

AN INCIDENT.

From the Reminiscences of Bishop Wilmer, of Alabama, recently issued from the press, we copy this incident worthy of republication:

"Men abound now-a-days—smart indeed, but not very profound; dealing with the surface of questions, and contemptuously ignoring all consideration of the final causes of things visible or invisible. I met with a disciple of this school some time ago. We fell into discourse upon religious matters. Urging upon him the importance of considering such matters, he made reply that he "had no faith whatever in Christianity; that he had read volume upon volume on Christian Evidences, but they had made no impression on his mind," and concluded by saying "that it was not worth while for us to argue the matter, because there was no common ground from which we could start." I then asked him if he did not think it the duty of every man to try to bring himself, by culture and labor, to his highest possible perfection? "Unquestionably," he replied. Well, then, said I, here is a ground we can both start from. Now, in the effort to bring your character to its highest perfection, must you not have some rule, standard, or model by which to work? The artist who wishes to make a representation of some object in nature, say a tree or a horse, seeks out the best specimen of such object, and aims to reproduce it, does he not? "Yes," he said, "assuredly."

Then I urged, in trying to bring yourself up to your highest capability, would you not for like reason, cast about you for the best specimen of human character in order that you might have the advantage of a model to work by? You would not reasonably look within yourself for the ideal man. The effort to make yourself a better man implies that, as yet, you know yourself to be an imperfect one; in making yourself the ideal, you would be openly repeating and reproducing yourself, would you not? "No," he said, "I would not look to myself; I would take some better specimen than myself for a model; I would properly take the best mortal that I knew and try to imitate his virtues." Now, I urged, who is the best man that ever lived? I know of but one man without sin," he very reverently said. Who was that man? "Jesus Christ." Then does it not follow from what you have admitted, that in the effort to perfect your character, you should set before you, for imitation, Jesus Christ? "I see no way of evading the conclusion," he admitted, "but I did not anticipate reaching such a conclusion.—Selected.

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