

men would represent God as acting more arbitrarily, capriciously, tyrannically, and far less lovingly, on the world of mind, than on the world of matter; as less full of goodwill to the soul that thinks, than to the matter incapable of thought; and as "passing by," with a lofty indifference, the necessities, and the woes, and the aspirations of the souls which He has permitted for ever to exist. Surely the Bible, soundly interpreted, teaches no such doctrine; and the common sense of mankind will for ever revolt against it.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth." The grace of the comparison is wholly lost in English, because we use one word for the wind and another for the Holy Spirit; whereas both in the Greek and Hebrew tongues the same word expresses both ideas. So that some\* have translated the text, "the Spirit bloweth where he listeth," yet we cannot doubt incorrectly, as thus the point of analogy is lost.

Again, there are two words in Greek signifying wind, one, applicable to the more violent motion of the atmosphere; and the other, which is here used, signifying rather the gentler breathing of the air, which is in constant motion. "The wind bloweth where it listeth:" not the hurricane with its impetuous violence; not the simoon with pestilential blast; but rather (as it has been well translated) "the air breatheth where it listeth." Go forth into the woods at noon on some warm summer's day, and note the deep silence that prevails. The song of birds is hushed; the lowing of the cattle is still; the very hum of insects is scarcely audible. Not a cloud crosses the sky; not a breath of wind is felt. Suddenly, without a note of preparation, without knowing "whence it comes, or whither it goes," a rustle is heard in the forest. Every leaf feels the sweet impulse; a breath passes over the water, a soft murmur is heard, and gently dies away. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." The free motion of the air is one of the greatest mysteries in nature. It is perceptible to all our faculties. It is the sustenance of life. It infuses into us new vigor and unspeakable delight. Yet it is inscrutable. The whence, the whither, the how, the why, what philosopher can tell us? The secret mystery of its coming and going no man knows. This vital air that breathes everywhere in constant, healthful, life-sustaining motion; sometimes fluttering as a whisper, or heard as a "small still voice;" sometimes rising like a "mighty wind," that fills and overawes, and is then hushed into silence, is our Lord's beautiful illustration of the working of the Holy Spirit on the mind of man.

We learn from the comparison that the influence of the Spirit is as wide-spread as the breath of air. It is confined to no class. It is limited to no age or nation. The love of the Spirit is the love of the human race. Yet it is as free as it is wide, independent of human

\* As Luther.