

mighty conversion. And then a poor blind penitent—an object of pity rather than of fear—enters the city, not as a foe, but as a friend.

The conversion of Saul should be understood aright. It was not the making a wordly man devout—he was devout before—but it was the turning a mighty river of earnestness into the right channel. Had he been left alone he would have become fiercer and still more gloomy in his bigotry. His name would have come to posterity in the same catalogue with these of Nero and Diocletian, with Ferdinand of Spain, with the ferocious Montfort, and with the tigress Catherine—the blood-stained niece of Clement VII. What Saul had received was *light*, and what every man on earth needs is the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The fanatic Mahometan, brandishing his scimeter and threatening death to his foes, is sincere; what he needs is light; and the poor blind Romanist, bowing to his countless saints, and yielding his reason to the will of others, is perfectly in earnest; he means the best, and believes in all he says and does; but still he needs the light of God, and that light will make him not more devout, but more Scriptural, more reasonable, more pure. Had the Apostle Paul been left alone, like a stream of fire he would have swept over the earth, devastating the church, and carrying misery in his path; but changed by the grace of God, he became like a broad benignant river, a blessing,