The next Scripture statement to be no-

THE MYSTERY OF AFFIACTION

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The world in which we live is full of mys. tery. The vast majority of truths taught us in Nature, in Providence, and in Rodemption must be received and believed, although but imperfectly understood. This is pra-eminently true of affliction. Why there should be so much misery and sorrow in a world, created by a loving Father, and more particularly why Christians should suffer more severely than other men in the present life, have been matters of profound study in all ages of the church.

To all such interrogations, it may be sufficient to-reply in the words of the Saviour addressed to Peter, "What I do thouknowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.' We know that it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, and that here even in our brightest moments, we see through a glass, darkly. We were never intended or capacitated to understand a fraction of the ten thousand mysterious providences that surround our pathway. They are sent to work in us patience to develope new graces and quicken our hopes of immortality, to teach us to wait submissively until the clouds and darkness are dispelled, and we shall know, even as we are known.

At the same time, it is lawful for us, within certain limits, to enquire into some of the reasons why God sends affliction. Even to the best of Christians these afflictions are painful and unwholesome. We need oceasional flashes from the other world to reveal their blessedness.

I. It is very evident from the Word of God that afflictions experienced by the pecple of God are sent reluctantly. "He doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men." This of itself is a blessed consolation. It is God that afflicts and these afflictions are sent unwillingly. In regard to all afflictive dispensations, it is true they come from God, but only in respect to his own children can it be said that they are sent reluctantly. In one case they are penal, in the other remedial; in the one case they proceed from love, in the other from God's indignation at sin; in the one they harden the heart, in the other they break it and draw it nearer to the Saviour. It is needless to argue the proposition that God is a God of Love. His nature is love-his erowning attribute love. For IIIs people He cherishes an affection that time cannot diminish, nor eternity decrease. What a blessed consolation this to suffering saints, whose whole existence is a dreary pilgrinage, with but few and fitful gleams of hope to dispel the darkness? Christian, it is a father's rod that is uplifted; all your trials are sont and controlled by a watchful Pro-

II. The aflictions of the rightcons are disciplinary. The world is for the Christian a school of discipline, where he is trained and educated for future glory. The ten-der vine must be pruned and trained. The young plant must be headed back, again ain, in order to increase its fruitfulness. So in like manner Christian perfection can only be appointed by severe exercise, and painful self-denial. That affiictions sent upon Christians are disciplinary, read what Paul says, in his Epistle to the Hebrows, "My son, despise not thou the chas toning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him, for whom the Lord leveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Christians must not despise afflictions, but strive to learn the salutary lessons they are intended to convey. Nor should they faint under them, for these trials are intended to strengthen our faith, and make us cling all the closer to a covenant keeping God. These trials are not exceptions to God's mode of dealing with his people, but are the universal rule of His govern-But for these marks your sonship would be doubtful.

But apart from the Word of God altogether, many circumstances connected with these providential dispensations prove them to be disciplinary in their character. "They are never sent so heavy as to utterly crush us. It intended merely for punishment they would be travely as a sent to the providence of the sent to be much more severe. On the contrary "they have many alleviations,"—they are adapted to our strength to bear them, and when the special lesson designed has been loarnt, and the particular sin eradicated, the suffering is removed. They are sent gradually. It the heart is soft and impressible nally. It the heart is soft and impressible a single blow may suffice; if not heavier chastisements follow. If otherwise intended the heavier strokes would fall first, and uttorly crush us. That this is the case the trials of Abraham and Job abundantly testify. And this explains why it is that the most ominon saints suffer most severely. The severest afflictions are reserved for the strongest believers. It is no marvel then. why the best of men seem never to be re- the Garden of Eden, the first unportant leased from suffering from their cradic to event recorded in Antediluvian lustory was their grave. It is just because they are other feeling in Antendram instary was able to bear them. Strong trials are reserted to the fall by which the progenitors of the able to bear them. The tiny pleasure boat human race were turned out of the garden that floats over the surface of the placed into the wilderness, to five aimid a state of lake would sink in mid-ocean, over whose billows the strong built vessel leaps merrily. The slender sanling cannot endure the rude blasts of winter that play harmlessly round the giant oak.

