

Enfer. Carter, N° 19



SIN AND THE JUDGMENT.

A Sermon preached in Christ Church, Ottawa, on the Third Sunday in Lent, 1875, by the Rev. J. May, M.A., and published by request.

“And the King shall answer and say unto them : Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have doae it unto me.” “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.” *S. Matt. xxv. 40 and 45.*

What a blessing has Christianity proved to the world ! When the day-star from on High visited us, darkness brooded over the sons of men. Moral corruption reigned supreme ; few knew their right hand from their left. The blemishes which disfigure the face of Christendom to-day are beauty itself, when compared with the loathsome impurities of the nations when the Saviour appeared among men. An Apostle tells us that it was “a shame even to speak” of the things which men did in secret. Happily such dark deeds are not now common. The tone of morality has been raised. The earth is dotted with Temples. The great cities have their hospitals for the destitute, the sick, the disabled, the incurable ; institutions unknown, I suppose, before the Christian era. These are the glories of Christianity, even as it exists amongst us. Truly the “wilderness and the solitary place” have been gladdened by the voice of Christ : and yet, even the brightest centres of Gospel light are still dashed with darkness. Say what you will, the religion we *practice* (I speak of the mass of Christians) *as we practice it*, falls very, very far short of the religion of Christ. It is not a true transcript of the religion of the first days. Its conspicuous defect is the frightful absence of the all-important element of the Cross,—self-denial. It is a Sunday religion. A religion of *hearing* rather than *doing*. It is a religion of frames, and feelings, and fancies ; a religion of dogma and controversy ; of party, and faction, and shibboleths. I do not say that these are its only characteristics ; but they occupy a sadly prominent place in it. Who now, when smitten on one cheek turns the other ? Who sells all he has and gives to the poor ? Who turns not away from him that would borrow, unless the security be unimpeachable ? Where now is the simplicity of the early days ? Where, that whole-hearted devotion, that burning zeal, that unsparing self-sacrifice ? Where that community of goods which prevailed when, for the first time, human hearts took fire