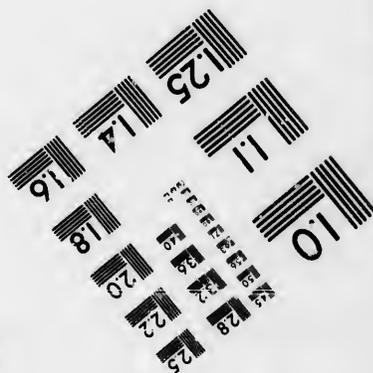
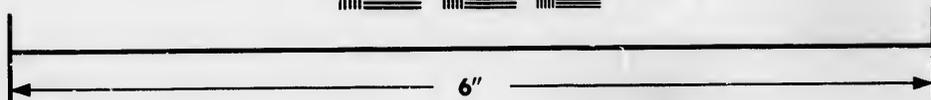
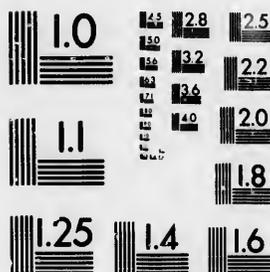


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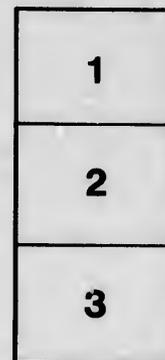
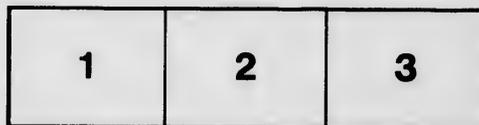
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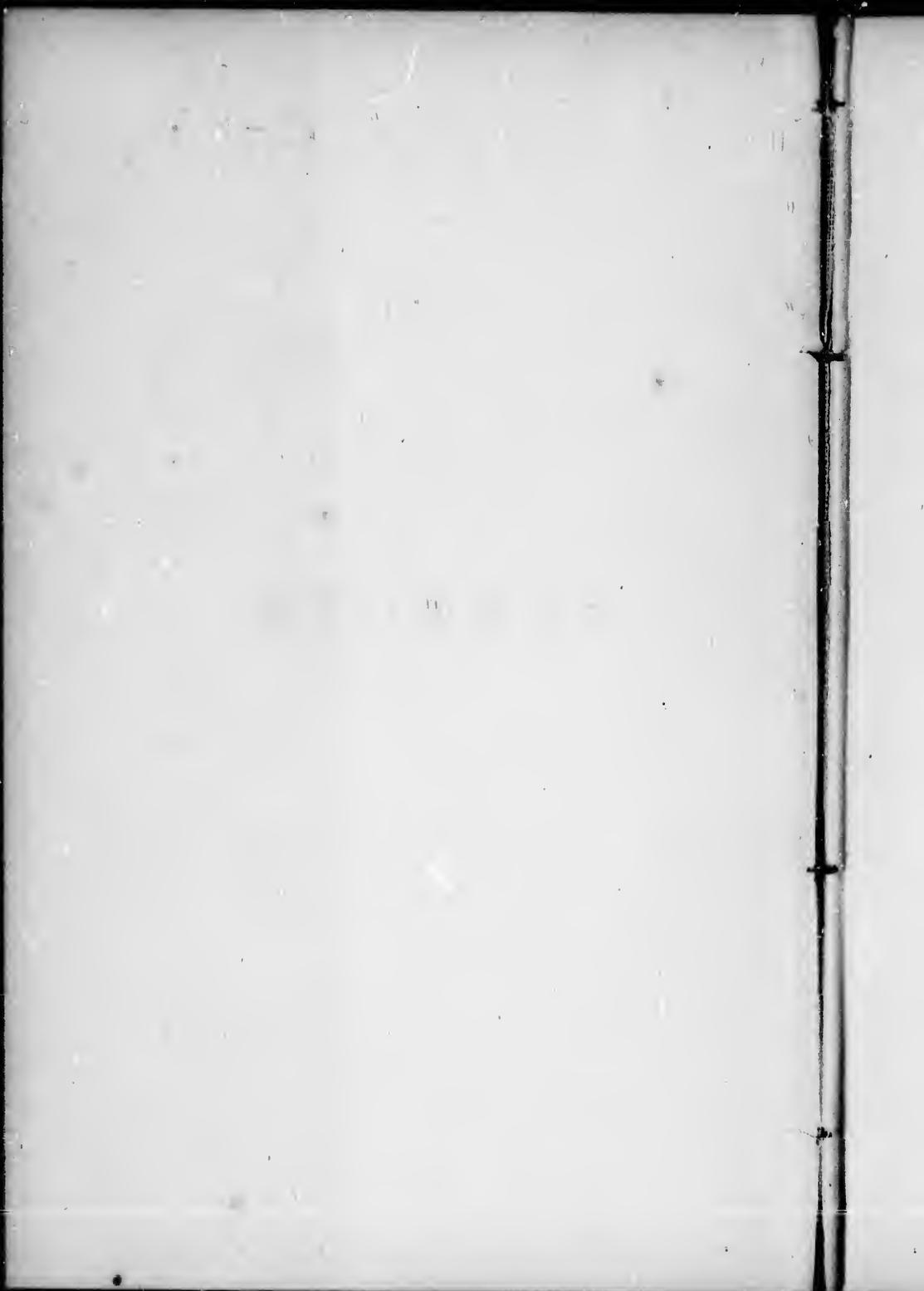
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SERMONS
DOCTRINAL, DEVOTIONAL
AND
PRACTICAL,

BY THE
REV. JOHN CARRY, B.D.,
INCUMBENT OF THE MISSION OF WOODBRIDGE, DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

Quebec:
JOHN LOVELL, ST. ANN STREET.
MDCCLX.

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P R E F A C E .

SMALL as this Volume is, it was originally designed to be much smaller—to contain but the six Sermons on the Holy Eucharist. I was afterwards encouraged to add a few more on miscellaneous subjects.

It may, perhaps, be deemed fitting to explain why a Country Missionary should have ventured on publication at all.

My object is the instruction of my own people, in the first instance, and of others whom the volume may reach, in a few necessary points of Christian doctrine and duty, on some of which, at least, I have found mistakes to be very general. It may be objected that better Sermons on all these subjects are already published. This is, no doubt, very true; but it must be remembered that Sermons are only to a

very small extent read by the *people*, and that the works of the Masters of Israel are little likely to come into their hands. On the other hand, a volume, even of inferior merit, may naturally be expected to cause a little more interest, from the fact of its being published in our midst, and may thus become more instrumental to edification.

With one exception, the Sermons were prepared in the ordinary course of duty, without the least idea of publication, and just as the exigencies of the Christian Year or other circumstances required. Had it been otherwise, they might possibly have been worthier of acceptance. But polish and originality are not easily preserved by a busy Country Missionary.

In the Sermons on the Holy Eucharist I trust there is nothing which is not agreeable to the Sacred Scriptures and the mind of our own Church.

I had no idea that in six Sermons such a subject could be exhausted. I have therefore only touched on the more obvious points, and the most necessary for Communicants to be familiar with.

I am bound to thank the brethren through whose kind patronage this volume appears. If they find in

it any help to piety, let me be bold to request that they will breathe one prayer to God for their servant in Christ Jesus,

JOHN CARRY.

WOODBIDGE,

August, 1860.

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SERMON I.

GODLY SORROW.

(Preached on the 4th Sunday in Lent.)

II. Cor. vii. 10.

“ Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

It cannot be denied that a large portion of holy scripture is taken up with the subject of Sorrow in its various forms, that it holds an eminent position, and fills a wide circumference in our holy religion;—that though the joy of a Christian, even in this dark world, is said by an apostle to be “unspeakable,” yet his sorrow rivals it in magnitude, and struggles with it for equal sway. Hence the profane barking of the world, always essentially anti-Christian—hence its opposition to the cross, that awful type of sorrow—and its impatient objurgations:—“Are we never to hear aught from your pulpits but the same melancholy strains? When will its torrent of mingled tears, and sighs, and groans, and alarms run dry?” Forgetting that sorrow is in the pulpit—because it is in the world; forgetting that sorrow is in the world, not because Christianity brought it there, but ourselves, by our sins; forgetting that Christianity (on which they fasten a quarrel, with a sort of natural antipathy) is not all sorrow—but that it has exhaustless stores of joy, to which they have no heart: but worst, and most of all to be deplored, forgetting, with immeasurable ingratitude, the wonder-working wisdom and goodness of God, who, finding sorrow in the world, introduced by human wilfulness, divests it of its

sting, makes it its own cure, transmutes it into an instrument of joy, and the mediate cause of glory and felicity! The apostle, in the few brief but powerful words of our text, perfectly describes the *character and advantages* of godly sorrow—sorrow thus graciously transmuted and divinely ennobled,—by contrast with the sorrow of the world—sorrow in its original, natural state. That we may apprehend that *character*, and realize those *advantages*, is the aim of this discourse; and let it, my brethren, be our prayer also to that good God, “without whom” no purpose “is strong or holy.”

1. First, then, whence does sorrow proceed? Undoubtedly from either the idea, or the actual feeling of misery. The manifold inconveniences and sufferings which arise from the losses and calamities of this life—poverty, sickness, disappointment, infamy—are the direct cause of the sorrow of the world. Whilst godly sorrow springs from another source—the consideration of evils of a different nature, evils spiritual and eternal: the injuries inflicted by sin on our moral and intellectual being, which cease not with the present life, but live on through undying ages, in monstrous exaggeration, more and more separating us from the Fountain of happiness—the ever blessed God. Godly sorrow, as the very words indicate, admits of no motive which is not referable to God.

2. But they differ not only in their sources, but in their *effects*. “*The sorrow of the world worketh death.*”—Any great grief, it is well-known, often blinds the understanding, so that it cannot see the means of redress, even when they are visible to others; it induces a mental stupefaction, benumbing the faculties and rendering the case helpless and hopeless. We know, too, how it dims the eyes, dries up the vital moisture of the body, and accelerates dissolution, even where the suicidal hand does not make shorter work. But this is only the smallest—the visible part of that death intended by the apostle. The sorrow which wells up from the low fountains of the earth, nor recognizes God, ends not with the earth—it issues in a worse death than the dissolution of the body,—in the severing of the soul from God, through the whole period of its onward existence,—a severance embracing every thing that is terrible in imagination or reality to a being like man, capable of the extremity of bliss and woe. Such is the dark, shoreless ocean into which the sorrow of the world empties its bitter streams.

Godly sorrow, on the contrary, belongs to the very region of life. It waters the restored Eden of the Church, flowing fast by the tree of life—it is in the poor sinner, fallen from God, lying in the shadow and region of death, the sure sign of life; it implies sight and feeling, the undoubted indications of life; it is the first token of returning health, the pulse throbbing which rejoices the good Physician as he stands over him with pitying regards, and which gladdens the sympathizing angels, ever ready to triumph in the success of His miracles of love. Thus blessed is it—*because it worketh repentance*, and this leads to salvation—the everlasting health of an indissoluble body, glorious, spiritual, immortal; the perfect happiness of a spirit pardoned, purified, replenished with the peace of God, and—oh, summit of all conceivable bliss!—united to Him, for ever!

3. The apostle was, therefore, a true friend to the Corinthians, when he rejoiced that they were made sorry by his letter. Friendship is indeed said to diminish grief; but why in this case it *caused* grief, we can now be at no loss to understand. *The happy consequences are the sufficient answer.* The apostle says, he did not rejoice simply that they were made sorry, (that would not have consisted with friendship,) *but that they sorrowed to repentance*—for “sorrowing after a godly manner they received damage from him in nothing.”

4. This leads the apostle to the position of our text, and us to observe *the important distinction which it makes between Godly sorrow and repentance.* If we were to regard only the plainness of the distinction, we should dismiss the subject in a very few words; but if we consider the all but universal extent of the mistake which confounds this distinction, and the fatal danger of such a mistake, we can think no fulness, or frequency, or iteration of warning superfluous. The text makes the distinction very pointed—“*Godly sorrow worketh repentance:*” it cannot, therefore, be that which it works or effects. A mighty step towards, an indispensable instrument of repentance, is godly sorrow; but it is not that very repentance. Yet how apt are thoughtless Christians to suppose that when they find springing up in their hearts sorrow for their sins, and that sorrow not arising merely from the unpleasant and painful consequences of sin, (a feeling too often mistaken for

godly sorrow,) but from really right and religious motives;—the heinousness and guilt of sin before God, the indignity and ruin it is to our moral nature, the unnatural rebellion it is against our Heavenly Father, the monstrous ingratitude it is to the Blessed Jesus who bought us with His precious blood, the despite it does to the Holy Spirit—the black enormity and foulness which encompass it in all its relations to the Holy Trinity;—when they find sorrow arising on these accounts, and sin is even loathed,—how generally do people delude themselves with the persuasion that this is indeed repentance! But repentance is something far beyond this. It is not merely a revulsion of feeling—it is, as the original word means, a *change of mind*; a deliberate change of purpose, and plan, and *act*. Everything that we read of repentance in the New Testament shows it to be equivalent to *thorough amendment of heart and life*. Thus we read of “works meet for repentance:” of “repentance from dead works,” which cannot mean sorrow; for *sorrow from dead works* would make no sense; it means a change of state, a conversion from dead works;—from the “death of sin to the life of righteousness.” So from those well-known promises to the penitent, in the prophet Ezekiel, we learn that repentance is the “turning away from all those sins which we have committed, and doing those things which are lawful and right.” But nowhere is this character of repentance better illustrated than in the verse following our text, “Godly sorrow worketh repentance.” What is the repentance thus wrought? “Behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!” These are the fruits of that sorrow which is effectual: these are the parts of repentance: *clearing ourselves* of all that is past, and great *carefulness* for the future; *anger* at ourselves for our old sins, and *fear* lest we commit the like again; *vehement desires* of pleasing God, and *zeal* for holy actions, and *revenge* upon ourselves for our sins, called by St. Paul, in another place, a “judging of ourselves, lest we be judged of the Lord.” “And in pursuance of this truth (says Bishop Taylor) the primitive church did not admit a sinning person to the public communion with the faithful, till, besides their sorrow, they had spent some years in *ἀγαθοεργία*, in ‘doing good works,’ and

holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination which led them into those sins, whereof they were now admitted to repent. And, therefore, we find that they stood in the station of penitents seven years, thirteen years, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God and His holy Church." These considerations may save us from any longer mistaking (to use Bishop Taylor's figure) "a grasshopper for an eagle; sorrow and holy purposes, for the entire duty of repentance."

Godly sorrow, then, "*works out* repentance:" it has a natural efficacy thereto; for we have a natural aversion to that which causes us sorrow, and an inclination to reject and even destroy it; and since our *sins themselves* (and not their consequences) are the cause of godly sorrow, therefore we are inclined to forsake them, to make war on them, and to do those good and holy works which are most opposite to them. This will be the effect of godly sorrow, if, when God's grace begets it in our heart, we do not madly and wilfully smother it, but cherish it as the germ of our true life, till it issue in the perfect work of Repentance.

5. There is another point of contrast—"the sorrow of the world worketh death," *immediately* and *directly*, of its own proper force: but godly sorrow worketh salvation (the opposite of death) only *mediately*, that is, through repentance.

In godly sorrow we have seen what a restoring, curative power there is, while worldly sorrow is deadly in its very nature, and immediately—it only aggravates the evils which cause it. The covetous man, who grieves over his lost wealth—is he cured of his covetousness by his grief? Nay, is he not most likely to have his spiritual disorder made more inveterate, his covetous passion still more inflamed, by the stimulus of his sorrow? The sorrow of the ambitious man for his disappointment and failure—will it not be more likely to confirm the ambitious temper, than to beget the contrary? Thus is worldly sorrow the antagonist of life, the direct way to spiritual death. But godly sorrow, by dispossessing the sin, effects a spiritual cure, and opens the way of life.

6. We may here remark, that sorrow is in its own nature curative, a provisional remedy for our misery in our very constitution,—inclining us to avoid the causes which excite it. And in affairs

pertaining wholly to the present life, it often works this wholesome intended effect. But in what pertains to the spiritual life, it fails utterly, nay, works the contrary of the effect intended, through the perverseness and contradictoriness of sinners, till God informs with His Spirit that restorative power which He originally put in it, and makes it the medicine of immortality. Thus does this natural passion (like all our passions) find its highest place and noblest use and development in religion.

7. The necessity of repentance, I trust we all see. Repentance is unto salvation—in no other way can salvation be attained. If we repent not, we die. *Have we this repentance?* How necessary is it to bring this question solemnly before our minds! Standing at only the starting point of godly sorrow and holy purpose, we look eagerly towards the glorious goal of salvation, shining in immortal splendors; and our longing eyes dwell not upon the intermediate way, skipped with more than lightning rapidity—the long, patient path of *Repentance*. Have we the “repentance unto salvation not to be repented of,”—never followed by a single regret for all its bitterness, and all its toilsome severities?—Every sinner has cause to lament his sins, that is—in their consequences; and many do bitterly lament them in the present bitter experience of their bitter effects on mind, body, and estate; and many more perhaps are sorry for (though they can hardly be said to lament) the possible consequences of them through a long eternity. But this is not godly sorrow. Those who grieve for their sins only because of injurious consequences to their person or estate, would grieve as much for the same injuries effected by a fever, or an inundation—or other natural causes, or unavoidable accidents. Those who are sorry for their sins for no other reason than that endless perdition awaits them, can no more be said to repent than the traitor, who is sorry that his treason brings him to the scaffold, and then only sorry, when he finds that the scaffold cannot be escaped. And much, very much of that which many feel sure is godly sorrow, which excites grief and violent indignation—is not such. It is too often a subtler form of selfishness and pride. We are indignant at ourselves that we should have been again overpowered by, or entrapped into, what we had so often resolved, and prayed, and vowed against; what we had so often renounced and

execrated; what had so often caused us agitation, and pain, and shame; and what thus exposed us to ourselves in our miserable weakness, our secret corruption, our foul deformity, our shameful irresoluteness. Not sorrow, alas! simply because the deed was against the holy and immutable Will of God.—In godly sorrow this is the rod which smites the stony rock into the gushing streams of penitence—the guilt of opposition to the Will of the all gracious, all holy God. “Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned,” is the feeling; and not—“Against *myself* have I madly done this thing.” Nay, the very hope of pardon is an active cause of godly sorrow, while it would calm and even wholly remove the sorrow of the false penitent. The true penitent has indignation at himself for his sins against that merciful Father who refuses not His forgiveness to such ungracious, undeserving wretches. He says, with the Psalmist, “There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.” The sense of which works indignation and revenge against himself in the penitent; the hope of which in the impenitent allays all fear, and calms every perturbation. *Have we, then, this Repentance?*

Let me remind you again, my brethren, that if your godly sorrow, however pungent, or active, or sincere, stop short of that Repentance, which is AMENDMENT, it can profit you nothing. Rivers of tears would be barren of result, save that they would leave the heart more dry and desolate than before. The highest tides of emotion would have no other effect, than to make us less impressible than ever. This is not only the natural effect of feelings excited, yet not carried out into act; but it is also the supernatural and just judgment of God upon those who neglect to improve the visitations of His Blessed Spirit; who, when He breaks the iron bars, and sets before them the open door of repentance, refuse to go forth—voluntary prisoners, and no less wretched! Would it not be well for us to inquire seriously (as we advance in this holy season, and ere it close upon us) what progress we have made in this repentance, or whether our eyes have not rested on a vain image of it? What a mistake to suppose that Lent is a time merely to afflict our bodies with fasting, to go mournfully, to renounce the more obstrusive gaieties of the world, to tread a beaten round of dull and pious formalities, to work ourselves

into occasional fits of religious sorrow, to awaken some feelings of compunction, to squeeze out a few pious tears at the remembrance of past enormities, and lade the air with our sighs:—instead of being a call to pull our sins up by the roots, to extirpate our ungodly and ungoverned passions, to lift up our hearts unto the Lord in affectionate, reverent, permanent, invincible love, to cultivate the temper of heaven in untiring acts of holiness—in a word, *To Repent*. Yes, my brethren, Lent is not a call to sentimentality, but to AMENDMENT!

If you labour successfully to obtain a true sense of your need of this amendment, a true sense of your manifold deficiencies, of your great wretchedness while at a distance from God and not reconciled to Him by hearty repentance; then will follow naturally and spontaneously the penitence that befits this solemn season—tears from the deep fountain of holy grief, prayers winged with importunate desires and the sighs of contrition, devotion glowing and “holy as the fires kindled by the fanning of a cherub’s wing,” and love that aspires perpetually to God, and longs after perfect union with Him.

8. In conclusion, let me once again, my brethren, beseech you to contrast godly sorrow with the sorrow of the world, in their natural effects, that we may be quickened to prosecute with unremitting zeal the “Sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.”—The one is injurious to the health of the body, confirms the vices of the mind, augments the burden of misery, and ends in eternal death. As when it was attempted to console one who mourned for his mother, by saying, that his tears could not bring her back; he replied, “that is the very reason I weep.” But godly sorrow is profitable; its whole progress is towards peace and joy; every step taken in it advances us nearer to the perfection of our nature, and the full satisfaction of its cravings for rest and felicity. Blessed are all its griefs, for they are but the brief darkness (however dense) before the cheering dawn, the glorious sunrise of a day that shall never set. Blessed are its bitterest tears! for they are soft and refreshing to the heart blighted by sin, as the dews of even to the parched and withering flowers;—a gentle stream fertilizing wherever it flows, and scattering profusely along its banks the flowers and fruits of holiness:—unlike

the dark and turbid torrent of worldly grief, which desolates all that it reaches, uprooting and hurrying along in hopeless ruin every plant that might have been planted and become fruitful in the garden of the Lord, and leaving behind, to mark its track, but the filth of its slime and the wrecks of its fury.

But it is in the Last great and terrible Day, that the difference will be fully revealed. Then every penitential sigh will be found, while it lightened the load of misery and sin, to have added to the eternal weight of glory; then every holy tear shall shine a gem in the crown of light: while the tears of worldly sorrow shall be so many petrifications of guilt, witnessing against the impenitent; and all their misdirected and unhallowed griefs, the ghosts of their many crimes, shall clamour for terrible judgment.

SERMON II.

JESUS WORKING THE WORK OF GOD.

(Preached during the Lenten Ember Days.)

ST. MARK, vi. 31.

“And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.”

1. In the life of our Blessed Lord, after he had entered upon His public ministry of “preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,” we have a truly astonishing example of the most fervent zeal, and the most untiring industry. No sooner had he been baptized, than He began the tour of Galilee, “preaching in every synagogue”—admired and glorified of all the people: for, in spite of the severity and spirituality of His teaching—so immensely different from the lax morality of the Pharisees, strict in nothing but an exterior ceremonial—He obtained a popularity entirely beyond what we should at all anticipate. Everywhere “the common people heard Him gladly.” The multitudes that followed Him from city to city, that resorted to Him by the sea-side, that intruded upon His most solitary haunts, that thronged Him as He stood in their streets, that besieged the dwellings which He honored with His sacred Presence,—are undeniable proofs of the ascendancy He had gained over the popular mind.

All this, of course, exposed Him to inconveniences and labours: but these He was so far from shunning, that He rejoiced in them, as entirely coinciding with the gracious design of His mission amongst

us. So, in our text, we see the multitudinous stream of comers and goers took away all opportunity of necessary repose. And when we recollect that this was not a solitary instance, but approached more nearly to an ordinary rule, we may perhaps learn to look with more holy wonder, with more reverent love, on the labours and sacrifices of the pitying Saviour.

Allow me to help your memory by two or three instances: St. Mark tells us, in his 1st chap., "that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places"—(because of the intolerable thronging of the multitudes, and the dangers which might result to themselves from it),—"and (he adds) they came to Him from every quarter." In the 3rd chap., he tells us, "that Jesus withdrew Himself to the sea-shore, and a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judæa, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things He did, came unto Him." And because He had "healed many, they *rushed* upon Him to touch Him." And on another occasion, related in the same chapter, "when He had entered into an house with His disciples" (apparently for the purpose of taking refreshment), "the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread." Upon which "His friends went out to lay hold of Him, thinking Him beside Himself," because He so unsparingly sacrificed Himself in relieving the bodily and spiritual distresses of an afflicted and ignorant population.

