Platonist dreamed of it. It was taught by the Peripatetic and the Pythagorean; by the ancient Brahmin of Siam, and the savage of the Canaries. And, centuries before it was sung by Sophocles and Lucan, or more gravely propounded by Strabo and Plutarch, it had

been distinctly announced by a written revelation from Heaven, as the concluding scene of the world's eventful history.

It is one of the most familiar, comprehensive, axiomatic truths found in the Bible—one of the first uttered by prophecy, and one of the last that lingered on its lips! Witness the primeval warnings of Enoch, and the sublime depictions of the Apocalypse, as found in the text and elsewhere!

III. IT IS A DAY OF DESTINY, AND ITS TRANSACTIONS ARE DECISIVE OF THE FATE, THE FINAL ALLOTMENT, OF THE MILLIONS ARRAIGNED. After this day, all change ceases to be predicable of either the character or condition of the judged. All is eternity, fixed and vast—an unalterable permanency of persons and things. To all present the eternal future, with its hopes and fears, is suspended upon a single volition of the Judge, and life and death conveyed by his voice. Truth and error, principle and practice, receive the hue and stamp of final judgment, without the hope or possibility of change.

Weighed in the balance of judgment, men and angels receive its awards, and are left to the reversions of doom. All are present before the highest and last tribunal. It is the concluding solemnity in the remedial administration of the Son of God. It is the final session of Heaven's chancery upon the claims and demerits of humanity. The adjournment is eternal, and no power or polity in the universe of God has after jurisdiction or revisionary control. Each receives the summary sentence, "Come ye blessed," or "Depart ye cursed;" and that sentence, traced by an immortal hand, becomes a part of the record, and sparkles forever upon the tablets of eternity.

The Judgment is conducted by him from whom nothing is hidden while doing, and by whom nothing is forgotten

when done. Every attribute of Infinite perfection is summoned in counsel, and impartial rectitude metes out the measures of doom, whether of deserving or delinquency. Whether you have assigned you the thrones of Heaven or the dungeons of hell, the award is final, and no remorse for the past or plea of amendment connected with the future shall be able to change the purposes of the Judge, or bribe the recording angel from the record of the deed! The righteous receive their crowns and thrones, while destruction, as the wing of the whirlwind, swift and terrible, shall seize the wicked—the prey of un pitying vengeance, the sport of angry destiny.

There is no aspect in which the Day of Judgment is so frequently presented in the Scriptures, as that of reversionary doom. Revelation is special and minute in presenting us with notices and conceptions of time as related to eternity, and as deriving its principal importance from this relation—being a relation both of connection and contrast. Time stands related to eternity as life does to death; it leads to eternity, and is to be resorbed by it. Really, the interests of the one and the other are the same, and, but for sin, had never been at variance.

The only quarrel eternity has ever had with time is owing to an inversion of moral order by the usurped preponderance of the latter and lesser, in the scale of human estimation, over the former and greater. Contrasted with eternity, time is limited and dependent. It may be viewed as a measure or fragment—a fractional portion of duration abstracted from eternity. It is that part of eternity's vast cycle with which the brief history of the earth, as the residence of man, is coincident and identical—and after which the laws and interests of time are transferred to eternity, and merged in its all-absorbing destinies.



IV. THE DAY OF JUDGMENT IS A DAY OF WRATH TO ALL THE VICIOUS AND REBELLIOUS, IN WHATEVER DEPARTMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUDGE. To all such it is a day of wrath, strictly and exclusively. In relation to such, Heaven has no blessing to bestow—God no pardon to grant. None of the acts or decisions of this day are remedial. No deed of amnesty, no compensative arrangement, alters character or reverses condition.

No prayer is heard or crime forgiven. No stain is washed or guilt expunged. On this day Heaven forms no new friendships—enters into no fresh alliances.

It is a dispensation wholly penal, and all its issues essentially punitive. It is a day of precise award and peremptory execution. The Judge, impelled by the inexorableness of a rectitude his enemies had set at naught, adheres to his every purpose, unmoved even amid the cry of despairing millions. Inquisition proceeds apace, and, grasping the vengeance insultingly challenged by his foes, he will exhaust his quiver ere he pause.

The day takes its distinction, as a day of wrath, from the direct infliction of punishment, fearful and unmeasured. The lessons of nature and warnings of Providence had taught all, that disobedience to the one and the other would prove the source and seal of ruin. That those who gave themselves up to the lawless misrule of passion and appetite here, labored under an infinitely improbable chance of escaping the doom we depict hereafter. Unheeded then, these lessons and warnings are now accredited.

Now conscience, in all her gloomy strength, lifts her upbraiding voice and lashes them with the scorpion troop of long neglected fears. What upstarting terrors! What forecastings of the wrath of this direful day! What images of the past, rising from the mists of obliv-

ion and shaking their fearful scourge! What messengers from the future, pale with the dreadful tidings which they bring! Mark the intense review—the invasions of memory—the burning shame—the self-accusations and restless agonies of a wounded spirit and ruined soul—enhanced by the impending gloom of earth and sky, and the last thunder-burst convulsing the heavens and shaking immensity! But these are mere intimations of the wrath of the Lamb. Sufficient, however, to teach the condemned that their punishment is not a mere negation.

No stroke of the destroying angel in groaning Egypt, or Assyrian camp, was more direct or less equivocal than will be the inflictions of this dreadful day. It is a day that will deal a stroke of higher origin, bolder aim, and wider range, than aught that crime has ever known before. A stroke that will need no commission of subordinate execution to bear it home. A bolt requiring no ministry of attendant angels to give it force. Nor can we shadow forth the might which directs the infliction, by aught we know of power in the whole range of retributive visitation. All sight or thought of waving scimitar or girding cutlass—of the trident of Neptune or the thunder-bolt of Jove—is lost when our gaze is arrested by the uplifted arm of avenging God-head; one untempered stroke from which, one solitary flash of vengeance from forth whose burning throne, will give perdition's millions a place and portion so deep and distant in the dark profound of hell, that no courier, of even lightning speed and angel wing, could reach them in an age!

Would to God justice had no such stroke to deal!  
Would to God there were none thus to be punished!  
But the vicious and ungodly exist. We meet with them

everywhere and always, in the history of our race. God-forgetting thousands throng the retreats of crime and crowd the habitations of cruelty. Impiety stalks shameless amid the high places of its reign. Earth is burdened with the insulting denial of Heaven's claims, and the face of the world is everywhere stained and blurred with the contempt and dishonor offered to God and virtue.

The details of a life without God have left such without hope. The time for repentance is past. The chance for amendment is unrecallable. Hence, Heaven has arranged that they be separated from the good for the purposes of punishment. The long predestined period for the separation has arrived, and Divine justice, burning with retribution and triumphant in avenging majesty, drives them from the face of the Judge, loaded and crushed alike by the displeasure of Heaven and the curse of injured millions.

The whole system of moral relations, as taught by Christianity, shows that this could not be otherwise. Sin had disfigured and disordered our planet, until it had become the great hospital—the grave of life and piety—a vast charnel house amid the worlds about it—or, invoking other imagery, a fearful volcano fast by the Tree of Life.

All this was foreseen and foreknown; and the prearrangements of all the laws and agencies of our planetary globe, as such, have been, as we have seen, adjusted accordingly. Its very structure utters the prediction of its ruin, and all its powers and elements rush to the accomplishment of the prophecy!

V. WE NOTICE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT AS A DAY OF WRATH, OPPOSED BY CONTRAST TO THE DAY OF GOD'S MERCY AND GRACIOUS VISITATION—THE ELIGIBILITY OF CONDITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATION, ONCE ENJOIED

BY ALL THE INTELLIGENCES NOW CONDEMNED. Their destiny is a self-chosen one. Throughout the entire company of the unhappy damned, angels or men, no one is excluded the approving presence of the God and Judge of all, except on account of his own rebellious choice.

No pre-decree, dark and dire—no preëxisting purpose or arrangement of sovereignty, unconnected with character and conduct, will influence the decisions of that day. All that Infinite intelligence and goodness could do, consistently with man's moral conformation, the nature of the angelic polity and the higher principles of the Divine administration, had been done, to prevent the final aspects and issues of this unutterable day: and the principal reason assigned for this high procedure, is the vindication of the Divine conduct in this respect.

It was the abuse of goodness, beyond any other reason, which rendered this day necessary; and the appointments and solemnities of this very day are manifestations of a goodness which might have been further abused, but for their interposition. It is not goodness in Deity to extend clemency where its extension would embolden to crime and damage the interests of his intelligent creation, by multiplying the evils of defection and rebellion. Were offenders permitted to range forever in the government of God, unpunished, it would invite others—worlds, not less than individuals, thus certified of impunity from an example before them—to throw off their allegiance too.

The supreme excellence of the Divine perfections and purposes, is manifested in nothing more strikingly than in the love of order. It is this gives beauty to virtue and deformity to vice. It is this opens the door of Heaven and unbars the gates of hell. This it was that planted the thrones of the one and dug the dungeons of the other.

Limiting, however, our view of the subject principally to man, we appeal to the constitution and arrangements of nature—to the provisions and bounties of Providence—to the wonders and miracles of redemption—to the power of conscience and the reign of grace—the long suffering of God and the ministrations of his word—to accredit the position, that nothing within the gift of Almighty kindness was wanting, on the score of eligibility and motive, to secure the happiness of man, had he not madly chosen death, in the error of his way, the insane infatuation of his career of sin and shame.

