

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold ;
 And to the presence in the room he said,
 " What writest thou ?" The vision raised its head,
 And, with a look made all of sweet accord,
 Answered, " The names of those who love the Lord."
 " And is mine one " asked Adhem. " Nay, not so,"
 Replied the Angel. Adhem spoke more loud,
 But cheerily still ; and said, " I pray thee, then,
 Write me as one that loves his fellow men."
 The Angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
 It came again with a great waking light,
 And showed the names whom love of God had blest .
 And, lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

II. MERCY INCOMPLETE WITHOUT SACRIFICE

We have dwelt at considerable length upon the tendency of the world to unduly magnify sacrifice. This, however, is not the only error to which men have been prone. Not infrequently they have manifested a disposition to go to the other extreme, and exalt mercy to the entire exclusion of sacrifice.

Now to this Christ gave no countenance whatever. The words of the text are not to be misunderstood in this connection. They do not mean that God does not desire sacrifice ; that all the externals of religion are distasteful to him. God himself was the author of sacrifice and distinctly required it in its literal sense when these words were spoken , all that is signified is that he will have mercy rather than sacrifice. This is well brought out in Matthew, twenty-third Chapter and twenty-third verse, " Woe unto you scribes etc. for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment mercy and faith ; these ought ye to have done and *not to leave the other undone.*" Notice what Christ condemns is not that they paid tithes etc., but that they neglected the weightier matters of the law. He does not tell them, however, to attend to the weightier matters and let the others go. No ! " These ought ye to have done and *not to leave the other undone*" Judgment, mercy, faith it must be remembered come first, they are of Paramount import—these ought ye to have done. But then it must not be forgotten tithing and other observances have their place, they are duties too.—"Not to leave the other undone." Or in accordance with the language of our text what he condemned was not that they observed sacrifice but that they did it to the exclusion of mercy. He does