

good eating? That is, is not the ultimate ground of possession in self,—is not our claim of right indefensible,—is not our money ours alone, ours absolutely, none daring to question us? To all which, the natural heart, the spirit of the world's trafficking, and the practical life of modern Christianity answer, yes, undoubtedly yes; while early instincts, sound philosophy, and Christ's teaching and example, answer no, a thousand times, no. In the judgment of the world, the man described in Luke xii, 16-21, was and ever will be a wise provident, and worthy-to-be-imitated man:—in Christ's judgment, he was and ever will be a fool." Here is a great gulf; choose ye, which side will ye stand on; whom will ye follow, whom serve?

Cicero, in his book concerning the nature of the gods, supposes the case of a man who has lived always in a dark cavern, or in the bowels of the earth, suddenly brought out, or up to the surface, where all the starry magnificence of heaven might be viewed by him, and he asks, what would such an one think,—would he not at once rise to the conception of a great architect? But now, suppose that such a man were to turn his eyes to the world of men, I would like to know his opinion of our social state, and how his unworldly, untutored mind would solve some of the social problems that Church and State have been tinkering at. 'See, here is God, seemingly sending all the mouths to one house, and all the meat to another, what would you make of that, Sir Stranger? Or see, here, in one part of Britain are thousands out of work, honest people, ready to work, reduced to pauperism, starvation, prostitution, crime; and in another part of the same Island, are men complaining that never was there such an abundance of money, that they do not know what to make of it, that millions of pounds are lying useless,—is not this a perplexing coil, Sir? Or, see, here are the heathen perishing, and the poor uneducated, and the aspiring youth thirsting for knowledge, and there are Christian people buttoning up their pockets, when the Church calls attention to such objects, and unbuttoning them only at the call of selfish ease and luxury, of selfish pride, passions, and prejudices,—what is your opinion on such a state of matters, O, my friend? Possibly the simple creature would be amazed, listening to me; possibly he would see no difficulty in the cases presented to him. 'What! is not "the earth the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and does he give to the most favoured, more than the usufruct thereof? However widely cases and circumstances may differ, all reconciliation of such contradictions must be based on him that hath giving, yea, and not giving grudgingly, nor as a favor, but giving cheerfully, abundantly, and as if discharging an obligation.'

'And is it to be so, then? Is this romance to be converted into our reality? Why, this man thinks as a child,' you say. Yes, he does,

my friend: and you might add, 'he thinks as Jesus Christ thought.' Yes; how freshly, how beautifully, how truly the child thinks on these matters. He thinks it strange, yea, inexplicable, that he who has, should refuse him who has not; for, in his opinion, the one man is virtually the brother of the other. He does think it strange that he should have two coats while another boy has none at all; and it is not in his mind that such a state of plus and minus is a necessity, or should be by any means permanent. And as to inviting to dinner, those who have plenty victual at home, and leaving uninvited the starveling who grubs on a dunghill for a bone, that to him is a mere absurdity. And to suffer a grand scheme for the education or the amelioration of others to go down forever, because men who have the needful treasure will not give it, this is to him a thing not conceivable. This is the simplicity of the child as well as the eternal truth of God, at war with the back-neved selfishness of men. Which will prevail? Better even for commerce and selfish interests, that the former be not crushed, I do assure you, O monied man. For if you give no ear to them, the poor, the ignorant, the unfortunate may combine to get revenge, that is, a wild justice. Did you ever hear of Socialism, Communism, Levelling; Schemes according to which it shall be decreed and enforced by law, that no man shall have or own more than another, that there shall be equal division among all of the gold and silver of the earth, and that when inequalities arise, the cry will be, 'divide again?' Horrible, wicked, ruinous, you exclaim. Yes, but not one iota more wicked or abominable than the principle and practice of selfishness; the absurd notion that what God has given you to use for his glory, is absolutely *your own*, to do with it what you like.

And now let me link the above irregular and roughly constructed paragraphs with one or two orderly and weighty sentences of Andrew Thomson's. Hear what the great evangelical preacher says;—"No man who is alive to the importance and the value of Christianity, who feels for the moral darkness and the degradation of his species, and who sincerely desires to see "the name of God hallowed," and his "will done upon earth as it is in heaven," can seriously refuse to lend his aid to those exertions which may promise to enlighten and reform, and bless the world. When he gives his guinea to a political, and withholds his shilling from a religious purpose; when he expends his hundreds on mere personal gratification, and grudges his units or his tens, for instructing his fellow-men in the way of salvation; when he lavishes his fortune on fashionable amusements for his children, and can scarcely be prevailed on to give anything for the moral tuition of the poor,—can it be denied or can it be doubted, that he is "a lover of pleasures more than he is a lover of God?"