

your trespasses." Our natural instinct is the will to retaliate, to pay the offender back in his own coin, to get our own back, as we say. But the sin of retaliation is the same as the sin of offence,—it separates men from one another and confirms their enmity. The grace of forgiveness lies in this, that it not only refuses to widen the breach made by the offence, but heals it. I know that forgiveness is one of the most difficult things in the world: it requires the hardest kind of self-denial. But if ever we are to create a real commonwealth in the world we must become a forgiving people. And I specially want to emphasise the importance of quickening the will to forgive in children. It is one of the things which become increasingly difficult to acquire as one grows older,—perhaps the most difficult thing to acquire of all. And for that reason it is peculiarly necessary that we should guard the minds of children from the contamination of thoughts of revenge and hatred at a time like this. After all, this war is an adult affair: let us at least save the children, as far as possible, from the moral dangers of it. Whatever provocation an enemy may give you to harden your heart against him, it is bad for you to succumb to it. But, as the Lord liveth, see that the tender soul of the child is not for ever poisoned by the invasion of hard thoughts of vengeance and hate. So far as you can, keep the child out of it. You indeed owe it to the child to do so. He will have to live in and