

THE LIFE OF HOLINESS.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON DIGGLE, M.A., Author of "The Lancashire Life of Bishop Fraser," etc.

(Continued from page 235.)

AS the Holy Life begins with the spiritual birth, so spiritual food and spiritual exercise are indispensable to its health and growth. Spiritual food and exercise, I say; for as physical food and exercise are necessary for physical health and growth, and intellectual food and exercise for intellectual health and growth, so spiritual food and exercise are necessary for spiritual health and growth. The kind of food and exercise must, in all departments of our triune life—body, soul, and spirit—be adapted to its own kind of health and growth. We cannot gain muscular strength merely by feeding on books, or mental growth by simply eating flesh. To grow in knowledge we must feed on thought; to grow in wisdom we must exercise ourselves in habits of observation and attention. Similarly for spiritual health and growth, spiritual food and spiritual training are essential. "Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood," said Christ, "ye have no life"—i.e. no spiritual life—"in you."* Other life, bodily and mental, we may have without taking Christ as our food, and following Christ as our daily exercise; but to the spiritual Life of Holiness Christ is the indispensable food, and the imitation of Christ the indispensable exercise.

The Life of Holiness also, like every other form of life, and especially of life in its highest forms, is a life of unity in diversity, of simplicity of essence, manifested in multiplicity of forms. Our bodily life manifests itself in many ways, through many organs—ear and eye and head and foot and numerous other members. Yet the many members of the one body subsist by the energy of the one bodily life. So with the soul-life. It manifests itself in countless ways through the instruments of thought and affection and will; yet is the thinking, feeling, resolving soul not many existences, but one being. Similarly is it also with the spirit-life of man. It has many forms of operation and manifestation—faith, hope, love, peace, joy, self-losing, and such like—yet all are but different attributes of the one spirit-life. And in every duly developed man, the body-life, the soul-life, and the spirit-life are all combined together in the single triune life—the complete life of the healthy, thinking, holy man.

In the Life of Holiness, too, there are many degrees. There is no monotony in any department of the Kingdom of God. All athletes are not alike

in their muscularity, nor all thinkers in their thinking, nor all saints in their saintliness. Nor, indeed, are all saints great saints, any more than all thinkers are great thinkers, or all athletes great athletes. In God's great house "there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth"; but every vessel, of whatsoever sort, if only it be "sanctified, is meet for the Master's use."† It is a grievous and deadly error to suppose that the Life of Holiness is meant only for the few chosen heroes—the few splendid saints—of God. In their degree, and according to their measure, it is the life—the necessary life—of all the true children of the Lord. For Holiness is not only the perfection and consummation of the Christian life; it is its prime



ARCHDEACON DIGGLE.

From a photograph specially taken for THE CHURCH MONTHLY by MESSRS. ROBINSON & THOMPSON, Liverpool.

essence and first condition. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."‡ "This," said our Lord, "is life eternal: to know Thee, the only true God,

* Johr vi. 53.

† 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. ‡ Heb. xii. 14.