How unweariedly active was He! When the sun goes down, and "the soft dews of kindly sleep" fall with reviving influence on the sons of ease and health, Jesus still wakes amid the throngs of the lame and the blind, and the deaf and the sick; yea, "*all that were diseased*" were gathered from every quarter and strewn around Him in all the misery and ugliness which are the unhappy progeny of sin,—while this, as their real cause, would strike *Him* with more concern than the exterior wretchedness. And, worse spectacle, "all that were possessed with devils," in their manifold writhings, agonies, and madness, are presented to Him, and He refuses not the labour of "laying His hands on *every one* of them, and healing them all." Thus does the star of eve find Jesus among the wretched.

Again, in the darksome night, when the tempest raged, we find Him, mindful of His disciples, who were oppressed with fear and labour, "walking on the sea and coming to them."

Another time, we find Him rising up a great while before day," and retiring to a solitary place, to snatch an hour for devotion, in anticipation of the importunate demands of "the afflicted and distressed in mind and body." And when He is found by His disciples, it is only to hear from them, "All men seek for Thee." In His active love He refuses not, in deference to the weak faith of a sincere suppliant, to go a toilsome journey to work a miracle of mercy—He, whose powerful word could reach through infinity, and, in a moment, accomplish His will. His feet would never know rest, if the innocent infirmity of a mortal body did not demand it: His hands were ever outstretched in acts of beneficent power: His tongue ceaselessly poured forth the treasures of grace and truth. What can be said beyond the few pregnant words of St. Peter—"He went about doing good!"

O compassionate Jesus, how much didst Thou labour for us, ungrateful men! all day speaking Thy parables to the multitudes; in the evening, when alone with Thy disciples, expounding all things to them; and, wearied with Thy sacred toil, fain to sleep at night in a little boat, rocked by the billows which affrighted Thy companions—much favoured, but of little faith!

But, my brethren, there is another consideration which must be entertained, if we would have any tolerable view of our Lord's labours of love. As a matter of faith, we believe Him to be "perfect man"—and in a double sense, *i.e.*, not only truly possessing our human nature, but possessing it in its highest state of perfection—all its parts and passions completely harmonized and adjusted. How inconceivable to us, then, the *exquisite sensitiveness* of such a Being! How thrilling the sight of misery, the moan of anguish, to a compassion so benignly and perfectly tender! beyond anything our dull nerves and duller affections can realize!

How harrowing to the perfectly human and holy sympathies of the Son of Man must have been the diversified forms of spiritual evil which were obtruded on His notice! hearts all desolate and burnt up with malignant passions; with just enough of moral life left to understand how utterly miserable they were in being under

the bondage of corruption, in being led captive by the devil at his will, without the least possibility of freeing themselves.

When you think of the Saviour's profound perception of spiritual evil, when you couple with it the melting pity which he ever showed to such poor wretches as a Magdalene, and consider the constant recurrence of such spectacles,—then you may see how intensely magnified were His merely physical sufferings by the keenness and extent of His mental emotion;—how wearing and harrassing they were to His bodily frame.

2. We must next notice the beautiful instance in our text of our Saviour's considerate kindness.

He who never thought or cared for His own ease or comfort; who never complained of His weariness or watching, of His hunger or thirst; was ever forward, with a divinely beautiful charity, to care for the minutest wants of others. He who endured the rigour of a forty days' fast, disregarding the solicitations of His bodily nature, will work a miracle rather than dismiss a hungry multitude fasting: yea, when there was no *necessity* at all, He will work a miracle rather than allow even shame to touch the feelings of those who honour Him—as in the miracle of Cana. And here, forgetful of Himself, He seems careful only for His disciples who humbly shared His labours: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile"—hereby providing, at once, for their bodily and spiritual refreshment.

3. We are now to consider the *end* of all this activity.

I suppose we must be all conscious that it was vastly more than the mere effect of merely benevolent emotion, transient and aimless in its nature. No—there was too much of difficulty, of self-denial, and of sacrifice, in all this, to allow us to suppose that it proceeded from aught but solid principle, firm determination, and settled definite aims. While inferior motives were not disregarded, we feel assured that the Son of God aimed at men's salvation chiefly. The miracle of healing or of feeding was wrought for the body, but the *method* of it was studiously managed, that it might be instrumental to the effecting of a similar mercy for the soul. We know better, too, than to confine the glorious design of salvation to the multitudes of Judæa. That would be too small a result for the matchless love and divine activity of the Eternal Son.

Mercifully did He include the whole human family in the purposes of His grace; so that all the labours of His life should have a determined instrumentality in effecting the salvation of the world. He came into the world *to save sinners*. How many divine voices echo endlessly from shore to shore of revelation this world-reviving truth! It was a work undertaken from infinite love; and how did the breast of Christ burn with a holy eagerness till it was accomplished! At the end of His pilgrimage of love there stood the bitter cross, and, stretching beyond it, the gloomy realms of death to be vanquished, ere salvation could be obtained for guilty man. But Jesus was eager to embrace the cross, and plunge into the dreary abysses of the dead, in full assurance of victory, and animated with the joy of presenting man again with his long-forfeited life and immortality. And so it was that He never once faltered in His onward career towards that awful goal. His eye was constantly fixed on it, and His mind ran to it faster than the lagging hours of the allotted years, and the necessary, determined acts of His preceding life, would allow. Oh, what strange fervency, what awful longings, mark the Christ almost as soon as He has entered upon His three years' work, and bewilder His disciples! Though in every other thought and deed of His life He was so absolutely submissive to the allotments of the Father, here He seemed impelled by a sort of mysterious and sacred eagerness. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I *straitened* till it be accomplished!" "*With desire have I desired* to eat this passover with you before I suffer"—because He rejoiced that not another passover was to delay Him from the long-wished-for moment, when the great blow was to be struck which should break for ever the shackles of human guilt, and procure, amid the acclamations of heaven, an amnesty for man.

But though this was the crowning act, yet all that went before was necessary too, and, being necessary, deserved and secured the active regard of the Redeemer.

Let us consider His design in some of its main parts.

In order that His great atoning act might give out all its virtue, it was necessary that there should be a Society in which, through appointed means, the efficacy of the Cross might be for ever communicated; in which men, as rational beings, might by precept

and example be trained up for a happy immortality. To secure a solid basis for such a structure, and to secure the means of full instruction and perfect example to all Christians, to the end of time, the Saviour directed the labours of His life. He came not only to be a Sacrifice for sin, but also as a *Teacher* of all moral and spiritual truth, and an *Example of godly life*. And therefore we see an additional reason for the fulness of His divine instructions.

i. He was desirous of leaving a treasure of wisdom and knowledge to the world in His blessed sayings, and parables, and discourse; and therefore He laboured ceaselessly, particularly as His end drew nigh. For the last week of His life, we find Him at day-break in the temple teaching the crowds who hung upon His words; or arguing with the obstinate Pharisees; and not till evening going out to Bethany for rest and food. And even the latter He seems sometimes to have neglected in His absorbing earnestness. For on one of those days, going *very early in the morning* from Bethany to Jerusalem, as He approached the fig-tree on which the miracle of blasting was wrought—we read that He hungered. And from thence onwards the Saviour has seen the happy fruits of His travail: from how many millions of hearts have gone up to God the warm utterances of gratitude and praise for those “words of Jesus” which bring light and consolation and enlargement to the sin-burdened soul! Alas, that while *we* so indignantly denounce the unutterable impiety which seals up His gospel from eyes that must be dark without it, so many of ourselves should show our treacherous insincerity by our indifference to the hearing, reading, and meditation of it.

ii. Again: as He was to be the great Exemplar of Christians, so did it behove Him to leave for our transcription a perfect Pattern of devotedness to the work of God. We have already said enough to give some impression of this. We have seen how no labour or danger was shunned in His devotion to His work. Even His disciples,—who were slow of heart to understand what the prophets had said, and who were never ready to see their predictions fulfilled in their Master,—could not help applying to Him one prophecy—“The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up.” How resolutely does He sweep away every argument for even the shadow of rest, with “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day!” How wonderfully was the saying of His childhood exem-

plified in His after life—"I must be about My Father's business!" Wearied with His journey, as He sat by the well in Samaria, He hardens Himself against the demands of nature, and engages with life and energy in the conversion of a poor sinful woman. And when, meanwhile, His disciples bring Him food, He appears insensible to His want; and His thoughts being abstracted from all things of the earth, save its sins and its souls, He astonishes them by His answer—"I have meat to eat that ye know not of—*my* meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

Thank God, this glorious Example has not been without its fruit. Miserable as have been the short-comings of the universal Church, yet what a wonderful *total* do her annals present of disinterested love, of beneficent activity, of dauntless duty, of unconquerable zeal! And this is chiefly owing to the example of Christ, for it was while "looking unto Jesus," that all those gentle deeds of unobtrusive goodness, which are registered only in the Book of God's Remembrance, and all those heroic acts which shed lustre on religion, were performed. Without the *example* of Jesus, it is to be feared that His precepts would be enervated of almost all their force.

iii. His miracles, too, were not merely works of present mercy, but the future defences and demonstrations of His religion; and, therefore, He was diligent in working them—that He might manifest His own glory, and cause men to believe in Him; "that (as He said on one occasion) the works of God should be made manifest;" and therefore, He says, "I do cures to-day, and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

iv. The training of His apostles for the work of man's salvation, was another main part of Christ's ministry. I need not dwell on the manner in which He executed it; with what assiduous care He inculcated and reiterated the simplest lessons; with what patience He bore their dulness of spiritual apprehension; how gently He reproved their forgetfulness and want of faith; how benignly He apologized for their failure in duty to Him; how compassionately He forgave their backsliding, and received them again to His love.

And now, my brethren, before drawing to a *conclusion*, let me ask you to consider the inexpressible *importance* of that work

which so occupied the *heart and hands* of the Blessed Jesus. When we think of a Being so august, so wise, so pure, so necessarily exalted in His aims—how overpowering must be our conceptions of the importance of that which absorbed His whole being! It could be nothing less than the *mightiest work* for the glory of God—the ultimate aim of all sublime intelligencē: *that work was our salvation*. Do we not, brethren, feel abashed and confounded at our cold and meagre thoughts of the Christian salvation? at the indifference which we so often entertain about *our own* salvation? Oh, let us ponder the work of Christ till our hearts glow with admiration and thanksgiving; till all the ardour of our souls is merged in the one desire of salvation; till every trace of guilty indifference is banished, and Christ's oracle, in all the hidden solemn depths of its meaning, is revealed—"One thing is needful!"

But the holy activity and zeal of our Lord concerns us most nearly in another respect also. Not only did he work for our salvation, but we are expressly told that in that work "He hath left us an example that we should follow His steps." This, too, our Baptism represents: "It represents to us our profession, which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ." How diligent, then, should we be in the service of God, after the example we have been considering! Was Christ so diligent in preaching the gospel of the kingdom—and shall we not make some exertion to hear it? Did Christ, fasting, at daylight, teach in the temple; and did the very Jews come in crowds to hear Him—and cannot Christians now, with every circumstance of comfort and convenience, be induced to come to Christ's house to hear the words of eternal life? Did he neglect the cravings of bodily hunger, that He might minister the bread of life to hungry souls; and shall we not eagerly "labour for this meat that endureth to everlasting life?"

What an example of zeal *in all that pertains to the good of our brother*, have we here too. When we recollect how Christ was pressed, and thronged, and rushed upon, and wearied, and harrassed in mind and body; does it become us to be fretful and impatient when the bodily or spiritual necessities of poor Christians make even large demands on our time, our attention, or our purses? Does it become the sickly sentimentalist, male or female, that weeps over the imaginary distresses of a romance, to flee with pain

and loathing from scenes of actual misery, from the tattered rags, the squalid couch of straw, the pinched features of famine, the piercing sounds of anguish, or (even) the abodes of vice? *Children of sensibility* they call themselves—rather call them truly, *children of selfishness*. Does it become the rich merchant, on whose brow the mark of the Crucified was traced, when his office is besieged by those who plead for the souls or bodies of Christ's redeemed,—to fortify himself against the tale of want, and peevishly exclaim with Rebekah, "I am weary of my life," because of those unintermitted importunities: if they cease not thus to trouble me, "what good shall my life do me?"—O thou man of wealth, think of the Man of Sorrows—and become thou a man of love, large-hearted and open-handed!

But this is an example which the *Clergy* incomparably beyond all men should feel themselves bound to imitate, because Christ has vouchsafed to give them a prime place among the instrumentalities of salvation: inspiration itself attests their dignity—"workers together with God!"

How, then, ought they to work, who "work together with God"—by Christ's side, who have His promise to be ever with them; to whom so much is entrusted; who are daily conversant with the great Example? They should work like Christ, "in season and out of season," they should work while it is to-day, they should work mindful of the value of souls bought with the inestimable blood, they should work looking for "the recompense of the reward" to be given by the Chief Shepherd, and—in a word—labouring to transcribe the example of pastoral fidelity which He hath left them.

Oh, my brethren, they tremble under the awful weight of their responsibility! They are persuaded of their own insufficiency. Their only hope is in the promised aid of Christ, and in the *prayers* of Christians. This Ember week, then, do they call upon you—and the Church with authority calls upon you—to beseech God with your devoutest prayers, with your most penitential fastings, that He would pour down upon them abundantly the reviving dews of His grace, the Spirit of zeal and knowledge and devotion; that so they may be wise builders, able ministers of the New Testament, faithful stewards of divine mysteries.

If St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the renowned champion of the cross, the converter of half the world, the favoured visitant of the "third heaven"—if he so earnestly beseeches Christians, "Brethren, pray for us,"—so that we may say of this request that it was "*his token in every epistle*,"—how can *we* help urgently asking your prayers? And how can *you* deserve a faithful and successful ministry, if you do not think it worth praying for?

The success of the ministry now seems nothing compared with its ancient success—perhaps we have *one* reason here, in the neglect of Christians to pray fervently and constantly for those who must always bear the brunt of the battle, who are the appointed leaders in the glorious war. If this duty were to be fully performed, what great things might we not expect from it! Secure of the prayers of Christian flocks, the Clergy would study, and preach, and pray, and exhort, and travel, and labour, with the animating hope that all these would be done far more successfully, would not be barren of the most blessed results. Strength and courage, patience and joy, would animate their breasts, whether they entered the lowly hovel, or had to meet the face of pride, or had to brave in foreign lands the violence of the savage,—while they knew that millions of suppliants were besieging heaven in their behalf. Nor would their strength be in mere feeling—the result of airy imagination. No—they would go forth to their several spheres of labour, accompanied with more than kingly pomp and power; while followed by the invisible bands of pious wishes and troops of faithful prayers. In them they would not only be greatly glad, but they would be invincibly strong and triumphantly victorious. Then should the rapid and thick-coming conquests hasten the expected universal sway of our Saviour and our King. Then soon should the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. And then, as each good soldier, whether of the clergy or the other faithful, sunk down at his post, whether hearing the shouts of victory, or in the midst of the undecided conflict—the kind and compassionate Master would say—not as in our text, "Come ye apart into a desert place, and rest *awhile*;" but—"Come ye and rest for ever from your labours, in the very region of rest, the Paradise above: come, inherit the rest prepared for the people of God!"

SERMON III.

THE FRUIT OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

(Preached in the Cathedral, Quebec, on Wednesday in Passion Week, 1856.)

ISAIAH liii. 11.

"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

WE can scarcely conceive it possible for any member of a Christian congregation in the present day, to doubt for an instant that this whole chapter relates exclusively to our Blessed Saviour. The very instinct of Christians in all ages of the church, from the first century to the present moment, proves that it does so. For choose what period you will, and you find Christians, when they would describe the sufferings of our Lord, turn at once to this passage of Scripture. So plainly are those sufferings set forth, that the chapter looks more like a history than a prophecy; it sounds more like a last chapter in the Gospels, than a prediction delivered seven hundred and fifty years before the event. Hence Isaiah, because of his remarkable clearness, more especially as contrasted with the obscure and enigmatical style of the other prophets, is called "the *Evangelical* prophet" — a characteristic which was very early noticed; for St. Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, confuting a Jewish adversary from the holy Scriptures, says:—"These words have not been invented by me, nor have they been ornately composed by art of man; but David sang them; Isaiah *evangelized* them."*

In the part of the chapter preceding our text, the sufferings of Christ are depicted with as much force and variety of expression

* Ἡσαίας δὲ εὐγγελίζετο. Dial. cum Tryph. 246. D. Ed. 1615.

as it is possible to conceive. Every species of painful and violent bodily infliction is included in the dark catalogue of woes which fell on that devoted and holy Victim: and overpowering as the impressions must be which those gloomy predictions make on our imaginations, we may rest assured that if they were not vastly transcended, they were fully equalled by the dread reality.

But yet, brethren, I apprehend that our text is calculated to give us a far more impressive view of our Blessed Redeemer's sufferings, than if we were to track His every footstep from the high priest's palace to Golgotha, and mark every instrument of agony, and observe its horrible operation. For it opens to us a new scene; it lifts us into a higher region—from the corporeal to the spiritual; it hides the tortures of the body, but to display more awfully the agony of the soul. Yes, my brethren, it becomes us, as we are treading, this Passion Week, the dolorous way of the Man of Sorrows, not to forget *the travail of His SOUL*.

The travail of His soul! this it was that completed His woes, that made his bitter cup run over with the very intensity of grief—and *without which* (we say it with reverence) many of His faithful disciples in all ages would, in their endurance for His Name's sake, have suffered as much as their Master.

Reflect on all the supereminent and divine powers of spiritual perception and invincible endurance, which flowed into His soul from such intimate conjunction with Deity, while yet His human nature remained entire—infinately exalted, but wholly undiminished. Reflect on this, and it may help to give you an insight into the travail of the Redeemer's soul. But it is after all only a fleeting gleam, the very vaguest conjecture, we can have of that mystery of woe—a mystery from before whose awful shrine not even Seraphim dare or can draw the unrending veil. Safer, better for us to pray with the ancient church, "By Thy *unknown* agonies, O Christ, have mercy upon us!" than endeavour vainly to gaze into those dark, unrevealable abysses. But as His exalted human nature gave Him a boundless capacity for suffering—and hence the weight of the expression in the text; so did it give Him an equally boundless idea of spiritual excellence—and hence the heaven-high fulness of meaning in the following words—"and shall be satisfied." Oh, what an immortal good, what an

eternal excellency, what a glorious result must that be, which equals the aspirations, the hopes, the exalted perceptions of the adorable God-man ! which compensates Him for the travail of His soul ! What a joy was that, in whose radiant prospect *He endured the cross, and despised its shame*, and whose possession shall yet fill Him with a full, and entire, and undying satisfaction !

If we, with our limited faculties and perverted affections, can have such expansive ideas of moral excellence, and find it hard to be contented with the most perfect specimens which the world has ever afforded—how great an achievement, how magnificent a result was that which satisfied Him, to whose spiritual gaze and divine desires, ours are less to be compared than the sight and motion of a mole to the sun-bright eye and the soaring flight of the eagle.

Though the *suffering and joy* of Christ are equally subjects which we cannot presume to comprehend, but yet are necessarily compelled to meditate on ; let me endeavour to give your meditations a definite direction, and so perhaps aid your conceptions of this great theme.

1. "He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied," *in the free remission of sins to men*. From eternity the prescient eye of the Son of God beheld mankind in infinite and (but for Him) abandoned misery. He saw them in enmity with God ; no power in themselves of making that reparation to justice, without which the righteous Governor of the world, though all-pitying, could not extend to them mercy. He saw them withering away under the frown of God, and the infinite depths of His divine pity were moved. "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no Intercessor : therefore His own arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness it sustained Him." By the single might of His own right hand and His mighty arm did He get Himself the victory (even in death) over death and the banded powers of hell—triumphing over them by Himself:—And lo ! Justice relaxes her frown, and flings away her sword, and becomes the very abettor of Mercy, who opens wide her arms, and, with a shout of joy that thrills through the universe, calls on the new-ransomed immortals to fly to her embrace !

Yes! the world is restored: it stands on a new footing, and in a new relation to God. "*Redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins,*" is henceforth proclaimed to the oppressed victims of sin: *forgiveness*—not clogged with conditions hard, or painful, or next to impossible to fulfil; but offered on the sole condition of *faith* in our glorious Lord—a faith animated by the gentle spirit of love.

Favour with heaven—peace on earth—good-will to men—oh, joyful burden of celestial song! And forth go the heralds of this grace: beautiful upon every mountain, upon every stormy sea, upon every island coast, are the feet of the messengers that bring glad tidings, that publish peace.

Is not this a magnificent achievement—a worthy result of such matchless sacrifice? And does not the benevolent Redeemer well rejoice in the freeness of that grace now extended to the whole world—free to us because "it cost Him so dear"?

The true Christian, in order to know the misery of a world of rational creatures separated from the Fountain of Blessedness, has only to ask himself what would be his own condition were he deprived of that knowledge and love of God, that trust and joy in Him, that felt nearness to Him, which he now possesses. How the serious thought of such deprivation sends a cold shudder through his soul! how the bottomless depths of dark despair yawn at the thought of separation from the "God of his joy and gladness!" Yet how far short of the full desolateness of such a state do our most vivid conceptions fall! *But Christ knew it, saw it all!* And deep as is the abyss of desolation to whose lowest depth His eye penetrated; so high rises His complacent, holy joy at having delivered man from going down to such a pit.

2. "He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied," *in the return of each single penitent to God.*

We are not to suppose that Christ so joys in the redemption of the world, as if all guilt belonged to men in their collective capacity. We should guard against such a supposition; for I apprehend that most of us might, on examination, find some vague idea of this sort lurking within. Thus are we apt, if not completely to shift our individual guilt, at least to diminish it very much, by sharing it with an infinite number. And on the same ground, we deprive

ourselves of much of that hope and encouragement to be derived from the faithful conviction that Christ did really redeem each one of us, not merely as parts of a whole, but as individuals also. A conviction which the Church, with a tender solicitude for our comfort as well as our salvation, is ever anxious to cherish—commanding her ministers to deliver into the hands of each Christian communicant the sacred elements, and to say to each separately, “The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee—the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee.”

Let no sinner dream that he can merge his responsibility in the universal guilt of our race. Each sinner is as much a sinner, as if he stood solitary and alone in the waste of an unpeopled universe—the guilt of each is no less formidable, his punishment is no less certain and dreadful,—than if he were the one dark spot upon which the eye of God rested, and on which His fury was concentrated. The principle by which companionship in human friendships lightens grief, is miserably reversed here—the communication of guilt and grief being no diminution, but a terrible aggravation of both. It is the case of ships in a storm—they are severally in imminent danger; but when brought together, the danger is proportionally magnified—for they become instruments of mutual destruction, and safety is almost impossible.

Let us see, then, what our Lord does in bringing individual sinners nigh unto God. We need not take for our specimen the very worst case—some old polytheistic Greek or Roman, with affections as debased and vicious as the gods they worshipped; nor some formal superstitious Jew, with a mind destitute of any spiritual perception, crawling on the clay, which he deemed it an enormity to mingle with spittle for medicinal uses, on his Sabbath; nor some fanatical devotee of Juggernaut; nor some wretched negro who adores his own shadow, nor looks higher for his God; nor some cannibal Fijian, who makes a religion of the cruellest murders, and a feast of the horrible sacrifice; no—nor some reckless scoffing sinner, who knew the commands of Christ, and dared to defy them; no—we have only to take what may be often seen—a sober, discreet, and respected sinner, to see the mighty work of Christ.