It is true of the history of every man, and stands connected with the final determination of the fate of all, that life was a field not more fertile of temptation to evil, than of motives and opportunities to goodness and virtue. The better and more hopeful alternations of their being were constantly before them—the reasons of duty and laws of faith were obtruded upon their notice at every step.

Although the principle of impiety had become naturalized in the mind of man, and aversion to God and duty was all-pervading, still lingering centuries of patience and forbearance continued to distinguish and bless his lot. God has so cared for our world as to render it impossible he should care more for it. He so delighted to bless mankind, that, had he blessed them less, it had impaired the realization of this delight. He so provided for human happiness in the system of redemption, as to render it impossible he should ever furnish to the universe a richer display of his love. The perfections of God and the claims of the Gospel so occupied the vision of man, that he could not walk in darkness.

The system of redemption was so constructed, that mercy could punish without impairing kindness, and

justice forgive without the sacrifice of purity. The light of nature, and of Revelation especially, enlightened every man; and not only was its effulgence thrown athwart the darkness of this world, but its luster, in colors of fearful warning, was imaged upon the very mists and clouds of hell, to deter and hold you back! And, lest man's foreseen appetite for doubt and distrust, on a subject so pregnant with endless results of good or evil, should lead him to neglect or decline the ordinary announcements of Heaven, God has strangely condescended to pledge his own existence, and has challenged human confidence by the stupendous awfulness of an infinite oath: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." How strikingly, therefore, does the Day of Judgment contrast, as a day of wrath, with the day of God's mercy and gracious visitation!

VI. IT IS A DAY OF WRATH BY WAY OF EMINENCE—IN A HIGH AND PECULIAR SENSE—THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH. Its decisions involve all, and without hope, who are not the friends of the Judge. The arraignment will include all his enemies, and the whole weight of his indignation will fall upon them. No one is spared. No part of deserved vengeance withheld. Each delinquent is sentenced to the perdition of hell in all its eternity and entireness, and the whole of Heaven's unmeasured anger shall press the hopeless damned. It is a day of unmingled and unmitigated vengeance. There is no blending of mercy, no gleam of comfort, no vista of hope.

The Gospel was the only hope of the judged, and the sin of its rejection has precluded its own pardon, and secured its own condemnation. God has "forgotten to be gracious." His "mercy is clean gone forever." The

day we describe tells you of the suffering of the lost. But, although in contrast with the past, it is as infinitude to naught—they do not suffer now as erst in mercy's sight. They cry and call for help, but the cry and prayer are answered only by the echoes of despair!

View this day further in the light of contrast, compared with other inflictions and displays of the wrath of God, that you may the more accurately estimate its designation as a day of wrath. Look at the elder, the continued, and more recent records of Providence, or rather Divine justice, and see the fact attested, that God's hatred of sin has been fearfully illustrated by its punishment in all ages,

Angels sinned in another sphere—a distant division of the universe—and his curse drove them to the place his justice had provided for them when crime, as Omniscience foresaw, should make them devils.

The God-like progenitors of our race, amid the loveliness of their primitive Eden, declined his authority and were banished the garden of their innocence, with the curse of mortality cleaving to them, and weighing them down to death and the grave.

The pollution of the old world by the antediluvians, was washed by a baptism of vengeance which swept them all away.

The degenerate cities of the ever memorable, ill-fated Pentapolis forgot God, and his curse reduced them to ashes and left only the sea of death in their stead.

Egypt oppressed his chosen, and the sun of her empire and renown sat in blood never to rise.

Jerusalem crucified his Son, and ruin sped from Heaven on a thousand shafts to lay her glory low!

The Jews rejected his religion, and the curse of dispersion early told them they were rejected in return.

When, in the fourth century, the Church, amid the intoxication of imperial sway, cast off his fear, a thousand years of darkness, blood and death, told her that fear was alike the beginning and the end of wisdom. And so of other examples.

All former displays of the divine displeasure, however, have been but admonitory pre-intimations of the execution of its final burden. The execution of this burden has been deferred to the day in question. But the pendency of the great trial can be prolonged no further. Forbearance has reached its term. The angel of eternity has sworn, that the interests of time with man shall have a close, and the Judge in person ratifies the arrangement. Compelled by ages of accumulating abuse and guilt, the administration of the Judge can no longer be just without the decisive infliction of final curse—of utter malediction—even upon the work of his own hands.

Hence the whole multitude of the rebellious are outlawed from the friendship of Heaven and the fellowship of virtue, by proclamation from the Judgment-seat, without sympathy or refuge—"Depart ye cursed." And, sinking under the weight and amid the reversions of doom, they reach at once the dismal gulf, where pathway never led to tell the depth beneath, and where the cry of anguished millions shall invade the ear like the wail of winds or the roar of ocean!

The curse, it must have been seen ere this, is not mere stigma and banishment. It is real, essential. It wrecks every hope and element of happiness. It shall enter and possess their conscious being. It is utter abandonment to the elements of all evil, in fearful and final combination! It is eternal privation of every thing connected with the hope or possibility of eventual recovery. And the reprobate throng, thus wedded to guilt by its final curse,



who, we ask, shall undo the maranatha, or, reversing the sentence of the Judge, separate them from the congregation of the damned ?

Who can marvel that, in prospect of such a doom, they cry for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of the Judge and the wrath of the Lamb ; or, that they should be glad to take in exchange the weight of the incumbent earth ! But, alas ! the exterminating curse is upon these also, and they are fast blending in the common ruin, already kindling alike upon their own deep foundations—the beds of primeval seas and the up-turned fords of ocean !

We cannot be insensible that, in contemplating such a visitation, the most wary calculation must falter, and all conception, even, be found in eclipse. But, without attempting to depict the ritual, may we not, to some extent at least, faithfully preserve the spirit of the scene ?

Thought and emotion are stirred to their depth. We assume ourselves present. How thrilling and appalling is all about ! What realization ! How does every thing come home ! The Judge ! The crowd ! The attending circumstances ! The majestic array of preparation ! The sentence ! The impression ! Did you see, or but *feel*, the sweep of that spirit's wing, as the Judge said " Come " ! And what *plunge* was that you heard as he said " Depart " ! God teach you, as we cannot, how only you will be able to stand in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb !

VII. IT IS A DAY OF IMPARTIAL TRIAL AND AWARD. This is shown by its high transactions. It is the last final arraignment—the great day of the manifestation of consciences--and, as such, a day of dread responsibility and the most appalling expectation. Now, for the first time, a tribunal may be seen, before which the prince and

the peasant, the king and the slave, are equal, and whose adjudication will fix and necessitate their doom upon the ground of absolute equality : for here man stands denuded of every thing else, and character alone attracts the attention of the Judge.

Now you are cited to give account of all the priceless wealth Heaven has lent you. God will now avenge his murdered truths and violated law. None can elude or deceive the Judge. Each one stands listening to the high recital of his deeds. Here ten thousand actions stand against you, the least of which this world can never bail. Virtue and goodness, alone, from unevangelized, and faith and holiness from Christian lands, are current here. The base coin of this world's morality will be rejected with indignant scorn in Heaven's exchange. Every thing is now settled for eternity, irreversibly. Salvation, in all the richness of its promised issues, and the damnation with which it so thrillingly contrasts, are received at the hands of the Judge and discernor of men, and the distinct abodes of all, interminable of weal or woe, will be assigned in view of character, and character only.

Fearful, terrible inquest ! How overwhelmingly true is it, that this will be to the ungodly, a day only of disaster and overthrow—and with what emotions will they view its approach ! What, for example, must be the feelings of those, in whose creed God was nothing, and eternity a fiction ! With whom in practice, cursing was gladness, and oaths and blasphemy playthings and pleasantries. Who disputed with Heaven the latest hours and last thoughts of their lives.

Need we ask such, amid the scene we describe, what mean those accents of terror in the deep roll and continuous peal of unbroken thunder ! What mean the re-

port of conflicting elements, and those sounds of dread and awe, that come deeply, grandly rolling on! What means that flaming column thrown athwart the Heavens—those pyramids of fire rising in the wild expanse—and the deep vollied and prolonged explosions from beneath, vibrating through all their immortal being! They are the preparations of Judgment, and pioneer your doom!

The only preparation for trial on your part, has been already made. All are present to enter upon it. Character alone is the subject of inquest, and all its elements are in the eye of the Judge. The principles of the Judgment are settled—nature and Revelation. The evidence and the witnesses are present—conscience and Omniscience. The Judgment will proceed upon a grand classification of moral elements. The process of discrimination will be conducted, under the unerring scrutiny of Omniscience, upon the basis of character attested by conscience.

The long hidden laws of action will instantly emerge to light. A hitherto unknown generalization will take place. A single principle of distinctive simplification will harmonize, or rather place in class, all the unnumbered facts of human history. The interminable compound of human character, among all the millions of earth's known or unchronicled story, will be resolved at once into two simple elements—the good and the bad.

