

doubts as to their bodily health or the trustworthiness of others. It must be met cheerfully, and if the soul struggles manfully, the cloud will pass and peace ensue.

2. *The attitude of science towards the doctrine of moral responsibility.* Quite apart from the unsettlement of faith in these days, the acceptance of prevalent scientific doctrines is exercising a subtle modifying power over our conceptions of personal responsibility.

Woe be to the priest who justifies sin in himself or others on the principle contained in the doctrines of heredity, or moral insanity or in the light of statistics. It is ours neither to condemn nor to justify. Our message, to ourselves and others, must always be that of the master, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

#### V.—*The loss of Ideals.*

Last and often the greatest trial of the Spiritual Life. The special difficulty of middle and old age. The soul has come to know the world in all its impurity, littleness, self-seeking and irreverence, and the temptation comes to go on in a dead level, without pressing on with eagerness and enthusiasm. Yet the man whose ministry has been stained, and who sees all around him others whose lives are no better than his own, must still press on to perfection, and again and again "wash his robes white in the Blood of the Lamb."

The one clue to all mental and moral difficulties in religion, is the constant realizing of the blessed truth of the Incarnation; and the living, through joy and sorrow, in communion with the God-Man, Jesus Christ, and in hours of perplexity, the clasping of His living Hand.

#### *2nd Paper by the Rev. Professor Wilkinson.*

#### THE RESPECTIVE INFLUENCES OF DEVOTION AND WORK IN FORMING THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

When devotion and work go together, work keeps men out of mischief, devotion keeps them in touch with God. Neither has any real existence apart from the other. The separation has been attempted with disastrous results in the past.

The tendency to-day is to lay devotion aside.

What we need is to find out "the true proportion of things," and the nearer we come to

that, the nearer we come to the perfecting of the Spiritual life.

By the "Spiritual" we mean no one-sided, but a complete life, in which we may use and develop all our powers and grow in usefulness to men and in the knowledge of God.

This 'Spiritual life' we cannot attain to without devotion as well as work, for work alone contains in itself no recuperative power; it is the function of devotion to restore. On this account, we cannot think of work alone influencing the spiritual life for good, it must, to do that, be devoted or consecrated work.

The English Church recognizes the need of consecration in work, when she bids her clergy "by daily Mattins and Evensong: when she provides for frequent Celebrations of the Holy Communion, and in various other ways.

Work besides keeping us out of mischief is the visible, manward side of the spiritual life. A Clergyman's work, parish organization, etc., gains him the confidence of and makes him better able to sympathize with his people. Honest work wins respect and forms a character in which self-sacrifice is a large ingredient.

The worker however must beware of becoming boastful of and absorbed in his work. Overwork may produce, says St. Bernard, "Hardness of heart, vexation of spirit, the disengagement of the mind, the withdrawal of grace." Yet for all this the spiritual life without real work is a sham.

But if *work* is the manward, *devotion* is the Godward side of the spiritual life. Great men by precept and example recommend devotion. The Psalmist says: "whose is wise will ponder these things." Isaac "*meditates* in the field at Eventide." Eliza is devout enough to go from the plough to the highest place in the Schools of the Prophets, showing how close is the connexion between work and devotion.

St. Paul prayed without ceasing. And above all our Lord continually went apart to pray and taught His disciples to follow His example.

The second Lesson at the opening Service of our Conference began "And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus..... and He said, come ye yourselves apart, etc." and towards the close "He departed into a mountain to pray."—ST. MARK, vi. 30.

It is through devotion that there flows into man the mind and life of Christ. Devotion is