Contrast the condition of such an one, yet in his sins, with the condition of him who has been brought nigh unto God, and has attained His peace. In doing this I must appeal to the experience of any Christian here who can recollect when yet he was unrenewed and afar off from God. He knows how really wretched his state was; how vainly he sought settled peace and contentment from the unsubstantial shadows which were perpetually eluding his grasp; how dismal a dissatisfaction he felt in every coveted pleasure, after he had tasted a few times of its sweetness; and how speedily every pompous joy became a ghastly corpse. He knows too how fearfully he was alienated from that "God in whom we live, move, and have our being;" how he lived as if he owed Him no obedience nor love; how, though unwilling to discard the semblance of religion, his daily endeavour was to banish God from his thoughts, and live as though God were not. He knows how all his wishes were earth-bound, centered on unstable vanities—how his castles of hope were built on the vanishing rainbow. And surely it must add to the sombre shadows of this picture, to think of all the immortal energies, the noble powers, the wide capacities, the warm hopes, the priceless time, so mournfully wasted on the follies of a dream, and so fatally misdirected from those high aims, whose earnest pursuit would have ensured present peace and future reward.

Now, the Christian knows and can value what the suffering Saviour has done for him by the travail of His soul. By the grace which streams from the cross on which He was lifted up, *He has drawn him to Himself*, and in this is included everything which the soul of man can need. He has purified his affections, so that they no longer grovel in the mire of sin,—a present plague and torture to the sinner. He has exalted his thoughts and his aims, so that now, instead of being absorbed in the low cares of the world and the flesh, his mind wanders through eternity, and expatiates with admiring and thoughtful gaze through the wide domain of creation. The happy soul now exchanges the base contentions of earth for a noble ambition that aspires to likeness to God, to the holiness of Christ, to the society of angels, to a throne in heaven, to the amaranthine rewards of immortality. The Christian feels within himself awakened capacities for divine and intense enjoy-

ment; new-kindled hopes, and loves, and aspirations; intuitive anticipations and longings; which glow through his being, and carry him forward to a world and a time, when no hope of the heaven-born spirit shall be unrealized—but an ocean of blessedness satiate its boundless cravings.

Yes, my brethren, and over our relation to even sensible things does the wonder-working cross throw a veil of heavenly magic. I think we may boldly say in sober, what the world will take for poetic, truth,—that, through the grace of Christ, the material world is invested, in the Christian's eyes, with a haze of additional loveliness.* To those eyes on which Christ's supernal light has been shed, there is seen a new brightness in the sun, a new glory in the stars, a more reviving verdure in the grass; to those ears that have drunk in the harmonies of heaven, there is heard a more refreshing gurgle in the waters, and a more hilarious tone of praise in all the voices of animated nature.

This is the achievement of that glorious Conqueror, who trod the wine-press alone, and who may now well rejoice in bringing many sons unto glory by the never-to-be-told travail of His soul. And if to see souls thus rescued from hell and exalted to glory, fills the hearts of the saints with joy, and heaven with the rejoicing songs of angels—what must be His joy whose gracious work this is? If we, with our defective power of spiritual apprehension, see such a superlative glory in this mighty spiritual revolution—what must be the sublime satisfaction of Christ, whose eye ranges over each universe of spiritual beauty and deformity, and pierces their profoundest recesses? No philosophic mind of man, no intuitive gaze of archangelic intellect can ever fathom the unutterable guilt and ugliness and danger of sin: it is the Infinite One alone who possesses this awful prerogative, or who could endure† the spectacle

* Humboldt, in his *Cosmos*, somewhere observes, that it is in the *Christian Fathers* we first find minute notice taken of *natural scenery*, and those sentimental and detailed descriptions of it, which form so prominent a characteristic in modern literature.

† No eye but His might ever bear
To gaze down all that drear abyss,
Because none ever saw so clear
The shore beyond of endless bliss.

—*Keble's Christian Year*, 12th S. after Trinity.

in its unveiled horror. And impossible, too, for the holiest of creatures to conceive the delight, as infinite as His own nature, which the eternal God takes in holiness. In the eyes of that *holy, holy, holy Lord God*, the very heavens are not pure; and therefore the Son rejoices in having adorned His ransomed ones with His own spotless righteousness,—aware that in no other way could they endure the searching glance of uncreated Purity.

Besides, brethren—and this is an important consideration—all that we see now in this present life is but the faint prelude of undying consequences, of endless developments; the tiny germ of the coming harvest of weal or woe: yet I hope we feel enough to elevate our conceptions of the mighty and gracious work of Christ. But we shall have cause for yet more elevated, and yet more grateful appreciation of that work, if we follow, in imagination, the impenitent soul, that would not be saved, to its own place. There we may behold the misery of evil passions let loose without any restraint; of corrupt desires, undestroyed by death, (against the delusive fancies of men,) yea, attaining a tremendous intensity, without any possibility of gratification; that hatred of God and holiness, which was here fixed as a principle, though as yet not freely developed—expanded into a malignant and ferocious implacability, which frets itself for ever in impotent rage against the Blessed God; and remorse, self-devouring remorse, growing and increasing in monstrous proportions, through an eternity measured by no cycles or revolutions of celestial orbs, but by the long groans and the suffocating sighs of the lost!

I know, brethren, that your minds will more cheerfully turn to the ascending Saint, and mark his shining progress. Behold him, then, fixed in his orb, in some bright allotted station among the sons of God. See his soul filled to its capacity with the purest, sublimest, most satisfying joy; and that capacity for ever expanding in the genial clime of heaven. See new thoughts, and higher conceptions, and more ravishing delights ever flowing in on his soul: behold, more dazzling glories ever glitter on his crowned brows; while his anthem of ecstacy and praise swells evermore higher, louder, and more rapturous. His blessedness is a circle which widens interminably on the shoreless ocean of eternity. Behold, *this hath God wrought!*

Ye angels of His that excel in strength and song, praise our Redeeming Lord! Ye saints, sprinkled with His holy Blood, adore Him in the touching strains of a tenderer, soul-felt love! We have the advantage of so blessed a work—let JESUS have the just glory, and the complacent joy of benevolent affection satisfied with a great accomplishment.

In this endless multiplication of good, then, we see a full illustration of our text; and we also see the weight of obligation to no ordinary love to the Blessed Jesus. We see, I think, the natural foundation of those thunderous words—"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, *let him be anathema!*" Oh, if your hearts do not give a full response to this, I fear for you—you should fear for yourselves. With yet "the sound of glory ringing in your ears," you may feel it hard to be turned to sterner contemplations: but it must be done.

We are unwilling, brethren, to dismiss you without entreating you to consider what must be the guilt of those so infinitely obliged, who, by obstinate sin, mar, as much as in them lies, the work which cost Christ so dear, and diminish His satisfaction in its success. And, oh, think too of its danger! How dangerous it is for a weak subject to thwart the favorite designs of an absolute and powerful Sovereign. Remember, then, what *our* Sovereign Lord and Saviour has set His heart on, yea, given His heart's blood for—and ask yourselves, if you can, without trembling—whether it be safe to oppose the most cherished designs of Him to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given?

We beseech you by the mercies of God, we warn you by the terror of the Lord—thwart not Christ in His designs of grace; mar not the completeness of His blessed triumph; throw not upon Him the dishonour of an unaccomplished work. If you do—the very Gospel itself has terrors in store for you—for rejected love will turn into the most intolerable fury. Remember that sentence of the sweet singer of the Old Law—"I will sing of *mercy* and *judgment*; unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing:" and remember that the sentiment belongs also to the New Law: "Behold (says the Apostle) the *goodness* and *severity* of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness if thou continue in His goodness." *Mercy* and *judgment*—*goodness* and *severity*—think of

them, brethren, and may God make your thoughts influential ! Behold now with believing eyes and a loving heart, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world : refuse to do so, and prepare to meet Him as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, determined to rend your soul, when there shall be none to deliver. Slight now the compassion and love of a Saviour which you are besought to receive ; and in the day of just retribution, the spitting, and the buffeting, the scourge, the crown of thorns, the blasphemy, the agony, the bloody sweat, and the death-throes of the cross, *will every one* be laid to your account : and how will you endure that load which crushed out the holy soul of Christ Himself ?

Oh that the love of that gracious Lord might take possession of us ! Oh that an everlasting gratitude might overpower our souls, and bind us fast to His cross in bands of indissoluble affection ; that sharing the transforming influences of His grace here, we may hereafter be partakers of His glory, and behold with our own eyes the full satisfaction of our Lord, and the ever-growing blessedness wrought by the travail of His soul !

SERMON IV.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

(Preached on Easter Even, Point Levy, 1857.)

ST. LUKE, xxiii. 43.

“And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”

THESE words are the gracious answer of our Saviour on the cross to the humble request of the penitent and believing robber who was crucified by His side—“Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” He believes in Jesus as the promised Messiah, who was soon to come in glory and set up the everlasting kingdom of God, and reign in it for ever. And Jesus grants *more* than his petition, as ever is the wont of our gracious Lord: “Not only will I remember thee when I come in My kingdom; but verily I say unto thee, To day—when thou art not expecting to be even freed from bodily anguish—thy soul shall accompany Mine, and be with Me in paradise.”

From this answer we obtain information on two points, which, if not absolutely necessary to know, are at least in a high degree important and consolatory:

First, we have here the highest assurance that the soul is distinct from the body, that it is able to subsist apart from the body, and does so subsist after death, and that it sleeps not, but is sensitive and capable of immediate enjoyment: And, secondly, the words help us to determine *the place and state of the soul between death and the resurrection.*

To these two points we may most suitably direct our meditations on this Easter Eve, when the mysterious three-days separation of our Saviour's human soul from His body is the subject suggested by the day and its services to the minds of all. In the discussion of the latter of these topics the proof of the former will incidentally appear.

1. The *place* to which the souls of the righteous depart, is called by Christ *paradise*. That this paradise is distinct from *heaven*, the immediate abode of God, and the promised habitation of the blessed after the resurrection, we infer with certainty from our Saviour's own words. To Mary Magdalene, who saw Him directly after His resurrection, He said, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God and your God." It is well known that the Jews of our Lord's time called the receptacle of pious souls after death *Gan Eden*, that is, the Garden of Eden. And this name was represented by the word *Paradise*—a Garden, or Pleasure Garden—in the Greek version used by the Jews of our Lord's day. So that in its religious signification it denoted a "place of spiritual delights." Hence it must have been in this customary sense that our Lord used the word; for otherwise He would not have been understood—and surely He spoke to be understood. A happy place, therefore, He promised to bring the robber to—a place which yet He plainly distinguishes from that heaven to which He was soon to ascend. If it be still affirmed, against this solid inference, that paradise is the same as heaven, and that the promise was fulfilled in that the penitent was there with Christ in His Divine Nature, though not yet ascended in His humanity:—then it would have been contrary to the order of grace and the words of Christ. It is contrary to the *order of grace*—because it was not till "He had overcome the sharpness of death, that the gates of heaven were opened to all believers;"* and not till He, as the First fruits and the *Forerunner*,† had entered them, could any of His redeemed enter. Contrary to His words also: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." And even though these words should not be applicable

* Te Deum.

† Heb. ix. 8.

to the present state of things, certainly they were literally true till Christ *had* ascended.* Therefore paradise was not heaven. St. Paul's words, in 2 Cor. xii., confirm this distinction: "I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the *third heaven*. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into *paradise*, and heard unspeakable words." Here the *difference of time and place* is indicated not only by the words *visions and revelations*, not only by *paradise and third heaven*; but specially by the repetition of "*whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth:*" for if the visions and places were the same, the repetition seems needless and unmeaning. The distinction of paradise from the third heaven, in this passage, is agreeable to "the opinion of all the ancient Christians"†—a testimony which can hardly fail to convince, confirmed as it is by the most distinguished Protestant Commentators.‡

What the *locality* of this receptacle of souls is, is beyond our knowledge and the scope of legitimate inquiry. But in reference to this locality, a difficulty will naturally occur to many, and it is one which we must not by any means pass over—How it can said in the Creed that He descended into *hell*, if He went to *paradise*? This article of the faith of all Christians is based on the prophetic words of Ps. xvi., by which St. Peter (Acts ii.) proves the resur-

* What exception Enoch and Elijah may be to this assertion, it is not of importance to enquire, as they were exempted from the operation of the curse. Nor is their being rapt into the heaven of glory (supposing that to have been the case) in their embodied spirits, any more an objection to the statement that disembodied spirits could not precede the Redeemer into the heavenly mansions; than their exemption from death is against the Apostle's words—"It is appointed unto men once to die."

† Whitby in loc.

‡ Käu. . . Finge, *cælum tertium et paradisum* plane esse synonyma; valde imminuetur nervus orationis Paulinæ. Bengel, in 2 Cor. xii. 3.

Hæc migratio in paradisum differt quidem ab ascensione in cælum, Joh. 20: 17, sed tamen docet, descensum ad inferos laute esse explicandum. *Idem*, in Luc. 23: 43. Similarly Dr. Fairbairn, Hermeneutical Manual.

rection of Christ—"Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell;" words which necessarily imply that His soul went into the place here called hell.

Many of the learned have, indeed, maintained that these words mean nothing more than that He was dead and buried, because *soul* sometimes means simply *life*, and *hell* is often used to denote the *grave*—not intending, however, by this to deny what we have been stating. But when we recollect that thus the same thing will be repeated which is before expressed in so short a summary as the Creed, and in far plainer terms; when we find our church, in the Third Article of Religion, making an express difference—"As Christ died for us and was buried, *so also* it is to be believed, that He went down into hell;" when we consider how natural it is to regard *buried* as setting forth the state of His body, and *descended into hell* as setting forth the condition of His soul meantime—we cannot, I think, without doing violence to the natural force of the words, suppose them to mean nothing more than mere *death and burial*; we must believe them to declare a local motion of His soul to the region called hell.

Now, in order to reconcile this with our text, we are to remember that there are two words, though differing widely from each other in meaning, in the original, which are translated by the one word *Hell* in our English version, viz., *Hades* and *Gehenna*.—*Gehenna* is exclusively the place of final punishment, but *Hades* is a word of much more extensive application: it means the *invisible* state of the dead—or, as we would commonly say, *the other world*; including the place where the wicked are tormented till the resurrection (as we read of the rich man, "In *Hades* he lifted up his eyes, being in torment"); including also the place where the blessed are refreshed during the same period, which is paradise—that part of *Hades* or hell into which our Saviour went. This large signification of the word *Hades*, exactly corresponds with the primary meaning of our English *Hell*, which denotes "a hidden or covered *hole* or pit;" while both *Hades* and its representative *Hell*, in the Creed, and St. Peter's speech, and in the Scriptures generally, stand for the unseen world at large. Whereas that which is *exclusively* the place of final punishment is never expressed in the original by *Hades*, but by *Gehenna*; and it is translating these

two distinct words, which mean distinct things, by the same English word, that creates such confusion and difficulty in the minds of unlearned readers. This is the notion which not only the Scriptures give us of Hades, but also the very heathens and Jews. A heathen poet* says—"In Hades there are two ways, one for just men, and another for the impious." Josephus,† a Jewish priest, says of the Sadducees, "They take away (*i.e.* deny) the rewards and punishments which are in Hades." "In vain, therefore, (says Jer. Taylor) does St. Austin torment himself to tell how Christ could be in both places at once, when it is no harder than to tell how a man may be in England and London at the same time!" I shall mention just one passage more to shew this difference. In Rev. xx. 14, "Death and hell (*Hades*) were cast into the lake of fire"—meaning not that hell is cast into hell, but that the Saints being now exalted from paradise to heaven, the state of death is wholly abolished for them; and, as a state of partial punishment for others, it is cast into Gehenna, where punishment is terribly perfected. †

2. You see then, brethren, how erroneous is the opinion, so prevalent among us, that the souls of the faithful pass directly, on their departure from the body, into *heaven*, a state of *glory*, and the promised reward: and that the souls of the impenitent pass, in like manner, into *hell-fire*, their threatened everlasting portion.

Let me ask your attention while I proceed to show how contrary this is to the whole reason of our religion, and what evil results flow from it.

(1). First, then, not only is there not one place of the New Testament which declares plainly that the souls of the faithful departed pass directly to heaven, but

(2). It is everywhere intimated that the state which succeeds to death is only one of rest and peace and joy, not of heavenly glory.

First, for the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah § says, "He (the righteous man) shall enter into *peace*: they shall rest in their

* Diphilus.

† Jewish War, Bk. II. ch. viii. 14.

‡ See the exact parallel of this verse in *Hos.* xiii. 14, "O *death*, I will be thy plagues; O *Sheol*, *Hades*, I will be thy destruction."

§ *Isa.* lvii. 2.

beds, each one walking (or rather, who had walked) in his righteousness." In the ninth chapter of Zechariah, which is appointed as the First Lesson for Morning Prayer on Easter Even, we read, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, *ye prisoners of hope*: even to-day do I declare that I will render double to you." From this we infer that the grave of Christ is the stronghold of the faithful departed, and that by the completion of His sacrifice, and by His entrance into paradise, its inhabitants—*prisoners of hope*—have now their happiness immensely enlarged. They are no longer in a pit wherewith is no water. Their hopes are brightened, they have more communion with heaven, they have stronger foretastes of the final blessedness.

If this be not what our Church intends us to infer, I can discover no propriety at all in what is meant for a *proper* Lesson.

How unreasonable, too, and against all our notions of the Divine economy, to suppose that the invisible Church received *no* improvement of its circumstances, no accession to its happiness, by our Lord's precious sacrifice and His conquest over death; while the visible Church, it is allowed, received immense accessions of grace and privilege both in kind and degree. Such is the incongruity necessarily arising from the opinion that the faithful departed, from the beginning of the world, have been in glory.

In the spirit of this interpretation of her Easter-Eve Lesson, the Church affirms, in her Burial Office, that "the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity." But this felicity is of an imperfect character. It consists, first, in "deliverance out of the miseries of this sinful world;" and, secondly, in assured hope, in greater nearness to God, and knowledge of Him, and joy in Him, than this world could ever allow. Yet all this happiness, however great, is nothing more than preparatory to that of the kingdom reserved for the Saints; for so the prayer proceeds—"beseeching Thee that it may please Thee of Thy gracious goodness shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to *hasten Thy kingdom*; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of Thy holy name, may have our *perfect consummation and bliss in body and soul in Thy eternal and everlasting Glory*." Thus are we taught, that till the

resurrection of the body there is no *consummation of bliss* even for the soul—that what is properly called *glory* is not enjoyed.

The New Testament has very few allusions to the Separate State—not more, perhaps, than half a dozen. But these allusions confirm the inferences which we have drawn from the Old Testament, and justify the observation of Bishop Taylor—“The middle state is not it which scripture hath propounded to our faith, or our hope.”* I call your attention to two places only. First, the raising of Lazarus: full of wonder and difficulty as it must be to us, however explained,—is not the difficulty almost intolerable, if we suppose his spirit called back, from the glory of God’s presence, to this world of sorrow? The whole tone of the narrative compels us to believe that Christ was performing an act of favour to Lazarus as well as to his sisters; for Jesus “loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus;” and He cannot be supposed to have done so unspeakable an injury to one whom He loved, as to deprive him of heavenly beatitude for thirty years (as tradition said). Would He not rather have rebuked the selfishness of sisters who could wish such a thing? But, on our representation of the state of the faithful departed, before the Passion of our Lord,—being but prisoners of hope,—the harmony of our Lord’s human affection with the exercise of His divine power in this wondrous act, becomes sufficiently evident.

The second place is one familiar to our ears: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may *rest* from their labours, and their works do follow them.” Rest, refreshment—not glory, is the character of the intermediate blessedness. The words “from henceforth” also imply that such high blessedness had not always been the privilege of the righteous dead before the all-enriching death of the Lord.

(3.) The New Testament *positively* points to the *Resurrection* as the period of reward. I shall lay before you at large the positive declarations of Scripture touching this point. In Rev. xi. 18, the four-and-twenty Elders are represented as saying, “the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the *time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst give reward* unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to

* Life of Christ.

them that fear Thy name, small and great." The Judgment, therefore, is the time of reward for all the dead: even the prophets, who died so long ago, are yet expecting their reward. St. Paul, (2 Tim. iv. 8,) triumphing in prospect of death, says, "Henceforth there is *laid up* for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me *at that day*: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His *appearing*." Not even St. Paul receives his crown before *that day*—the day of Judgment. The *appearing* of Christ is the period of reward for all. Meantime that reward is "*laid up* for them in *heaven*."* But if the happiness of the righteous is as full as it can be directly after death, save only as regards the body, there can be no good reason why they should expect, and wait, and long for—all which is included in *loving*—Christ's appearing. Nay, how *can* that appearing be an object of desire, if they already *possess* the *presence* of Christ in the highest degree? And—as a matter of fact—those who hold the error we are combatting, do not look forward eagerly to His appearing; their thoughts are bounded chiefly by the happiness which ensues on departure, and the Resurrection is entertained as little more than a true speculation. I appeal to the experience of such of us as have held this opinion. Again: "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, (St. Peter promises the Clergy—1 Pet. v. 4,) ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." "The inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, (i. 4, 5,) reserved in heaven for Christians, is ready to be *revealed in the last time*"—only then *revealed*—so that before that time it is hidden from us. He further assures us, (i. 7,) that it is "*at the appearing of Jesus Christ* that the trial of our faith will be found unto *praise, and honour, and glory*." And St. Paul instructs us, (Rom. viii. 18, 23, 24,) that the period of "the glory which is to be revealed unto us," is that of "*the redemption of the body*" from the grave—until which time (so far shall we be from a state of perfect reward and happiness) that we continue *groaning*—that is, earnestly longing for—that adoption, that final proof and completion of our sonship. In the 15th cap. of 1st Cor. not one syllable is said of the intermediate happiness as an encouragement to Christians under suffering, and in prospect of death for the Name of Jesus. The

* Vide Col. i. 5.

glory of the resurrection body is elaborately dwelt upon as the grand inducement for being "steadfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord." And the Apostle goes so far as to say, that if there be no resurrection we are of all men most miserable. So little stress does he lay on the preceding happiness, which consists mainly in prelibations of resurrection glory; so that if there be no resurrection, then those intermediate antepasts themselves have no existence.

Even in this life it is the privilege of Christians to be *with* the Lord; and it is certain that immediately after death, they shall be with him in a degree,* which, St. Paul says, "is far better;" but *with the Lord*, in the highest sense, it is clear we shall not be till the resurrection. Nothing can be more decisive than the words of St. Paul, in his 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians.† Comforting them on the death of friends, he never alludes to the intermediate state, but declares more plainly and at greater length than is done elsewhere in Scripture, the mystery of the resurrection, the coming of the Lord, and our being gathered to Him. Then he concludes his discourse in these words—"and so shall we *ever* be with the Lord." The inference is, that the enjoyment of the Lord's presence is previously partial and interrupted, but afterwards it shall be complete.‡

This is the teaching of the beloved disciple also—"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and *it doth not yet appear* what we shall be: but we know that *when He shall appear*, we shall be like Him."

We have heard the words of the disciples—shall we not hear the great Master Himself? Or, had He, who alone of right has re-crossed the dark valley, nothing to tell us of the other side? Yes, in our text He promised much—a mighty boon to a malefactor. Yet He afterwards withdrew a friend from the same place; but to His dearest, highest, most favoured friends—the privileged twelve—He never promised, or, so far as we know, even mentioned,

* *ὄν Χριστῷ εἶναι, πολλῶ μᾶλλον κρείσσον*, Phil. i. 23. Vulg. *Multo magis melius—by much more better*.

† iv. 17.

‡ This is implied by *πάντοτε*, which admits of no interruptions—while *αἰεὶ* might consist with many.

that middle land. For them—for us—He has something higher, better far. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." * Who can mistake these glorious, consolatory words?

The parable of the pounds, (St. Luke xix.,) in which "a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return," teaches the same doctrine, viz., that the period of return is the time of account and of reward. "The Resurrection of the just" is the time of "recompense" for charitable actions, our Lord teaches in the same Gospel (xiv. 14). In Rev. vi., the souls under the altar, the martyrs of Jesus, "cry with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them that they should *rest* yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants, also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." Even the departed martyrs had as yet but *rest under the altar*, not *glory before the throne*; for all were to be avenged—all were to be glorified together. And thus it is said of the saints before Christ, "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, *received not the promise*: † God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." *To be perfected* is a technical phrase drawn, like the following context, from the Grecian games; and it means, having accomplished the contest and *received the reward*. ‡

I am far from having exhausted the information of the New Testament on this point, yet see how full and even overwhelming is the amount of evidence adduced. Most striking it is, how the sacred writers well nigh entirely pass over the happiness immediately after death—making only a very few incidental allusions to

* John xiv. 1—3.