Here and now, upon earth and amid its scenes and relations, the just and unjust are side by side. The good and the evil, trench upon the same line of difference and contrast. The wheat and the tares grow together. The sheep and the goats are found in the same fold. The gold and the gravel roll on in the same channel. The wise and the foolish crowd each other within the same locality. But *then* and *there* we have the period and place of final

separation. And in presence of the last tribunal, the Judge, in unblenching majesty, will effect a severance, at once complete and eternal. What a combination of momentous interest and terrific grandeur !

The division effected instantly throws an encompassing wall of protection about the multitude of the approved, while the lost and reprobate throng “cry for rocks and mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb !”

And, after the most careful and impartial survey, how commandingly reasonable does all this appear, in view of the premises ? Skepticism, it is true, has always ranked the day of Judgment, especially the conflagration of our planet, among the most improbable *incredibilia* of the Christian Revelation. In tracing the history of our globe, however, from its origin coeval with the heavens, until we have counted nearly six thousand of its annual revolutions, we have ever found it under the abiding action of destroying causes ; and, reasoning from analogy, we are compelled to assume, that the result will be conformed to the arrangement, and the world undergo a revolution by fire, as once it did by water.

The moral analogy, too, in the case, holds with the physical. Not only was earth the theater of crime, but, by means of the consequent introduction of death, the sepulcher and opprobrium of life ; and as such, in a high moral sense, the dishonor of the universe. The rebuke of this day, however, by a baptism of fire, wipes away the disgrace. The hour of triumph has arrived. Life is avenged and its triumph complete. From the ruinous heap of every grave, there springs a living, undying structure, and the wide and wasted earth, late and long the death-scene of expiring millions, every where stands

thick and waving with the harvest-fullness of renovated life ! And although earth itself shall fall, it is only to rise and re-appear a new-created member in the great family of worlds, when death, the great and only antagonist of life, in the natural history of man, shall be destroyed and banished from the universe of God !

The end we contemplate will, indeed, present a fearful scene ! Flame-invested heavens !—a reeling sphere ! dissolving elements !—a world-consuming conflagration ! must, indeed, present fearful sights and sounds for human sense and consciousness ! But it is over—and now look at the mass and contents of that pile ! The ruins of our once God-like heavens and earth—of a magnificently costly, but burnt up, world ! And yet from this wreck—these ruins—there shall emerge, as God has promised, “new heavens and a new earth,” the refulgent abodes of truth and righteousness, complete in all possible glory and loveliness !

FINALLY : WE NOTICE, MORE COMPREHENSIVELY, THE PROCESS AND ISSUES OF JUDGMENT. There will be present, on the occasion, as subjects of the trial and witnesses of the scene, intelligences from the three great, the only, regions of the universe in which, according to the Bible, they are known to exist—Heaven, earth and hell !

The ranks and hierarchies, the principalities and powers, of Heaven—the quick and dead—the living and buried generations of earth—together with the whole multitude of the damned—are all mustered in the grand assize. Millions on millions—millions on millions—august concourse !—stupendous tumult ! Who can depict their coming together !

Were it ours to achieve, by what creative force of thought, or miracle of language, could we bring before you, in any effective way, so vast, so interminable a

sweep of congregated existence! A multitude—a reckoning so immense, so utterly sumless, that all the millions earth can number will hardly serve for units in the count! There is a magnitude so tremendous, a magnificence so unutterable, connected with the event, that the utmost power of conception falters, and the strong wing of imagination itself drops feeble, unable to girdle the compass of the mighty scene!

But what are these convoked masses of individual and conscious being, crowding the vast expanse of Heaven as the theater of Judgment, contrasted with other sights and sounds and fearful scenes, from which none can turn away! What eye does not see the unappealable Judge and his refulgent throne, guarded and begirt by thousands thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him! a boundless amphitheater of living grandeur!

Listen to the noise and shaking of the primitive elements, and the stormy commotion of the hoary deep! See lightnings leaping from the angry depths of gloom, and the thunder-shaft bickering in mid-heaven! The eternal wheels of nature rolling back or standing still at the suspension of her laws! The watch-fires of the sky gone out, and the beacon lights of ages extinguished; while darkness grows darker still, amid the waving of dread wings, and the coming of mighty sounds, by man or angel never heard before!

The now unseen, yet all-seeing, Judge will then be seen of all; and seen, too, amid pomp and circumstance and terrible attraction: physical display and material grandeur: scenic exhibition and appalling splendor: meet to give commanding publicity and circumstantial effect to this fearful hour of final and avenging retribution.

When erst he descended on Sinai, darkness and tem-

pest, thunder and earthquake, prepared his way! Even his visit to Bethlehem was marked by signs and wonders—the guiding star and exulting cherubim!

When on the Cross, darkness enveloped, and trembling seized, the earth, and nature, in sympathy with the great Atoner, threw her sorrows round the scene!

His rising from the dead attracted angel visits to his tomb; nor could he ascend to Heaven without the chariots of God marshaling by thousands their splendors in his train!

And how much more, then, shall the day of universal summoning and eternal Judgment be graced and aggrandized by the glories of creation, clustering on the gaze of the immortal tribes everywhere crowding the area of Judgment!

Let the spectator, who may have *no interest* in this day, if such be found, speculate curiously and unmoved upon the giant wreck of a dismantled world, and the broken slumber of its ages, while mingled smoke and conflagration fill the horizon of the heavens, and roll the vast volume of desolation over earth and sea! This might, perhaps, be borne *by such an one*. And, in the instance of the just and good, God may support, and his grace sustain. But, in the case of those by whom God has been rejected and his grace set at naught, who will support—what sustain—when the guilty ear catches the note of doom, pealing the remembrance of transgression and the summons of vengeance! When lightning shall scorch and thunder try the soul! When the Judge shall grasp the balance of the skies, and crime incline the eternal scale against all future hope! When even the accusing angel shall resign his office, and angry destiny begin to unfold its unutterable hell of anguish and despair!

What means that bitter cry of agony, rising from the

smoldering segment of Heaven's concave, on the left of the Judge: "Hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb"! Tell us now, can the once cherished pleasures of time and sense, or the riches of the universe, still one agonizing throb, when the brightest joys of earth are seen paling in the light of its own conflagration! So far from it, the heart turns with despair to all that was lost in this world, and with horror to all that is awful in the next!

Children of ungodness! Outcasts of eternity! It is *your* last, and Time's farewell, gaze on the world's receding drama! And no star floats in all the lurid gloom to cheer the dying eye, or tell of coming hope!

Where, now, are the indifference and audacity of crime? Stand up, now, ye chiefs of atheism and sensuality! Throw your eye athwart the amazing vast unbosomed to your view, and listen to the howl of doomed impiety already startling the midnight of hell!

Stand up, now, ye haughty but dark priests of erring science, who, excluding God from nature and his works, made the mechanism of the universe the meaningless result of unmeaning chance, and, worshipping *second* causes, insanely denied a First! Call, now, on your godless oracles, and let them tell you "who shall be able to stand"!

Blasphemer and scoffer! Lift up your heads, scathed by lightning and canopied by thunder-folds, and let the burial-places of memory cast up your cursing and your mockery! As ye loved cursing and contempt, stand out, now, in the visible accursedness and infamy of your choice!

Let the skeptic, in this final trial of his boasted unbelief, parley now with the thunder-peal and trumpet-blast, as, erewhile, he was seen parleying with sin and hell!



Let the prayerless buffoon come forward now, and tell us the value of a life spent only in learning how to play the fool!

Ye princes and plenipotentiaries of intellect, who, dictating knowledge to others, never knew yourselves, look, now, upon your debt of more than ten thousand talents, and nothing, not a farthing, with which to pay!

Ye worshipers of mammon—ye idolaters of gain—who, disdain all commerce with Heaven and the future, and knowing no Bible but your ledger, made gold your God and gain your shrine—look, now, upon a calcined world about you; muster, now, your title-deeds, and tell us what is left! Alas, of all that once was yours, a lost soul only remains!

And you, one and all, ye reckless spendthrifts of immortal wares, look, now, at the past graved on the future—the scroll of the one unrolled, and the dust of ages swept from the other! You, too, will be there, and looking, but only to see the burning ruin of a world you loved and trusted glowing in your eye! Gaze on its desolate magnificence, and tell us what you have left to relume the lamp of hope! Once, amid the giddy whirl of folly and the infatuation of vice, you dreamed only of mirth and gaiety; laughter filled the fane, and curses shook the throne: but now, every beam of light is a shaft of agony—every thought of the past, every look of the future, but confirms the discipline of despair, and it is hell but to recollect what you were and what you might have been!

But we can no more. To be worse than this, were not to be at all. One word of deep, solemn self-questioning and prayer, and we have done. In view of this last great trial, who, of the children of earth among us

or elsewhere, of the present, or any other age, "will be able to stand?" God help us well to understand, before we attempt to answer the question. Few, very few, we are compelled to suppose, if any, are yet ready to do so. The future has much to teach us. We all, much to learn.

When time, having held in trust for eternity, the bliss and the bitterness of earth, its joy and its sorrow, shall render up his dreadful seal, and his last shadows eclipse its waning light—when invading ruin shall go abroad in avenging visitation upon the theater of crime—when grave and sepulcher, sea and desert, amid the convulsions of expiring nature, shall yield their dead, millions at a throe—when earth, air, fire and ocean, shall blend their agonizing energies and close for the final strife—when the shock of conflicting elements and the dash of ruined systems shall burst upon the ear of surrounding solitude as the funeral dirge of a dying world—then, and then only, shall we be prepared to say "who shall be able to stand"!

