

I think it is not necessary for me to apologize here for putting a somewhat limited construction upon these words. No doubt, more is intended here, the words will carry more than the application which I am about to employ. I am not forgetful of the truth of which we have already been reminded in our prayer, that all God's works praise Him in all parts of His dominion. One would be blind and deaf, indeed, could one pass through this golden May day and reach this evening, careless of that lesson which God is ever teaching us, on the right hand and on the left. It is glorious to listen to the voice of God in nature, it is glorious to look upon his handiwork, but, after all, the Lord Jesus Christ, by the triple quotation from scripture, by the unswerving confidence with which he takes his position upon the word of God, and by the absolute assurance with which he wields this sword, seems to warrant us in using the words which he employs in the narrower application of the Bible, as it lies before us to-night; and, doing so, I would ask you to notice that there are three things which can be learned. First of all, I find here suggested the nature of revelation. It is called in this passage "the word of God." Now, brethren, is that not the peculiarity of the Bible? It is, in a sense which is sacred to itself, God's word. It is more to us than any paper or print can be, just as the poor, thorny accacia in the wilderness was more than a shrub or bush to Moses, because it burned and blazed with the Divine presence that was in it. God's voice is heard between the covers of this book as it is not heard in any hymn that we sing, or in any theological treatise over which we pore, or in any sermon to which we listen. In the Monastery Library at Erfurt Martin Luther took down the Bible, on which the dust of many years had gathered, and when he opened out its pages it was not the Bible alone that Luther found. Luther found God. He, as truly as the patriarch, might have said, "Surely the Lord is in this place." Churches and creeds and ceremonials, whatever their office, whatever their power, may hinder sometimes, rather than help, the anxious enquirer seeking for God, but let him open this book, and it is God's Law that utters forth its voice, it is God's Light that is shed abroad, it is God's Love that thrills and pleads. As one of the great Scottish preachers of the last century said when he recalled the bright experience in the day-dawn of his own Christian history "That which gave me such comfort was the discovery of the Lord as revealed in His Word." I say then it is for us to lay emphasis upon this truth, the nature of revelation is that it is the Word of God.

Then for another thing,—I find here the method of revelation. "It is written." Here you have something that is external, external to our inner consciousness, external to the light of reason, external to the transient changes of fashion and feeling and opinions. Can we be sufficiently thankful this evening that these words, "It is written," describe for us the method of God's revelation to man in the scriptures? In the course of these eighteen centuries, it is wonderful for us to recollect how Christianity has become the moulding power of the civilized world. It has taught us a sweet humanity, it has stricken the shackles from the limbs of the slave, it has stooped down to wipe the tear from the eye of the disconsolate, it has elevated woman to her right and true place among the works of the Creator, it has adjusted the claims of man upon man, and of nation upon nation, the world over. But it has done more than all this, for it has revealed to us God's mercy in Christ, and has given to us a good hope through grace of everlasting life in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Now let all this become mere tradition, let it float to and fro upon the restless billows of every restless age, how long would it be before this revelation of God's word and of God's will to man would become corrupt and changed, confused and perhaps absolutely destroyed? In the fact that God's word is written I find the assurance of permanence and the assurance of purity and the assurance of integrity which fill my heart with gratitude for the work of the Bible Society in this country.

Then I would further remark that not only the nature and the method of revelation, but also its purpose is suggested to us here. "He answered and