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THANKSGIVING.

A SERMON

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"In everything give thanks."—I Tess. v. 18.

ONE way of avoiding the difficulty which at first sight may seem to attach to the fulfilment of this apostolic command would be to say that the words must not be pressed too closely in their application. They form one of a series of injunctions couched in general terms: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." An accommodating fancy might assure us that St. Paul is here somewhat free and loose in his modes of expression, and that a paraphrase of his teaching would read a little more like this: "Rejoice as constantly as you can. Pray quite often. For everything that is favorable give thanks."

We do well not to come under a thoughtless bondage to the letter, even though it be the letter of Scripture. But on the other hand we do well not to refine away the magnificent force of revelation by our timid and uncertain commentaries upon it. In such a case as the one before us, any attempt to abridge the inclusiveness of this call to thanksgiving not merely destroys its significance, but utterly misconceives the temper of mind which inspired it. The apostle means just what he says: "In everything give thanks:" and