

as a reference to the Greek will enable the scholar to see, "Men of Athens! I perceive that in all matters ye are scrupulously and minutely a religious people" — (literally, over-godfearing, religious in a more than usual degree.) He then proceeds to the proof or illustration of this statement, "For as I passed along, and beheld your preparations for worship" (your religious paraphernalia conveys the idea of the Greek word), "I found even" (the word is in the Greek) an altar on which was the inscription, *To the Unknown God.* That is, "I saw many temples, and many altars, dedicated to all the gods by name. And I saw also one more. So scrupulously religious are you, that you have dedicated an altar to the special worship of every god whose name is known among men; and lest there should be still another god, unknown to you, whom through this ignorance you might seem to neglect, you have dedicated an altar to this unknown god, if such there be."

"This is the state of the case. Up to the light you have got in this matter you have acted; and for this you are to be praised. Ye are, men of Athens, a god-fearing people. But now I come with a revelation to you. Another god there is. Ye are, and have been, worshipping this other, the unknown god: that very god, therefore, whom ye yourselves have been worshipping in ignorance, *him* declare I unto you." And then he proceeds to preach the God that made the world and all things therein, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. Having thus got for himself a firm footing, the apostle proceeds with his argument, and is listened to with the utmost attention, till he steals his way, so to speak, to the one great topic of all his labours and preaching,—"that man,"—the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the appointed Judge of the quick and the dead. But he had touched on a disputed point. Carefully and cautiously as he had worked his way along, when he speaks of the resurrection of the dead, his audience is on edge, the pent-up emotion finds egress, and there is an end of his oration. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." There were two parties; discussion grew keen and hot, it is to be supposed; and so Paul, seeing that for the time his hope

of preaching Christ was at an end, departed from among them. Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed. There was a woman also, named Damaris. All honour be to her!"

#### FIRM FOOTING.

"Eph. vi. 15.—"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

In the context of this verse the apostle exhorts the Ephesians to the profession and use of the various Christian graces and virtues, under the allegory of putting on the soldier's panoply, or whole armour. This verse states what is required for the feet. It is not very obvious what is meant by being shod with "preparation." But when we find that the Greek word *preparation* is used by the LXX for *establishment* or *settlement*—as it is in Ezra iii. 3, "And they set the altar on its bases," and Zech. v. 11, "It shall be established and set there upon her own base"—we perceive the allusion of the apostle is to the military half-boot of the Romans, the sole of which was furnished with iron spikes, to keep the base or footing of the soldier firm. As the *caliga*, or iron-studded shoe, kept the soldier firm, so the gospel of peace keeps the Christian from being discomposed. The emperor Caligula derived his name from the fondness of the soldiers when he lived in the camp, and wore his little shoes like theirs."

#### IDOLATRY REPROBATED.

"Job xxxi. 26-28.—"If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; this were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge; for I should have denied the God that is above."

This passage is illustrated in our own day by a custom which prevails amongst some pagan nations of Africa. On the first appearance of the new moon, they say a short prayer, in a whisper, holding their hands before their face. It is an act of adoration. As the "Lord of fire" and the "Queen of heaven" were worshipped throughout the East in ancient times, rendering homage to them doubtless prevailed in the days of Job. This was an act of idolatry which the patriarch reprobated."