And then, O then, may God, who made us in goodness, judge us in mercy! And when the invitation, until now unheard and unuttered, shall echo through the height and breadth of Heaven, "Come, ye blessed," and every place in the universe, hell only excepted, shall repeat the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed"—and the uncircumscribed energy of creative might shall proceed to complete the stupendous drama by remolding the ashes of the desolation, and once more giving earth, rekindled and resphered, her wonted place and primal signs among the stars and worlds of God—then may we blend with those who emboss the burning path of the Judge on his return to the Heaven he had left!

And now, finding ourselves within an infinite circumference of action and enjoyment—of which God is the center, while Heaven's immortal millions share the attraction of the scene—let the years of eternity roll on : for *there*, and *to us*, they roll only in beauty and in brilliance !

## SERMON XII.

HEAVEN.

“AFTER this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood around about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”—Rev. vii, 9—17.

SOMEWHERE in the immensity of being, we are all destined to find an everlasting home. Eternity, with its vastness and its issues, lies before us; and that eternity, as it rolls, is seen deciding and unfolding the destinies of intelligence. All the ages, therefore, of the eternal future, must be to every one of us, replete with good or evil; and whatever may be our dreaming with regard to the amazing vast—the unknown somewhere, spread out before us—one thing is certain, thither we are

rapidly hastening, and there we shall soon find our selves.

What question then so important, as that which relates to our leaving life with unfeared certainty of a better state of things, when done with time and the fellowship of earth.

That there is another and a lovelier world in the distance from us, is an opinion, a conviction, that has been cherished and consecrated by the universal consent of ages and nations. It is a truth which has lived in the hopes and floated through the language of all the tongues and tribes of our kind. And to this grateful topic we now invite your attention, in a few remarks upon *the future happiness—the reversionary inheritance—of the virtuous and good.*

Universal space—if indeed it can be adumbrated at all—is the symbol of God's omnipresence; and, included within this mighty circuit, there must be some given limits within which the just and the faithful shall be finally convened, to reap the rewards and share the delights of immortality: where the wise and the holy shall meet the God they have loved, and the friends they have lost. Where the universal Judge and Rewarder of all, shall give to beings, one in aim and nature, one abode.

On this very momentous, attractive theme, at once as sublime as it is interesting, all limited intelligence, and how much more our feeble share of it, must of necessity fail, and we are left, as we proceed, to glory in falling beneath the grasp and grandeur of a subject, we would nevertheless essay to understand and discuss.

In asking attention to this subject—involving, as it does, the hopes and fears of anxious inquiring millions—hopes and fears which have agitated the hearts of all

who ever lived or died—who, in the long lapse of ages, have been saved or lost—WE SHALL, FIRST, NOTICE THE HEAVEN OF OUR HOPES AS PROPERLY A PLACE OF HABITATION—OF PERSONAL RESIDENCE, REAL AND ABIDING—SOME SELECT GIVEN LOCALITY IN THE UNIVERSE OF GOD, PREPARED AND APPROPRIATED AS THE DESTINED INHERITANCE OF THOSE ADMITTED TO HIS FELLOWSHIP—THE FINAL HOME AND REWARD OF THE VIRTUOUS PART OF HIS INTELLIGENT CREATION.

From the light alike of reason and Revelation, it would appear, that Heaven is really and truly a place—such distinctively—having, like every other place, its necessary limits and boundary ; for limit and boundary are essential to the very idea of place.

Amid the vastness, therefore, and sectional localities of the Universe, Heaven has a fixed circumference and limitude, to which the Scriptures definitively apply the well-known adverbial restrictions and distinctions “there” and “where”—opposed to here, to this, and every other place, except the one spoken of. Its existence and designation as a place, are everywhere spoken of and introduced in distinction from earth, from hell, and every other division of the universe. And if either, any of these be a place truly and essentially, so is Heaven.

As truly as earth itself is a place—a territory—so truly is Heaven ; or Revelation is an unmeaning mockery : for the idea is everywhere incorporated into its very structure and language. Hence the idiomatic forms of expression—“in Heaven”—“to Heaven”—“from Heaven”—“into Heaven”—“out of Heaven.” We read of arrivals there, and departures thence ; of admission and expulsion. So also, Heaven is said to be “open” and “shut,” while ingress and egress, are everywhere affirmed of it.

It is a place as distinctly bounded and defined, so far as relates to extension and limitude, as country or city, palace or temple. It is true, the great expanse of circumambient air investing our globe, comprehending the lower strata of the atmosphere, is called heaven. The higher region of the firmament is also called heaven, or the heavens; and in view of this arrangement, the abode of the blest is styled "the third Heaven," and "the Heaven of Heavens," by way of excellence: or, as we are about to consider it, the place of final beatitude for confirmed virtue, under the universal administration of Jehovah. The apparent exception only confirms the general rule of Scripture designation.

Heaven, in the Scriptures, is presented and localized to our conception, as a "country"—a "land"—a "kingdom"—a "city"—a "temple"—a "house"—a "building"—a "world." And hence, appositely, the conclusive declaration of our Lord—"Behold I go to prepare a place for you, that *where* I am, *there* ye may be also." Thus Heaven is represented to be the grand theater of rendezvous and residence for all the hosts of God, approved by the judgment of the great day of final recompense.

*In a high and peculiar sense, Heaven is the abode of the God and Father of all—enthroned and reigning, amid the affections and activities of the millions of the blest.* "I will that those thou hast given me, may be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory." "Our Father who art in Heaven." "The Lord God shall dwell among them." "Thou that dwellest in the Heavens." "Thou has spread out the Heavens as a tent to dwell in." "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." "Heaven is thy throne." "They are before the throne of God." "The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them,

and lead them to fountains of living water." Enoch went to Heaven with a body. Elijah went with a body. Our Lord went with a body. The saints that rose at the time our Lord did, most probably went with bodies also, as we cannot suppose they died a second time, and that their bodies reëntered the grave.

Translation and ascension, in all these instances, placed the substantive elements of humanity in the Kingdom of God—the body not less truly than the soul. Even spirit must have space and place in which to exist. If finite and limited spirits exist at all, they must exist somewhere, and that somewhere—say it be the Heaven we describe—must be an isolated locality, a place; and, as such, defined and understood by the mind contemplating it. And especially when human bodies are transferred thither, as we have seen, with local relations and affinities, they must of necessity have a fixed locality, a given range of residence and action, in that region on high, called Heaven.

*Heaven is a place of exalted excellence and pre-eminent grandeur, distinguished from all others.* "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God." "Fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God." "They are without fault before the throne of God." "Join the general assembly and church of the first-born in Heaven." Hence also the frequent assumption, that Heaven is a place *above us*. "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from above." We are "born from above." "Lift up your eyes to the hills"—of Heaven—"from whence cometh salvation." "High as Heaven." "Who shall ascend into Heaven?" "Rose up to Heaven." "Thou hast ascended up on high." "Seek those things which are above." Our Lord "was taken up to Heaven," and shall "come down in like manner from Heaven." "Je-



hovah came down upon Mount Sinai." "O that thou wouldst rend the Heavens and come down." "The Heavens must contain the Son of God until the time of the restitution of all things."

Such is the great dwelling place of righteousness—the home and Heaven of God's elect. With what simplification and yet aggrandizement of conception, does the vision rise before us!

*It is a scene of action and display—the theater of Jehovah's immediate majesty, and the homage and enjoyment of those surrounding him.* It is a place wide and ample as the wants and multitude of the redeemed: and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in its light. Owing to this universal truth of natural and revealed religion, all ages and nations have looked, however vaguely, upon the great palace of final virtue, the Heaven of Christianity, as occupying an immense height, the ascent to which is steep and difficult, and upon God as the high and lofty one, with eternity for his habitation and its hosts his inheritance.

What a magnificent scene of relationship and intercourse! What field and sphere for the range and expansion of thought! No marvel a Divine instinct has turned the heart of all toward it! "O that I knew where I might find him, that I might approach even to his seat." "O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest." "Principalities and powers in Heavenly places." "The whole family in Heaven." "Inheritance of the saints in light." "In my flesh shall I see God." "Changed from glory to glory." "Steadfastly looking up into Heaven." "Inheritance of the saints in light."

In all these passages and allusions in relation to the Heaven of rest promised the faithful of God, the

idea of place, residence, and action, necessarily attaches.

*Heaven is, most probably, a sensible, material structure, analogous to other divisions of the universe, in form and substance—one of the myriad worlds of God, all of which, so far as known, are material structures.* That this great and permanent apartment of Deity, is substantively a material frame work, an essentially physical structure—and not an immaterial expanse of diffused, unconfined spirituality, as many have supposed—is not only fairly, but, as we think, necessarily inferable, from the fact, that, as the children of God, we are destined to dwell there, in the palpable material conformation of human beings (the proper generic nature of man), with not only souls, but bodies. And, further, as we have seen, that the real body of our Lord with which he ate and drank after his resurrection, the same as ours in its component elements, and the model after which ours is to be fashioned, together with the bodies of the antediluvian patriarch and the Tishbite prophet, are already there, according to the Scriptures. Facts, tending, among others, to show that Heaven is not a mere immaterial space, or simple ethereal expansion. The whole language and current imagery of the Bible, favor the assumption.

