

loved dead are far away from us. No oceans roll between us, no immeasurable firmaments stretch between them and us. Where God is they are, and God is here. The visible and the invisible worlds overlap and interpenetrate. It is no long journey to heaven. As the old catechism has it, "the souls of believers at death do immediately pass into glory." When Elisha prayed "the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw: and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The unseen world surrounds us like an atmosphere. We are encompassed by the great cloud of invisible witnesses. Our eyes are veiled, but the inhabitants of that hidden country, "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them which are the heirs of salvation?"

3. *The conditions of the future life.* Nothing troubles men more, in their thought of that world into which all are going, than the question of personal identity. Shall we recognize those whom we have known on earth? Will the old tenderness of family and friendship survive the shock of death? A determinate answer to these questions would assuage a multitude of sorrow. But in the light of the transfiguration, how can there be any doubt in this matter? The apostles recognized Moses and Elijah whom they had never seen; would they have been blind to the presence of those whom they had known and loved? The transfiguration was over in a single night, but the light that it kindled has never paled or gone out. It falls on every Christian death-bed, it irradiates every funeral assembly, it beams soft and serene over the sleeping-places of our beloved, it burns through the veil that parts us from the other world. The disciples saw and knew Moses and Elijah; shall we not see and know the members of our households, and the cherished ones of our hearts?

## LESSON XI.]

[JUNE 11.]

## THE AFFLICTED CHILD.

MARK ix. 14-32.

As our Saviour was descending from the Mount of Beatitudes, a leper met him and cried to him. He healed the man. This miracle stands inseparably associated

with the Sermon on the Mount. The sermon is a background for the miracle. As he was descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, the father of a demoniac met Christ, with his child and cried to him. The child was healed. This miracle stands inseparably connected with the transfiguration. "The great last picture of Raffaele," says Alford, "is one of the best and noblest comments on this portion of the Gospel history. The events passing at the same time on and under the Mount of Transfiguration are by the painter combined to carry to the mind the great central truth, there is none but Christ to console and to glorify our nature." There is deep instruction in the association of teachings and events in the Scriptures. Keeping in mind the associations of the transfiguration with what so closely followed, let us notice some points illustrated in our passage.

I. *The Christian is the representative of Christ.*

The father came with his child seeking Christ. He had heard of him. It would be nothing strange if he had made a long and painful journey. Men travelled hundreds of miles by sea and land to look upon Jesus. Christ was in the mountain. The poor man in his disappointment, was directed to the nine apostles left below. It was understood that the Saviour's interests, temporarily at least, were in their charge. This was true. They represented Christ. He was testing them to see if he could safely leave them. He was longing to return to his Father. In appealing to them the man took the only course open to him. It should have been a safe appeal. They admitted it. It was not a new trust. They had represented their Master on their missionary journeys. It was nothing new for them to be applied to to work miracles of healing, actually to work them. They had cast out devils. They attempted to heal the lunatic child. Everywhere, always, the Christian represents Christ. He holds in his hands the great trust of Christianity. Coming to him should be equivalent in the healing, saving result to coming to Christ.

II. *The failure of the disciple is charged as the failure of Christianity.*