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"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget its cunning."—Psalm 137, v. 5.

Sermon.

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The Redeemer's Errand to this World.

"For the son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—St. LUKE, xix. 10.

NOW if such an incident as that described in the preceding verses of this chapter had occurred somewhere close at hand, within the last hour, we should have no difficulty in feeling, when we were told of it, that it had actually happened. We should at once see before us the whole circumstances: the Prophet of Nazareth in His garment without seam; the crowd of people that thronged Him as He walks along the street; the publican Zacchæus, little of stature, running on in advance and climbing up the tree; the kind Saviour stopping at its foot, calling Zacchæus down saying a few kindly words that fairly bewilder the head while they go straight to the heart of the poor disreputable publican, quite unaccustomed to be spoken to kindly by people of any credit or character,—and then, amid the astonished murmurings of the crowd, going away to be guest at a house which it was long since any respectable man had entered. But it is far towards twenty centuries since all these things happened; and things look misty, and indistinct, and unreal, when we look at them over many hundreds of years. They seem like shadows,

the people whose names and doings are preserved upon the historic page. They were not always names in a book; but now, in many cases, they are little more. Events recorded are to events as they actually befell what the embalmed mummy is to the living man. Let us try to bring back that day. Let us try to see these little things which took place upon it, as though they were going on now. The interest of these things ought to be to-day as fresh as ever. We see our blessed Redeemer acting and speaking; mercy, sympathy, and salvation in all He does and says.

He has stopped at the foot of the plane-tree, and called Zacchæus down. "To-day," says Jesus, "I must abide at thy house." Now, Zacchæus was a publican. He was one of those Jews who were regarded as traitors to their country and their blood, because they had undertaken the odious work of collecting the tribute which the Romans levied upon the conquered race. And you know it is difficult for any man to continue better than the character he bears. The publicans, probably, were as bad as they were esteemed. And Zacchæus, probably, was no better than the average of his class. The Jews certainly spoke of him as "a man that was a sinner"; and we all know, that, although in theological phrase every man is a sinner, yet when the word is used in the conversation of daily life, it always implies that a man is a greater sinner than usual. Zacchæus was the very last man that the reputable Pharisee would have thought of offering to go home with. It was something new to the poor publican, accustomed to averted eyes and contemptuous