He who thinks, as Philosophy and Religion have been prone to teach, that sin and misery, imperfection and suffering, are necessary adjuncts, inseparable from simple materialism, or matter proper, and always found in connection with it, errs grossly and stupidly. Look at the primitive materialism of man, as his body came from the hand of God—of the Heavens and earth, pronounced good by the all-discerning Creator—of the body of our Lord, and of Enoch, and Elijah, at their translation—the bodies of the living faithful, at the second coming

of Christ; in all these instances, we have actual, undoubted materialism, in every possible aspect, without sin, and of course without any tendency to produce misery.

The same view and reasoning apply with equal force, to "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," and by consequence happiness, and hence excluding both sin and misery. Matter, wherever it exists, and under whatever possible modifications, must always claim, and of necessity exhibit, abiding affinity with other matter. Our bodies, however changed and etherialized by the resurrection, or the translation of the living faithful, at the same time must always be material, and, in substance, essentially diverse from spirit—and so, therefore, must be their place of residence. If it be said that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," it is said also, that the unregenerate *soul* "cannot," and the objection proves nothing against our argument.

Of one thing, at least, all must be certain who believe Christianity: that there is such a place as Heaven, and that it is a place of unequalled excellence and consummate enjoyment—whether, to our conception, the great habitation of God and eternity, shall present its bending firmament and spreading arch, its walls and foundations of adamant and sapphire, its streets of gold and hills of light; or be strangely, and, as we think, inconsistently subtilized into a land—an intangible world or expansion of pure spirit and mystery.

The single fact, that humanity, in its unchanging elements of matter as well as mind, is to dwell in Heaven, proves, incontestibly, that the place of its residence is not, cannot be, mere unsubstantial space—but a solid, material structure. In the supposition we oppose, there appears to

be something degrading to the character of God and not in analogy with the known economy and distinctive unity of his workmanship.

Could we place ourselves upon some mount of vision, which would serve us as a turret of observation ; could the mind charge itself with the extent, the vastitude, of universal nature ; could it so make the circuit of modern astronomical discovery, as to be prepared for the infinity beyond—the millions of unexplored worlds in the boundless fields of space : what would be the lesson taught ? Would it not be, that immeasurably extended space is stocked and crowded with innumerable worlds, and that these magnificent and yet material structures are the abodes of life and intelligence—theaters of mind and its achievements ?

And, certainly, analogy will not allow us to suppose, that the favored division of the universe, called Heaven, differs in its substantive material from the other parts of the unbounded whole. The intellectual universe, as it regards locality and relative position, is always found in union with the material ; nor are we authorized to assume their final separation in any instance, not even in Heaven itself !

The re-organization of our bodies in the resurrection, and the corresponding change in the living, necessarily implies, that the mutual relations of matter and mind, now existing, are to be perpetuated, and that, in Heaven itself, man will be as strictly conformed to an external world about him as here, and shall then, as now, happily blend, in his own nature, the essentially diverse elements of the material and intellectual systems of universal being.

II. WE NOTICE HEAVEN AS A STATE OF ENJOYMENT, ADAPTED TO THE SUSCEPTIBILITIES AND MEETING THE WANTS OF THE ENTIRE NATURE OF MAN. *It is a state of immunity*

*from all evil, natural and moral.* It is also a state of security from all enemies within and without. Admitted there, we dwell in the unveiled, unclouded presence of ineffable perfection. No enemy can approach—no malignant influence assail. We repose in the possession of all possible good, without any, the least, mixture of evil.

Here all is celestial delight, an infinite diversity of good—happiness in its largest meaning and fullest scope, with nothing to discount its completeness.

*It is a state of conscious and untroubled felicity.* We shall have within us every principle of essential beatitude, and nothing from without—no extrinsic influence shall ever interrupt the current of unmingled enjoyment. It is more, however, by negation, than positive description, that we help you to a conception of the joys and happiness of Heaven. We cannot give you any thing like a graphic depiction, or scenic exhibition, of the abodes of life constituting the Heaven of Christian piety.

It is a commonwealth where only high and holy natures congregate in inter-community, and free from every taint and stain, and all the anguish and inquietude of earth.

*The elements of Heavenly enjoyment, as we have seen, and would further notice, relate to both matter and mind, as found in the nature of man.* And believing, as we do, that no just conception of the happiness of Heaven can be had without proper notice, and recognition of this view of the subject, we are disposed to give it what some may regard as undue emphasis and importance. Heaven, we repeat, is not to be regarded as an unsubstantial region of dimness and mystery—of shades and ghosts—of disembodied intelligence and impalpable entities—a dreamy amplitude—a spectral vacuum—a land of spirits only—of souls without bodies, and scenes without sensible objects.

The happiness of Heaven does not consist in a substitution by which spirit takes the place of matter—the latter being excluded by the former. The substitution in the case, so far from implying the separation of mind and matter, will be that of righteousness for sin and happiness for misery, in connection with the one and the other. The true subjective glory of the redeemed, will consist in an adaptation of mind and matter to the great ends of their creation and the evolution of their appointed destiny.

The spirituality distinguishing Heaven, and upon which the pulpit should insist, is not a spirituality of nature and substance, but of temper and tendency. In the former sense, hell will be as replete with spirituality as Heaven. As it regards Heaven, it will not be the absence of matter—the body—but of physical disorder and moral defilement. And this appears to be the grand speciality and crowning glory of the Heavenly state.

Heaven—the kingdom of Heaven, is said to be at hand—within us: not certainly in its mighty structure and majestic proportions, but in reference to the nature and influence of its laws and principles, and the moral qualities predominant there. It is not by etherializing or diluting matter, in any physiological sense, as a part of our nature, that it becomes fit for Heaven; but by being deprived of its merely mortal and more earthly functions, and invested with those that are immortal and Heavenly.

That the material substance of the human body, may, as a question of fact, be taken into intimate and abiding connection with the spirit and glory of the world above—its hosts and its happiness—has been already and incontestably exemplified in the person of our Lord and other instances. In what sense, then, as preached and dreamed by philosophic and religious mystics, is Heaven a remote

and mysterious—an inaccessible and limitless unknown—somewhere and nowhere—a place bounded only by illimitable space! It is such, we humbly conceive, in no allowable sense whatever.

Revelation has given to the world above—the Heaven of its own disclosures—a “local habitation and a name.” It is, whatever may be its extent, or the magnificence of its appointments, a veritable abode, and in it are found the great staples and residentiary elements of human happiness. And until removed from earth, Heaven is only brought near to us, and we to it, in the high moral sense implying that we share the principles, the love, and the purity by which it is distinguished.

In a word, the happiness of Heaven consists, essentially, in the well regulated mechanism and functions of the highly complex, and yet well conditioned natures, admitted to a residence there.

*The recollections and prospects of the Heavenly state are worthy of being glanced at in this connection.* The redeemed rest forever from the troubles, the anxieties and the toils, of life. The disquiet and infelicity of human life, are felt and feared no more. They have performed the appointed course of trial and are set down in the seat of the conqueror, and all that remains, is the review of the past and the fruits of the struggle. Perfect sanctity of nature shall be forever conjoined with every circumstance of external enjoyment.

Among these, there will be intellectual ties and rational intercourse—exalted devotion and enrapturing harmony. There will be thought beyond the knowledge of earth—intercourse with the God-like, good and great—devotion worthy the immediate presence, and song and anthem enhancing the glory, of the God and Father of all. There will be the gladness, the greeting

and the gratulation of rejoicing millions. The society and scenery, the converse and melody, the sympathy and rapture, of Heaven, will regale the eye and ear ; while its grandeur and magnificence will hold all the powers of thought and emotion in perpetual fascination, amid scenes and visions unknown to the hopes and dreams of earth !

All the ennobling endearments of social commerce and high wrought friendship, will exist in full and unobstructed agreement. Heaven's taste and heaven's affections—the powers and impulses of true discernment and transcendent regard—will be infused into all. God will be there in visible manifestations of his truth and love, and Heaven's vast expanse everywhere lighted up with the effulgence of his glory !

*Heaven, as a place of residence and state of enjoyment, should always be viewed in contrast with earth.* This is a state of pupilage and probation, that of dignity and promotion. Here is conflict, there victory. This is the race, that the goal. Here we suffer, there we reign. Here we are in exile, there at home. On earth we are strangers and pilgrims, in Heaven fellow-citizens with the saints ; and, released from the strife and turmoil, the bitterness and regrets of earth, are incorporated forever with the household of God.

This is triumph ! How striking the contrast ! How must earth and its trials be lost sight of in the field of such a vision ! How must this contrast strengthen the ties of confidence, and kindle the ardor of devotion !

