

less absurd is it to turn away our eyes from obvious and natural suggestions calling up to our minds and presenting in new and it may be more impressive aspects, truths which Scripture has elsewhere plainly and directly substantiated. And the effort to link in these suggestions indissolubly with the Word so that ever as it is read, they will arise in the mind of the reader is surely not unworthy of the Christian teacher, and may fairly be considered as only following out the mind of the Spirit.

It needs no quick and lively fancy for instance, to make the first picture presented to us in this narrative call up the circumstances of man's fallen estate. A poor blind beggar sitting by the wayside, how naturally does this suggest our position by nature, blind to the manifested glory of God, helpless by reason of this very blindness, and dependent for our support, for that which we can neither earn nor merit, but must receive as alms from the hand of merest pity. Every beneficent miracle that our Saviour wrought, reminds of some different aspect of this same sad fact.— The leprosy he healed remind us of moral pollution, the palsies he cured of moral impotency, the fevers he allayed of raging lusts. The hungry fed suggest a deeper inner want, the demoniacs relieved, a sadder spiritual despotism, the dead he raised a deadlier inward death. But of all the emblems which these inward and outward woes suggest, none seems to go more thoroughly to the root of the matter than this of blindness. Itself merely negative, it embraces within itself or brings in its train all positive evil. The blind man travels along life's rough highway to knock his foot against every stone without being able to see the beauty, or estimate the value of earth's most flashing jewels.— Thorns he feels, but he sees no rose. Chill winds blow upon him, but he knows not that they bring up a rich canopy of sun-gilded clouds, big with blessings and ready

to drop down fatness on the earth. The rains beat on him, but he cannot see how the grass grows green and the little hills rejoice. In short, he is alive to all the miseries, and insensible to most of the benignancies of nature. So it is with the spiritually blind. Sensitive to the miseries and blind to the mercies of God's wise and holy government, they grope their darkened way through a world full of God's goodness, finding only evil where in truth all is good, finding only misery where every thing is redolent of mercy; and all because the light of the glory of God has not shined into their hearts, because the eyes of their understanding are not enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Ah, yes! the central evil of the fall is spiritual blindness and the central blessedness of redemption spiritual enlightenment, that we may know with all saints what is the height and depth, and length and breadth of the love of God that passeth knowledge.

But, while every instance of blindness cured reminds of this, the case before us has its own peculiar lesson in the state of apathy and passive contentment in which the blind man is first of all presented, contrasted as it is with the manifestation of eager and earnest anxieties, which take place on the near approach of Jesus. We see that such apathy is a common characteristic of the blind, and we can easily account for it. By the very completeness of their deprivation they are shut out from everything that can remind them by contrast of what they are and what they might have been, and thus speedily become oblivious of the great evil of their lot, and are troubled only about those secondary evils of which it is the occasion. So also with him who is spiritually blind, oblivious of the glory and blessedness from which he is shut out, he is assiduous only in seeking to obviate the present inconveniences