

tarianism, reigns in it. A noble book; all men's book. It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem—man's destiny and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free, flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity, in its epic melody and repose of reconciliation. * * * Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind; so soft, and great; as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit.—*Thomas Carlyle.*

THE WORDS OF CHRIST.

A PORTION OF ONE OF THE CANTERBURY SERMONS OF THE LATE DEAN STANLEY.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but Christ's words have not passed away, and shall not pass away." They are still read; they are still revered; they will be read and revered hundreds of years hence, as they are now; let us trust, more than they are now, more than they ever have been. What are the causes of this undoubted fact? What are the causes of this hope that is in us? Let us humbly and devoutly ask this question, remembering whose words they are of which we speak—words which it seems an almost equal irreverence to praise or to censure—words, however, which it is our duty and privilege to understand, to examine, and to explain.

1. Suffer me to begin with the most simple, homely peculiarity of our Saviour's teaching, true of the Scriptures generally, but especially true of His words, namely, their brevity. Perhaps we hardly enough consider either the fact or its great importance. Remember how small a book even the whole Bible is, and remember, further, how small a part of that book is occupied by His words. Compare them with the teaching of other celebrated teachers in our own or former times. One collection alone of the sayings of the Arabian Prophet, Mohammed, fills no less than thirteen hundred folio pages. All the sayings of Christ are contained in the short compass of the four Gospels; the few that are not there do not occupy two pages at most: the whole Sermon on the Mount—the greatest discourse ever preached, the whole code of Christian morality, the whole sum of saving doctrine—would not, if read from this place, take more than a quarter of an hour. Consider how greatly this has assisted the preservation, the remembrance, the force of Christ's words. We have not to go far and wide to seek them; they are within our grasp, within our compass, within our sight; very nigh to us, in our heart, and in our mouth, easy to read, easy to recollect, easy to repeat. The waters of life are not lost in endless rivers and lakes. They are confined within the definite circle of one small living well, of which all can "come and drink freely, without money, and without price."

2. But the well is not only easy to find, but it is deep, and its "waters spring up into everlasting life." You never get to the end of Christ's words. There is something in them always behind. They pass into proverbs, they pass into laws, they pass into doctrines, they pass into consolations; but they never pass away, and, after all the use that is made of them, they are still not exhausted. One reason of this is to be found in their freedom from local, temporary allusions. Allusions of this kind, no doubt, they do contain. Some light is thrown upon them by the knowledge of the country, and of the manners and customs of the time. But by far the larger part of his teaching is drawn from subjects so familiar, so natural, that they can be equally understood in almost every country. No learning is needed for their illustration—shepherds, sailors, ploughmen, soldiers, fishermen, can understand them as fully as the greatest scholar that ever lived. Another cause is their great variety. Each one of the classes I have just mentioned