

THE INCARNATION.

BY REV. OLIVER STEARNS.

It was not Jesus's speech only which taught men Divine truth, not his outward miracles which proved it, not his resurrection alone, but altogether, all that he was. The life and sacrifice which he wrought through a human body lifted the Divine character and human destiny into the world's view. They made this character, this destiny objective, and thus informing and quickening to man. They still do thus. And it is the office of the Church and the ministry to give prolonged effect to this mediation; to repeat in ritual and in speech this voice of Jesus out of the Divine heart, beseeching the sinner to be reconciled to God. Therefore neither mountain nor ocean, no aspect of nature, — no crystal palace or monumental pile, or victorious battle-field, or eloquence in high debate at the organization of a nation's life, — no work, act or art of man, — is the token of anything so grand and affecting as that of which the lowliest Christian temple is the symbol. It stands in the busy street where men are hurrying too and fro on the errands of human interest, amidst clustering homes where birth and death come, and sin and change are felt, to remind them of a God to be hoped in, and a mercy to be prayed and hoped for. There is no work which reaches to the height and depth of the preacher's, — that of him who is an ambassador to men in Christ's stead. He is to be the tongue of the Incarnation, the medium by whom the Comforter will come and bring earth's child and heaven's Father together. If he have felt the proper power of the Word made flesh, that power