

sphere, also infallible. They fully serve the purpose in creation for which they were designed. A lamb has been caught and torn from its mother. With rolling eye, and thrilling limb, and beating heart, it has been held in strong men's arms for a time at a distance. But when their purposes have been served with the creature for the time, they let it go. Straight and quick it hastens, by bounding leaps to the pure green pasture, where the flock ate feeding, and among the flock to its own mother. The shepherds do not find it necessary to lead or drive it to the spot; they trust to its instinct, and are not disappointed. Nor has the lamb been taught and trained to such a course. It was born thus. This is not an art which it has learned, but a nature which it owns.

On the other side, the instinct is as quick and as sure. The sow that was washed—and for this purpose forcibly held for a time separate from her companions and her haunts—as soon as she is let go returns to wallow in the mire with her kindred. It was by an external force that she was kept for a little in a clean place and clean company: as soon as that force was removed, nature asserted her dominion, and the foul creature plunged greedily into filth.

These things serve well, and in the Scriptures are actually employed, as allegories. The facts, as they emerge on the lower sphere, serve as a glass in which we observe the operation of good and evil on the higher. Such diversities of nature and consequent acts obtain in the world of human kind, where some, renewed in spirit, experience an instinctive drawing towards the pure; and others, obeying the law of corruption that reigns in their members, rush into evil company and evil deeds, whenever they are freed from restraint.

Jesus was preaching once to a promiscuous congregation on his own high themes. As soon as he had finished, one of the company said unto him, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me."—Luke xii. 13. The word of Jesus had held even that worldling spell-bound for a time: the fascination that lay in his voice that spake as never man spake, caught and carried him away. But the

word that arrests attention does not always renew the heart. Enthralled as by the sound of sweet music, that listener kept respectful silence till the Preacher ceased; but on the instant, his heart's affections, released from the mastery of Jesus voice, went rushing to their own element and occupation again—went rushing to covetousness, as water flows downwards when an interrupting barrier has been removed. He had a quarrel with his brother about a share of some property, and to this congenial theme he flies as soon as he is let go from the word of life.

It is sometimes remarked, that when persons who at home maintained a Christian profession, have gone abroad—gone to a distant colony where ordinances were wanting, or to a papal country where ordinances were superstitious,—they have left their religion behind them, and abandoned themselves to godless pleasures or godless gains. In these cases, as the result proves, the religion was an external thing from the first. It was of the nature of a bondage. At home the cords of the general Christian profession of the country were sufficiently strong to keep the man away from the employments and company that he secretly loved; but when these cords were broken by the simple fact of his removal from home, he was a free man, and like other creatures, animate and inanimate, when he was let go he went into his own. Thus worthless, in the last resource, is the Christianity which acts as a restraint to prevent a man from following his own inclinations: beyond expression precious is the faith in Jesus which takes the inclinations and changes them so that they instinctively seek the pure. This false religion of bonds is the direct contrary of the true. Christ's work is a redemption; Christ is a Redeemer. He sets the captive free. "If the son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." This glorious grace turns upside down the world which blindly counts religion so much restraint, to which some men prudently submit, with a view to a larger return in a future life. The man who only submits to the restraints of religion, runs wild in all evil when these restraints are removed. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "I