

sadness ; but his letter, on the contrary, is a fountain of joy, an inspiration of courage. He was calm, meek, Christian, — not so much from logical deductions as from moral intuitions.

FIRST—THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

"*For me to live is Christ.*" The Apostle sets out, thrilled with a deep and absorbing fact,—the fact of conscious life : "*For me to live.*" He felt, he knew he lived. Christianity is life and life-giving. It is not a theory or philosophy of living, merely ; but life itself. It includes the inspiration, the rule, the end of life, and the Apostle, shrouding this Divine principle within him, felt the true pulse of being ; and every true believer, conscious of the Divine within him, can say : "*I live!*" Other men don't live ; they exist, but not live. There is a vast difference in existence and life. Life is far superior to existence. Existence was given us that we might rise into life, and it is only faith in Jesus will raise us to the dignity and power and sublimity of life. Only in Him is the whole man flooded with the rapture of being and stirred with a life that dies not.

1st. *Christ is the SOURCE of the believer's life.* To create, to produce life at first, or to infuse life into the dead, is the exclusive prerogative of God. Man has done his best to create ; the painter has spread his canvas, and with the pencil's witchery portrayed the image of your friends, and after those friends have passed away, that life-like painting has often called up the forms of the departed, and in all the passion of agonized affection you have sighed : "Oh, that those lips could speak !" but there was no response. And the sculptor has taken the shapeless block and chiselled upon it the features of the human face, and the proportion has been apparent, the attitude graceful, and the figure true to nature ; but though the eye reposed in beauty, there was no flash of fire ; though the cheek was well-formed, it had no mantling blush of health ; though the lips were well-shaped, they could never speak to thrill the soul ; so that, while you admired the artist's skill, you were forced to remember that life is the gift of God. All life is from Him originally. *Natural life* is of Him. We eat and drink and pursue our callings and pleasures too, often without thinking of the power which gave us life and sustains and upholds that life every moment. We find ourselves in being, and think out