† Comp. Heb. x. 36.

‡ See Appendix to this Sermon—Page 47.

it.* When *they* exhort Christians by the hopes or fears of futurity, they never stop short of the coming of the Lord. Thus St. Paul, comforting the Thessalonians under the hands of their persecutors—“It is a righteous thing with God to recompense *tribulation* to them that trouble you : and to recompense to you who are troubled, *rest* with us—*when* the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.” Whereas by most pulpits now-a-days the mind is, (if not directed to, yet) allowed to dwell on the happiness or misery that ensues on death, as the main motive—all the accumulation of glory, all the intensity of woe, which the resurrection brings, being permitted to drop entirely out of sight.

(4.) I may here insist a little on what was before just touched—that the *intermediate state* is one of *expectation*,—fearful to the wicked, joyful to the righteous,—a state very different from the *glory* of heaven. This is affirmed with emphasis in Rom. viii., in which the Apostle says—“We which have the first fruits of the spirit, *even we*, groan within ourselves, *waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*” Thus the *resurrection*,—the great seal, the consummation of our adoption as the sons of God for evermore,—is an object of groaning hope, of earnest longing desire ; and indeed it must be, so long as it is not enjoyed, and consequently all through the intermediate state : “for we are saved, body and soul, by hope ; but hope that is seen is not hope ;” and therefore what is not seen, that is, possessed and enjoyed, must still be hoped for.

The surprise both of the pious and of the wicked at the interpretation put upon their actions by the Judge, as described by our Saviour, in St. Matt. xxv., shows the imperfect, anticipatory state preceding the judgment. Hope is here ever mingled with some

* It is not because I do not believe that the famous passage in the Epistle for Easter Even (1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20) does not refer to this matter, that I have omitted to quote it ; but because it has been so vexed by the interpretations of men, who have been unwilling to take it in its plain meaning—the meaning of the Catholic Church—that it would require too much space to clear it ; and, moreover, it is not necessary to the completeness of our argument.

Since these words were written, I have seen that Dr. Fairbairn, of the Free Church, in his Hermeneutical Manual, has vindicated, in the main points, the ancient Catholic interpretation of this passage.

Vide also Herzog's Theological and Eccle. Encyclopædia, Article *Hades*.

degree of fear and uncertainty : in paradise it is certain, confident, joyful—it is all but fruition. Here we live by faith—there we live by hope—in the resurrection by Charity. Here we are warriors, in paradise conquerors, in heaven we triumph. Parallel is the state of devils and the damned. “They are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” They have imperfect tastes of their ultimate misery. “Art Thou come to torment us *before the time* ?” is the cry of the devils. At that *time*, not before, shall the damned be united with them in “the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

(6.) Our *Christian reason*, too, leads us to the conclusion which we have seen so fully established by the letter of Scripture. Let me ask you to weigh this short argument : God made man of *soul* and *body* united into *one* being. Their separation is death, the *punishment* of sin. So that while in the separate state we are not properly men, at least we are in a state of *imperfection* ; and consequently the vestiges of the original *curse* still remain with even the saints till the resurrection. Now, I ask, can an imperfect being, still labouring under the effects of the original curse of God against sin, be *capable* of a *perfect* happiness ? Can he be admissible into that Presence where there is nothing imperfect, where no shadow of punishment can exist, where (it is expressly said) “there shall be *no more curse* ?” Glory, it is admitted, is the state of highest reward, of consummate happiness, of the restoration of all things—Can, then, a disembodied spirit, whose separation is the punishment of sin, partake of that glory ? No—it is a palpable contradiction. The *highest* felicity cannot surely coëxist with even the smallest remnant of punishment. The state of the blessed, therefore, in paradise till the resurrection, has something of a penal character—not the punishment of *pain*, but of *loss*—the loss of the body, and the want of that happiness of which the risen and glorified body will be the instrument in heaven.

(7.) Hence, also, we see what a signal injury is done the great doctrine of the Resurrection—putting it out of the forefront of Gospel motives, the place it occupies in the New Testament ; removing it to the background of our thoughts, and making this article of our Creed little more than a dead letter. It is impossible that we can rightly appreciate the misery of God’s curse, which

doomed us to death, if we suppose that death detracts very little or nothing from our power of enjoyment—nay, that we can be *perfectly* happy while yet it is not fully removed from us. Unless we apprehend the imperfection of that state (in its best circumstances) to which death, the curse, has reduced us, it is impossible that we can value as we ought that climax of redeeming grace, the glorious Resurrection, which abolishes every shadow of death in God's kingdom, effaces every vestige of the curse, and exalts man to an eminence of glory vastly beyond his original unfallen state.

(8.) This error is a complete contradiction to all that we read of the method and nature of the last Judgment. What propriety can there be in a judgment at all, or how can it be called a judgment, if this notion be true—that the saints are called from heaven to receive the reward they have enjoyed for ages; the damned from hell, to receive a punishment they have been suffering as long? So that the wicked are not properly *sent*, (as Christ* says,) but *remanded*—sent back to hell: the just not *called* to receive the kingdom, but *confirmed* in it. In fact, so utterly new and erroneous is this scheme, that St. Justin Martyr (A. D. 150) says, it was the doctrine of *heretical* persons at that time, that souls immediately after death were taken to heaven.† Those heretics formally denied the resurrection; and those who, in the present day, agree with them in maintaining the direct reception of the soul into heaven, deny it by implication. The orthodox Christians of ancient times knew nothing of it. Bishop Taylor ‡ so well sums up all the inconveniences and contradictions of the notion, that I cannot do better than transcribe his words:—

* Matt. xxiv. 41, *depart*; v. 46, *go away*.

† Trypho. § 307, A:—*Εἰ γὰρ καὶ συνεβάλετε ἡμεῖς τίσι λεγομένοις Χριστιανοῖς καὶ τοῦτο μὴ ὁμολογοῦσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλασφημεῖν τολμῶσι τὸν θεὸν Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τὸν θεὸν Ἰσαὰκ καὶ τὸν θεὸν Ἰακώβ, οἱ καὶ λέγουσι μὴ εἶναι νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν, ἀλλὰ ἅμα τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, μὴ ὑπολάβητε αὐτοῖς Χριστιανοῖς.* And § 223, B:—*Ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ ἀποθνήσκειν φημι πάσας τὰς ψυχὰς ἐγὼ ἔρμαιον γὰρ ἦν ὡς ἀληθῶς τοῖς κακοῖς. Ἀλλὰ τί; Τὰς μὲν τῶν εἰσεβῶν ἐν κρείττονι ποι χάρῳ μένειν, τὰς δὲ ἀδίκους καὶ πανηράς ἐν χεῖρονι, τὸν τῆς κρίσεως ἐκδεχομένης χρόνον τότε.* See also Irenæus, *Adv. Her. V.*, c. 31, § 2, p. 331.

‡ *Sir G. Dalston's Funeral Sermon*, to which I am indebted for some of the arguments and phrases of this discourse.

“According to this *new* opinion (says he) it will be impossible to understand the meaning of divers passages of Scripture, [several of which I have alleged,] or at all to perceive the economy and dispensation of the day of judgment; or how it can be a day of discerning [*i. e.*, separation]; or how the reapers (the angels) shall bind up the wicked into bundles, and throw them into the unquenehable fire; or yet how it can be useful, or necessary, or prudent, for Christ to give a solemn sentence upon all the world; and how it can be, that that day should be so formidable and full of terrors, when nothing can affright those that have long enjoyed the beatific presence of God; and no thunders or earthquakes can affright them, who have upon them the biggest evil in the world, I mean the damned, who, according to this opinion, have been in hell for many ages: and it can mean nothing but to them that are alive; and then it is but a particular, not a universal judgment; and after all it can pretend to no piety, to no scripture, to no reason, *and only can serve the ends of the Church of Rome.*”

Perhaps you may be a little startled by his last words. Let me say something in explanation, by which it will appear that that very notion, which it is probable many of my hearers entertain, is the very basis of one of the most anti-Christian practices of Romanists—I mean the *Invocation of Saints*. They hold that the less perfect Christians go to a place which they have invented, and they have invented its name, too—Purgatory—where they remain till wholly cleansed, by fires as hot as those of hell; and then they ascend to heaven, *whither the more perfect saints pass at once from the body*. And because they thus reign with Christ in the beatific Presence, in a state of power and glory, therefore they invoke them, as being able to help their suppliants. They suppose, too, that the saints in heaven are aware of the petitions offered them—as it is pretended that they see all things in *speculo Trinitatis*—in the glass of the Trinity—from beholding the face of God.* Now the doctrine of the Intermediate happiness—

* Obj. II. Sancti non cognoscunt preces nostras; ergo frustra invocantur. R. Neg. Antec. Quia Sancti *omnia* cognoscunt in Verbo, quæ ad eorum statum pertinent, adeoque preces nostras ad eos directas vident in Verbo, sive in Deo tanquam in *speculo* omnia continente, sicuti Angeli preces nostras cognoscunt.” *Theologia Petri* Dens, Tom. V., N. 25.

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that *all* saints are blessed, and rest from their labours in paradise; that *none* of the saints are in heaven, beholding the face of God, and reigning in His glory, but are in a state of imperfection—this, at one blow, demolishes purgatory, and the long train of masses and indulgences which follow it; prayers for suffering saints, and invocations of blessed souls. In fact, according as these Romish practices grew, so was thrust aside the doctrine of the intermediate state of happiness, till it was formally *condemned* in the Council of Florence, held in the 15th century. It was this Council which first formally decreed the errors I have named—purgatory, indulgences, masses, and offerings for the dead.*

If there were no other use of this doctrine than the sufficient answer which it furnishes to these and other dangerous errors, this would be a good reason for all Christians understanding it. But even if we saw no immediate advantage in any particular truth of Revelation, yet it would not justify our indifference to it. God may have ends to serve by our belief of it which we cannot now divine. The words of our Lord—"Ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter"—are applicable in such case.

We have before seen how necessary it is to a just appreciation of that prime doctrine of the Resurrection. Let me spend a very few words in showing its use in one or two other respects.

The *appearing of the Lord, the presence of Jesus Christ with His Church*, is evidently declared to be her hope and her happiness in several of the passages I have quoted, and indeed generally in the New Testament. Does not the popular Popish and Protestant doctrine obscure this? Does it not make Christians forget that the Body cannot be perfect without the Head? Does it not make them forget that the joy of the Bride cannot be complete, till the Bridegroom return, publicly espouse her, and receive her to His own supernal home? And does it not dim the Church's own

This figment seems to be derived from Rabbinical vagaries—at any rate, it entirely coincides with them. Rabbi Jos. Albo, in John Smith's *Select Discourses*, p. 298, Ed. 1673, says—"That when the Israelites stood upon Mount Sinai, they saw God *אין עין לעין* eye to eye, or face to face, and understood all secrets of the Law, and all the *arcana superna et inferna*," &c.

* Cabasutii Synopsis Conciliorum—Concilium Florentinum.—Tom. III.

recollection of her Lord, and retard her in trimming her torches, and making herself ready?

How grievously too does it tend to subvert the *Communion of Saints*—Christians glorified one by one! Christ the Saviour—not “of the Body,” but of individual units! It is not thus that the great King will appear before principalities and powers; but “with all His Saints.” The head of His compacted Body, He will present Himself at last before the Father, with that Body in its completeness, and say, “Behold, I and the children that Thou hast given Me!” As they were “called in one Body,” so only shall they be “glorified together.”

There are so many interesting considerations relating to this doctrine yet untouched, that I might be tempted to go on; but perhaps I have tried your attention enough.

Now, in conclusion, let us recall with devout gratitude the love of a Saviour, who is, as it were, this very day resting for us in the state of separated spirits. Through every state and every place that we have to pass, He has passed; that He might bless and improve all to us. And as He has blessed every stage of our earthly condition, as He has deprived death of his sting, and the grave of its terrors; so has he exalted the felicity of paradise itself—more blessed now than before His brief dwelling there. To the prisoners of hope He has rendered double. This is indicated by saying that the blessed souls are *under the altar**—that is, “under the protection of Christ, under the powers and benefits of His priesthood, by which He makes continual intercession for us.”† And this is surely more than to be, according to the Jewish phrase, “in Abraham’s bosom.”

Finally, let us be thankful to that gracious Lord who has, in our text, given us proof that there is no dark, dismal extinction of the soul after death, that it is not asleep and insensible, but awake,

* Rev. vi. 9.

† Jer. Taylor, in *Funeral Ser. ut supra*. His interpretation is confirmed by 2 Mac. vii. 38, “For our brethren, who now have suffered a short pain, are dead *under* God’s covenant of everlasting life”—*i. e.*, under the secure hope of that immortality which it guarantees, *ὑποκάτω τοῦ θνασισηγίου—ἔνδ’ διαθήκην*. We may see from this that the holy departed are not yet raised beyond the need of the Saviour’s gracious intercession.

and awake for ever, to exquisite felicity. To every faithful departing soul the compassionate Saviour says—"Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Yes, there He will reveal Himself more nearly, and brightly, and comfortably, than in His closest approaches here. Those glimpses of God which here are but indistinct, and few, and far between, there become glorious illuminations. Those bright and strong ones who here minister to us invisibly, there visit and converse with them more openly and frequently—help, perhaps, to prepare them for the full burst of resurrection glory—and mingle more familiarly in those glowing Liturgies whence confessions of sins, "the sighing of a contrite heart, and the desire of such as be sorrowful," are for ever removed. What consolation in view of our departure hence! What balm in the retrospect of those who have left us! Does any bereaved one hear me, whose crushed heart yet quivers at the remembrance of some smiling babe, some innocent prattler just rising into interest; a youth or maiden that had attained the full vigour of existence; or some one still more loved and still more deplored—snatched suddenly and inscrutably away, and taking with them, for a time, to their own cold graves the hopes and the joys of many a household? To such we say, Mourn not for them as those that have no hope; weep not for the faithful dead, nor bewail them with despairing lamentations. They are not dead—they are not even asleep. They are with the Lord. They repose delightedly in the ever-blooming bowers of paradise. They wait with certain hope and serene repose the resurrection of their bodies, the acquittal of the last judgment, and their entrance into the unchanging heaven reserved for those that die in the Lord. Follow their track—brightened with holy obedience, and shining unto the noon of eternity; and you shall look into their faces again. In the calm of heaven shall they smile upon you. The joy of your households on earth shall beam with augmented lustre upon you above, and no separations shall mar any more the eternal unions and friendships of the skies!

APPENDIX, PAGE 39.

I do myself (and, I am persuaded, every intelligent reader) no small pleasure in appending the following extract from the Non-conformist *John Howe*—a man who, for his sublime piety and genius, deserves to be better known than I am afraid he is. The passage is in his treatise on “The blessedness of the righteous,” (founded on Ps. xvii, 15,) cap x, the last section:—

“2. It must be acknowledged, the further and more eminent season of this blessedness will be the general resurrection-day, which is more expressly signified in Scripture by this term of *awaking*; as is manifest in many plain texts, where it is either expressly thus used, or implied to have this meaning in the opposite sense of the word sleep. Dan. xii. 2; John xiv. 12; 2 Cor. xv. 2; 2 Thess. iv., &c. What additions shall then be made to the Saints’ blessedness lies more remote from our apprehension; * inasmuch as Scripture states not the degree of that blessedness which shall intervene. We know, by a too sad instructive experience, the calamities of our present state; and can therefore more easily conceive wherein it is capable of betterment, by the deposition of a sluggish, cumbersome body, where those calamities mostly have their spring; but then we know less where to fix our foot, or whence to take our rise, in estimating the additional felicities of that future state, when both the states to be compared are so unknown to us. But that there will be great additions is plain enough. The full recompense of obedience, and devotedness to Christ, of foregoing all for Him, is affixed by His promise to the resurrection of the just; the judgment day gives every one his portion according to his works. Then must the holy, obedient Christian hear from His Redeemer’s mouth, “Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom,” &c. Till then the devils think their torment to be before the time. It is “when He shall appear we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is.” That noted day is the day of being “presented faultless with exceeding joy.” And divers things there are obviously enough to be reflected on, which cannot but be understood to contribute much to the increase and improvement of this inchoate blessedness. The acquisition of a glorified body; for our vile bodies shall be so far transfigured, as to be made like, conform to, the glorious body of the

* [Viz., than those advances upon the present happiness of the Saints which are to be made in the intermediate state.]

Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (μετασχηματίζει, σύμμορφον. Phil. iii. 20, 21.) And this shall be when He shall appear from heaven, where saints here below are required to have their commerce, as the enfranchised citizens thereof, and from whence they are to continue looking for Him meantime. When He terminates and puts a period to that expectation of His saints on earth, then shall that great change be made, *i. e.*, when He actually appears, at which time the trumpet sounds, and even sleeping dust itself awakes; (1 Thess. iv. 14, 15, 16.) the hallowed dust of them that slept in Jesus, first, who are then to come with Him. This change may well be conceived to add considerably to their felicity. *A natural congruity and appetite is now answered and satisfied, which did either lie dormant, or was under somewhat an anxious, restless expectation before: neither of which could well consist with a state of blessedness every way already perfect.* And that there is a real desire and expectation of this change, seems to be plainly intimated in these words of Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," (*ch.* xiv. 14:) where he must rather be understood to speak of the resurrection than of death (as his words are commonly mistaken, and misapplied;) as will appear by setting down the context from the seventh verse, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground: yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth, and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more they shall not be awaked, nor raised out of their sleep. O that Thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that Thou wouldst keep me secret till Thy wrath be past, that Thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thy hands." He first speaks according to common apprehension, and sensible appearance, touching the hopeless state of man in death, (as though it were less capable of separation than that of some inferior creatures,) unto the end of ver. 10, and then gradually discovers his better hope; betrays this faith, as it were obliquely, touching this point; lets it break out, first, in some obscure glimmerings, (*v.* 11, 12,) giving us, in his *protasis*, a similitude not fully expressive of his seeming meaning, for waters and floods that fail may be renewed; and in his *apodosis* more openly intimating, man's sleep should be only till the heavens were no more; which *till* might be supposed to signify *never*, were it not for what follows, (*v.* 13,) where he expressly speaks his confidence by way of petition, that at a set and appointed time, God would remember him, so as to recall him out of the grave; and, at last, being now minded to speak out more fully, puts the question to himself, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and answers it,

"All the days of my appointed time," *i.e.*, of that appointed time which he mentioned before, when God should revive him out of the dust, "will I wait till my change come;" *i.e.*, that glorious change, when the corruption of a loathsome grave should be exchanged for immortal glory; which he amplifies, and utters more expressly, (v. 15,) "Thou shalt call, and I will answer; Thou shalt have a desire to the work of Thy hands"—Thou wilt not always forget to restore and perfect Thy own creature.

"And surely that waiting is not the act of his inanimate sleeping dust; but though it be spoken of the person totally gone into *hades*, into the invisible state, it is to be understood of that part that should be capable of such action; *q.d.* "I, in the part that shall be still alive, shall patiently await Thy appointed time of reviving me in that part also, which death and the grave insult over (in a temporary triumph) in the meantime;" and so will the words carry a facile, commodious sense, without the unnecessary help of an imagined rhetorical scheme of speech. And then, that this waiting carries in it a desirous expectation of some additional good, is evident at first sight; which therefore must needs add to the satisfaction and blessedness of the expecting soul. And wherein it may do so, is not altogether unapprehensible. Admit that a spirit, had it never been embodied, might be as well without a body, or that it might be as well provided of a body out of other materials; it is no unreasonable supposition, that a connate aptitude to a body, should render human souls more happy in a body sufficiently attuned to their most noble operations. And how much doth relation and propriety endear things, otherwise mean and inconsiderable! Or why should it be thought strange, that a soul connaturalized to matter should be more particularly inclined to a particular portion thereof, so as that it should appropriate such a part, and say—it is mine? And will it not be a pleasure, to have a vitality diffused through what even more remotely appertains to me; to have everything belonging to the *suppositum* perfectly vindicated from the tyrannous dominion of death? The returning of the spirits into a benumbed or sleeping toe or finger, adds a contentment to a man which he wanted before. Nor is it hence necessary the soul should covet a re-union with every effluvious particle of its former body; a desire implanted by God in a reasonable soul will aim at what is convenient, not what shall be cumbersome or monstrous. And how pleasant will it be to contemplate and admire the wisdom and power of the great Creator in this so glorious a change, when I shall find a clod of earth, a heap of dust, refined into a celestial purity and brightness! When "what was sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption; what was sown in dishonour, is raised in glory; what was sown in weakness, is raised in power; what was sown a natural body is raised a spiritual body! When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, and death be wholly swallowed up in victory!" So that this awaking may well be understood to carry that in it, which may bespeak it the proper season of

the Saints' consummate satisfaction and blessedness. But besides what it carries in itself, there are other (more extrinsical) concurrents that do further signalize this season, and impart a greater increase of blessedness than to God's holy ones. The body of Christ is now completed, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; and all the so nearly related parts cannot but partake in the perfection and reflected glory of the whole. There is joy in heaven at the conversion of one sinner, though he have a troublesome scene yet to pass over afterwards, in a tempting, wicked, unquiet world; how much more when the many sons shall be all brought to glory together!"

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SERMON V.

—
THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

(Preached in the Cathedral, Quebec, on Tuesday in Easter week, 1857.)

—
REV. xx. 6.

*"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection :
on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests
of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand
years."*

WE lately, brethren, crowded in devout sadness to Golgotha, and beheld the awful mystery by which Justice and Mercy were reconciled. We returned, smiting upon our breasts, and full of self-reproaches at the remembrance of the part which *our* sins bore in such a tragedy. We rested sorrowful, meditative, expectant, while the sealed stone and the grim guards secured the rocky sepulchre of the Saviour. We have accompanied the devout and ardent Maries and the other holy women to the empty tomb—we have seen its brazen gates, its iron bars, broken for ever in sunder. We have seen the place where the Lord lay, and we behold Him now a glorious Conqueror over our most dreaded foe. "He is risen!" is the thrilling acclaim of His Church, caught from angelic voices, while above all is heard His own solemn assurance—the immovable foundation of faith—"I was dead, but, behold, I am living for evermore!"*

May we not, at this time, like ransomed Israel on the shore of the Red sea, contemplating the overthrow of their great enemy in his final attempt, pause and wonder at what God hath wrought for

* Rev. i. 18., Gr.

Messiah and His Church, and thoughtfully consider what must now be our future career, to what end we must now direct our steps?

We have in the Resurrection of our Lord a seal of His mighty power, His perfect veracity, His quickening grace; we are satisfied of the truth of our creed, "that all men shall rise again with their bodies:" and—are we to stop here? No, brethren; this faith is in order to action. We lie by nature in the inactivity of spiritual death. The Resurrection of the Living One from among the ranks of the dead, has made a spiritual revolution—it becomes the dawn of a new day. It promises us resurrection now, and resurrection hereafter. It speaks life to both souls and bodies. For we are admonished in our text, and in many other parts of Scripture, that the death of the body is not the only death, nor the resurrection of the body the only resurrection. *There is the first and second death—there is the first and second resurrection.* And our text teaches us that we must have part in the first resurrection if we would have a happy share in the second—if we would be safe from the power of the second death—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." That we may value this first resurrection, and be animated to seek its present and ever-during benefits,

I propose now to inquire—

- I. What this First Resurrection is; and
- II. What are Its Privileges.

I. First, then, it is not a literal bodily resurrection of the saints, with Christ personally reigning with them here on earth for a thousand years. Many, in the first three centuries, imposed this literal meaning on the first six verses of this chapter, and my text in particular, and an increasing number in the last three centuries have followed them. But the notion is traceable to the carnal dreams of the synagogue, and has been confirmed by misapprehensions as to the nature and plan of the Book of the Apocalypse.—According to distinguished interpreters, ancient and modern, this book is not one continuous prophetic picture of the fortunes of Christianity from the first Advent of Christ to the end of the world; *but a series of such pictures.* That is, having sketched the course of events to the end, the Apocalypticist returns to the beginning, and proceeds through the same period and to the same

terminus, in a different line, and by a different set of symbols. The twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second chapters, therefore, instead of being a chronological continuation of the preceding part of the book, are only a summary of what had been previously set forth—a brief picture of Christianity from its rise on earth to its consummation in glory.