III. Afflictions are intended to teach us lessons of heavenly wisdom. In the school of affliction we learn by experience divine truth. The dectrines of the Bible must be brought home to our soul. So long as the sun of prosperity shines brightly—so long az we onjoy health and strength, and death makes no in vasion of our households, it is hard to believe experimentally all that the Bible eays of sin, of God's anger and our moral ruin. But when we are brought face to face with misery in the world around us, and death in the seclusion of our own households

then our faith in God and Scripture is wonderfully increased. It was so with the Psalmist David, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy statutes."
Prosperity in his east had fostered pride and
forgetfulness of God, and it was only when
the rod of chastisoment was uplifted that he returned to the paths of wisdom. Sorrow is a much more effectual preacher than the most elequent sermoniser. "One stroke of it often carries with it the combined experience of years," When the chill blast of rience of years." adversity sweeps around the dwellingswhen trials, kindred or personal, press down the soul—when the idol of the heart is snutched by death from our embrace, then, if not before, we are taught the utter worthlessness of all our earthly joys.

IV. Afflictions are intended to afford time for serious reflection. To many Christians this is the turning point of their life. It is true that every believer reflects more orless in the time of health. But amid the excitement and turmoil of a restless, busy world, we are apt to lose sight of our present position and progress. stand points of vision, wholce we can survey the past as well as scan the future. We need moments of leisure, when, with Gods word in our hand, we can enter our hearts and dissect unsparingly its hidden plans and purposes. There is no period more favourable to this, than a bed of affliction, if God in his morey leaves the mental powers unimpaired. Then eternty flashes back its light upon the soul, and shows us the vanity of living for this world alone. Then it is such questions as these that stand up before the awakened conscience. Whence am I What am I? What my past existence Whence am I? What my present life? Whither hastening? What the aim and end of all my plans and projects as seen in the light of the judgment day? Dr. Chalmers, in these still moments of affliction, regarded his past life as but a feverish dream. How many who ead those lines can thank God for those olitary hours of reflection.

V. Affliction is sent by God as an instru ment for our sanctification. The Holy Spirit uses affliction for this end, "that we may be made partakers of His holiness."
High Christian character cannot be attained without it. The noblest examples of Christian fortified and purity are produced by flory persecutions. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?

These are they which came out of great tribulations, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the

VI. Afflictions are sent to increase our dependence upon God—to wean us from the things of time, and cause us more car-nestly to long for eternity.

It is easy to admonish others, "not to trust in promises nor in men's sons," but hard to apply this maxim to ourselves. So long as the Lake of Galilee war cal in and peaceful the disciples had no need for the Saviour's protection, but when the storm arose, and the waves swept over their feeble bark, then they cried for morey and deliverance. So with all the applications of God's people; they show as how weak and helpless we are in all our undertakings without divino assistance—how useless are our plans and purposes if not seconded by omnipotent power; and when this feeling of dependence is fully developed the Christian can say in the language of the prophet,
"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, nother shall fruit be in the vine—the labor of the clive fail, and the fields yield no meat—the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stall, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." But for afflictions we would become satisfied with earth. But by these instruments God teaches that this is not our He stirs us up in our feathered nests as the eagle does her young, and trains us to look upward for an eternal home. And just as in the darkest night we have the clearest vision of the stars, so in the gloomy hour of sorrow do we feel the value of a rest prepared in heaven. Reader! can you say with David, "It was good for me that I was afflicted?" or with Job, "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lod." It is comparatively casy to believe in general truths, such as that of the apostle, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of but it is a much harder matter for us to say, like the same apostle, "I take pleasure in my infirmities—in repreaches— in necessities—in persecutions—in distress for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then strong. la heaven shall appear light indeed; what blissful memories shall then be experienced! Soon these afflictions will be over. The trials of the present moment, like the storms of winter, are but the harbingers of a glorious

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE BIBLE.

