

is perhaps peculiarly prone to this. It may be safely affirmed that no Diotrophes, ancient or modern, ever yet determined within himself to aim at supremacy, and seize the reins of church government. Such a resolve, deliberately made, would be too monstrous to be entertained and acted on. So naked a devil would be instantly dismissed with a "Get thee behind me, Satan!" The injunction, "be ye clothed with humility," would be so palpably and outrageously violated by such an avowed purpose, as to secure its prompt and summary rejection. Yet it must be obvious to all observant persons, that the genuine though unconscious Diotrophes is well nigh ubiquitous. A certain writer says every church has a crooked deacon in it. Happy is the church that has not a Deacon Diotrophes in it!

A very grave question presents itself concerning this character. Is it that of a blemished child of God, or a disguised child of the devil? In other words, is Diotrophes an imperfect saint or a consummate hypocrite? This is not only a grave question, but a very difficult one. As you watch this man's "walk and conversation," you come first to one conclusion and then to the other about him. The zealous interest he shows in church affairs, the fair speeches he sometimes makes, the humility he always professes, his prayers and his alms, incline you to classify him with the saints; while his upstart spirit, artful tricks, tortuousness and deceit, almost compel you to rank him with the hypocrites. You cannot exclaim concerning him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" and you hesitate to say, "I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Only Omniscience can assign him his true place.

One thing is very certain, however. It is this, that love of pre-eminence is grossly inconsistent with saintship, and utterly at variance with the spirit and example of Christ. How far this evil disposition may be indulged in by a true Christian, ranking only as a spot and blemish on an otherwise holy character, the Bible does not tell us, and we have no means of determining.

Another thing is also certain, viz., that this Diotrophes is a sore trial and nuisance to God's ministers and Church. Of old he "prated against" the loving and beloved apostle John "with malicious words," and by his high-handed procedure drove brethren out of the Church, whose right to be there was at least equally good with his own. He must have acted very badly when even the sweet-spirited John is roused to a pitch of holy indignation, so as to threaten that when he comes he will "remember his deeds which he doeth." What sort of remembrance was in store for Diotrophes we are not told; whether severe censure or authoritative apostolic dismissal from the Church. But in view of the perplexing inquiry how to deal with those of whom he is the prototype, one cannot help wishing that we had on record the faithful words of rebuke with which such an one as "John the beloved" visited his evil doings and malicious pratings; and that we knew the method pursued by an inspired apostle to antidote his evil influence, and rid the Church of his mischievous ascendancy.

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## SAYINGS AND DOINGS AT THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

BY THE EDITOR.

We give a large proportion of our space to an account of the proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance meetings recently held in New York, only regretting that we cannot favour our readers with more. It is our endeavour to give a sample of the sentiments of a number of the leading members, rather than a report of the proceedings. It is not necessary to say there were many admirable addresses delivered, which we have been unable even to notice. We are principally indebted to the *New York Independent* and the *Boston Congregationalist* for the facts here presented. Should our readers desire a fuller report before the proceedings are published in book form by the Committee, they can secure it by sending 25 cents for a copy of the *New York Tribune* supplement, which gives a very full account of the proceedings, with the addresses delivered.