

lead them "rightly to divide the Word of God." The antiphonal recitation of the Psalms becomes practically an effectual barrier to any approach to *understanding them*, indeed the exercise of this faculty in regard to Divine truth appears to have fallen into desuetude. Part of Ex. xv. was read as "the first lesson," and it would probably have been more instructive to some of us, had we been informed that the passage "He is my God," &c. (ver. 2), should rather be "*this* (referring to the visible presence of the Shekinah) is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation;" again at ver. 11, anyone interested in the subject would prefer hearing the Almighty celebrated as "reverenced in praises, working wonders," and that the Shekinah or the Messiah is mentioned by name in the second occurrence of the title *Lord*, in the 17th verse. Again in John xi, part of which was read as "the second lesson," we might have considered that we had learned something, had we been informed that "whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall not die forever" (ver. 26), is preferable to "shall never die." When, in due course, the sermon was delivered, and that in the form of an essay, which was made to depend on Matt. ii. 18., as from a peg, it was startling to be informed, in view of the "then was fulfilled," of the previous verse, that this wailing on account of the murder of the infants, was a "less intentional fulfilment" of the prophecy of Jeremiah, than one supposed to be fulfilled elsewhere. Two circumstances in connection with this pathetic narrative, were overlooked by the minister: the first is the fact that Rachel died and was buried at Ephrath (Bethlehem), where her tomb remains to this day, situated between Jerusalem and Bethlehem; in this passage she is poetically represented as *dwelling there*, and watching the fate of her murdered progeny, the descendants of Benjamin, whose tribe was united to that of Judah; the wail of the heart-stricken mothers, which as it were awoke her, was so loud as to be heard from the height of Rama, at a distance of twelve miles. The name Rama should, therefore, be emphasised in reading the narrative—"In *Rama* was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." This pulpit deliverance was either intended to apply to some bereaved parents in the congregation, or to that wide sphere of slaughter of the innocents which is being perpetrated daily; it gave lamentable evidence of that ecclesiastical mania which blasphemously represents "Christ's immeasurable love for children to be the solution of their untimely death." It is time the professional representatives of "the living God" laid the fact to heart that the Almighty's relation to ourselves is that of "giving us richly all things to enjoy," 1 Tim. vi. 17; if, therefore, the cemeteries are crowded with the frail wrecks of little children, and homes are rendered desolate by thousands, it is that the beneficent laws of the Allwise are transgressed on every hand, and the penal consequences of such transgression, which are intended as warnings, are so far wrested from their purport by the professed ministers of God, that we are told *authoritatively* that our Creator brings children into the world in order to snatch them away so soon as our heart-strings are woven around them; "grief is (said to be) wholesome discipline," &c., &c. One need not wonder at the widespread repudiation of pulpit utterances, when sentiments so opposed to truth and reason are a stock commodity thereof; unless the ministerial order desire to confine their appeals to "silly women," and to banish all cultivated intelligence from the churches, the sooner they cease to calumniate the Most High the better; they will discover moreover (to adopt their own sentiment), that if the heat of their ill-ventilated churches and schoolrooms be diminished, *the Lord will not take so many of the children*. Among other pieces of information which we received, in relation to infants was this, that "the covenant advantages of their baptism were difficult to define."