

doing, he need not cumber his mind with a lengthy catalogue of precepts and sermons, which in the first place it is difficult to learn, and in the second place after they are learned, it is almost impossible to remember. To any man who has brains enough to know what his own desires are (to say nothing of other men's), and memory enough to remember a little rule concerning the application of these desires to his fellow-men, here is a directory which will never leave him at a loss to know his duty: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them." So much for its conciseness.

Look still again at its *universality*. It is universal. No matter who your neighbor is or what his station in life is, here is a rule which applies to all alike. Whether you are brought in contact with your sovereign or with the man in yonder hovel, the rule is the same; whether your dealings are with your ruler who holds in his hand the rod of mighty empire or whether they are with your boot-black, the same great universal principle must decide the question of conduct—"Whatsoever ye would that he should do to you do ye even so to him."

Such then is the golden rule, the "balance wheel" in the great machinery of human conduct, the preventive of all irregularity of movement in the great universe of morality in which as rational

beings, created in God's own image, we are all placed --- placed as responsible agents, accountable for all our actions.

And now the question arises, What is the foundation of this comprehensive, this concise, this universal rule, this epitome or summary of conduct? Wherein lies its philosophy, its reasonableness? Supposing that, when this marvellous statement fell from the lips of the God-man on that morning of old, some argumentative hearer should have risen up in the audience and challenged its soundness; supposing at least that he should have asked our Lord for the foundation upon which his principle was built. What answer would probably have been given? What defence would the simple preacher, whose pulpit was a mound on the Galilean plain or the bow of a fishing smack, and who preached with a needle, a coin, a broom, a sparrow,—what defence would he have been able to make for this sweeping principle which pierces into the very heart of life itself and comes too often into direct conflict with our personal interests? Mark its philosophy, its foundation.

Now the word "therefore" which introduces the statement suggests that a possible foundation may be given by our Saviour in the preceding verses. The sentence is certainly a conclusion to some argument. The argument, however, as we learn when we look at the context, is more of the nature of a motive than a