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THE TEMPTATION.

MUCH has been written on the possibility of temptation in the experience of a sinless Being. The difficulties which have been raised in this region are chiefly of a metaphysical kind, such as it is possible, for some minds we might say inevitable, to raise at every point in that mysterious complexity which we call life. Without attempting to enter profoundly into the question, may not an appeal be made to our own experience? Do we not all know what it is to be "tempted without sin," without sin, that is, in reference to the particular thing to which we are tempted? Are there not desires in our nature, not only thoroughly innocent, but a necessary part of our humanity which nevertheless give occasion to temptations? But on its being recognized that to follow the impulse, however natural, would lead to wrongdoing, the temptation is instantly repelled and integrity perfectly preserved. In such a case there is temptation, conflict, victory—all without sin. And clearly what is possible to us on occasion was also possible to our Lord on all occasions, all through His pure and spotless life. His taking our nature indeed involved not only the possibility, but the necessity of temptation.

Matthew iv. 1-11 records what is known as *the* temptation, by which it is not of course meant that it was the only one.