

A MAN OF GOD.

Such a man undoubtedly Adam was, formed out of the dust of the earth by God himself; as to all that part, or those parts of him which are of the same grade in nature as the highest order of animals belong to. But in order that he should be truly *man*, and fill the place designed for him, it was necessary that he should be endowed with a nature much higher and nobler than that which the monkey or the elephant possesses, and so God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (or lives) and man became a living soul. So Adam heard the voice of God, when He declared the limits to the gratification of his animal appetite, respect to which limit was the trial test of his loyalty and proof of his obedience. And even after his disobedience, he heard "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." So the original ideal concerning the human being was that he should hear and recognize and understand the voice of God. Man has no longer a garden planted specially by God "eastward in Eden" or anywhere else, to live in; and that is counted as a disadvantage, but he had a Redeemer in promise until he came, and in fact and reality for more than eighteen centuries past. That is an advantage of which he knew nothing before the fall, as far as our information extends. But with a Redeemer, or without, it is the prerogative of man to converse with God, consciously and intelligently. And so those moral mountain top men of the antediluvian age, Enoch and Noah, "Walked with God." The law that was broken by Adam and Eve had no significance for them, for their responsibilities were conditioned by different facts. They did not live in a garden, and no special tree was to them the symbol of divine law. In so far as the Word of God in the past influenced their lives, its significance centred, not in a visible tree, but in the coming "seed of the woman who should bruise the head of that serpent" by whose seductions the changed condition of man was brought about. But they "Walked with God." Into whatever predicament of surrounding facts they found themselves, God

was the most important fact of their environment, and they needed not to burden memory with any laws once given to their ancestors, for the Author and Father of all possible law was their hourly Companion. Whether any others whose names have not been chronicled succeeded or not, it is certain that these two men did realize the ideal life for man, which is constant, continuous, familiar, communion with God. And was not Abraham called the "friend" of God? Whence came the magnificent godliness of that princely man to whom such far-reaching promises were given and with whom the Almighty Jehovah entered into an age-long covenant, and who both naturally and spiritually was the father of the faithful? Did he study a written law and take it to his intelligence as a yoke, a limit, or a directory? Perhaps there was a written or a traditional law; no doubt the words of God to Noah after he came out of the ark at Ararat were known to him; possibly God may have made some revelations to Shem, of which Abraham would not be ignorant; but there is nothing in the record given us to indicate that Abraham was influenced by anything, even from God Himself, except those words which He spoke to him from time to time, as the present occasion required. Walking with God, talking with God, that was what made Abraham the man that he was. It is true that Noah and Abraham built altars and made animal sacrifices, but it is not said in the record that either of them did so on account of their own sins, and may we not suppose that they made sacrifices as Job did, for their families, saying, "It may be that my sons have sinned and renounced God in their hearts." Abraham had his servants before he had any sons, and he would act the priest for them. I do not say that these men never needed the atonement for themselves which those sacrifices prefigured, but all the facts agree with the supposition that once in their earlier history they had exercised faith in the Divine Mediator, and thus having been lifted into the favor of God they began and continued to walk with God, never again needing to ask forgiveness in connection with a sacrifice, see-