What did Moses care for the perils of the wilderness, when, from the storm-defying steep of Pisgah, he viewed the land of Promise, imaging forth the green fields of Heaven's eternal spring ! Look at Elijah, the immortal Tishbite, exchanging the sighs and solitude of his Juniper



shade, for wheels of fire and steeds of wind that bore him home to God! Look at Paul—poor, perilled and weary, amid the journeyings and conflicts of his mission: the hand that once stretched the strong Eastern tent, or wore the dungeon's chain, now sweeps in boldest strain the harps of Heaven! What cared the holy John for his *deportatio*, or banishment, into the rocky, sea-girt Patmos, when his residence there was overshadowed by the flight of angels and he looked forward to Heaven as furnishing the rewards of persecution—and what does he now care for the edicts of Nero and the cruelty of Rome! Look at the Christian of apostolic and early times, exchanging the clanking of his chains and the curses of his jailor—the dungeon's dew and martyr's stake—for the notes of gladness and lofty anthem pealing from lute and harp, bedecked with eternal amaranth! The load of chain with which he went out to meet the descending car of his triumph, with its angel-escort, was a richer dowry than the jewels of empire! The taper that flickered in the dungeon of the sainted hero, shot a ray more glorious than ever spoke the splendor of full-orbed noon! What are the frowns or the diadems of all this world's masters or Cæsars, compared with the prospects of such an expectant!

What has earth of rich or rare—the gems of the Orient, the mines of Golconda, the rose and the glory of Cashmere—that must not want attraction, and be poor indeed, when Heaven's undying freshness mantles, and her eternal columns rise in grandeur to the eye! What think you Pisidia's martyr—the murdered Stephen—cared for his toils, his travail and his watchings, or even the stoning of the bigot mob, when the magnificent pomp of opening Heaven, with the vision of the Crucified, tranced his wondering senses into awe! The want and suffering of

earth, are exchanged for the celestial joys and service of the Heaven, whither we journey.

III. HEAVEN IS TO BE REGARDED AS A FINAL STATE, PERFECTIVE AND CONCLUSIVE OF THE HAPPINESS IMPLIED. The purity and permanence of the heavenly state, must always rank among the grander themes of Christian thought. Man, in the estimate of Christianity, was made for two world's—one a state of trial, the other of recompense. Heaven, as a place and state, is both perfective and conclusive of our happiness. Our happiness is incomplete, indeed, scarcely commences, until we reach Heaven—and when we do, our being and welfare are never to be transferred to another region.

We may not be able to name, or fix attention, upon any era in the calendar of eternity, or the succession of its cycles, when Heaven's happiness shall be possessed in full and finished degree; but it is always full and finished in kind, both as it regards place and state. The nature of this happiness admits of no generic change. It will, doubtless, be in a state of eternal progression; but it is progression involving increase without any change or alteration of moral order. In quality it never varies, while in quantum it admits of perpetual augmentation.

The laws and economy of Heaven will continue the same, but new celestial developments will unceasingly enlarge the experience of eternity, and multiply the sources and intensity of enjoyment. There will be new paths to tread and fruits to gather; new truths disclosed and scenes unfolding; but no going out, no change of state or place.

*We infer the truth of all this, as the visions of inspiration reach no further.* With the redeemed, reaching Heaven, all is ultimate. No other place or state is to succeed

Earth is a state of struggling—Heaven of rewarded virtue. The one is a scene of conflict, the other a recompense of bliss. And after the passage of this preliminary state, it is the great after-stage of being, and immortality the term.

This is the one great inheritance ; all before was initial, and there is nothing to follow. Of Heaven, as a place, the law of residence is, “they shall go no more out ;” as a state, “the nations of them that are saved, *shall walk in it*”—“an exceeding great and *eternal* weight of glory.” The evils of life are retrieved, the avengement of its wrongs complete, and the triumph without pause or close.

There will be an infinitely diversified range of excellence. There will be the new to discern and the boundless in which to expatiate ; but all will be under the same economy and constitution of order and progression, without change or transfer. Whether as state or place, our home is “eternal in the Heavens.”

*The declared provisions of the Heavenly state, secure this result.* Heaven will be perfective of our happiness as a place, and conclusive of it as a state. Not that Heaven precludes accumulation, growth, acquirement—but because it precludes removal : and a better state of things is impossible. There will be intellectual enlargement not less than increased enjoyment ; still Heaven is the consummation of our happiness, because no other or after state shall place us upon the issues of a different destiny.

Here all the springs and principles, the elements and manifestations, of immortal blessedness, terminate in the perfection and completion of celestial enjoyment. Endlessly varied will be the cycle of activity and consciousness : height above height, vision beyond vision, foun-

tain beside fountain, and, on every side, the glories of a horizon inviting fresh survey. And for the very reason that the grand and the lofty, the lovely and the infinite, will continue to engross us, Heaven is to be regarded as the great fulfillment of being.

*Our desires and solicitudes are bounded by the accredited realities of the Heavenly state.* The uncreated, universal God, is himself the great center of moral gravitation in the Heavenly world. The glorified worshiper finds in him the vast sum, the immense total, of his bliss. Here we meet a boundless aggregation of facts, relations and developments, beyond which immortality itself is without inclination or pinion to soar.

No wish of the heart or desire of the mind found there, shall either exclude or wander from him. But these, together with the fears and anxieties of earth and time, shall expire alike in the bosom and amid the wonders of Almighty love.

*This view of the subject, is sustained by the history and the hopes of the Church.* Such have been the hopes and the aspirings of the Church in all ages. Abel, Enoch, Noah and others, are said expressly to have sought a "better country—that is, an heavenly." Moses had "respect to the recompense of reward." Enoch and Elijah actually went to Heaven, in pledge that all of similar character should go too. "I have waited," said the dying patriarch, "for thy salvation," and was then "gathered to his people." "At thy right hand," said the prophet bard of Israel, "there are pleasures forever more." "I shall behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness. I shall dwell in thy house length of days, even for ever and ever. Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory." "Whom I shall see for myself," says the

heroic sufferer of the land of Uz. "The ransomed of Jehovah," shouts the exulting prophet, "shall return and come to Sion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." Christ says to the ancient Church, in prophecy, "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise."

The aspirations and confidence of New Testament piety, on this subject, we need not quote. The whole current of its testimonies, is to the same effect. After all he had taught on this subject, with Gethsemane at his feet and Calvary in his eye, how impressively does the Divine Redeemer recall attention to the Heaven of Christian hope as the great end of his advent and mission among men. "Let not your heart be troubled—in my Father's House are many mansions." Thither myriads of earth's sorrowing children are rapidly hastening. Look at the gathering millions, as, in crowd and column, they fill the channel and cover the shores of the mystic Jordan! How long is it since eternity has known an hour, in which was *not heard* the prelude of the Heavenly harpers—they come, they come!

*The different degrees of glory affirmed with regard to the inhabitants of Heaven, not inconsistent with the preceding views.* Perfect beatitude will be the portion of all, but it will be with that variety which lends charm and interest to the ever-varied creations of the universal God. Heaven will present an endless gradation in dignity and happiness, characterizing all the ranges of intellectual life and Divine enjoyment, from the least of all saints, up to the highest principdoms and dominions of the sky. That variety distinguishing the splendor of the stellar hosts, is the inspired similitude of the different degrees of glory in Heaven.

The proper individuality and difference of character,

obtaining among the good and devout of earth, will be perpetuated in Heaven. It would imply an utter reversal of all the laws of character, and a subversion of the mental and moral habits governing conduct and action, to suppose that Paul and John, Luther and Wesley, will present no diversity of reward and excellence in Heaven. As there are upon earth different kinds and degrees of moral worth and goodness, so in Heaven there will be similar difference in the kind and measure of reward and distinction meted to them. Humble and illustrious worth, will both heir immortal recompense and fullness of joy; but, in the case of each, it will be the expansion of the principles and elements giving birth to the distinctive classes upon earth.

In Heaven, the millions of the unfallen and the redeemed, will take rank and class respectively about the throne of God, in conformity with the grade and extent of excellence, by which they are distinguished. Not unlike concentric circles around a common center, we may suppose ranks and grades to fall in and receive place and position at the hand of God, in strict adherence to the law of actual affinity with him. Moral resemblance to God and the extent of coöperation with him in the accomplishment of the Divine purposes, will be the rule of rank, and the law of relative position.

There will be many, innumerably multitudinous mansions, adjusted to the diversity of character and claim, as well as the multitude of the saved; but fullness of content and sufficiency, happiness intense and transcendent, will reign in all.

We may imagine circles near, and orbits distant—greater and less nearness of access to the throne and altar—while even the very verge of the sphere is occupied

by rejoicing millions. And yet all repose in the consummation of their hopes and wishes, and find the grand totality and laws of happiness the same to all and the same forever!

IV. HEAVEN IS EMINENTLY A STATE OF TRIUMPH AND REWARD. To estimate the conflict implied, you must note the great militant conflict of the Church, the enemies and the arms of Christianity. Our whole life was a struggle, a conflict with adverse elements. We had much, a fearful aggregate, to oppose, and much every way to overcome.

Now that we are in Heaven, we have triumphed over every foe. Everlasting joy and the ensigns of conquest are upon our head. Robes, and palms, and crowns, and harpings, but feebly denote the celestial triumph. Here, all was struggle and effort, pang and parting, ending in death and the grave. There, in fellowship, and "reigning in life," with the Majesty in the Heavens, we share the glories of "eternal redemption," in all the fullness of secured possession.

