

THE  
Presbyterian College Journal.

VOL. X — FEBRUARY, 1891 — No. 4.

Our Graduates' Pulpit.

THE RELATION OF MERCY AND SACRIFICE.

A SERMON

BY THE REV. G. WHILLANS, B.A.

*"I will have mercy and not sacrifice."*—Matthew xii. 7.

IN these words we have the very kernel of religion. It is almost superfluous, I presume, to indicate the significance of the terms of the text. By sacrifice we understand not merely the slaying and offering of animals in honour of Jehovah, but all outward religious observance. Mercy we take to mean, not simply leniency toward an offender, but something closely akin to love, the New Testament "Charity," love to God and love to man; that disposition of heart which gives life to all religious forms, and which manifests itself equally potently in our relations with our fellow men; that disposition which lays as the foundation of God's service, a regard for the great moral principles of his universe; which believes in honouring God, not solely, but primarily, by dealing justly, kindly, lovingly, with man.

Mercy and Sacrifice.—We have here contrasted the external and the internal, letter and spirit, form and essence, ritual and morals.

In considering this subject, permit me to direct your attention to two points: First, mercy preferable to sacrifice; second, mercy incomplete without sacrifice.

I. *Mercy preferable to Sacrifice.*—This truth calls for no demonstration. It is clearly stated in the words of our text. "I will have mercy and not,