

A SERMON.

"Our exhortation was not of deceit nor of uncleanness, nor in guile; but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel even so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness.—1 THESS. II. 3, 4 and 5.

These words, my very dear friends, condense almost all I have to say at present. Of themselves they may be my sermon. With all humility can I take these words of the Holy Apostle in my own mouth and apply them to all my dealings during nearly ten years with my Congregation. I think I may with some confidence appeal to those who, during these ten years, have known my manner of living,—who for over 1000 occasions have been listening to my utterances in fully considered discourses, on Sundays and Weekdays, and to innumerable other Public Speakings of less formal character,—to all who have known and heard me during these years, I may, I think, appeal with some confidence whether in their opinion I am guilty of affectation or presumption in making this evening a personal application of these sacred words.

And, my Brethren, I do declare, that from first to last I have endeavoured without "deceit" or "uncleanness" or "guile" to exhort you to your duties as Christian men and women, and as loyal members of the Church of England. By no means do I claim the possession of extraordinary gifts, nor do I boast of powers to attract and captivate crowds. Only by the ability which God has given me, whatever that may be, so have I tried to speak, without any consideration as to whether my words pleased men or not. It was one of the first instructions received in my ministerial life, from one of the wisest of prelates, now no more, that *nothing injured the cause of Truth so much as compromising it*; and that no cowardice was so contemptible as that of a man convinced of a Divine truth and concealing it so as to win a little fleeting popularity. And