

of the moral and the spiritual above all triumphs of intellect, as seen in the widow's mite cast into the treasury, in the box of ointment broken by the hand of prescient love on the Saviour's person, in the tears of penitence washing His feet; the mystery of human sorrow, the boundlessness of human aspiration, the blending grandeur and beauty of the Saviour's character, the power which belongs to the heart—to love—to apprehend and to verify the gospel; these supply him with the lofty themes on which he discourses with marvellous force and eloquence. Without being formally and directly an argument for Christianity, these sermons are only the more really an apologetic of the most effective kind; one by which the faith of many a hesitating believer has been greatly strengthened. A brief quotation will be of more service than any description in enabling you to understand and appreciate this characteristic of the discourses of Vinet. "Humanity hath separated itself from God. The storms of passion have broken the mysterious cable which retained the vessel in port. Shaken to its base, and feeling itself driven upon unknown seas it seeks to rebind itself to the shore; it endeavours to renew its broken strands; it makes a desperate effort to re-establish these connections without which it cannot have either peace or security. In the midst of its greatest wanderings, humanity never loses the idea of its origin and destiny; a dim recollection of its ancient harmony pursues and agitates it; and without renouncing its passions, without ceasing to love sin, it longs to reattach its being full of darkness and misery to something luminous and peaceful and its fleeting life to something immovable and eternal. In a word, God has never ceased to be the want of the human race. Alas! their homage wanders from its proper object, their worship becomes depraved, their piety itself is impious; the religions which cover the earth are an insult to the unknown God, who is their object. But in the midst of these monstrous aberrations, a sublime instinct is revealed; and each of these false religions is a painful cry of the soul, torn from its centre and separated from its object. It is a despoiled existence which in seeking to clothe itself, seizes upon the first rags it finds; it is a disordered spirit, which, in the ardour of its thirst, plunges all panting into fetid and troubled waters; it is an exile who in seeking the road to his native land, buries himself in frightful deserts."

But these discourses are much more than a powerful argument for the Gospel; they are a singularly beautiful exhibition of its contents and of its spirit. They are the former mainly, indeed, in virtue of being the latter. They are not less