

consent or a wilful rebellion, so, too, woman's place of honour and dignity was changed, and bitterness and humiliation cast upon her. The only nation in which she seems to have at all retained her rightful position or happiness was among the Jews; that is to say, the nation in which some knowledge of God and of obedience to His laws still remained. It was not until Christ came and gave honour to woman, and recognized fully her service and her ministry, that she became in any true sense once again the comrade and the help meet of man.

The ordinance of marriage was the third gift. This ordinance was in like manner confirmed and blessed by Christ at the opening of His ministry, and His first miracle was at a marriage feast. By His teaching and blessing He restored both woman and marriage to the place which God had first marked out for them.

Untried Innocence.

We find Adam and Eve in the garden, innocent, but with an untried innocence. They have also a rudimentary conception of law. "Thou shalt not."

The supreme question at issue is whether the higher or lower nature shall prevail; whether the thought of God or the thought of self shall be first. Untried innocence in itself is of little value. It is "the result of circumstances and not of character." Man can reach the highest stage only when he stands firm in the day of testing. We recognize how much higher tested obedience is than untested. The beauty reflected in the face of an aged saint of God is far greater than the beauty in the face of an innocent child, for it tells of the victory of the spirit of God over the lower nature, the name of God written upon the forehead. How far transcending both must have been the beauty of Christ! His was a beauty that shone forth with an innocence greater even than that of a child, for a child has sinned, whereas Christ was free from sin and has won a victory over temptation more complete than that of the greatest saint who ever lived. "Tempted like as we are, yet without sin."