

16 THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

thinker says, "is not a duty, but a virtue." It is the fruit of God's grace.

Love is eternal. It creates the atmosphere of heaven. "God is love." And it is eternal life to know God. For "love is heaven, and heaven is love." Faith will one day be lost in sight, hope in fruition, but love is immortal, and will last for ever. And as we learn the lesson of God's love we become more like Him "whose nature and whose name is love."

Love is supreme. It holds all else in its hand. It is all-powerful. All men are compelled at last to acknowledge that its might is irresistible. The genius of man is great. He can chain the winds, utilize the vast forces of nature at his pleasure, measure the stars in their courses, flash his thoughts from continent to continent, but to the resistless power of love he must bow. It is the stream which, like a river of God, has made earth's desert fruitful and its wildernesses to blossom like the rose. It is the chain of gold by which the round world is every way bound about the feet of God. It is like the sun, in that its gracious power turns darkness into light and makes the waste places fertile. It alone satisfies the heart, and satisfies it the more the greater its dominion over the heart and life. So Michael Angelo confessed :

"Painting and sculpture's aid in vain I crave.

My one sole refuge is that love divine

Which from the cross stretched forth its arms to save