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"I FORGOT THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—P. 137, P. 5

Sermon,

By the Rev. John Cumming, D. D., Minister of the Scotch National Church, Crown Court, Convent Garden, London; Chaplain to the Highland Society, and to the Scottish Hospital.

Matthew vi. 13.—"Deliver us from evil."

I have addressed you on successive communion Sabbaths on the successive clauses of this most beautiful, expressive, and comprehensive prayer, the riches of which it is impossible to exhaust, and the beauty, the significance, and the appropriateness of which they that use it oftenest, in the right spirit, and with a right understanding, will be the first to admit. I showed you that it begins, first of all, by an appeal to God, in that most tender and beautiful relationship, "Our Father." I then showed that the first half of the petition contained an unfolding of the riches of God—His name be hallowed—His kingdom come—His will be done; and that the last half of the prayer contains an unfolding of the wants of man,—"forgive us our debts,"—"deliver us from evil,"—"lead us not into temptation;" and I showed you that the prayer is a comment upon that single verse, so expressive, and always found to be so real,—"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you;" or, to turn that verse into the language of this prayer, pray first, "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done," "Thy name be hallowed," and then there will be added unto you, while you ask for it, "forgive us our debts," "lead us not into temptation," "deliver us from evil." Beautiful is the consistency of all the Bible, and of all Christianity—it is one glorious,

harmonious whole; and the more we search into the Bible, the more luminous will be the footprints of the Creator on its every page, and the glory of Deity in its every text.

I come now to the prayer, "Deliver us from evil." The very utterance of the prayer is an admission of a great fact, the existence of which none can dispute, the why, the wherefore, and the how of which men have differed about in all ages.—that there is evil in the world. How and why this evil came into the world, it is not possible even for us to resolve. I have read all theories, but I have found none to commend itself to common sense as this—that man sinned, and "the wages of sin is death;" that God made the world beautiful, holy, harmonious, good; that man's doing, sustained by Satan's help, has marred it to the extent in which we find it. All ages witness that evil is in the world; all languages have a word for the monosyllable *sin*; all systems of superstition admit it; all police, law, legislators, warriors, lawyers, physicians, imply it; all are standing—not always dumb, but in all instances expressive testimonies that there is such a thing as evil, sin, enmity, wickedness in the world. The unenlightened, it is true, have the idea of evil only from its outward exponents. The impression of the great body of mankind is, that evil can only be seen in the form of plague, pestilence, famine, battle, murder, death, robbery, tyranny, or oppression; but these are but the fruits, not the roots; these are but the offspring, not the prolific parent; these are but the signs and the true and undeniable evidences that evil is in the world,—they are not themselves the evil from which the believer prays that he may be delivered; these are the out-