Let us glance over the prophetic history. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."—Rev. xx. 1—3.

This angel who binds Satan, is no other than Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, who came to destroy the works of the devil, to deliver those who were oppressed of him; who gave His disciples power over unclean spirits and to cast out devils; who was indeed the Stronger than the strong one armed, and came upon him, and disarmed him, and rescued the prey; who vanquished him in the wilderness, and left him a disheartened foe to His weakest servants; who, in a word, once rejoicingly said, "I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven!" It is this Angel of Jehovah alone who hath (as he says Himself) "the keys of hell and of death;" who alone can vindicate mankind from such an aggressor, and effectually restrain his rage. This Angel is no other than the Seed of the Woman, who was to bruise the Serpent's head. The binding and imprisonment of Satan denote the curtailing of his power over men, the diminishing of that authority in the world, which he exercised with so little hinderance before the Incarnation. What blindness and ingratitude it is to deny, that since that Blessed Event he has indeed been bound—compared with the preceding ages of the world, and the period which is to usher in the last great Day. Idolatry, the grand pillar of his kingdom, has been terribly shaken; nor are now men's bodies (may we not add, their minds too?) so possessed and controlled by evil, as before the Advent of the Great Deliverer. Let it be no objection against this explanation, that the Devil yet *does* tempt—for the expression "that he

should deceive the nations no more," does not mean that he was to be deprived of *all* power of tempting, but he was bound *in order that* (*iva*) he might not tempt: just as it is said, Christ went forth "conquering and to conquer," — (*iva*) *in order that* He might conquer. This is not contradicted by the fact that very much yet remains in the world unsubdued to Christ. If the devil prevail, it is not the fault of Christ, who has bound him, so that he cannot do violence to any Christian's will. It is this binding that makes the Apostle's words true—"resist the devil, and he will flee from you," as conscious that his strength is shorn, as one who has experienced what defeat is.*

The number 1000 is not to be regarded as a definite number, but a mystical one—expressive of the whole duration of the prevalence of Christ's religion in the world. It is used twenty times in this book, but not once in a definite sense, except (as some think) here.

2. Another cause of misapprehension about this resurrection is the forgetting that it is a resurrection of *souls*: — "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands"—*i.e.*, who in profession and practice were pure and faithful Christians. As I have now briefly shewn what this resurrection is *not*, I proceed, just as briefly to declare what it *is*,—that the FIRST RESURRECTION *is nothing else than the state of grace in God's Church on earth*, † the remission of sins; the quickening by the Holy Ghost of those who were dead in trespasses and sins; the begetting guilty and despairing criminals "to a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;" the Regeneration, in which all things become new; "the resurrection (in short) from the death of sin to the life of righteousness."

* See the last note (from Episcopius) in Hare's *Mission of the Comforter*.

† The chief grounds and favourers of the views stated in these two sections, may be seen in Wordsworth on the Apocalypse, Lects. i. & vi.; and in the 2nd Dissertation annexed to the late Prof. S. Lee's "Six Sermons on the Study of the Holy Scriptures." On this subject, Bk. xx. of St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* is specially worthy of perusal.

We consist of two parts—soul and body—both sinful, guilty, exposed to death; and Christ, who is a perfect Saviour, intends to save both from that final curse of death, the last enemy to our felicity. But according to His own system of divinity, He begins not (like the Pharisees) with the outside; but He cleanses first that which is within; He purges the soul from the guilt and defilements of sin, and then the penal consequences cease of themselves. The soul rises now to righteousness by a spiritual resurrection, and this ensures, in the order of Revelation, the resurrection of the body too to life immortal—which is the Second Resurrection. Hear His own glorious method of salvation: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, yea, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God”—“awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead”—“and they that hear (and obey the call) shall live.” “For he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

This is the First Resurrection.

Again: “The hour is coming, (mark, He does not add, ‘And now is,’) in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.” This is the Second Resurrection, final and two-sided. Oh, what a question of overwhelming consequence is it, Are we—or how *may* we be, among the blessed and holy ones, who have part in the First Resurrection, which insures the happiness of the second?

Into this resurrection-state the boundless and unmerited mercy of God has introduced us by the Sacrament of our Baptism. It was at once the *beginning*, *symbol*, and *instrument* of our spiritual resurrection. “Buried with Him in Baptism, (says the Apostle,) we are raised with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.” And again: “We are buried with Him by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted in the likeness of His death, we shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.” Thus is effected the first quickening of our old man; here begin to beat the first pulses of spiritual life. But let

us be cautious on so great a point, and not be blindly confident where the second death is one of the alternatives. The beginning is not the end; to enter the door is not to wander in enjoyment through the halls of the palace; to sow is not to reap; the symbol is not the thing signified; profession is not act; to be born is not to live a noble and useful life. If, therefore, we neglect to realize what is professed and symbolized in Baptism—to perfect what was begun in it—to walk in that newness of life to which we were therein raised up,—then is our last state of apostacy worse than our first state of natural death—then are we, in the words of St. Jude, “twice dead;” we have entered upon the state of second death, which is perfected in the “resurrection to damnation.”

The resurrection of the body is no natural result—death, and consequently the resurrection, not entering into the original divine plan: it is a supernatural effect of divine grace, merited for us by Jesus Christ. And since this resurrection—glorious gift as it is in itself—shall turn, for many, into so intolerable a curse; it is the last, greatest, unanswerable proof, that the divine grace in our first Resurrection may, through our fault, be received with a similar deadly effect.—Can it be otherwise than deadly, to slight with unbelieving worldly temper the glorious gift of God—eternal life, offered us through Christ, and even begun in us by the grace of a risen Saviour; to value less than the pleasures or pains of the passing hour, the sublime privilege of rising with Christ to a lively hope of immortality; to neglect the holy duties which He has annexed to the regenerate state; to condemn the cultivation of those graces which adorn it, which are necessary to preserve, perpetuate, perfect it?—If this be at all a picture of our state of mind—in vain we imagine we have part in the First Resurrection. Like the terrible Exemplar of greater numbers than are willing to own the resemblance, “we have neither part nor lot in the matter;” and have need to repent and pray God, if *perhaps* we may be forgiven; for wilful continuance in sin, after having been made partakers of such blessings as tax the eloquence of inspiration to express, may too sadly reduce our forgiveness to a *perhaps*. “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” Amid the numbers that wear the external badge of Christ, His eye beholds the humble and contrite, the pure and heavenly-minded; His seal is upon them; they are marked

for His jewels; they alone have effectual and happy part in the First Resurrection—they alone are his true Church, predestined to everlasting glory. For “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection”—this is the character, this is the reward of those who not only rise to, but live the life of the regenerate. *Blessed* are they—happy—beyond all that the world deems happiness; beyond its trances of rapture—its most ecstatic joys: happy, up to the height of those mysterious words—“filled with all the fulness of God!” And *holy* too—at once character and reward. For happy we cannot be, if not holy; since holiness is essential happiness. And, oh, *holy* in a sublimer strain than the world either exhibits or thinks necessary to exhibit. Those who have “a zeal of God” might well be indignant at its audacious pretences to holiness, but—it becomes us, wretched mortals, who would be “angry for God,” to tremble and adore, when we remember the withering displeasure of the Almighty at those empty shews of piety, whose hypocrisy is scarcely veiled:—a few hurried words, a formal visit to His house, a solemn bow, a pleased departure, gifts which recognize His claims without satisfying them. This to have part in the First Resurrection? Oh, may God be pitiful to those who are so wretchedly deceived! “As He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” Do not these words, as a falling mountain, crush all our vain, inflated hopes? It was not that we might contentedly and safely grovel in the mire of the world, that the Incarnate God groaned out His soul on Golgotha, entered the regions of the dead, rose resistless, and triumphantly ascended the highest heaven: it was that we might die to sin and rise again unto righteousness, after the example and by the virtue of His death and resurrection; and thus partaking in the first Resurrection, might at length ascend where He is, and with Him continually dwell.

Remember, brethren, how we are expressly admonished by His Scriptures and by His Church, that this is what Baptism doth represent unto us. “If then (says the Apostle, implying the truth of the supposition) ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth: forni-

cation, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

And so speaks Christ's Church too—reminding us "that Baptism doth represent unto us our Profession, which is to follow the Example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as He died, and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." In the Collect for Easter Even she teaches us to pray that "as we are baptized into the death of God's Blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, *so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him*,"—i.e., really effect what our Baptism represents and binds us to,—"that so through the grave and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection:"—i.e., having part in the First Resurrection, upon us the second death shall have no power; and the first death, though indeed it must be endured, yet shall it have no terror, since Christ has plucked out its sting, and made it the very portal of deathless life.

So bound by duty and profession, so incited by gratitude, and the most glorious prospects, shall we not, brethren, endeavour to secure our place in the First Resurrection? Think not of the difficulty of mortifying the old man, of putting on the new—dwell not on the mere difficulties which nature feels; but think rather of the omnipotent power, the gracious willingness of Him who has begun the good work in you—and who, by His own Resurrection and your Baptism, has sealed your belief of both. His Resurrection is not only a seal of power, a type and pledge of your resurrection—first and second; but it is itself efficacious thereto by its merit. And therefore we should long with the Apostle, to "know Him *and the power of His Resurrection*." Yes—the true faith of this great fact and doctrine of our religion—in what it has represented and effected for us in our Baptism—in what it bids us expect in futurity, will be found a mighty instrument of new and spiritual life.

That, therefore, soul and body may be at last rescued from the second death, let both be now rescued from sin. This is the present use which holy Scripture would have us make of this doctrine,

as St. Peter said to the Jews—"Unto you first, God having raised up His Son Jesus Christ, sent Him to bless you"—how? "*in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.*" This is how the Resurrection of Christ is a blessing to us: if it were not efficacious to raise us from sin, it were inefficacious to raise us from the dead. And therefore to "believe in the remission of sins" is as high and difficult a point of Christian faith, as to "believe in the resurrection of the dead. Verify, then, your profession by rising to a new life, and you shall know—(what otherwise you can never know)—what it is to be truly blessed.

Let us next consider—

II. The *Privileges* of those who have part in the First Resurrection.

1. "*Upon them the second death hath no power.*" For them death is abolished in all its parts and influences. Now is done away all that *guilt* and *corruption* which are the seeds and certain beginning of it. That *separation* from God, which is at once cause and effect of the curse, is done away, in the mortification of sin—according to the words of the prophet, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." But he who is risen with Christ, is sheltered from the curse by Him who was made a curse for us—he who was once afar off is now made nigh by the blood of sprinkling. The curse is *wholly* removed—for "there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." In such the deathless life is already begun, and will be perfected by Him who began it, unto the day of Jesus Christ; "they *have* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; they *are* passed from death unto life"—and Christ "will raise them up at the last day." The curse is completely undone in respect to both soul and body.

With what an elevation of sentiment, with what freedom of thought, with what contempt for sensual things, should such enfranchised spirits pass through this present life? Admitted into "the glorious liberty of the children of God," sealed His sons and heirs, candidates and inheritors of immortality,—how should they be portraitures of heaven upon earth, perpetual remembrances and proofs of a better world,—arguments beyond what books can furnish, beyond what the sceptic can assail! With such a comment,

how striking would the words of Christ become—"Ye are the light of the world—ye are the salt of the earth!"

2. They are to be *Priests* of God and of Christ.

This, brethren, is a glorious character and privilege of *us* Christians. "This is not said (says St. Augustine*) of bishops and presbyters alone, who are now with special right called priests in the church. But as we say that all are Christians on account of the mystical chrism, [the anointing of the Holy One;] so do we say that all are priests, inasmuch as they are members of the One Priest." And this is the doctrine of St. Peter, who says of the body of Christian people, "Ye are a royal priesthood—an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ."

Do we, brethren, ever bear in mind this our great and sacred dignity, and endeavour to walk worthy of so high a vocation? We all, I am sure, have no mean notions of the great sanctity that should mark and adorn the bishops and priests of Christ's Church, who minister the bread of life at our altars, who proclaim the message of Reconciliation, who pronounce the absolving words, who offer the sacrifice of your prayers and praises to God. You feel with unerring instinct that *they* should not be of the earth, earthy; absorbed in its low cares and base pursuits; debased by its filthy passions: you feel that they should live in a higher region and breathe a purer atmosphere; that their souls should be the home of devotion and holy meditation, so that they may ever come before the Lord with pure hearts and clean hands, and offer unto Him acceptable sacrifices. You will admit that they are rightly exhorted "to have in remembrance into how high a dignity and to how weighty an office and charge they are called:" But—you are prone to forget—that *you* share the *essence* of this priesthood, which consists in *offering sacrifices to God*. A few special offices are now restricted to their ministry; but their prominence is only temporary. This transient life once past, all are the equal Servants of God, every ransomed soul is a high-priest, and offers the same endless sacrifice of adoring love and praise. What sanctity, then, should ye study, *ye priests* of the most High God! What care should mark all your ways! What

* De Civitate Dei, lib. xx. cap. x.

reverence and awe should you bring to your priestly offices ! When you pray, when you give alms, when you communicate—remember that as priests you are sacrificing to God ; and how will this drive away sloth, negligenee, indevotion, irreverence, and kindle love and zeal. As you passed through a defiling world, how careful would it make you to avoid its pollutions—to remember that you were invested with priestly robes—that you were the consecrated priests of God and of Christ ! and how would such meditations, too, on the love of God, in thus bringing you near to stand before Him, quicken your gratitude—which thus quickened would become a triple protection from apostasy !

3. Lastly, those who participate in the First Resurrection *reign* (says our text) with Christ—or, as in chap. v. 10, “ We are made unto our God *kings* and priests : and we shall *reign* on the earth.” “ I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them.” With St. Augustine* I say, “ We must not suppose that this is spoken of the last judgment ; but the seats of the prelates and the prelates themselves are to be understood, by whom the church is now governed.” But, as he explains, *not these only* ; for all Christians, as members of the Great King, are kings and reign ; since *Christians*, by their union with *Christ*—their oneness with Him, share all His offices. “ The Chureh (says Augustine†) is Christ’s kingdom Therefore His saints now reign with Him They reign with Him who do what the Apostle says, ‘ If ye are risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.’ Of such also the Apostle says, ‘ Their conversation is in heaven.’ Finally, they reign with Him, who are in such wise in His kingdom that they are themselves His kingdom.” In this interpretation Augustine agrees with the words of Christ, who declares that the judgment of Satan had begun with His own Incarnation. “ Now is the judgment of this world : now shall the prince of this world be cast out—now is the prince of this world judged.” And St. Paul declares that “ the saints judge the world—yea, angels.” The authority which Christians exercise over their evil selves, and an evil world, and evil angels, is a real and kingly one. But it is

* De Civit. Dei, lib. xx. cap. ix.

† *Ut supra.*

only the faintest shadow of that royal rule—whose mysterious nature is as yet unknown to us—when we shall be “set down with Him in His throne.”

In connection with this, I will only beseech you, brethren, to ponder the weight of dignity and honour which God has graciously put upon you—to *reverence yourselves*—to walk worthy of your high calling in Christ Jesus. Called to reign with Him now—to judge the world, to judge angels, (greater in power and might and nature,) to overcome in His name, and to sit down at last with Him on His throne—called to all this, shall you—the expectants, the promised heirs of such glory, and already in part the possessors—shall *you* mingle with ardour in the strifes of the world? Shall you—forgetful of higher dignities—contend with breathless eagerness for the foremost place in its honours, riches, applause, or pleasures? Shall you—the judges of angelic powers—be yourselves condemned by every scoffing unbeliever or worldling who beholds you, because you fall before every assault, are entrapped by every snare, of your infernal foes? Shall you—the anointed kingly victors of the world and the flesh—be the wretched slaves of sensuality, the captives of every dishonourable lust, and have your crowned brows abased to the mire of the world, on which your feet should trample with a strong disdain? Oh, why are we such Christians, but because we forget that we are not of the world, because we forget our high calling, we forget that God has made us kings and priests, we forget the resurrection-state to which we have been exalted, and, forgetting, slip back (often hopelessly) from it!

Oh, let new purposes animate us this Easter-tide! Let us remember what a victorious Saviour we have. Let us remember the quickening Spirit, who loves to fan the feeble spark into extinguishable flame. Let us remember the Father, who beholds us while yet a great way off, and runs to meet and embrace the repentant child. Remembering this—let us rise far above the world, rise with Christ—secure our place in the First Resurrection: for “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him” the thousand years of eternity!

SERMON VI.

THE PLACE OF THE TRINITY IN PRACTICAL TEACHING.

(Preached before the Clerical Association of the District of Quebec,
met at Sillery, 9th June, 1857.)

PSALM xvi. 9—(PRAYER BOOK VERSION.)

“I have set God always before me.”

THESE words strongly and clearly discriminate true religion from all its counterfeits. Morality, based on the maxims of a pagan or semi-pagan philosophy; on decency, or fitness, or prudenece, or the cold calculations of selfish policy,—has often usurped the venerable name of Religion; but paganism itself has come to the rescue, by reminding us that *Religio*, à *religare*,* to bind, is that which binds us in love and duty to God. Morality, on the contrary, and all that is falsely called religion, never soar so high; they draw their motives from the earth, and are therefore of the earth, earthy.

God, so far as He is known to us, and our relations to Him are comprehended, is and must be the one pregnant motive of religion—the motive that gives religion not only its activity and efficiency, but its very being. God, as seen by the eye of reason in all the varied expressions of His creative power and wisdom, and as perceived by the dim instincts of our fallen humanity,—was this motive before the book of revelation was opened. But after He had spoken with His chosen servants, face to face, as a man speaketh with his friends; after He had revealed His name and His attri-

* Or, to the same effect, if from *relegere*: the careful meditation of divine things.

butes,—“*The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation,*”—He filled the whole firmament of religion with His light and His influence—as the Sun in whose presence men were to walk, in whose absence they had to stand still, or, at best, walk with doubtful steps.

Religion, then, is nothing else than making God the all in all of *motive*—doing everything with reference to His character and will, so far as they are declared to us in His works, our moral constitution, and His revealed word. And this is what is so admirably expressed in our text—“*I have set God always before me.*” Faith in Him will not suffer us to turn our backs upon Him, but it will make us ever firmly and deliberately fasten our eyes on Him, as the centre that is to determine our orbit—we *set* Him before us. *Before* us—not only to regulate our movements, but to intercept from our vision all the vain delusive phantasms of the world. We “set Him before us” as the object of our *contemplation*, our *love*, our *worship*, our *hope*, as our *help*, the *rule and witness* of our actions, and the *scope* of our being.

Our reason, a sparkle of immortal light, will have its proper tendency towards the Eternal Sun. The infinite attributes of God are the noblest, fittest object of man’s contemplation, and indeed the only one of which he will not and cannot tire. It is in the *perfections* of God that we find the only satisfying terminus of that capacity for love with which He has benignantly blessed us. Here we may love—nay, must study to love; love without weariness, with ever-growing desire; with ever-increasing admiration of the divine excellences; and be ever more and more ennobled, according to the natural laws of love, by becoming assimilated to that which we love. We tolerate no love that does not perfectly coincide with this. We think it treason to *worship* with outward reverence or inward esteem any beside the Creator; idolatry, to place our *hope* in aught else; madness to expect *aid* from any other source. To set Him before us always, as the ceaseless *witness of our actions*, is essential to true religion. The thoughtless

tendency and irreverence of our minds require to be awed into sobriety and watchfulness by the recollection that there is ever upon us, spying out all our ways, that Eye which, as the Son of Sirach says, is "ten thousand times brighter than the sun;" that Eye which is too pure "to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity." The disregard of this is the most terrible flood-gate of sin. "The iniquity of my people (saith God by the prophet) is very great; for they say, The Lord seeth not." While perhaps the very cause why the blessed *cannot* sin, is that they shall always behold the face of God. But in this life we can only partake of that state by faith and consideration. And therefore the truly religious man will exercise himself day and night in the remembrance of an ever-present God. In a word, true religion, binding us inseparably to God, will constrain us to regard Him as the very *end* of our being: to keep Him ever before us as the point towards which our tempers and acts should tend, for whose glory "we are, and were created," whose sentence is to determine our destiny, and with whom to be for ever is the highest glorification of our being.

Such, my brethren, was religion according to the old revelation. But when God, who had been known hitherto chiefly in His mysterious Unity, drew aside the veil and disclosed Himself to our faith, in His no less mysterious Trinity; there arose new duties from our new and enlarged knowledge of God—naturally and necessarily arising from the disclosure of new relations between us. When the Eternal Son and the Holy Spirit were distinctly revealed to us, as our Redeemer and Sanctifier, it was not by any express and formal enactment that new duties arose on our part; but suitable feelings sprang up within us, and appropriate acts were performed by us, towards these Blessed Persons; just as from the beginning it was natural to love and serve the Father and Creator of all. What thus arises from nature must surely be all-pervading in its influence, and must merit our most careful and reverent study. God never revealed Himself of old, even in the humblest degree, without enlarging the sphere of duty to him who was so favoured; and now when He has revealed His infinite nature to us, as far perhaps as our capacity admits, certainly as far as our necessity requires, the bonds of religion are at once

stretched and strengthened. We cannot now say, with no more meaning than did the pious Jew,—“*I am the Lord's* ;” nor be content with those more simple exercises of piety which we have described. “*I am the Lord's*,” expands into an awful and wondrous relationship—“*I am that Lord's*” who is “the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity!” dedicated in a divine Sacrament to the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Their servant, yea, their very property I am. Their mark is upon me. Their will is my law. Their presence is my utmost joy.

This admirable mystery none deny who do not repudiate the *essence* of Christianity as contained in the Church Creeds, or think of refusing a place in speculative theology; but, alas! there are not a few, it is to be feared, who think it of no further use, who see it in no other light, than a speculation; who think that one may be a very good Christian—at any rate a pious man, without the least special reference to this doctrine. But such thoughts are very mad and very guilty, if God has really revealed Himself as a Trinity of Persons. Indeed we may gather our deep interest in this mystery from* “the faint image of it in our nature.” “Man,” says St. Augustine,† (who in this is supported by the very letter of scripture,) “consists of three parts—spirit, soul, and body; and hence man is an image of the Trinity:” an image, he remarks ‡ elsewhere, “than which there is nothing nearer in its nature to God among all His works.” Can that relation be other than vital and all-pervading which began with our original? Can that resemblance be insignificant which was announced in the amazing “Let us make man in OUR IMAGE, after OUR LIKENESS?”

I hope that these considerations do, in a general way, show us how practical is this doctrine—how it must permeate our whole religious life, leaven all our thoughts, move and control all our activity, and be the deep hidden Fountain whence every rill of holiness is to flow.

* W. A. Butler.

† *Tractat. de Symbolo.* Homo habet tres partes, spiritum, animum, et corpus; itaque homo est imago s. s. Trinitatis.

‡ De Civ. Lib. xi. c. xxvi. Sub init. “quâ (imagine) Deo nihil sit in rebus ab eo factis natura propinquius”

To make this point clear is the object proposed to me in this discourse; and yet I know not that I can produce a single proof that is not already familiar to you; I cannot pretend to furnish even an additional new illustration: in short, I do not know that there is anything whatever within my power, save to stir up your minds by way of remembrance—to refresh your knowledge, and urge you, by God's grace, to turn it into act. But this, thank God, is a sufficiently encouraging aim to the preacher, while its accomplishment would be infinitely more advantageous to Christian people, than any amount whatever of merely communicated knowledge.

Be it, then, my task and high privilege to remind you *how entirely and exactly commensurate with our whole spiritual life, is this most sacred doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.* And I may here be permitted to remark, that, next to its Divine revelation, this fact is the firmest basis of the doctrine—certainly its strongest corroboration. For no invention of error could possibly so fit, and adapt itself to, all the complexities of our moral being, as does this capital article of revealed truth.