DR DAWSON'S CLOSING LECTURE.

Yesterday afternoon, in Erskine Church, Dr. Dawson delivered his closing lecture on the Anthropology of the Bible. There was a large audience. In commencing, the leeturer said. After the creation of man in God's own image, and his being [placed in things not conducive to their comfort or happiness and evidently not adapted to man's original condition. The earth was cursed for man's sake, and the present race is struggling with the same difficulties Adam contended with while earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. Eden is blotted out in consequence of the fall of man, but if Adam and his descendants had remained innocent the boundaries of earth's paradise would have been enlarged, and eventually the whole world wou'd have been transformed into an Eden. Sin, however, has brought about the present anomalous relations between man and the

ticed is that after the fall, and sin had time to corrupt the human race, it was divided into tribes or peoples—the Canites and the Sethites. Cain, the first murderer, was branded as an outcast, became a wanderer, and his children being adventurous, active, and sharp-witted, rapidly improved their condition. Their great success was partially attributable to their longevity, while their frames were stronger in proportion than those of the present race. Cain is said to have built a city. About that time the poet Lamcel flourished, a fragment of whose composition is to be read in Genesis. From that it is to be gathered that war and bloodshed existed then, and that the people of those days made a distinction between a man who slew his enemy in the battlefield, in open fight, and one who murdered him at unawares Certain of Cain's des. condants lived a pastoral life. They possessed sheep from the first, while the taming of the wild cattle and horses was attempted successfully in the course of time. Jubel, one of Cain's children, was a musi cian. Music was evidently an early gift to the Antediluvians. A still more important man was Tubal-Cain, who, of an enquiring and inventive genius, became skilled in metallurgy. His discoveries caused an immonse stride in antedduyaan arts, sufficient to show that in scientific and mechanical discoveries the rate of progress of the Canites was not far behind that of the present generation. Among the Sethites less mechanical invention and civilization is per ceived. They followed a nomadic or shepherd life, and were no doubt simple-minded people, who had far more of the higher civilization-a love for God-than their "goahead" neighbors. As these nations grew. and overspread the earth, coming more in contact as their civilization advanced—in a similar manner to the people of the 19th century-it is recorded that "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they choose." The natural consequence of this connection was that a new physical stimulus was given to the races, but as happens now, the stronger nature of scrupulous Canite. full of wealth and wie kedness, reared wicked children, and the latter went from bad to worse. Polygamy was also introduced at this time. Autodiluvian civilization had now about reached its climax. Giants walked the earth-mighty men, and of renown. Full of their physical superiority these beings no doubt oppressed the weak, and, as at present, one nation was often at war with another. The condition of things just previous to the flood was lamentable. Sin had borne fruit; strength of body, vigor of mind, beauty of person, the no doubt vast increase of the human race since the creation, and its great material success, had filled the Antediluvians with yain glory, and they were now to be cut off.

THE DELUGE.

Before the flood it is likely the earth was arger and rander than subsequently There were lightly forests in those days where are now seas. The vast plains over which sweep the German Ocean and Irish Sea, were inhabited, while the basin of the Mediterranean was an immense river val-ley—perhaps that of the Gilion. It is very probable man was introduced to the world while in this condition, the Camtes going more to the east of Eden, while the Seth ites went west over modern Europe, and the vast, perhaps enormously fertile valley of the Mediterranean. The population was large. Great communities lived in the centres of civilization, where the mechanic arts would be carried on, while emigrants—wan-dering tribes—kept leaving their homes seeking a living in the forests of the West-ern Continent. Everything favors the idea that this part of the world was densely peopled; large cities, as now-a-days, stood amid well cultivated fields; flocks prowsed on the Savannas; the hills were covered with mines; while an active, working, and manufacturing people gave life to the whole scene; eventually, there is no doubt, bringing themselves up to a point when there was a struggle for existence amid the masses, as is now seen in the older countries of Europe. 'cople emigrated, and the nations mingled, while the wandering tribes penetrated the forests and lived much as do our

