

ness than seek His presence, and value their character more than interest in Christ.

In these simple, unpretending narratives, we get these precious secrets of the ways of God in Christ, thus discovered to us.—Their remains, however, another which I must not pass. I allude to the blind beggar of chapter ix.

In him we see an HONEST conscience. It is not a happy, or an awakened, or a sleepy, or a bad conscience. We do not see in him any uneasiness about his soul. He had not been under a fig tree with Nathaniel—nor did the arrow of conviction enter him, through the word of Christ, as it had penetrated to the deepest secrets of the Samaritan. It is not in such quickened conditions we see him. But he is honest. He is true to the light he has, and he will hold to the facts he knows. He suffers, rather than yield his integrity; and the Pharisees cast him out. Religiousness persecutes truthfulness—a common case.

Could Jesus leave such an one alone?—Could He be indifferent to him? We know He could not. He heard that they had cast him out, and we may conclude that He at once sought Him out; for we read “when Jesus had FOUND him.” He made him His object—and the sight of Jesus and this beggar meeting for the second time is full of blessing and comfort.

As yet, this poor man knew Him only in His power to heal him. There had been no exercise of soul as a sinner, though there was an honest conscience. But on seeing Jesus now the second time, outside the camp, his soul is exercised. Jesus calls him into this exercise. “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” And the poor man is at once made ready to take anything from Jesus. “Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?” And Jesus reveals Himself to him as the One who had given him sight when he was blind, and now takes him up, when all were casting him out. “Thou hast both seen Him,” says the Lord, “and it is He that talketh with thee.” The soul then discovers Jesus. Love and power thus combined, and thus acting in Divine virtue, was enough. “Lord, I believe,” he answered, and then “he worshipped Him.”

Thus He reached his soul, and dealt with him. And we are conscious that while he

was only an honest man before, he is now a quickened soul. For an honest conscience is not a saved soul.

But in addition to all this, let me notice Paul's dealing with the conscience, in his Epistles. He sees none of these varieties.—He sees the sinner just as he is, a sinner.—He instructs the conscience how it should deal with God and His Gospel, rather than shows us, as in the Gospel, how Christ deals with it. He tells the conscience that it may enjoy a PURGED condition—not merely an awakened or convicted or honest condition, but a purged condition.

This argument is found in Hebrews ix., x. The Apostle there teaches that we may have a good or a purged conscience, by faith in Christ because after He had made His one offering, He entered the holiest place, never more to leave it as the Priests under the law left it, His offering being effectual to put away sins, and this, because of the admirableness of such a sacrifice as that rendered “without spot,” and “through the Eternal Spirit,” and because this sacrifice met and satisfied God touching sin, answering and fulfilling “His will.” The Holy Ghost Himself, in revealing the new covenant, or God's covenant, has established also the fact, that sins and iniquities are remembered no more.

Thus, under the teaching of the Apostle, the conscience is taught to deal with God, and the sinner exhorted to be happy in His love, and satisfied with His provisions—thus to enter the kingdom as a little child, not REASONING but RECEIVING.

In John, we see living cases in which the Lord was dealing with the conscience; in Hebrews, we are taught in what way the conscience is to deal with the Lord, and how it is to reach the condition in which the conscience of Andrew, Nathaniel, the Samaritan, the Adulteress, and the Beggar were left by Jesus.—J. G. BELLETT.

SATISFYING MERCY.

Mercy is that perfection, or property in the divine nature, which prompts and moves the Most High to pity, sympathise with, and do good to poor sinners. Mercy can only be shown to the miserable. Mercy never can be