I. First, then, the Doctrine of the Trinity—or rather the Trinity itself, is the great central sun of our **INTELLECT AND AFFECTIONS.**

I need not do more than remind you that we are often admonished in Holy Scripture “to acquaint ourselves with God”—to know Him—to consider His character and ways. And how just and right is this! What can be more agreeable to every unperturbed instinct, than to exercise most of all with respect to the great Author of our being, the several faculties of reason, reflection, and research? These are noble powers, and the works of God give them both scope and stimulus. With such a book as nature outspread before us, I cannot but think it a grievous fault to hide them in a napkin, and keep them unused. I cannot but think it will be one day found to be an offence of unthought-of magnitude.

How mighty a difference is there, intellectually, between the philosopher who has ranged through the heights and depths of creation, and the poor man whose life is spent in grinding a pin's point! But in regard to God,—religion, the devout contemplation of Him, would forbid such a discrepancy. The poor unlettered peasant or artizan, who is accustomed to think of his God with

devout feelings of awe and reverence and love; who contemplates Him through the medium of a mind darkened by no proud theories, no turbulent passions; whose sight is strengthened by faith and sharpened by love;—will be found to have as true, as noble, as elevating, as comprehensive conceptions of God, as the most admired professors of the world's wisdom. And where the intellect is not expanded by noble conceptions of God, there is too good ground to suspect religion has little place. Trust in God can hardly dwell with grovelling notions of Him. The contemplation of God therefore is our sacred duty and privilege. But if the essence, the eternity, the self-existence, the infinite attributes of Deity, known only in His Unity, afforded questions all-absorbing to the reason, profitable indeed for modest meditation, yet never to be solved; now that we know "One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity,"—the God with whom we hope to spend eternal ages—the God of nature and grace,—is it too much to ask that He should be in all our thoughts? or that every meditation of inferior things should insensibly ascend to the Trinity? Even though our meditations should stop short with creation, and we should neglect the more glorious displays of God in His works of grace; yet we cannot now forget the Trinity. For though the eternal Father is the maker of heaven and earth, yet it is no less truly said of the Son—"all things were made by Him;" and of the Spirit, moving, brooding upon the face of the waters, that from the dark and formless mass He brought forth beauty and order.

If we would be truly great, if we would have our souls filled with the noblest, fittest, and most satisfying thoughts; we must dwell with God by devout contemplation. And if we would be humble, as becomes creatures—creatures who are balked and baffled by ten thousand things, we must ever gaze on this mystery of mysteries, "dark with insufferable light." Here we may learn to abase our self-conceit, to cast in the dust our ambitious aspirings, to restrain all forward and intrusive approaches towards the light unapproachable in which He dwells,—in a word, to feel how small, how weak we are, and with "those spiritual eagles, the quick and strong-sighted seraphim," cover our faces and adore.

If this doctrine had no other practical aspect than this, yet how precious and necessary would it be! "If there be anything more

than another (says one of the greatest lights of the church in our century, the lamented Archer Butler*) in which the religious habits of our Age are peculiarly defective, it is in the feeling of *awe*. We are not satisfied unless we have measured with the foot-rule of our understanding every side of every truth we profess; unless "our hands have handled of the Word of life." The finger must be seen in the print of the nails, and the hand in the side, or we will not believe. We have (I fear it) too much of the spirit of the heathen victor who rushed into the Holy of Holies to discover *what was there*; too often (I fear yet more) like him we return from our scrutiny, contemptuously assuming that there *is* nothing where we have *seen* nothing. How in our times the rapid progress of natural knowledge may, and does assist, this spirit of proud discontent, it is unnecessary to insist. But, for the tendency, in all its degrees, the revelation of mysterious truths is the trial, and, duly improved, the remedy. In the old dispensation, religious awe was secured by means outward and occasional; the solemn Temple Service, the frequency of miraculous interpositions, the prophetic teaching, the very obscurity of that shadowy region of types and forms in which the ceremonial religion lay;—in ours, where these things have been laid aside, the objection is provided for by those fuller declarations which we possess of the properties of the divine nature in itself and in its mystical communion with the spirit of man. And thus our God becomes more awfully unfathomable to the Reason in proportion as he draws more nearly, more lovingly, more blessedly to the Heart!

But if the doctrine of the Trinity is the highest object of the intellect, no less does it fill the whole region of the *affections*. I shall instance but one particular. When we hear the Blessed Trinity saying, "Let us make man out of nothing, Let us recover him from sin and perdition, Let us crown him with joy and salvation;" with what feelings of supreme gratitude and love should we observe the Father designing such great things for us when as yet we were not; the Son executing them *Himself*, when we were and were in misery; and the Spirit making effectual for each of us in particular all His acts of redeeming grace! O, brethren, it is not a mere idea, an abstraction called Beauty or Goodness, that we are

* Serm. iv., vol. ii. pp. 65-6, Am. Ed.

called on to love and admire; but a Personal Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, whom, in their several offices towards us, we are most truly bound to consider and love.

(1.) We* should set always before us God the Father, from all eternity pleased with His own most gracious purpose, to create us in His image, to endow us with most excellent faculties of mind and body; to subject to our uses a world which He pronounced very good; to permit us to fall, that He might raise us to a higher and better and more secure position; resolving to send His eternal Son, that we might attain eternal joy through Him; and meantime, by ways of unsearchable wisdom, providentially preparing the world for the manifestation of such a mercy; giving proofs of His patience and benignity "in showers and fruitful seasons, in filling our hearts with food and gladness," more especially in the consolatory promises of prophecies, in impressive types and ceremonies: in letting not one thing fail when *the fulness of time* had arrived. Then He gave His Son in our human flesh, then He laid on Him the iniquity of us all, then He bruised Him and put Him to grief,—He accepted His sufferings and blood, He exalted that Holy Victim to His own right hand; He sent on us His Holy Spirit, to abide with us for ever, and lead us into the land of uprightness and life eternal. How familiar should such reflections be to our minds! How should the frequent remembrance of all the goodness designed us in the infinite heart of our Divine Father and Personal Creator, seize us with all the overpowering strength of the most ardent, most sacred, most devoted love!

(2.) The Second Person of the Holy Trinity must ever be associated with the Father as the object of our love,—as He conjointly with the Father is the cause of our happiness. "By Him the Father made the worlds"—"He upholds all things still by the word of His power." But we know and love Him chiefly as our Redeemer. He did not dissent from the gracious purpose of the Father (with whom He has one will) when our salvation was designed, though at His expense. "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no Intercessor"—and, lo! the king of angels is found in mortal flesh, in the form of a servant; His

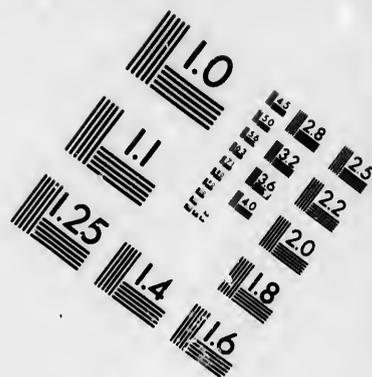
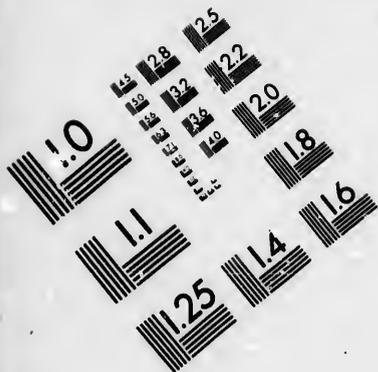
* This and the two following paragraphs are indebted to Barrow's Sermon on the Blessed Trinity.

Divine glory is eclipsed and shrouded in human frailty; the First-Born of Creation is despised and rejected of men; the Owner of unnumbered worlds is without a roof to cover His head—and all this is done of perfect choice, with content, yea, with zeal. After thirty years of lowliness, let us hasten to the closing scene. God is by man accused of blasphemy: Wisdom itself is accused of folly: the Truth is charged with imposture: Love is traduced as mischief: Goodness is defamed as malevolence: Power is trampled by impotent malice: the Judge of all the world, the Fountain of Right, is condemned and executed for injustice: *the heart of God bleeds, the Sole Author of Life expires!* Herein is love! oh, how can we ever sufficiently love Him who so first loved us!

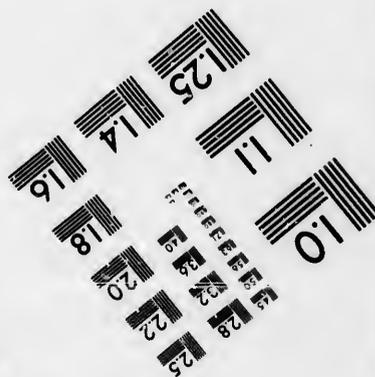
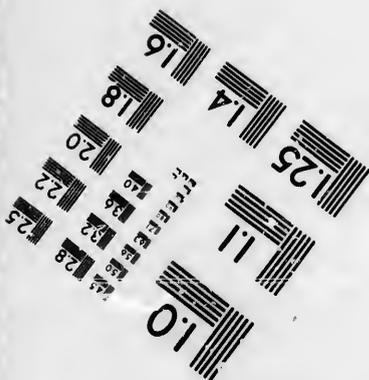
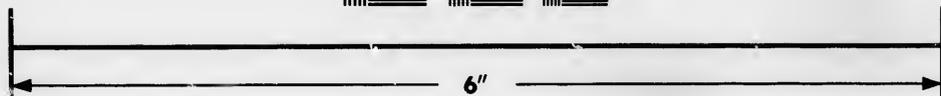
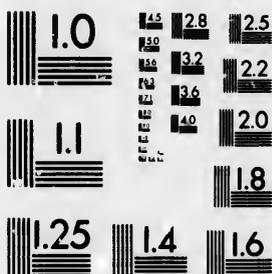
(3.) Nor less love do we owe the Blessed Spirit of God, who with equal goodness conspired in the great design of salvation, and by whose ministry and powerful energy it is that the purposes of the Father, and the sufferings of the Son, do actually issue in our salvation. He it is who repairs our decays; who enlivens our dead souls; who illuminates our darkness; who warms our icy hearts; who imparts spiritual strength; who breaks the bonds of our captivity; who quickens faith; who kindles love; who excites repentance; who gives peace and hope and joy; who is our helper in the works of God, our guide even unto death; who bears witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God, and is our advocate with God;—in a word, the Root of all good within us. Oh, what love is due to Him, who bears so long and so lovingly with our shameful provocations and oppositions—unwilling to give us up—desiring to be guest with such unworthy creatures,—to adorn our hearts, naturally so foul and ugly, so that they may be fit palaces and temples for the inhabitation of the whole glorious Trinity!—Thus does the doctrine minister to our love and our other affections, an object in which all light, all beauty, all perfection shine, and therefore most justly does it claim to engross our affections.

II. But we advance a step higher. We rise from the intellect and the affections to that work which most perfectly combines them—to worship. The doctrine of the Trinity determines our WORSHIP. This is fundamentally practical—for as is our worship, such will be our religion and our own characters. If we worship a God who is a figment of our own imagination, it is no less idolatry





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than if we worship the creation of our hands. Therefore as worship, the embodiment of religion, must begin with right notions of God, the Athanasian Creed, after declaring that the right Catholic faith is necessary to salvation, and proceeding at once to define what it is, says—"And the Catholic faith is this, That we WORSHIP *one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.*"

The Catholic faith is not bare intellectual assent—it is *worship*; and we worship God aright only when we neither deny His *Unity* nor His *Triplicity*. It would be insolently provoking to the Blessed God to refuse to worship Him in that wondrous nature in which He has been graciously pleased to manifest Himself. To deny His nature to His very face in the very act of pretended homage, must surely be the highest blasphemy possible. And surely those conceptions which we have of God in our most solemn addresses to Him, when our spiritual character receives its strongest impresses, must be of all things in religion the most prevalently practical. And this perhaps is the true light in which to regard that awful sentence of the Athanasian Creed—"Without doubt *he shall perish everlastingly*"—not the presumptuous anathema of the church, as some ignorantly think,—but the faithful echo of the recorded judgment of the Church's Lord. Those who are *wilfully* ignorant or regardless of a triune God, *shall* perish—not only by the judicial penalty which their contempt or disregard merits: but they perish *in the nature of things, necessarily, unavoidably*; because the worship of this God (which includes knowledge, faith, love) is the only possible means of reviving our dead souls, and raising them to a new, spiritual, and immortal life. Not *arbitrary* therefore, but *natural* and *necessary* is this tremendous sentence.

How important must that revelation be which shapes the worship of both heaven and earth! "Holy, holy, holy," is the burden of even celestial song; and in the church below the angels' *Τρισάγιον* is caught up, and echoed endlessly with every circling sun. Thanks be to God, we have holy and beautiful services, whose outward form has been moulded by the indwelling presence of His Three-fold nature, and whose heart is instinct with it. Perish the hand which would mar a single sentence that shrines the doctrine of a Triune God! without which the fairest appearance of a church is but in reality a putrefying corpse! Ever amidst confessions, and

prayers, and litanies, and psalms, may our *Gloria Patri's* shine as mysterious stars of the upper heaven—bright remembrancers of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! In our worship, as Christians, brethren, we can never go a step *beyond* this doctrine, nor a step *without* it. And therefore our *prayers* conclude with that summary of all that we can desire—“*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,*” &c.—or, “*The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*” And as the summary of all doctrines and all mysteries, the Festival of Trinity Sunday is appointed at the end of that first half of the church's year, through which are distributed and celebrated in order the chief mysteries of the Christian religion.

A similar vital presence has this doctrine in the Sacraments—those most solemn of all acts of worship. Not to mention that we are baptized in the name of the Trinity, we are made in Baptism “members of Christ, children of God:” and the Spirit is the agent of both effects. He grafts us into the Body of Christ,—He moves upon the face of the waters, and we are new-born. In the Lord's Supper, the Father “makes the feast.” The Son declares—“My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.” And the vital influence of the Spirit makes the earthly elements of bread and wine the spiritual food and sustenance of the soul—the body and blood of Christ.

III. Not only does this doctrine regulate our worship,—which is the sublimest exercise of our whole nature, and the complex of all that is reasonable and spiritual in man; but it alone discovers to us how we may be enabled to “worship the Lord with *holy* worship.” We are not uncertainly taught that all the MOTIVES AND MEANS of righteousness are derived from the Trinity. “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,” is the general principle of action set forth in holy scripture. But we find every such rule modified by reference to the several Persons of the Trinity; *e.g.* “Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Is a motive for love to the brethren required? “Be ye followers of God, as dear children: love even your enemies, that ye may be the children of your *Father* which is in heaven.” And: “Ye know the grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*; walk in love, as Christ also has loved us.” And this love to the brethren is called “the love of the *Spirit*,” because produced by Him. Do we seek a motive for holiness?

"Be ye holy, for I am holy," God says. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." We are to be holy also because Christ, who hath left us an example that we should follow His steps, was holy, harmless, undefiled—and did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." We are to be holy also because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost. So *all motives* are to be sought in the Trinity.

Thence the *means* of holiness are also to be sought. We must first seek to the Father, "from whom cometh every good gift and every perfect gift"—we must ask, and He will give us "good things," or that summary of them, "His Holy Spirit." It is by that Spirit we must mortify the deeds of the body. It is in Him we have our new spiritual existence; so it is in Him we must walk, if we would not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. And yet the Son says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." "If any man lack wisdom," he must ask "the Father of lights, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Yet no man knoweth the Father to ask from Him, "save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." And yet again: it is "the Spirit that takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to us—and teaches us all things—and leads us into all truth; and from whom we have an unction, and know all things." Meanwhile we must not forget that the matter of the Holy Spirit's teaching, which is called "the things of Christ," is not only Christ's but the Father's: "My doctrine is not Mine, (saith He,) but His that sent Me." Thus in nothing can we sever that Union of Persons, which is the Fountain of all Unity.

IV. Lastly, as the crown of all, the Triune God is our END. That we should be united with Him and enjoy Him for ever, was His gracious design in our creation. But once separated from Him by sin, what should bring together things infinitely distant—a holy God and polluted man? Oh, work worthy of divine wisdom and might! If indeed we admit the possibility of such a wondrous reconciliation, we need stumble at no preparatory mystery; for a mysterious effect can be brought about only by mysterious means. And such were the means employed in our reconciliation. God becomes man, and is inseparably allied to humanity, in order that

man may be partaker of the Divine nature, and be eternally united to God.

In the incarnate Son, accordingly, the chasm which separated divinity and humanity is bridged over—His flesh is a new and living way to God: He is the One Mediator—to the exclusion of all others—between God and man. But His Incarnation was accomplished by the Holy Ghost, in His Sacred Conception, to which alone we must restrict the epithet Immaculate, if we would not blaspheme.

The Incarnation did not of itself unite us to God—it only removed the obstacles and cast up the highway. The same Holy Ghost has next to form Christ specially in the heart of each; to beget us anew to God, and unite us to Him. He initiates the work in our Baptism, He continues and advances it to perfection, in our subsequent life, by the instrumentality of faith and love, in devout waiting on those *Bethesdas*—those houses of mercy, where He resides in the plenitude and energy of His grace—the ordinances of the church. Thus does the Spirit unite us to God, in preparation for our enjoying Him;—And yet the Son too leads us to Him—"for no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son,"—and He declares, with most solemn emphasis, "*I am the WAY.*"

What a union is this! a union which the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity join in effecting! What voluminousness of comment could expand, with adequate reference to this great fact, the wise man's proverb—"a three-fold cord is not easily broken!" Who or what, then, shall separate us, when so united? *To enjoy God, and for ever!* To drink in from the light of His countenance rivers of joy—to desire perpetually, and be perpetually satisfied; to have capacities ever expanding, and so able to take in and enjoy more of God; to be perpetually growing more Godlike—for ever nearer to Him—and since for ever infinitely below Him, having therefore an eternity of such joy in prospect—this is indeed bliss! For this we worthily adore the Holy Trinity. If you would attain this happiness, (which it would be presumptuous in us to suppose we understood more than the minutest fragment of,) let us hold fast in practice as well as in speculation, the doctrine which, at this season, the church holds up for our reverence and faith.

Let us be careful to have our inward eye duly purged, so that we may see it everywhere in God's church and God's word. For, (in the words of one quoted before,*) "Wherever it is not asserted it is assumed; it is not one thread in the web, but the ground of the whole texture. It is like the clouded sun at noon-day; you cannot always see the orb, but you know it is *there* by the light it spreads!"

* W. A. Butler, vol. ii, p. 68.

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SERMON VII.

THE MEDIATOR IS NOT PARTIAL.

(18th Sunday after Trinity.)

GAL. iii. 20.

"Now a mediator is not a mediator of one."

ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν.

THERE is not in the whole New Testament a sentence more difficult than the verse which furnishes us this text—"Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." The meaning of these few words and their connection with the strain of the argument, have exercised the ingenuity of thousands of learned and pious men, and nonplussed their sagacity. The fact that as many as three hundred and four expositions of this verse have been collected, and two hundred and forty-three of them commented upon by a learned German, is at once proof of what I have affirmed, and also an illustration of a striking and well-known saying of St. Gregory the Great, namely, "That in the holy scriptures there are shallows where a lamb may wade, but also depths where an elephant may swim." *

It is not this intricate matter, however, which I now intend to investigate. The words of the text contain in themselves,

* S. Greg. Mag. Epist. Præfat. in Lib. Moral. Sc. Exposit. in lib. Job, cap. 4. "Divinus enim sermo—habet in publico unde parvulos nutriat: servat in secreto unde mentes sublimium in admiratione suspendat. Quasi quidam quippe est *fluvius*, ut ita dixerim, *planus et altus*, in quo et *agnus ambulat*, et *elephas natet*."

altogether apart from the context, an important *principle*, which it is my aim to develope and expound, and, by the help of God, bring home with profit to the conscience of all.

1. The principle they affirm lies on the surface and is manifest to every eye, "*A mediator is not a mediator of one*"—literally, "*A mediator is not of one, or belongs not to one*"—he is not connected with, acts not for, one party exclusively; but is connected with, acts for, two parties. Indeed the single word *mediator* (and the Greek *μεσίτης*) necessarily suggests as much—meaning *one who is in the midst of two, a middle man*. The general idea, then, of a mediator is—one who forms a means of connection between two parties in some manner separated, and of themselves incapable of coming into union, or meeting.

The mediator may be in some cases no more than (1) a mere *internuntius*—a go-between, a messenger to carry backwards and forwards the words of the two parties. Such was Moses at the giving of the Law:* "I stood (says he) between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount." "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel"—is God's charge to Moses; while the people entreat him, "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it." Moses reports this speech, and God answers: "I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken unto thee." To these events the Apostle refers in the verse preceding the text, "the law was ordained (or dispensed) by angels in the hand of a *mediator*."

(2) But a mediator frequently acts for the reconciliation of parties at variance; for the purpose of obtaining some favour from one party for the other; for, in the case of God and man, inducing God to lay down His displeasure against us, and us to give up our enmity towards Him. A mediator in this case is a *reconciler* and *intercessor*. Such was Moses when he besought God to spare the people after having made the golden calf, and urged the people to return to their offended God.

* Deut. v. 5.

A mediator may offer himself voluntarily, and when both parties consent to abide by his decisions—in which case we should call him an *arbitrator* or *umpire*—his acts are of force with both sides; if he should not be accepted, his interference is ineffectual, and may be no better than impertinent.

Again, a mediator may be authorized by *one* of the parties. A king surely has power to determine who shall mediate between him and his revolted subjects—who shall convey their expressions of penitence and their petitions for pardon, who shall declare to them the intentions of their sovereign, and, in a word, be the only one through whom he will treat with them. Surely subjects would be bound to use the ministry of such a one alone, nor can rebels be thought to have the *right* of choosing who shall be their intercessor.

2. Such a mediator God hath appointed His Son Jesus Christ to be between Himself and mankind. Sin made a wide and fearful gulf between God and man; so that it could no longer consist with the immaculate holiness of God—holiness that is a consuming fire to iniquity—to converse immediately with us. We had not only ceased to be worthy of such a sublime privilege, but we had lost the capacity to enjoy it. And consequently God, who, from the infinite compassion of His nature, would not, in His just displeasure, cast us off, gave His own eternal Son as our mediator, through whom He might still keep up communion with us, without polluting the awful sanctity of His nature, or descending from the height of His strict justice; through whom we might approach our incensed Father with confidence, and with the freedom of perpetual access.

It is distinctly to be borne in mind that *Christ is mediator appointed by the Father*. Unless we firmly believe this, what ground is there upon which to build *confidence* in His intercession, as acceptable to the Father, and prevalent with Him? If Christ's mediation could have been merely volunteered, without commission from the Father, then, however charitable and well-meant His endeavours, the Father would not have been bound to hear His intercessions. But if He acts by the power and appointment of the Father, then must the Father hear Him, unless He would oppose His own authority.

3. We must observe the *fitness* of our Lord for the office of mediator. Since He acts on behalf of God and men, it was neces-

sary that He should partake of the *nature* of both—that He should be both God and man :—this constitutes His *fitness*. “ *There is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.*” Why there is but *one*, is explained by the fact that there is but One Person who is God and Man in mysterious union ; and hence we see how effectually is overturned the anti-scriptural and dangerous doctrine of the Romish church respecting the invocation of Saints, a multitude of mediators. By giving us a mediator who is expressly called “ *the Man Christ Jesus,*” Almighty God has shewn a pitiful regard to our infirmities, to the deep needs of our nature, and completely confronted the argument on which those of that church chiefly rely, namely, man’s lothness to approach directly to God, without the intervention of inferiors [or relatives]. The readiness of Christ to hear His mother in our behalf, is deemed a sufficient argument for imploring her intercession, while it is deemed a sort of presumption to approach without it. But can God be better or so well pleased with any one’s intercession as with His own beloved Son’s, whom He Himself has appointed as mediator ? What presumption is it to approach God in the very way He has Himself prescribed—in the *only* way of which He has given us a hint ? Is not the eternal Son more dear to the eternal Father, than can be the human mother to the divine Son ? Can it be pleasing to the God-man Mediator to entertain the slightest shadow of doubt of His readiness to hear and receive us—who is of our own very nature, who is appointed in that very nature to receive us, who has given proofs of love to us surpassing all knowledge and all wonder ?