Among the ancients there are four great classes. first, that which used chipped stone implements, second, one supplied with carved stone knives, &c., of better workmanship, third, the age of bronze or brass, and fourth, the Roman period, when from was generally employed. There are no written records left of the first period, but a few bones and implements found in caves tell the tale. These are met with in Western Europe, Wettern Asia, and North-ern Africa, and are the remains of a very primitive people, whether antediluvian or postdeluvian has been debated. If the former, they were not of a civilized race, for though no remains of a primitive civilized race have been discovered, the Deluge may have obliterated all traces of their cities, which may now lie fathoms deep in the Mediterranean. That there was an ancient race, acquainted with many chemical and mechanical secrets, is proved by the fact that the Egyptians and Chaldeans received their civilization from Noah's followers. The building of the Ark is a proof of the latter's advancement. It was not exactly a ship, but a great house, built so as to float, and its construction is not considered miraculous; the Lord only giving Noah the limensions, and some minor instructions. Many believe the Deluge to have been uni-This question is not raised in the Bible. Moses professes to give the narrathe ark, who was an attentive observer as the flood increased, destroyed mankind, and floated the ark away. The animals taken were only of certain kinds, likely from the region of country cultivated. There is no mention of larger carnivorous beasts, of which there were no doubt numbers escaped The flood was universal as far as destroy the wicked, but still may have been confined to a comparatively small portion of the earth.

AFTER THE FLOOD

Mon did the same as before. They fought, speculated, and invented, grew wicked, forgot God, and oppressed the poor and needy. The Hamites took the position before occu pied by the Camtes, and became the leading race. Another class, the Horites, or cavedwellers, were a tall, muscular perple. Skeletons answering to this description have been found in the North of Italy, resembling the forms of Mongolians, or out In-dians. These men were six feet high and well developed, but it is impossible to say well developed, but it is impossi? 'c whether they are postdiluvians, or lived be

foro the flood. In conclusion the lecturer compared the times of the Antediluvians with our own. There was the same struggle amid the over-crowded people in contres of civilizaion for subsistence; immigrants wandered off to the ends of the earth in search of it, and necessarily this caused the same mixture of races, as described in Genesis. The parallel could be drawn farther; the same degenerate human nature existed now as before; it was if anything of a more dangerus type, refined by 19th century civilization, and as before, there must be a cul-mination of evil, and then came God's fearful punishment. Let them turn to Rev. vik. and 8th verse: "Babylon is fallen, is In another verse men are strictly warned not to wership the beast. He thought this passage was just as applicable to the present age as to the people of the latter day. The Gospel was to be preached to every one. Each one chose a course of action accordingly, and then the hour of judgment would come, God's justice would e made manifest. In these days, as be fore the flood, men will forget there is a Creator at all, false religion sare taught and believed. God's warning to the Antedila vanus is being preached to the people of 1873, from the Revolations, and it was to be feared with a like result. The world is very wicked. Infidels, papists and pagans form a large portion of the inhabitants, and before the trumpet sounds, there is the Antedduvian example telling them that mediaeval idelatry and modern infidelity, two hydras hand in hand, will lead the people after them to run. Let this be a warning to Christians and so-called Protestants not to be lukewarm, nor ashamed of their religion, but serve that God who has the entire control of them, and whose warnings against modern sinners are equally sure of fulfilment as those so long ago confirmed by the flood.

This deeply interesting lecture closed the series for the past winter, which has undoubtedly led all its hearers to study more closely, and apply personally the truths haiden in God's history of the Anteddu-

THE REV. DR. WYLIE ON ULTRA-MONTANISM.

