

longing, that is, for the holiness without which a spiritually enlightened man feels that happiness is impossible,—*mercy*, because those who have themselves been the objects of the divine compassion must feel compassion for their fellow-men ; and, finally, *purity of heart*. This is the consummation. Christian character, internally considered, begins with poverty of spirit, and is perfected in purity of heart. Why, then, does our Lord, before proceeding to notice the external relations of the members of his kingdom ("Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake," and so on), interpose the beatitude of our text, "Blessed are the peacemakers" ? What propriety is there in describing his people by their disposition to promote peace, after Christian character has been already fully developed, and its maturity indicated in the beatitude relating to purity of heart ? The answer is, that peacemaking does not rank in the same class with poverty of spirit, godly sorrow for sin, meekness, and the other component elements of Christian character ; but it rather assumes that an individual's Christian character has been formed, and it supposes him then to go forth and endeavour to leaven the world with those high and holy principles which have been implanted in his own soul, and the communication of which to others is the best way—in fact, the only true way—to promote peace and goodwill among men. Though purity of heart is the completeness of Christian characters, yet peacemaking is properly placed after it, because it is just in so far as we have become pure in heart that we can do the work of peacemakers,—the work of filling the earth with the influence of the Gospel,—the work of bringing men to live in harmony, by bringing them to receive that divine truth which, were it universally received, would utterly banish variance and contention from human society.

In order to the further elucidation of the subject, we