Fit it was that He, our mediator, should be *man*, that we might come boldly to His gracious throne ; fit that He should be *God*, that we might be persuaded of the *success* of His intercession with the Father. Fit it was that as He was to be our King, to subdue and rule us, He should be God—having all power, able to conquer all opposition, to bring down the rebellious by conversion or destruction. How could such knowledge or power as this required be fitly put into a mortal’s hands, or how could a mortal capacity receive it ? Fit it was that as Priest, to atone for our sins, He should do it in our Nature. It was *man* that had sinned, it was man who must atone. Christ took not on Him the

nature of angels : for aught we know He could not atone for us in that nature. But "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death." Since by death the conquest was to be made, and His Divine Nature was incapable of suffering, He must assume a nature in which He could die, and what so fit as *ours*? Hereby the punishment of our sins was made as personal as it could be—for though our sins were not punished in our own persons, they were in our *nature*, which is next to our persons. Moreover, as He who has suffered is very God, we have the assurance that as certainly as our nature suffered, so is that suffering a full equivalent for our sins, with an infinite merit and efficacy; for, as St. Paul says, "the church is bought with the blood of God." And, as was before observed, this is what gives its prevalence to that intercession which He now makes in heaven for us—presenting and pleading that precious blood which is the blood of God.

4. We must observe, also, that as He is mediator, acting for both parties, so He came down to earth to treat in person with men, and has returned again to heaven to treat in person with God. The Father knew that there was no one who could have such an interest in upholding His holiness and authority as His eternal Son—to Him therefore He entrusts the wondrous mission of mediator. Forthwith He begins to act; for though not actually assuming our nature till the fulness of time, He from the first infallibly purposed to do so, and, on the strength of this, acted between God and us from the beginning. Hence it has always been the belief of the Church that the Angel of Jehovah, who appears so often and so conspicuously in the Old Testament, acting for God in all His dispensations with men, is no other than our Lord Jesus Christ—in all time the "One Mediator between God and men." To which we may add—that as we read of no crowd of inferior mediators then, much less are we to believe in them now that *the* Mediator has been fully manifested. He manifested Himself most graciously by all the wonderful events of His life, from His most wonderful conception to His glorious ascension: not enduring *invisibly* the punishment of our sins at the hands of evil spirits, which He might have done, but, for *our* full *satisfaction of faith*,

doing all openly, so that we have the amplest proof of His mission as mediator. He came to beseech us face to face to be reconciled to God; and He has returned to heaven "now to appear *in the presence*, or, literally, before the *face* of God, for us." Should we not solemnly and tenderly consider what obligation this lays us under of ready obedience to our Lord? If the lowest angel were sent on an embassy of peace—with God's gracious offers of pardon to us rebels—with what humility and transport should he be received! But the only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, whom all the angels of God worship, how should we give the more earnest heed lest we should at any time let slip the words spoken by *Him*? How should we fear the thought of indifference to *His* message! How shall we escape if we do so?

5. But it is to what I am now going to offer to your consideration that I invite your most special attention. "*A mediator is not of one*" party, but acts for BOTH. We, in our foolish self-love, in our blind and careless disregard of God and His honour, very generally, I fear, allow ourselves to look on our Saviour as *wholly concerned for us*, and not at all, or very little, for His Father: as if His only work were to *secure us*. Do you not feel, my brethren, how inclined you are to this one-sided view? Yet a moment's reflection shows you how contrary this is to the very idea of a mediator. He mediates with us to overcome our enmity to God; He mediates with God, that He may remit His displeasure against us. By His mighty grace He subdues our hearts into penitence and obedience, He takes us by the hand, and leads us into the presence of God, assuring us that "He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him:" and, ever-living, He has an unchangeable priesthood, in which He maketh effectual intercession for us to His Father. Here you see His mediation in both its aspects. This is the essence of Christianity—a *God-man* mediating between us and our heavenly Father. This doctrine alone it is which furnishes all the great motives and arguments for *Christian practice*. Motives drawn from other sources, however good and efficacious, are not *Christian* motives. Oh, how important, then, that we should not mistake or forget this! But if we allow ourselves to suppose that He acts for *one* party only—or, with an easy selfishness, permit our minds to slide or

even incline to this persuasion—we *enervate* every motive, we rob it of its power to move us.

Consider what would be the consequence, if we thought the mediator to act *for God only*. He would then have no care but how He might, in the most striking and effectual manner, vindicate the insulted Majesty, the outraged authority, the awful holiness of God. He would see to it, that the *Almighty* God should not be opposed with impunity by weak and puny man. He would see to it, that the supreme *authority* of the universal Ruler, exercised with paternal mildness, and the strictest and most impartial justice, should not be opposed and spurned by *lawless* mortals, in their impious endeavours to “break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords from them.” He would see to it, that that *justice* and *holiness* which encompass God with reverence as a halo, should not be audaciously violated in the face of all creation, without as ample amends, without adequate vengeance being exacted. Oh, could our eyes see the eternal Son leaving the throne of the Father, leaving the heavenly kingdom, armed and commissioned with all the power and authority of Deity, innumerable troops of angels crowding the celestial portals, shouting Him success in His great mission, and ready at His beck to follow Him, and execute His commands on earth: if we saw all this, and heard not a whisper of mercy, saw the stern brow of inexorable vengeance—how would our hearts die within us! how would a frantic despair possess us! Then should we feel in sincerity what we are in reality—guilty, and deserving vengeance; impotent and unable to ward it off. Conscience of guilt would paralyse the tongue that would cry for mercy; conscience of weakness would paralyse the arm that would rise against the Omnipotent. Here would be no argument for piety towards God.

Consider, on the other hand, the consequences of supposing the mediator to act *for us only*. He would come among us, telling us of His pity for us in our alienation from God, our banishment from paradise, our exposure to eternal death. He would tell us of His exceeding love to us, which indeed we might see in His leaving heaven and assuming our nature. He would tell us of His power with the Father, and His determination to employ it for us—to deliver us from the curse of the law, and exalt us to everlasting

life, in body and soul. If all this were mixed with no word of our heinous guilt and ingratitude, of the dishonour and injury done to God before all His intelligent creatures by man's apostasy, of the necessity of an atonement to make reconciliation with God, of the necessity of *our* being reconciled by actual repentance, reformation, obedience and holiness—where would be the argument for piety? We might do as we please, would be the thought; there was One who was able to save us, and was sufficiently interested in us to do so. Thus the nerves of the great motives for holy obedience to God are completely cut. Would to God that we did not so often see this verified—that we did not see reckless forgetters of God, in their dying hour, without any conviction of the guilt of sin, of their own guilt in particular, much less any agony of compunction, trust, as they say, in the merits of Christ. If, then, we acquiesce in the deceitful suggestion that “a mediator is of one” party, and *that* ourselves—will not an utter indifference to all the interests of holiness ensue?

But our blessed Lord is a true Mediator—acting for both His Father and us with perfect impartiality, and so has provided against both the results we have described—despair and indifference. He enforces holiness and duty upon us, by the most powerful motives known to our nature—*Hope and Fear*. Of His love to us, the One Mediator has given us every proof that can be given or desired. That He will not fail to employ the power and authority of His office for us, we cannot doubt, when we remember that to fail to do so would be not only against the *compassion* of Christ, but would be against His *duty*—*inasmuch as the Father hath appointed Him mediator for us*; inasmuch as the honour of the Father is promoted by the success of His mediation. But especially is our confidence in the zeal and efficacy of Christ's mediation confirmed by the consideration, that He Himself is necessarily so much concerned in its success. He is partaker of our Nature, and in pleading for us, pleads in a manner for Himself. We are assured, too, that Jesus Christ—“perfect man”—perfect in our nature, and perfect in all its affections, has, and must have, a mighty sympathy, a fellow-feeling for us—the very ground upon which the Apostle urges us to firmness in the faith, and confidence in prayer, saying—“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest

that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us *hold fast our profession*. For we have not an *High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore *come boldly* unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

If, then, we turn from our sins by a true repentance, if we live in the practice of that holy obedience of which the great Mediator has left us an absolute Exemplar, if we seek to come unto God through Him—not by our own virtue, not by inferior and unauthorized mediators that cannot help us ; is not our hope in God as solid as the basis of heaven, as immovable as the throne of God ? What more can be done to make us "*joyful through hope?*"

Again ; He is God—He cannot part with His Divine nature, He cannot forget or forego His claims on our obedience—even if He could forget His duty to the Father, who has entrusted Him with the care of His honour, and dignity, and rights, and commissioned Him as His representative to men. Though He is one with us, He is one with the Father in a yet higher sense ; and to suppose that He could for a moment overlook what is due to the Almighty Father in His affection for us, is the greatest affront to Christ. What ! do we suppose that Christ, however much He loves us, can love us *more* than He loves His Father ? and that to screen us, He will let our injuries and insults to God go unavenged ? No ! He is bound to see every wrong done to God redressed—to see every rebel brought into peace and love and duty, or *utterly cut off*. For this He has received all power in heaven and in earth, for this hath the Father put all judgment into His hands. So that Christ is by His very office of Mediator constituted as much the Destroyer of the undutiful and disobedient, as He is the Reconciler and Saviour of the penitent. "The Lord hath anointed Me" (Himself says) "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and—the *day of vengeance of our God*," (Isa. 61 : 1, 2). The very first promise of a Saviour gives Him rather the sole aspect of a destroyer of the wicked : "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed (the whole generation of vipers, all the ungodly,) and her seed ; It shall *bruise thy head*," (Gen. 3, 15). His work, then, you see, is no one-sided work : *He is to be no less a just*

mediator for God, than a merciful mediator for us. God grant that this awakening thought may startle our souls from their deadly stupor of indifference, from their impious trust in Christ—impious and dishonourable to Him, because the companion and, doubtless, in many cases, the very stimulator of our sins.

In the last dread Day—not of life, though the impenitent could wish it, but of this present Dispensation—when the Mediator has assumed His seat of righteous judgment, and when those who abused His Name and His office and His mercy as a cover for their sins, shall stand before Him, anticipating their just and dreadful sentence;—how agonizing will be the reflection—“By disobeying the holy commandments of God, I proclaimed my rejection of Christ’s mediation, and now I am undone. Jesus was once a living screen between me and death; but now that I have incensed and rejected Him, the *only one mediator*, whither can I turn? To which of the Saints or Angels can I flee? The Mediator Himself will be my severe Judge, and”——the soliloquy is cut short by the unalterable sentence—“Depart!” May God give us grace practically to remember “*a mediator is not a mediator of one!*” May the Holy Ghost, who has given the precept, give the heart to obey—“Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. For blessed are all they that put their trust in Him”—the One Mediator between God and man!—AMEN.

SERMON VIII.

DRUNKENNESS.

EPHESIANS v. 18.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess (ἀσώτια); but be filled with the Spirit.”

If drunkenness be deemed so lightly of in the present day by Christian people, whose religion so much abhors it—no wonder that it had such allowance among the heathen, whose religion even adopted this vice into its rites of worship. So wise and pure a man as Plato could say, “that no man should be allowed to be drunk, *but*—at the solemnities of the God that gave them wine!” *

Needful, therefore, was the exhortation of the text for the Ephesians, who had so often, perhaps, in the worship of Bacchus, been religiously drunk—horrid as that sounds in our ears.

Eighteen hundred years have passed away since inspiration thus warned Christians, and yet this filthiness is not purged out from among us.

Let me, my brethren, while I expound our text, beg your most serious attention—for the subject is one in which *all* are interested;—the drunkard, (though God’s house is not the likely resort of such,) if perchance he may be stirred up to make some effort for his deliverance; those who are beginning to be entangled, that they may have their eyes opened to their danger ere it be too late; and those who as yet have escaped, that they may learn the way of real and permanent security.

* Whitby in loc.

Our text contains—1. A *Prohibition* from the sin of Drunkenness; 2. A *Reason* for it; and 3. An effectual *Preventive*.

I. "*Be not drunk with wine.*" *Wine* here stands for all intoxicating liquors; and *drunkenness* is the result of an undue use of them. When their use becomes undue, a very little sense and a very little honesty will enable any one to determine. The use of wine and similar liquors is, like that of food, to refresh our minds and bodies; and when our drinking goes beyond this, when it unnaturally excites or stimulates our mental or bodily powers, then it becomes drunkenness,—though we should not reach the last stage, in which our powers are not stimulated but prostrated—when we lose consciousness and memory, when we reel and stagger on the highway.

Any degree of drinking which would unfit us for going directly into God's presence, or engaging at once in the most solemn exercises of religion—in prayer or the Holy Communion, must be put to the account of drunkenness. Let us consider what recollection, calmness, and sobriety of mind we should think proper to maintain, were we to have an interview with some great officer of state, on a matter of vital importance; and let us not treat our God and Saviour with less respect and reverence. That measure of indulgence which we should deem excessive in a Christian Priest, suddenly called from a feast, to minister the Word and Bread of life to a departing soul, and which we should regard as unfitting him for so holy a duty—why should any real Christian suppose allowable for himself?

II. We come next to the *Reason* or grounds of this prohibition, assigned by the Apostle.—We are *reasonable* creatures, and the God that made us such is ever desirous of treating us agreeably to that character. He condescendingly says, "Come and let us reason together." He who might command, and give no account of His commands to any man, yet graciously moves us more by the gentle power of reasonable argument, than by the terrors of absolute authority. We are unworthy of our reason and of the God who bestowed it, if we show ourselves insensible to His condescending goodness.

The argument of the text will be seen (though short) to have the amplest scope and the most persuasive power. "Be not drunk

with wine, *wherein* (*i. e.*, not in wine, but in the being drunk with it) *is excess.*"

If we take *excess* here in its common meaning, we shall have a mere truism, no reason, no argument at all; for every one knows that drunkenness is excess. But the Apostle has said here immensely more than the word *excess* conveys to our minds. The original word cannot be expressed (so far as I know) by any *one* word in English; but the *idea*, which is quite clear, can be easily given: it implies *non-saving, the impossibility of saving—the very opposite of saving or frugality—utter loss and unbounded wastefulness.* This is what the Apostle says is in drunkenness, and it gives (as you perceive) a new aspect to the text. This reason holds good as regards *this life* and the *next*.

I. As regards the *present temporal life*.

There is probably no one present, of my own age, who is not as fully aware as I can make him, of all the evils and inconveniences which drunkenness ordinarily produces in society, and therefore I shall not insist mainly on these topics; since, if we are not influenced by those living arguments which we every day behold in all their frightful nakedness and force, it is not likely that a weak representation of them in words from the pulpit can have much effect.

Take, then, but a short summary of the temporal evils.

1. How visible are they in the *body!* The first instances of indulgence are accompanied with a horrid nausea and a bestial sickness—which are nature's solemn warning, the body's protest against such abuse. Those warnings, being despised, cease; the vital powers are undermined, and the foundation is laid of manifold disorders, which will one day exact a terrible revenge—sending the drunkard, before his time, into a dishonoured and infamous grave; and making him, ere that fatal day arrives, a reproach to himself and humanity, in the bloated and bestial disfigurement of even his outward man.

2. His "*poverty,*" too, in the words of Solomon, "*comes as one that travelleth, and his went as an armed man*"—that is, unexpectedly and irresistibly it invades his dwelling, making it a scene of desolation; giving his wife the bread of affliction to eat, and plenteousness of tears to drink—or landing her in the same horrible

pit with himself; clothing his children with rags—aye, even *filthy* rags,—altogether a just and fearful picture to the outward eye of the inward ruins of the soul. I would to God that such spectacles were not so common in this Mission!

3. What grossest and most detestable of all injustice is hereby done his children! whom he refuses the first claims of nature and duty—*food and raiment*; or, if not these, at any rate what is just as valuable, and, in all higher views, more so—a good example, instruction, and superintendence. He throws them upon society, not only untrained for its duties, but positively vitiated, and unfitted for any good or useful service.

4. I have some doubts in my mind about reckoning among the temporal evils of drunkenness *shame and disreputation*—not because I do not think it the most shameful and disreputable of vices; but because society at large seems to have well-nigh lost all such feelings. Men do not shun the drunkard's company; they invite him to their houses; if he is but rich, and in what is called good society, they think it a favour to be asked to his table and share his hospitality: he is chosen to a seat in the legislature, or on the bench of sacred law; he fills municipal or higher offices; and when he dies, his having been a drunkard does not prevent all the customary demonstrations of respect being paid to his remains; and—worst, and most shameful, and most horrible of all—the holy rites of Religion are asked and granted to adorn *his* departure from the visible Church, whose presence was its continual reproach! Yet in spite of all this, I *will* reckon *shame and disreputation* as the drunkard's portion here; for the wise and discerning and religious few, whose esteem alone is to be valued—they will withhold their respect—they will regard the apostolic injunction, “With such an one (*i.e.* the drunkard) *no, not to eat.*”

5. Another result I mention as most alarming to any one who is thankful that he is a man, and not a beast—that he walks erect, instead of herding with the cattle of his barn-yard: and that is, *the certain impairing and possible loss of the reason altogether.* That the drunkard becomes precipitate, thoughtless, incapable of transacting affairs of importance, of seeing the difficulties of his path, of avoiding danger, of understanding and turning to account the circumstances which might ensure his success—of all this we

do not require proof; and it is no disproof of it, that here and there you may find one whom strength of constitution has preserved from the very extremity of these mischiefs.

The three verses preceding our text, taken in connexion with it, remarkably illustrate and confirm these observations: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time (*i. e.* taking advantage of every circumstance to secure yourselves against the dangers which surround you), because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. *And be not drunk with wine*"—implying that drunkenness would incapacitate them for that prudence and circumspection, that wisdom and knowledge, which evil and dangerous times required.

The statistics of our Provincial Asylum, also, and of all similar institutions, tell a tale that is not to be gainsaid—how large a proportion of insanity is to be attributed to this cause. The observations of medical men have made this still more alarming, by assuring us that drunkenness is very frequently hereditary. What a complication of mischiefs have we here! What a prospect for the future of even this world! What miseries are this present generation preparing for the sorrowful thousands and millions of the next! Oh, had we but a spark of honour, or shame, or pity, or manliness, or common justice, in our breasts—how should we set our faces against a monster so hideous and all-devouring as this! How guilty must we be if we refuse to employ all our influence in banishing it from our midst!

One instance of most cruel wrong I must here, in the name of God and humanity, denounce—and that is, tempting or allowing to be tempted any unhappy brother who finds his danger in the bewitching cup. The offer of false hospitality, and the formal sale of the licensed vendor, are here alike wicked and detestable. No foolish delicacy should in such cases prevent us from using the words of prudent counsel, of Christian and charitable warning.

But these are only the purely earthly aspects of this vice; such as lie on the surface and are open to all. They furnish the only motives that the merely worldly care for—who have no steadfast faith in unseen realities. Your own selfishness will press such considerations upon you more forcibly than an angel could.

Let me remind you--

II. How that *excess*, which (in the original) I explained to mean *impossibility of saving—unbounded wastefulness*, applies to our *Spiritual life* as truly and more awfully than to our temporal: *how utterly our souls are lost hereby*. In this moral and spiritual application the word was customarily used to denote *excessive debauchery and profligacy, an utterly abandoned life*. For example, the prodigal is said to have spent his substance *with riotous living*, or, according to our text, *with excess*; and this is explained farther on to be, *having devoured his living with harlots*. So that, morally, what the Apostle declares to be in drunkenness is, *a collection of the most abominable vices, an excess of destructive immorality*. And surely this gives, with reasonable minds, a mighty point and force to the exhortation, "Be not drunk with wine."

Let me now show you from holy Scripture and experience a few of those deadly evils.

1. There is *inconsideration*. Those who resign themselves to habitual inebriation, must make a truce with all serious thought. Drunkenness is the deadly enemy of reflection. It is the very means to which unhappy wretches have recourse for drowning disagreeable memories; and if mere memories cannot live in such a dark whirlpool, how can sober consideration? We need not the testimony of God's word on such a point, yet hear it for a mighty confirmation: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, *neither consider the operation of His hands*."* How could they! The prophet Hosea, too, declares—"Whoredom and wine and new wine *take away the heart*"—that is, destroy all understanding. And the prodigal, who wasted his substance in these very indulgences, is said, when he repented, *to have come to himself*—as if, while lost in these sins, his understanding had also been lost. When consideration, the guide of life, is abandoned, there is no calculating and there is no resisting the floods of iniquity which desolate the spirit of man.

* Isa. v. 11, 12

2. All excessive drinking, even in its less extravagant forms, stimulates our bodily appetites, inflames our baser and sensual passions, and renders less manageable our whole animal nature. How mad and wicked, and of how fatal consequence is it, to expose ourselves still more, where, alas! we are already weak and defenceless enough! to give such powerful auxiliaries to enemies so formidable in their own native strength! "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red..... *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*"* Accordingly, the Apostle having made a long and earnest exhortation against unclean lusts, "the unfruitful works of darkness," suitably subjoins our text, "Be not drunk with wine"—as affording food and strength and occasion to those lusts. We know, too, how *anger* and *wrath* are aggravated hereby, as well as lust. "Who hath woe? (asks Solomon), who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babblings? who hath wounds without cause?..... They that tarry long at the wine." † St. Paul aptly joins together "not given to much wine" and "no striker." The quick rising of passion, the resentful word, the sudden angry blow—these are what we every day see in connection with drunken excess. "Wine drunken with excess (says the wise Son of Sirach ‡) maketh bitterness of the mind, with brawling and quarreling. Drunkenness increaseth the rage of a fool till he offend: it diminisheth strength and maketh wounds." And to sum up all in a single word of inspired Scripture—"Wine is a *mocker*"—*רֵז*, a thing that sets at nought all restraints, that scoffs at and seorns all that is modest and serious and wise and holy in manners and morals and piety: or, as the oldest translation in the world makes it, to the same effect though in different phrase, "Wine is an *unchastised thing*"—*ἀκόλαστον*—untamed, unbroken, and utterly unmanageable; wantonly spurning every law of God and man.

But here I must pause in this endless subject, nor go on to describe how this vice is poisoning society, corrupting human life in all its sources: how it deadens conscience, blights all holy emotions, fits for all sin here, unfits for all good hereafter, and prostrates the soul—leaving it the most wrecked and desolate and undone spectacle in the wide creation of God.

* Prov. xxiii. 31, 33. † Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. ‡ Chap. xxxi.

Thus have I endeavoured to give you the force of the Apostle's short but pithy argument—neither more nor less: May the good Spirit write it in the burning characters of holy fear upon our hearts!

And now, old men and maidens, young men and children, pray God to help us, while I in like manner try to shew you—you who are as yet undefiled—the true and only *preventive*—

III. "*But be filled with the Spirit.*"

This is a security which the world never thinks of. The curative, restoring power of the Gospel being overlooked, the world has invented for itself temporary, uncertain, superficial remedies. A Temperance Society tells you to take their *pledge*, to join their ranks—and then you may triumph in your security. As regards total abstinence from intoxicating liquors, every one is at perfect liberty—as much as to abstain from animal food. He may abstain on the score of *health*, or of *diet*, or as a mere matter of *taste*. Nay, if he find he cannot innocently and moderately use them—or use them at all without running into excess; then is he most sacredly, most religiously *bound* to a total abstinence—as the only and necessary means of maintaining a good conscience, and under the peril of eternal damnation. But to join a *Temperance Society* as a moral or religious act, and as a direct and necessary means of overcoming sin and pursuing holiness—I have no hesitation in declaring *to be sinful, and grievously sinful*. Because hereby a *baptized Christian* throws contempt upon his baptism—denying its obligations, which could not or did not bind him, while he seeks and acknowledges the binding power of a purely human promise, to a purely human society. It is that *trusting in man, that making of flesh our arm, that apostasy of the heart from the Lord*, upon which His *curse* has ever rested.* It is a covering over of one sin with another. Is not such a seeking of human aid, to the open contempt of divine grace, the very sin, in principle, which God so severely threatens in the following words? "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin."†

* Jer. xvii. 5.

