

It labours not after it in any sense whatever. But how seldom, if ever, is this the case with any other. We humble ourselves and know we do it. And the very convulsion of feeling within mars the effect of its outward appearance. We are conscious of a sense of hypocrisy, and can scarcely help feeling that others must be more or less conscious of it also. And such a state of mind leads us into solitude. It does not, as in the case of the child, give us rest in whatever society we may be cast, or circumstances in which we may be placed. We are not great in being superior, or even equal to our position, but little in having to flee from it. Had we in being humble, the happy frame of the child, how noble and great might we not be. True greatness fills all things, and is conscious of everything *but* itself. And at this point, as at many others, extremes meet; the unconscious child is the nearest possible approach to the All-conscious Father of all. His very greatness knows no humility. He is above all things, and through all things, and in all, the embodiment of all true humility, and, alike to all, great or little, even as the little child. Let us strive to be like that child, and the more shall we be like our Father in Heaven. And if nearest to Him then the greatest.

But observe still further, that in the little child there is no feeling of self-abnegation present. It does not seek to deny itself. There is no miserable striving after being other than itself. A feeling, that is ever apt to blight and distort whatever of true greatness may be present in the grown person. The child is itself always, and feels no unseemliness in being so. Nor do others discern any. It denies not itself, for self is not felt by it. Conceive then of such a character, superadded to a matured intellect and a warm heart, and you have a greatness that is seldom seen on earth; a greatness, in the conception of which, as we approach it, we grow great. A state of mind in which alone

all the powers of our nature may be used to the best possible advantage. For in such a state there is no possible distraction. And instead of provoking the jealousy and opposition of others, it enlists their sympathy and co-operation. And all become, willingly tributary or helpful to them in gaining whatever right object, however high and holy, which they may have set their heart upon, or be labouring after. And are not all these things sources of power and consequent greatness, that few, if any, on this side of time can ever attain to. But in another world, where right lies as the foundation of all things, and love reigns as the rule, how great must those be who are thus like a little child.

Besides all this, consider further, the perfect restfulness and self-composure, with the untiring life and energy, which we find in a little child. And combine all this with the fearless abandonment, that may be called rashness by those of riper years, but which, nevertheless, calls forth the sympathies and enlists the observation and the exertions of others, for the protection and safety of the little one, and then think of how much power such an one, of even ordinary capacity, must have to accomplish work and to become great. And add to all this, the further thought, the sweet, clinging, aid-invoking, practical recognition of the superiority of those greater, older, and wiser than itself, and we have the portraiture of a character, the stepping stones to which are laid so low, that the veriest child may ascend them, and as it climbs towards the summit, finds itself in the presence of the Eternal Himself; likest Him, the nearest and therefore the greatest there. Hence, how simple! How true! How profound! Our Saviour's answer to the question: "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?"

Thus are we brought to the third thought suggested.

3. *That just as the child-like character is developed, so shall we be great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*