

The Young Churchman

"Feed my Lambs."

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THE CHURCH SCHOLAR'S NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 2. *Do not sound a trumpet before thee.*] 'When you have been enabled to do a charitable deed, be not careful to have the same trumpeted forth to the world.'

— *as the hypocrites do.*] "Hypocrites" = "actors."—The authorized teachers of religion in the time of our Lord, were, for the most part, no better than actors. Their religious actions and ministrations were simply "performances"—for shew and for remark.

— *in the synagogues.*] To give alms in the synagogue or assembly for public worship was usual, and not wrong—nay, was a duty.—The ostentatious display of the deed, and the pains taken that the amount given should be made known and talked of, were the sins.—The Offertory-portion of the public Service of the Church enables all to give according to their ability to the furtherance of good works, without ostentation.

— *they have their reward.*] They are seen and talked of; and this, being what they aimed at, will be their reward—the only fruit which they will reap.

Ver. 3. *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.*] 'Let not even t'c left hand, as it were, know what thy right hand doeth. Communicate not even to thy bosom friend the good which thy principles as a Christian man constrain thee to aim at doing—lest thou seem to boast. Nay—reflect not even on thine own deeds in this department of thy duty;—but go on with simpli-

city adding unto them, as if the past were nothing.'

Ver. 4. *Shall reward thee openly.*] 'Thy character as a man will improve: thy grace and knowledge which will increase within thee as the natural effects of obedience will be recognized and felt by thy fellow-men.—And the time will come when in the presence of the assembled world, thy Lord Himself also will confess and own thee.'

Ve. 5. *They love to pray standing in the Synagogues.*] To join in the public prayers of the Synagogue was quite right: what these "actors" are condemned for, is, that they caused themselves to be seen ostentatiously engaged in pretended private devotion, at extra and unusual times, and in unusual ways.

— *in the corners of the streets.*]—at places where many streets meet, and where large crowds congregate together. There is no doubt but that we might pray in the streets and in a crowd without sin. Christian men offer up many prayers as they thread their way through busy thoroughfares, and are not rebuked therefor, but blessed by their Lord. And the reason is—their only object in so doing is really to hold communion in their inner consciousness with Him who is one Spirit with them. They are not anxious to thrust before the notice of their fellow-men the fact that they do thus hold communion with Him into whom they have been baptized—hold communion with Him individually, as well as collectively, in the public assemblies of the Church.

Ver. 6. *When thou prayest, enter into thy closet.*] 'When you wish to express your own private individual petitions to Almighty God—apart and aside from the public prescribed Forms of Worship—retire in privacy into your own house,—or wherever else you