

Our divine Lord, also, who, knowing all things, knew what he had planted in man, continually *illustrates* his heavenly precepts by his beautifully simple parables, or instructive fictions; and although in some instances, owing to the peculiar perversity of his Jewish hearers, they were not clearly understood, it was plain, from their very form of illustration, they excited the attention which curiosity, admiration, or aversion, were, in his case, sure to command.

I have always been charmed with, and have on another occasion quoted, the exquisitely simple and deeply interesting parable of the "Sower," every line of which is full of important meaning:—

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them; but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold."

And how faithfully and successfully has the "Great Dreamer," in his "Pilgrim's progress to the Celestial City," imitated and spread the fame of this simple and pure style of instructive fiction through all ranks and degrees of society, from prattling childhood to declining age, and wherever the footsteps of civilized man have trod; inculcating truth, establishing principles, and imparting blessings, by the power of an all but inspired example.

"The Young Men's Christian Association," which I have the pleasure of addressing this evening, is an instance of the principle I have been endeavouring to enforce. They form themselves into a Society, and meet together for self improvement, and for the benefit of those who, from various causes, would otherwise be left to struggle against solitude, or indifference, or temptation, *alone*. They proclaim by their example that "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and invite the thoughtless youth, and the stranger from another land, to quit, for a season at least, the restless activities of wasted hours, or the solitude of unknown faces in a stranger's inn, and repair with them to light and cheerful rooms, where conversation, reading, and prayer, com-