The Roy. Dr. Wylie 18 well known as a very able man who has for many years made the Romish controversy a speciality. For twelve years he has presided over the Protestant Institute of Scotland, and has delivered lectures to different classes of students all that time. On the 29th of March the prizes for the season were distributed in the Protestant Institute Hall, Edinburgh, and Dr. W. gave the following closing address on Ultramontanism:

the result of the competition, and to award the prizes, permit me to cast a glance back upon the history of the Institute within whose walls you have this winter been studying the great controversy between Protestant truth and Popish error. This Institute was founded and endowed by the Free Church of Scotland, acting through a committee appointed by its Assembly, in the year 1860, an appropriate and auspicious year, being the tercentenary of the Reformation in Scotland. The other Protestant bodies of the country co-operated in providing the funds received. providing the funds necessary to carry on of instruction here communicated so that the seminary is entitled to style itself the Protestant Institute of Scotland. The object for which the Institute was erected was the initiation of the theological and other students of all our Churches in the distinctive doctrines of the Protestant and Popish theologies—in short, of the whole field covered by these two systems, for there is nothing appertaining to either that is not distinctive. This object I have steadily kept maxiew, and endeavored to the utkept in view, and endeavored to the ut-most of my power to carry out over since my appointment to the chair of this Insti-tute in 1861 by the Free Presbytory of Edinburgh. I may say that I have been upheld in these my efforts by the decided predilection shown by the students of all 'communations to become familiar with the outlines of the Popush controversy. The class, as you are aware, is a voluntary one; have no enactment or deed of Church Court securing attendance on my lectures ; I have nothing to bring you around me save the importance you attribute and the interest you take in the study, and yet now these dozen years and more I have not failed to see, winter by winter, a large, a deeply interested, and a very intelligent class of students assemble, both in Edinburgh and in Glasgow, for the study of this branch of theological science. I have had the farther pleasure of seeing the class joined by not a few from other countries—from Germany, from France, from America. Not fewer, I should think, than between one and two I should think, than between one and two thousand young men have passed through these classes, and are now filling stations of usefulness in various parts of the globe as ministers of the gospel, as lawyers, as as ministers of the gosper, as lawyers, as medical men, or as thembers of other professions. The curriculum of study in this Institute, as you are aware, comprehends three courses of lectures, extending over as many years—the dogmatic course, or ex-

