

and Head in respect to the sin of covetousness. In his first sermon at Nazareth he announces that he has been anointed "the Messiah," specially to preach the gospel to the poor. The sermon on the Mount is opened with his blessings upon the poor, and the poor in spirit; and its first woe is aimed at the rich. He holds up the two great antagonistic powers of earth,—those of good and of evil, as God and mammon. He affirms that the first duty of man is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and that all needed earthly things shall be added. He declares anxiety for earthly goods to be in its nature heathenism, "for after all these things do the Gentiles seek." He enters upon his first observance of the passover after he begins his ministry, by scourging the money-changers out of the Temple. He teaches his disciples to pray, and the first three requests put in their lips are for the prevalence of the kingdom of God on earth, and but one of the seven petitions has reference to bodily wants, and those are considered only with reference to the passing day. He sends for the apostles and the seventy disciples to preach, and one of his most emphatic charges is not to carry gold, or silver, or superfluous raiment. A rich young man seeks to learn of Him the way to eternal life: He tells him first, "sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor." He feeds thousands from a handful of biscuit, to show his power to provide all needed good. Some of his most angry warnings are to fools who build great storehouses and barns. Many of his most striking parables, as those from the pearl-merchant, the treasure-hunter, the dishonest steward—his most touching lessons from nature, the lilies, the birds, the foxes—his most surprising miracles, the draughts of fishes, the finding of money in the fish's mouth—the instantaneous relief of the poor, the blind, the leper, for the mere asking—appear like one incessant testimony against covetousness as to worldly possessions, and in favour of the most child-like submission, obedience, and trust in God. "He that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." His most eminent model of Christian beneficence is a starving widow, who casts into the Lord's treasury her last and only farthings, "all her living." His life was life-long poverty. He had no safe refuge like the foxes; no quiet nest or home like the birds. He washed, like a menial slave, the feet of his disciples. And when he describes with Divine foreknowledge of all its particulars, the coming great Day of Judgment, he says that the chief ground of accusation and damnation of worldlings and false professors will be that they withheld time, property, influence from the acts of mercy of which he was the great example, and the

performance of which is the principal seal of the divinity of his religion; while the acquittal and salvation of the righteous will be chiefly on the grounds of such evidence of their sincere belief in and obedience to him. To any one who, with an unbiased mind, will consider the life and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will seem a continued vehement and burning protest against the love of mammon as the great enemy of love to God, and the great obstacle to the salvation of the race of man through his death on the cross. Oh that it were possible to view it as he died, who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor; who, though King of kings, took upon him the form of a servant for us, and suffered for us the shameful death of the cross.

Need of Efforts for its Cure.

In respect to no sin is the Church now more called to lift up her prayers to God for deliverance, to utter the most solemn warnings, to counsel and to legislate in her courts, and to thoroughly rouse her whole membership, in view of the withholding of the reviving influences of the Holy Spirit, and the judicial abandonment of multitudes of souls to the power of what is the "root of all evil."

Remedy—The Inspired Rule.

The remedy is simple. Let the whole Church be united in obedience to the Apostolic rule. (1 Cor. xvi. 2.) "Upon the first day of the week let every one lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." Contributions for the great work which God has laid before the Church should be *weekly*, or the payment at longer intervals of what has been set apart *weekly*—*universal*, embracing the gifts of every individual, even the poorest—*considerate*, treasuring or setting aside the money with calculation, knowledge of the objects in view, reflection, and prayer—and *proportionate*, a stated share of the income, which is less from those able to give, more from those who have been prospered in the favours of Providence.

Blessings Conditioned upon Fidelity in the use of Property.

It will be a joyful time for the world when there shall be a general awakening of the Church to the guilt of the sin of robbing God in withholding his tithes, and to humble prayerful efforts to secure again his favour. Then there shall be a flood of rain from the windows of heaven that will make the whole world glad, and blessings shall be poured out which there shall not be room to receive. Thus saith "the Lord of hosts." (Mal. iii.) When "the liberal deviseth liberal things," and the