We ask you to re-look at man's adverse condition upon earth. Man is not a native of Heaven—but an alien, restored to the rights of citizenship in the great commonwealth of the finally blest. His condition was once an earthly, sinful and suffering one; but, rising above, he has triumphed over the ills and evils of earth, sin and suffering. Life was a warfare without truce or interval; but the victor is now approved, and crowned with wreaths, compared with which the chaplets of fame and the laurels of empire are but weeds.

The head and hand, so lately burdened with care and toil, are now, like all about him, forever vernal with amaranth and palm. The hand once so feeble, now wields a sceptered influence, and upon the brow, but

now clouded with sorrow, plays the light of immortality, as upon its chosen altar !

*Look, too, at the resistance the Christian had to oppose to the untiring activity of infernal agency.* Strong in the strength supplied from Heaven, the Devil, our common enemy, who, with unwearied assiduity, went about seeking whom he might devour, has been resisted and overcome ; and now he may revisit the haunts of his usurped mission, and the high places of his world-wide rule, but he will find no Christian to tempt, no child of faith to seduce. God's elect upon our planet are counted up, and the congregation of the damned is numbered. Babylon is divorced from Jerusalem, and the separation is eternal. Heaven has garnered the wheat and hell shall burn the tares.

In this way we perceive how eminently the path of life is one of duty and trial, instead of being carpeted with flowers and invested with repose. And we perceive, further, that we have no right to expect, or even pray, for heart and hopes upon earth cheerful and buoyant as those we look forward to in Heaven.

*The triumph of the Christian implies his reward.* The text assures us the Christian is rewarded, because he "came up" with unblenching firmness through "great" affliction—because, in the practice of the virtues exacted and the aggressive resistance of vice, he "washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Therefore" it is he is free from stain "before the throne of God," and, without defection, shall "serve him day and night."

It is true of all the saved, that, unsought and unasked for, the grace of God gratuitously placed them in a condition to avail themselves of the rewardableness of obedience and piety, and this in perfect consistency with the most conscious indeliberate and entire want of merit on



their part. They are now preferred to the glories of a state destined to be prolonged in happiness throughout all ages.

In estimating the reward awaiting the Christian, you are to take into the account the present and the future—the difficulties and the recompense of the Christian profession—the battle and spoils of a life of virtue. The Christian hero, having passed the scene of trial, is now at rest, pavilioned high upon the mount of immortality, from which memory gilds the past, like the sun of heaven, as the tempest retires, throwing his radiance over the broken billows of the sea!

V. THE CHARACTER, PECULIAR AND DISTINCTIVE, OF THOSE ADMITTED TO A RESIDENCE IN HEAVEN. *First, note the transformation implied.* A great change has passed upon them. They have been the subjects of a divine, a Heavenly, transformation. Sharing “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,” they, in return, by unreserved consecration and active obedience, “have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” And they thus stand out noticeably among men, enrobed in character, conduct, life and conversation, such as the Gospel requires and Heaven can approve.

These have been rendered acceptable to God, and befitting the Heavenly mansions, prospectively, through the atonement and propitiation of the Son of God. From this grand fulfillment of the Cross, and this alone, and yet effectively, flowed the redemption of the world and its sequent regeneration, in connection with faith and obedience. Of this system of recovery, suggested by Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Benevolence was the great originating agency, and the atonement of Christ the grand procuring cause.

Such are the original means and method of preparation. *Turn we, now, more especially, to the indispensable terms of eligibility, so far as man is concerned.* That which contingently contributed to the event, and, indeed, determined the result of admission into Heaven, on the part of those found there, was their assiduous and unremitting industry in acquiring moral fitness and growing preparation for the Heavenly state. So every way and always essential, in the instance of accountable man, are repentance, faith and obedience, to this preparation (and these virtues giving character and tendency to the whole of our being), that, without them, as conditions of eternal life, Christianity itself becomes, in name and effect, a lifeless, defunct creed—an exploded, lying wonder.

*As belonging to Christian character, let us notice the leading practical results of this progressive preparation in a life of piety and usefulness, comprehending all the ordinary details of the one and the other.* Such a life invariably results from the great transforming change of which we have spoken, unless its tendencies be resisted and perverted. It affects all the depths and springs of our nature. It sheds over our higher tastes and the sterner principles and impulses of our nature the luster of a pure, unselfish elevation. Our motives and purposes take hold of eternity. Eternal things engross and attract thought and feeling. Earth is looked upon as a state of preparation only, the mere vestibule of being.

In the great conflict of the Christian profession—as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, with nerve to dare and hand to do, abjuring self—they battle for God and virtue against the ills of life and the powers of darkness. They have attached themselves to the distant fortunes of one who, when on earth, had not where to lay his head; and, for their reward, they look to what others

regard as the unknown perspective beyond the grave. Busily and arduously, despite all that may oppose, they are seen plying the means and processes of resemblance to their great Exemplar in Heaven. "One is their Master, even Christ;" and it is their one great endeavor to "be like him" here, that, hereafter, they may "see him as he is." Amid all the disturbing vicissitudes of life, with unrepressed fervor of effort, they aspire after Heavenly attainments.

They act upon the maxim, that, to reach Heaven at all, there must be susceptibility and similitude—a personal adaptation, on the part of the aspirant here, to the kind of happiness current there. Thus, looking forward to a better, they wear this world about them as a mantle that, at death, they may throw off, and mount to life—the bosom of their God. It is their true characteristic, that, pointing the road to Heaven, they lead the way themselves and ask the world to follow.

*We are thus prepared to reflect, for a moment, upon the hope and confidence inspired by this mysterious process of life.* Of this hope we can only say, it is "full of immortality;" of this confidence, it is strong and unquestioning. Panoplied in grace and virtue, the Christian meets the ills of life and earth's adversities, like the moon in her course, steadily moving forward, and with firm, unshrinking prow, breasting the threatening aspects and stormy billows of the sky, and claiming path and finding way, as though they had not been!

VI. THE MANNER OF ACCESS AND MODE OF ENTRANCE INTO HEAVEN. Would you live forever, where sin is not and death unknown? you must first die. In the whole system of human recovery, God has ordained that grief and trial shall be the precursors of glory and promotion. And, in analogy with this arrangement, our entrance

into Heaven is through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

Death becomes the mode of transfer—the gateway of entrance to the land and mansions of immortality. Nor is this absurd. Death, in fact, is but existence in another form. It is a mere parenthesis in our being, affecting only its mode. It concludes our earthly, and commences our higher and Heavenly, career. Death only changes the accidents of existence, transferring us from one stage to another: and, of all abodes, the grave will be found the most prolific of life and being.

Child of the storm and the wave! you are now at sea, and would you reach the immortal shore at which you aim? you must first buffet the dark and oblivious flood that rolls between mortality and eternal life! Your sun must set in this, ere it can rise in the other hemisphere. You must abide the trial of death and the scrutiny of the omniscient Judge.

But, admitting this in all its force, when we mark the hopes and consolation gilding the last hours of Christian toil and contemplate our final triumph at the feet of God, can we hesitate upon the threshold of the only door admitting us to his presence and fellowship forever.

Christianity exhibits several successive stages in the renovation and perfection of our nature. The first seems to relate, principally, to a just and comprehensive apprehension of the existence and natural perfections of Deity. The second eminently includes a clear and impressive appreciation of the moral perfections of God, together with living, practical conformity to his moral character, will and purposes. While the third contemplates our transfer from time to eternity, and gives the immediate perception and open vision of uncreated excellence, in a state of the most perfect blessedness and unchanging

felicity. Of the two former we may avail ourselves on earth; to the realization of the latter, it is necessary that our connection with earth and matter; in their darker aspects and grosser symbols, should be dissolved. This dissolution is death; and a principal part of its necessity appears to arise from the fact, that there are certain principles of our nature—established laws of our being—which cannot be evolved and brought to bear upon our ultimate destination in any other way.

This appointed separation of the elements of our nature, for the purpose of ultimate re-construction, and a conformation better adapted to the great ends of our being, is to be regarded as a fixed, regular stage in the economy—the natural history of the moral world. It is a special appointment not to be resisted or avoided. It is not an arrest—an oblivion—of the intellectual and moral life, of which we are now conscious; but a temporary breaking up and disseverment of the organic whole, with its elementary parts, for the accomplishment of a specific purpose.

The period of death's dominion over the body, is a portion of the natural history of man, of which we know but little, beyond the revealed fact that it is a period of seed-time and germination, and that a series of results are going on, however slowly or imperceptibly, intimately connected with the re-construction of the elements of physical life, preparatory to the re-union of soul and body in the resurrection.

To die, therefore, so far from an extinction of being, is but a change of its order. It is existence under a new form of development, and is gradually preparing humanity for after stages of being, and the full effulgence of uncreated light. It is such a view of the subject, and such alone, we conceive, that solves the enigma of the

grave, and gives the true philosophy of life and death, as brought to light by the Gospel.

FINALLY : WE NOTICE THE NATURE AND ELEMENTS—THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND DURATION, OF THE HAPPINESS WE CELEBRATE. God has prepared for the long lost, but now recovered, children of his providence and grace, a duration of never-ending bliss. When the wilderness of life is past, with its perils and hardships, they are admitted into his immediate presence, where, through all the celestial mansions, he pours himself abroad in blessing and in bounty.

