

then entered the school of the rhetorician Libanius, who, when once asked which of his pupils would succeed him, replied, "John, if the Christians had not stolen him from us."

When twenty-one years of age he commenced the life of a hermit, much against the entreaties of his mother, who was so sensible as to know that it is not God's design that talent should be buried in solitude, but that it be used for good out in this anxious, suffering, busy world of ours.

After spending six years in seclusion and study, he entered upon public work as a reader in the Church, and at the age of 35, in the year 382, he was ordained a presbyter of Antioch, where, three centuries before, the disciples were first called Christians. He could not labour amid the moral contagion of a great city, half heathen and half Christian like this, without seeing sin in its most hideous forms. Even the Christians were abandoned to the vices of the heathens, and left the church on Sabbath to attend the theatre or take part in pagan orgies. His heart sickened at the sight, and with his Bible he hid him again to the desert, only to learn, however, that unless he could banish himself from himself, he could not in his natural state banish himself from sin, and to be confirmed in a conviction he used often to repeat, that "sin is the only evil."

He came back among his townsmen prepared to war against sin to the death. He appeared amongst them another Elijah or John the Baptist, in his personal simplicity a reproof of the luxury of the times, and in his burning words a bold reformer and fierce denouncer of vice. Thousands flock to hear him in the great Basilica. Every eye is fixed on that emaciated face, lit up with the glow of enthusiasm, every ear drinks in the melodious flow of speech that rolls through the sanctuary, now deep and solemn, and now thrilling with compassion. As one heart after another is electrified with oratory, the church re-echoes with a deafening applause. If this is the authority for such a practice in some American churches at the present day, the ministers of such churches ought, on the other hand, to remember how Chrysostom reproves the people for filling the house of God with the noise and clamour of a theatre, telling them that these plaudits for a moment fill him with pride, but afterwards produce the