

SERMON.

JOHN VI. 44.

No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.

The practical purpose for which Christ said these words was to show to the people who, from one motive or another, came from across the sea and thronged Him, what sort of religion was approved by Him as distinguished from much that, under that sacred name, found favor with a certain class of men. I have no doubt the saying fell like an unwelcome thunder-clap on the ears of the excited multitude that had toiled over sea and land expressly to gain access to His person, and, thereby, manifest their interest in His work. The sequel shows that they were keen enough to perceive how these few incisive words stood in sharp contradiction to their beliefs, and completely ignored a zeal which they had thought no little of. The declaration was simply amazing; for, had they not "come" to Him from afar, over hill and dale, lake and land? Were they not full of zeal to see His face, hear His words, and note His deeds? Was there not a truly grand enthusiasm in such a throng, equal to anything recorded in their annals and huge enough to satisfy the most eager lover of great religious movements? What, then, could He mean by "No man can come unto Me?" Had they not "come" to Him in crowds? And what new mysticism is this, "Except the Father draw him?"

Now, I suppose most persons are aware that it is possible to lay hold of these words and make them subservient to the foundation of the theology of a certain school. But I do not intend to enter into that subject. Christ was not teaching here technical