It is a happiness comprehending and engrossing every power and every function of an immortal, glorified existence—every where delighting in the good—gazing on the beautiful and glorying in the vast.

*The glorified humanity of Jesus Christ, binding in perpetual union the elements of mind and matter, shall be the visible august Shekinah, reflecting the effulgence of Jehovah's glory upon the millions whose names are written in Heaven.* And these millions of immortals throw their gaze over the boundless fields, out-spreading before and about them, but to learn the great apocalyptic truth, that "the Lamb is the light thereof!" He is the burning focus of vision—the Almighty center of attraction—the sum and soul of all the awaiting scenes and unfolding glories of Heaven's indefinite, boundless future.

*Our bodies, having been subjected to a refining, ennobling process in the grave, shall, by their renewal and re-construction, be adapted to higher aims and more stupendous achievements.* They sunk in death beneath the primal curse and bedewed with the tears of the living—weak, natural, corrupt, mortal and earthly. They rise and enter Heaven—powerful, spiritual, incorruptible, immortal and heavenly. Such is the great transforming, the

little less than creative change, that is to pass upon the material, organic part of our nature. This mortal, broken loose from the power of death, is invested with imperishable vigor and beauty; and thus the grave becomes the great connecting link between humanity and Heaven.

*In Heaven our wants are all supplied.* The river of God, diffusing light and gladness, shall lave its center and enrich its borders. The light of life and joy pervades its whole extent. Whatever our wants and wishes may be—infinite in number and boundless in aim—Heaven accords a full supply.

Enjoyment and satiety spring and luxuriate in a thousand forms. The Tree of life, the bread of Heaven, the hidden manna, and the waters of salvation welling from beneath the throne of God—these shall prevent the recurrence of hunger and thirst, by their ever-augmenting supplies, and place the redeemed beyond the reach of want and care.

*Sin and sorrow are no more.* We are placed, by the confluent force of moral causes, in an eternal impotence of sinning, including exemption from all the possibilities of evil. There is, there, no aching head or brow of care, and the harps of Sion no longer wail, in melancholy dirge, the sorrows of a bruised or broken heart! Inquietude shall no longer bleed the vitals, or despair give fearful tension to the maddening brain. Never, again, shall the tear of penitence tremble in the eye of the mourner, nor the prayer of misery woo the throne of God and humbly motion Heaven for relief!

*We shall have every variety of rational enjoyment.* Intelligence, volition and sensibility, in all their direct and ultimate functions, will be actively employed, intensely absorbed; and all the improved powers and energies of

a deathless mind shall be thrown into action and achievement, amid the objects and interests of an eternal world. Every energy of the mind shall share a jubilee, and every affection of the heart a rapture-breathing Sabbath. There will be a magnificence of display, a stupendousness of arrangement, an amplitude of variety, an intensity of bliss, in the immeasurable household of Heaven, we can neither conceive nor describe.

Even on earth, hope and enjoyment pointed us to every thing beautiful in nature and bright beyond it; and, in Heaven, we realize the vision in a way and to an extent resigning to beggary the richest dreams and poetry of earth.

*Heaven will forever re-unite those who were friends on earth.* There will be a renewal of the virtuous and endearing friendships of earth and time. And when the Christian comes to die, and angels ask for tears at sight of the heart's fondest ties and most touching affinities rudely wrecked and sundered by the hand of death—at such a moment, what single thought of earth or Heaven could so increase the sunset splendor of the soul, the cloudless rainbow of the mind, as the felt assurance of re-union in Heaven with those we loved and trusted here!

*A pervading oneness of principle and sentiment—an unbroken identity of affection and feeling—will forever unite in undisturbed, indissoluble bonds, the great fraternity of Heaven's long divided family, and preclude, alike and forever, the possibility of division and discord.* Here, the erring martyrs of opposing creeds no longer curse and ban in Mercy's name. Here, the children of Christ, from every fold—antipodes in modes and forms, or severed by the world's diameter—meet to regret the frailty of earth and rejoice in the friendship of Heaven.



*The only remaining topic we discuss will go to show, that, essentially analogous to the nature and elements, will be found circumstance and environment, connected with the happiness of Heaven.* God will be beheld in the majesty and immensity of his nature—in regal state and display—upon the chosen theater of his own appropriate manifestation. In the essential distinctions of his benevolence, especially, he is beheld in the beauty and grandeur of his own revealings.

The Heavenly worshipers find themselves in unrestrained neighborhood with the throne and palace of God, the river and tree of life, the family and pavilions, the splendor and equipage of Heaven; and, in full and satisfying fruition, they bask in his rays and burn in his love.

*Heaven is a state of society but feebly typed by that of earth.* All our mortal and immortal instincts proclaim that man was made for society, and it is the evidence of history and consciousness, that “we are weeds without it.” Without it, Heaven is dismantled of its most endearing charms, and earth becomes the sepulcher of joy.

Of the society of Heaven we can form no adequate idea. Every age of time and division of earth—every creed and language—every color and clime—shall present their hundreds, thousands and millions, centuplicated beyond the reach of numbers, at the foot of the throne of God, where death and sin are not. Myriads, too, may be there from other worlds—from districts of God’s unfallen creation. Ours may be the only prodigal in the great family of worlds; and, after due time and trial, all may meet in this vast region. And, not only the millions of the past and the saved of ages that time yet holds in reserve, but the angelic princes and personages, sages and citizens, of the celestial polity, are inclu-

ded in the count and swell the society of Heaven. And of this society you and I, living to God and dying in Christ, are equal and welcome members !

*Intellectual elevation, not less than moral purity, will always distinguish the inhabitants of Heaven.* Knowledge, in endless variety and in a continuous flood of rich discovery, will pour in upon them, and the utmost accumulation will but increase the thirst to know ! And thus, alive to the indeterminate increase of knowledge, the light of eternity alone can limit the field over which it expatiates. But what we shall know of the universe of things, vast and boundless as eternity itself, that eternity alone can tell !

We may conceive, however, of the intellectual, immortal nations found in Heaven, that their capacity to know and acquire, will be distinguished by something like geometrical progression. Every principle and fact of celestial intelligence will be found pregnant and invested with important analogies and relations ; and these, naturally and necessarily, will multiply themselves, in combination with others ; and the result will be, that the everlessening distance between the created and uncreated, will but terminate in an indefinitely augmented sense of the grandeur and condescension of Godhead !

*In these reflections, though dimly, we are Divinely guided.* In the generality of their range and meaning, if not more minutely, they are plainly suggested and authorized by the word of God. We have feebly essayed the depiction of a place and state, "whither the Forerunner hath for us entered." Messiah is the great precursor, the leader of salvation and the Church, upon the path and at the goal we have attempted to describe.

He is with us amid the cares and pains of mortality, the anguish and dismay, of death. And he who came to

instruct and died to redeem, who dignified our nature and long plead our cause in Heaven, will bring together and there unite, in one vast family, individuals and orders the most diverse and unequal, the "least" and the "greatest," the most ancient as well as recent, in the myriad lands and among the thousand tribes from which they have been born to him, and are now destined to the inheritance of his love.

*The ever successive eras of endless duration will but add fresh accessions of capacity and fruition.* What a destiny awaits us! In companionship with the Everliving, and commensurate with God's own duration, will be our progress upon the path of immortality. "The true God and Eternal Life," has pledged his all sufficiency to this effect: "Because I live, ye shall live also." In a word, human nature, in its essential elements of matter and mind, trained and restored by Christianity, inherits immortality of life, amid the glories and stabilities of that kingdom prepared for all the blest of God!

Here, however, we are compelled to pause. We find ourselves at the very boundary of the vast circle, over which thought and language throw the light of their lessons, and we can proceed no further—ascend no higher! Awed in thought, and reverent in feeling, the vision before us seems to be sealed by its own God-like resplendence!

Of the rank and fortunes, the relations and ministry, of cherubim and seraphim—how employed and what achieved by them—we can say no more. Of the beauty and grandeur, the forms and colors, the groves and gardens, the temples and melody, palaces and triumphs, existing the objects of interest and delight to the immortal nations adorning the fields and plains of Heaven, we can tell you naught in addition.

*And, in conclusion, can only remind you of the perpetuity of the whole.* This thought must redouble the joy and consummate the felicity of Heaven. Ours there, will be an existence which death can neither intercept nor put an end to. Throughout the countless throng, so magnificently begirting the throne of God, intellectual interest and high wrought emotion will know neither decay nor change.

But, we are again reminded, we cannot grasp the orb, and have no arithmetic with which to number the years of eternity; and, by how far we are unable to depict, even to ourselves, the princely grandeur of the Heavenly world, we must fail to bear you aloft through its ample dominions. Imagination, awed and shrinking, retreats from the task, and the bewildering anxiety of created minds, is lost in the immensity of the contemplation!

Such, in dim, imperfect outline, is the Heaven of our hopes! And where, you may ask, does our farewell gaze part with the Christian? We leave him throned and sceptered, with harp and palm, amid this very scene—the scene we have so feebly described! We see the victor and we see his crown! We see the hero and we hear his song! We see the conqueror and we see the weapons of his warfare, adorning the palace walls of Heaven, ready to make proof of their temper again, should the fortunes of virtue, or the welfare of the universe, ever require it!