positions of the dootrines of Pofory; the political course, or the hearing of the Popish principles on civil liberty and national independence; and the ritualistic course or exposition of the new Popery, or rather old Popery with a new name that is rising in England. This permits a tolerably complete discussion, or, I ought to say, disanced of the whole subject. That the proficiency in the study of those who have strended the lectures in the Institute is not contemptible, I had a very pleasure precipation of London offered come testant Assciation of London offered come twenty prizes for the best competitive papers. testant Assemtion of London charge come twenty prizes for the best competitive pap-ers on "Barrow on the Supremacy of the ers on "Barrow on the Supremacy of the Pope." The competition took place on the same day in the three kingdoms. The centres were London, Dublin, Bristol, Liver, pool, and Ediuburgh. Upwards of an hundred young mon took part in it. The highlred young men took part in it. The high-or prizes ranged from £50 with a gold medal to £10; the others were of smaller value. All the higher prizes were carried off by those who had been students in the Protestant Justitute of Scotland. The win-ner of the £50 and gold medal was the Rer. William Park, of Ballymena, then a sin-dent in the Justitute, and one of the meddent in the Institute, and one of the most distinguished I over had the pleasure of distinguished I over had the pleasure of enrolling. As regards the financial condition of the Institute, I am glad to be able to say that by the beneficence of the Free Church, which gave a general collection for the ondowment, and by the liberality of not the condess of the cause, and in constitutions. few friends of the cause, and in especial of the late Mr. Morrieson of Harviesion, its funds are now sufficient for the work it is at present carrying on. Not only so, but the Institute gives free accommodation within its buildings to the Scottish Refer mation Society, an association which is perfectly independent of and distinct from the Institute, but which has kindred objects, and whose welfare it therefore seeks to promote. But I am still somewhat hampered as regards prizes for my Edinburgh class. There is an inequality on this point between my Edinburgh and my Glasgow class which I fain wish I were able to remore. A very generous merchant of Glasgow, although resident in London, gives me year by year £10 as a first prize for my Glasgow class; and his liberality has been attended with the most marked effects on the class in the west. I wish much that I had an equally generous donor in the cast to enable me to give a £10 first prize to my class in the capital of Scotland. Is there no one east or west who is willing to this extent to further the objects for which the Protestant Institute of Scotland has been erected, and which it is striving to carry out? And here I must not omit to mention a very liberal egacy of £500 left us last year by the late Mr. Hay of Edinburgh, a gentleman who took a deep interest in the question, and who was often in the hall during the lecture hoar. The importance of the study of this great question is not diminishing. No one who casts an intelligent glance over Europe at this hour can fail to see that its interest and importance is growing. Out of the action of Popery—that is, of the Ultramontanes—come all the great conflicts that at this day distract Europe. In Germany it is struggling to break up the Empire and recover the political position it lost by the Franco-German war. In France it is plot-ting to restore absolutism and place a Bour bon on the throne. In Spain the priest have incited the deluded peasantry to take up arms and begin a civil war. In Italy it has cursed the new Government and seeks to everthrow the new kingdom. In Eng-land it is still the grand misched-maker, as all successive Governments in Pritain know to their cost. And last and most alarming of all, it lass seized upon the English Establishment, and is slowly, craftily, yet not unsuccessfully, carrying over the rich endowments, the magnificent organization, and the leading intellects connected with that Establishment to the side of that which is the avowed enemy of the truth-that Establishment which was erected to Gentlemen, before proceeding to declare propagate and defend, and which burned the and illustrious men who founded it. In the presence of these startling events one cannot but see that Popery remains to his hour, despite all the disasters that have befallen it abroad, a great power, as determined a plotter as ever, as truculent an enemy as ever of the liberty and peace of nations—of the purity and progress of Churches. That man looks a very little way below the surface who thinks that this power has been disarmed, and that the great controversy with it is at an end. It is at this hour coquetting with the masses. ill shake hands with Carlists in Reds in France, Internationalists in Germany, infidel clubs, Broad Churchmen, all inougrel sects, opinions, and parties; if become head of them all, and will lead them m a great crusade in all countries to over throw the gospel, trample out order, and destroy liberty. Papiets I pity, profoundly pity, they are the victims. I have now made the tour of all Christendom; I have wandered over its various countries, which the system of the Papacy. I have marked, almost heart-broken, the piteous sights it has presented to my eye: the ignorance, leave the ignorance, and idlocy beggary, debasement, disease, and idocy with which it has covered all these once powerful and civilized countries. I would have had the heart of a stone or the intellect of a slave if I had not pitted those on whom the Papacy had inflicted so terrible a terrible a rum. But to the system itself I bear deadly enmity; I detest, ablior, condemn it , and will resist and fight against it to my latest breath. Did I cherish any other feelings to that system I chould regard myself as but a half-hearted friend of liberty, and a most unworthy professor of the blessed gospel.

The Rev. Capel Molyneux, the Low Church minister who recently resigned his lang at St. Paul's, Onslow Square, London, on account of the ritualizing tendencies of the English Church, has been presented by his late congregation with about \$18,000. This was presented to him with an address, which, while offering no opin-ion as to the course he has adopted, expressod the warmest sympathy with Mr. Molyneux in the pain he must have felt in sovering the ties formed during a forty five years ministry.