† Isa. xxx. 1.

I am now addressing baptized Christians, and therefore every consideration adduced must have reference to such a character. In your baptism you were made *members* of Christ—think of the sanctity to which the dignity of such union obliges you! and how criminal it is to allow the force of selfish and worldly motives, while this highest and most sacred one is not recognized! In our baptism, too, we were made partakers of the Spirit; and hence St. Paul derives an argument against defiling the body by *fornication*, because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost. This argument, surely, must be extended to drunkenness and every defiling lust. The privilege, then, of us Christians, who have been made partakers of the Spirit, is to increase in this glorious possession, till we are "*filled with the Spirit.*" This and nothing else will effectually secure us against the entrance of any corrupt lust into our hearts, or its tyranny there. The heart cannot remain as an empty, unfurnished house—it *will* have some lodgers. Something must possess it. Nay, something must *bear rule* there. It acknowledges no neutrality—it cannot bear indifference. And one set of loves, or pleasures, or principles, will hold their ground, till they are ejected by a newer and stronger. Unless, therefore, the Spirit of God, who is the antagonist of all impurity, dwell in your hearts and rule in them, you can have no assurance at all that the united powers of sin will not come upon you, enter in, and possess you. And consequently the Apostle says not in our text "Be partakers of the Spirit"—though that would be much; but "*Be filled with the Spirit*"—filled to the very brim, so that there may not be room for one drop of the world's poison-cup in your hearts. Here is the true secret of temperance, the certain pledge of safety.

Look at the motives which send men to the inebriating cup:—The temporary forgetfulness of painful or bitter thoughts; the pleasant excitement which it affords to their minds, which find excitement in no rational or holy work; the unrestrained intercourse of companions in folly; the songs and the jollity which, at least in the outset, form the chief attraction to the drinker. We may suppose a person once ensnared in all this, renouncing it and joining a Temperance Society, or making solemn promises or oaths against it: but if there be nothing of equal power and attraction to take its place in his heart, what security can he have that the

evil spirit will not return with greater violence, and make his latter end still worse than the beginning? Will men never be warned by all the mournful examples of this which every-day life furnishes? Or if the evil spirit do not return in his former shape, he no less returns, and with undiminished power and sway, in the guise of some other equally deadly sin. If God's Spirit be absent, our spiritual life is defenceless—at the mercy of the demons of hell.

But see what a fortress the God of mercy provides against our spiritual enemies; or, if we have been overcome, what a refuge from them. The Blessed Spirit of God is Himself, to our penitent and trusting hearts, *all* that the world was to our unchastised senses—yea, ten thousand times more. He can fill our hearts with a strong and holy *joy*, which will take the place of the drunkard's joy, exclude it, nay, quench the very desire of it. Hence the joy of God's Spirit—a spiritual ebriety—is sometimes represented in holy Scripture by its vicious counterpart; though the one is glorious and divine, and the other is destructive. Just as the destroying waters of the flood find their antitype or "a like figure" in the salutary waters of Baptism. The *one* point of likeness, in the midst of utter unlikeness, is this—as drunkenness makes a man insensible to the miseries, or the realities of his present circumstances; so the presence and joy of the Holy Spirit lift a Christian above himself, and make him comparatively indifferent to, almost unconscious of, those present worldly pains or pleasures, which, in their full unbroken force, press upon those who have not the Spirit.

This may fall strangely, perhaps disagreeably, upon *our* ears; because we have so little experimental knowledge of holy joy, because in the present time the divine life of the church is so low and languid. But it was not strange or unnatural in earlier days, when the joy of Christians was a full and mighty stream, hurrying along and sinking in its glorious torrent the rubbish that now overwhelms us—making the very mention of joy in God a mockery!

It is of this cup of divine joy, filled by the Spirit, we may most truly say "*Drink, and forget thy misery.*" In this cup are all the satisfying goods that can rejoice the heart, that can banish all thirst for the muddy cups of carnal pleasure, and yet leave the appetite unclayed and eager for the exhilarating draughts of heaven.

Of this ebriety St. Basil beautifully says : * " Ebriety, which is the mother of temperance ; ebriety, the teacher of ignorance ; ebriety, keeping wakeful the eye of the mind ; ebriety, pouring the light of truth upon souls always full ; ebriety, not making us reel, or weak when we have recovered from our surfeit ; but rather strengthening our limbs, and arming them against sin with the armour of righteousness ; ebriety, with which the company of the Apostles was filled." And similarly St. Anselm : " O Fountain of Life, fill my mind with the river of Thy pleasures, and make my soul drunk with the sober drunkenness of Thy love ; that I may forget whatever is vain and earthly, and may keep Thee alone continually in my memory, as it is written '*I remembered Thee and was delighted.*' " †

So in Ps. xxxvi. 8, (where our version excellently gives the sense, though not the Hebrew literally,) we read : " They shall be abundantly satisfied—Heb. *inebriated* †—with the fatness of Thy house ; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures." Excess of joy and fulness of satisfaction are what is here meant. And where God gives these, there is no room for, no possibility of desiring, other joys. You have the same expression in Jer. xxxi. 14—" I will satiate—Heb. *inebriate*—the soul of the priests with fatness, and My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." And in v. 25, " I have satiated—*inebriated*—the weary soul, and replenished every sorrowful soul."

Would you make sure, then, of not drinking the devil's cup of short and fevered and deadly joy ? Drink the Lord's cup of divine gladness. *It* will banish your cares, *It* will brighten your face, *It* will overflow you with gladness, *It* will loosen your tongues to sing—not the drunkard's chorus, but the Lord's Song—praises to glorious, redeeming grace ; for the Apostle adds to our text, " Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." This will the Spirit's presence do for you.

* Ap. Suiceri Thes. Eccles. s. v. *μεθη*, ii. 326.

† Ps. 77 : 3. vulg.—Quoted in Hare's Mission of the Comforter, Note H.

‡ ἰνὴν—the oldest versions and the latest critics agree in this rendering, which has such a glorious fulness of meaning.

In one verse of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, is conveyed the whole lesson I have endeavoured to impress upon you to-day—*“Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.”* All the wisdom of the world knows not one other sure way of not becoming the prey of sin. There is no half-way house. You have your choice—“Be filled with the Spirit,” or, Be possessed by Satan: walk under the holy, gentle guidance of “the good Spirit,” or be led by Satan in bonds. If you aim at being more than merely prosperous in this world, and respected by worldly men—if you aim at being *Christians*, at fulfilling the vows of your baptism; if you aim at securing the glories of your birthright—“an inheritance among the Saints in light,”—you cannot, you will not, hesitate which to choose.

I could and do wish your temporal prosperity, brethren, and I might therefore have urged this consideration more; but how small a gain, after all, would the greatest degree of this be! As in Christ's stead beseeching you this day, I could not, I durst not, lose sight of greater arguments—your relation to Him, the gift of His Spirit, the hopes of glory. Secure these latter, and you have the best security for even temporal good; and even should you miss it, you will not be greatly troubled, when you are “filled with the Spirit,” and your mouths are opened in God's praise; when you are “inebriated with the fatness of His house,” and He “makes you drink of the river of His pleasures.”

VIII.
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SERMON IX.

PROGRESS THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.

(AN ADDRESS TO THE NEWLY CONFIRMED.)

Delivered at Christ's Church, Woodbridge; St. Mary's, Tullamore; St. John's, Gore of Toronto; and Graham's Corners;—in the Summer of 1858.

HEBREWS vi. 3.

"And this will we do, if God permit."

THE Apostle, having chidden the Hebrew Christians for their rudimentary knowledge of the Christian religion, adds, in the first two verses of this chapter, "Therefore omitting discourse of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation." "Instead of going over again and again the first simple truths of our religion—let us go on unto higher truths, let us advance to a perfect knowledge;" and, then, assuming that he has carried them on with him to a steadfast determination no longer to continue babes in Christianity, he adds the solemn resolution of the text—"And this will we do, if God permit."

The English "*go on*" by no means expresses the great force of the original; which denotes the most vigorous pursuit of an object, as if we were carried away irresistibly towards it. It is the same word which we properly translate *rushing* in the account of "the

rushing mighty wind," which symbolized the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.*

Christians should seek Divine knowledge and advancement with a holy impetuosity.

The several parts of this foundation, from which he would have them press on, as enumerated by the Apostle, are Repentance, Faith, Baptism, Laying on of hands or Confirmation, the Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

If St. Paul felt bound to advance to a perfect exposition of Christian doctrine, it was, of course, because Christians needed such perfect knowledge, and needed it for perfecting their characters, tempers, and lives.

You have heard the exhortation of the Apostle, "Let us go on unto perfection." A few days ago with some of you, a few years ago with most, your determination, publicly professed before God and His church, was that of the Apostle: "This will we do, by the help of God's grace." We would now, brethren—young men and maidens, old men and children—press upon you some urgent arguments for turning this profession into practice, this resolution into a reality. And, oh, may the Spirit of all power and grace forbid that I should utter, or you should hear, this day, the awful mysteries of our redemption, without that solemn reverence for them, and that steadfast faith in them, which may make them life and power and salvation to our souls!

We should press on to perfection:

1. *From the avowed object of the Religion we have professed.*

"Jesus Christ has purchased the church with His own blood, and cleansed her with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present her unto Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." Of this church we became members by baptism. That baptism and its holy obligations we publicly acknowledged in our Confirmation. These were the first steps towards the proposed end—an end seldom reached by a short or easy road.

* *φερόμεθα*: Optimis Scriptoribus Græcis familiaris est phrasis *φέρεσθαι ἐπὶ τῷ*, significans, *animosè rem aliquam persequi*. Severà lege incumbere studiis philosophicis erat *φέρεσθαι ἐπὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν*. Idem quod hic *φέρ. ἐπὶ τὴν τελείωσιν* dicebatur quoque in Scholâ Pythagoræ. Sed sensu hic legitur multo sublimiori. *Valck. ap. Grinf. Scholia Hellenistica, in loc.*

Unless, then, we intend to deny the whole aim of our religion, and to renounce our baptism, we cannot allow ourselves to linger at the starting-point, we must be continually pressing onward to the goal—*perfection*. “Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect,” is the lowest standard set by our Saviour: and what vigorous progress does this require in us all! “Without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing”—how far are we yet from such perfection! Yet it is to that end, and nothing short of it, that the “washing of water,” which we have received, points and leads and pledges us. For my part, I do heartily take up the words of the Apostle, and say, “And this also we wish, even your *perfection*.”

2. *Our own solemn promise and profession binds us to advance.*

Here, in God's house, in God's presence, before God's people, we professed the faith of Christ, we avouched the Lord for our God, we promised that we would *evermore* “keep His holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life.” Shall the promises made in worldly transactions, before selected witnesses, be deemed sacred and obligatory; and shall we presume to make light of obligations whose solemnity nothing can surpass; vows, which are registered in heaven before attesting angels, before JESUS, “the faithful and the true Witness?” Draw back from such vows? “No!” you should say, “though the pillars of the earth were removed, though I were involved in the ruin of universal nature.”

“*Promise unto the Lord your God, and keep it.*”

Let the remembrance of that day on which you took the Lord for your God, be ever a safe-guard from sin, dissolving all its snares.

3. To advance towards this perfection is our *highest, surest happiness.*

Sin is the greatest misery in the world—it is the parent of all miseries. If we are only free from it, we cannot be miserable, whatever evils we suffer. Look at the closing hours of our holy Lord and Master, Jesus. Was there ever such an accumulation of woes? And yet would you not shudder at the thought of calling Him miserable? Why? Because He was without sin. To be the servant of sin includes everything degrading and miserable

to which human nature is liable. Consider the Apostle's question to the Roman converts—"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now *ashamed*?" What fruit, save *grief and shame*! "for the wages—the just hire—of sin is *death*"—a death composed of infinite degrees of grief and shame. But when we are "made free from sin, we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life." To be the servants of God, to be free to follow holiness without any effectual opposition, is the noblest, most glorious, most elevated freedom in the world; it is the grandest dignity of angels; for holiness is the sublimest attribute of God. Oh the misery and degradation of having to wade, against the ineffectual resistance of our weak and enslaved souls, in the mire of sin! Oh the sweetness and nobleness of living perpetually in the blessed atmosphere of holiness, every pure breath inspiring us with joy, second only to the thrill of the freed Spirit as it enters the immortal brightness of paradise! Brethren, every step you take in that course on which you have professedly entered, is a step to joy, and happiness, and freedom; and when you have advanced far on this blessed way, when you have won many victories, and subdued many sins, and overcome many temptations, and acquired many virtues—then will you be surrounded by a peace like that of heaven; you will live in a region as unlike that in which the people around you live, as if you were separated from them by the immensity of worlds; you will be what Christ, by His Spirit, has anointed you to be—*kings*, reigning over yourselves with the majesty and the solid happiness which belong only to celestial thrones. Therefore "follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," or be a sharer in the Divine blessedness.

4. Let us be stimulated to go on unto perfection by the consideration that *this is the nature of life*.

Any living thing, whether plant or animal, whose vital energies are not seriously injured, will keep on growing till it attains its perfection. This is the necessary law of its being. But when it ceases to grow, it is either because it has reached the perfection of its nature, or because its vital powers are damaged or destroyed. So it is with the Christian. He has received the Holy Spirit, a principle of new life infused into the decayed stock of our fallen nature. *Increase* is henceforth the *law* of our being. If we do

not increase, then is it plain that we are doing violence to the Holy Spirit, that we are grieving Him, and that, if we go on so, we shall be sure to quench Him—that is, wholly destroy the germs of that new life imparted to us in baptism, and strengthened in confirmation. Have we been regenerated that we might for ever remain *babes* in Christ? Does the Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, dwell in us that we may be stationary as dead stocks? Has God multiplied the means of grace, and dispensed with bounteous hand the life-giving food of the soul, and yet designed no growth for our souls? No! He says: “*Grow in grace*”—“as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may *grow* thereby unto salvation”—“*growing* up into Him in all things, who is the Head.” And of the whole Church it is said, “Ye, as living stones, *grow* unto an holy temple in the Lord, an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

The sum is, *Growth* has two opposites—*perfection* and *decay*; and decay must be the inevitable alternative, if there be no progress towards perfection. And this brings us, in the—

5th place, to the awful argument for progress which the Apostle employs in the context, and which I shall go on to expound in the remainder of this discourse. “And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and *have* fallen away (Gr.); seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.” The Apostle plainly declares the danger of falling into this horrible state to be the argument for going on to perfection: “And this will we do,” (he says,) “*for*,” if we do not, we are sure to incur those mischiefs which have just been mentioned. He implies that if there be not advance unto perfection, there is *apostasy*, that is, *falling away from Christ*—not the partial departures of smaller sins which may occur in the daily life of a Christian, but an entire alienation from Him: and this state he declares hopeless, (for any remedy known in the religion of Christ)—“it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.” And what can this be but that sin against the Holy Ghost, which hath never forgiveness? What more powerful

argument, then, can there be for advancement, than the certain prospect of this dreadful alternative—*apostasy, irremediable apostasy?*

I have already partially shewn, from the nature of *life*, how the neglect of growth must issue in decay. It would not be difficult to perceive the several steps of the process, were we to investigate it with a little care.

If at first the impulses of our sinful nature are strong—the Holy Spirit works mightily in us, conscience is tender and active, and *habits* of sin have not been formed. If we are surrounded by an unholy atmosphere, communion with God in prayer and holy recollection of His Presence preserves us from its deadly taint. Hereby are cherished within us reverence, and watchfulness, and trust in God, and aspirations which carry us above the world. In the devout exercises of religion, in the solemnities of public worship, in the reception of the blessed Sacrament, and, especially, in that without which public religion degenerates into formality—private devotion, that is, the quiet, reverent study of the Bible, meditation upon it, thinking much of God and spiritual things, examination of our hearts, fervent prayers and praises to God;—in all these our better nature is strengthened and improved; our souls, by such converse and holy familiarity with God, are established in the Divine life, they instinctively and naturally grow up to God, and become more and more fixed in union with Him; while in the same proportion *sin* loses its hold upon us.

As the tastes of heaven, as delight in God, are felt to flourish; so perish all sinful affections.

But reverse all this. Let our religion lose its heartiness and earnestness. Let us become infrequent in prayers and holy meditations, and converse with God. Or, while some of these duties are outwardly maintained, let them be gone through as a sop to our conscience, in a formal, heartless manner: then how speedily vanishes the vision of heaven! Its glories go out as the stars behind the tempest-cloud of midnight; no hand beckons to us, or in our gloom we cannot perceive it; no voice calls to us, or our ears are dull of hearing; the thoughts, the words that used to thrill our hearts, and wake every chord of holy emotion, no more affect us—they have lost their power; towards God and holiness fatal Apathy

seizes us, and reigns undisturbed on her slumbrous throne! But view another side of that world of mystery which exists within us—while sin is extending its usurped power. As the lights of heaven go out, the fires of hell glare luridly through the soul, and shed dreadful illumination on all its guilty inmates and all its dreary caverns. The storm of passion roars louder and louder, till the last feeble echoes of reason, and the still small voice of the Spirit of God are no longer audible. God now is no more in all the apostate's thoughts, but sin is. With Sin he daily contracts a closer intimacy, and while it is often felt to be an oppressive friendship, yet is there a fearful fascination in it which the poor soul is unable to resist—for now is the Guide and Helper of souls, the Blessed Spirit, for ever expelled.

Do not suppose, brethren, that all this requires, of necessity, some plain outward manifestation: as God's saint walks the earth, and appears like other men, there being little visible that may tell of the pure joy and the heavenly meditations within; so may there be as little external index of the infernal tumult within the sinner's breast. Often it may be all covered over with practised smiles and well-dissembled calmness. But it often is not so. Often there is an open scorn for God and the restraints of His holy law. Christ and His salutary Passion serve for nought save to add point to the blasphemer's oath. The innocence, and purity, and meekness He has exemplified and enjoined, serve as matter for jest, and are fearfully renounced and derided; and by some who received the mark of the Crucified, the drunkenness and debauchery which, at an earlier period, they had openly and religiously renounced, are, at a later period, no less openly and confidently professed. Where all inward spiritual life has ceased, where God is not, where sin is in absolute supremacy, where Christ is never thought of, or disesteemed—what is to hinder the most explicit, open denial of Christ before the world, if only occasion shall demand it from the sinner, if only the temptation shall be strong? Every one sees what temporal disadvantages might result from an open, verbal denial of Christ in a Christian country—which is, therefore, abstained from by those who, without scruple, deny Him in works, and do their utmost to blaspheme Him in deed. Though, then, we may never proceed to the length of apostasy implied in the text,

an express renunciation of Christ; yet we may do it in reality, contract the whole guilt of it, while we retain the Christian name; we may "crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." O merciful Lord, how great is our danger, the danger of *re*crucifying *Thy Holy and Blessed Son!* To drag the innocent, suffering Saviour once more to the cross, to bind and scourge Him, to nail and fasten Him aloft for scorn, to wag the head and mock Him, to number Him with the transgressors—this is to *re*crucify Him, to put Him to an open shame; and this is what the impenitent do. After having been once consecrated to Him in Baptism; having taken Him deliberately in Confirmation for our Master—if we then throw off His authority, if we refuse obedience; do we not say, "Thou art not the Lord, Thou art not *my* Sovereign, I disown Thee, I reject Thee; Thou art an imposter, Thou wast justly crucified!" This is the blasphemy of the disobedient and obstinate sinner, which makes the music of hell, but which the angels hear with horror.

Again, I say, do not let us suppose that in order to do this we must shout in so many words, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" The Apostle will tell you of some "who *profess* that they know God, but in *works* they *deny* Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." A picture—how terribly exact! of multitudes whom we every day meet. How many hundreds are there among us who have openly and solemnly professed the Crucified One, who yet shame by their ungodly lives and deeds Him and His Church! of whom we hear with blushes, and confusion, and overwhelming shame! And if *we* feel such shame, we, who have so little zeal for our Lord—what do the holy angels feel? what does our Lord Himself feel? what does the Father Almighty feel at the dishonour done to His beloved and eternal Son?

Put Him to an open shame! make Him once more the laughing-stock of the ungodly and blaspheming infidel! make Him the sport of devils! make Him the pity of sorrowing angels! overwhelm all who love Him with grief and dismay! Oh, let us hope that no one here has gone so far in apostasy. But of this let us be well-assured, that every wilful sin, every moment we linger in a habit of sin, brings us nearer to this gulf of perdition whence we cannot

be extricated. Every lesser sin is an approach to the irremissible sin of "treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith we have been sanctified, an unholy thing, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace."

Surely we *must* feel that these sins are in a very great degree committed, even where Christ is not professedly renounced; surely we must admit that where the sovereign authority of Christ, as a Lawgiver, is disobeyed, there He is trodden under foot; that even where we trust in the blood of the Covenant, but only to make it a screen for our sins (and how often is that done!) *there* we most emphatically make It an unholy thing; while every evil thought indulged, every ill thing done, is doing despite to the Spirit of grace.

How terrifying, yet how merciful, the warning which accompanies this! "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him"—the greatest opposers of Christ, yea, His very murderers, were brought to repentance, and obtained pardon: in their Baptism a full and absolute pardon was given—a complete washing away of sin. But—"Whosoever shall blaspheme the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness." Sin, before we have been made partakers of pardon, and the Holy Ghost, and the divine nature, is a very different thing from what it is afterwards. Who does not see this? Sin, after we have been made the children of God, after we have received pardon, after the reception of the Holy Ghost—is sin against all that is intended for the overthrow of sin, sin aggravated by all that can possibly add to its enormity and guilt; it is henceforth *always*, in a certain degree, sin against the Holy Ghost. And must not this sin, long persisted in, attain its completion? The result of that completion you have heard—"it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance."

When mercy is despised, and the blood of Jesus made little of, the feelings of the heart deadened by long contact with sin, and made proof against the inspirations of the Holy Spirit—what hope is there? All the instruments of grace become ineffectual—and *salvation is impossible.*

Besides these reasons which arise from the nature of the case, there is another reason also assigned by the Apostle in vs. 7, 8, "For the earth which drinketh in the *rain that cometh oft upon it*, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned."

The fruitful field is rewarded with God's blessing, as well as man's culture, and becomes yet more fruitful. What an encouragement for us! "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." How beautifully are the divine influences, which are poured upon our souls, described as "*the rain that cometh oft upon it*"—the bounty of heaven (as the original denotes) descending *without compulsion*, and *continually* resting upon the earth.

The Holy Spirit is that "gracious rain" which God sends upon His inheritance, and whereby He refreshes and waters it, that it may abound in the fruits of holiness; and a variety of phrases is employed to denote the several degrees of the Spirit's influence, and the several modes of its impartation

1. Christians are described as "those who were once *enlightened*, and have tasted the *heavenly gift*." For many ages after the Apostles, no word was so commonly used to denote baptism as *φωτισμός*, illumination. The initiatory Sacrament was so called, because of the light of divine knowledge received from instruction in the Gospel preparatory to Baptism, but chiefly on account of the inward and supernatural illumination of the Holy Ghost, who is the "heavenly gift" received therein.

As *light* and *life* are kindred in their nature, and frequently joined in holy Scripture; so is the sacrament of *regeneration* appropriately termed *illumination*.

This, however, is but the entrance into life, the origination of the powers and faculties of the new creature; who is further advanced towards perfection, by being

2. "*Made partaker of the Holy Ghost*." Not as though His presence and operation were not till now; for without Him there is no life at all. But now by the Laying on of hands, His grace is imparted in fuller measure and mightier operation. This grace,

obtained by Laying on of hands, manifested itself miraculously in the extraordinary ministries of earlier days; but though these have failed, yet the same Energy still operates invisibly, and no less effectually in the ordinary and permanent ministries of the church. The Holy Spirit is still given as the riches of the soul, its safeguard and Sanctifier, who is to adorn and fit it for glory. Of the whole circle of His inward blessings, not one is withholden.

3. Christians are advanced still higher, in that "*they have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.*" "The world to come" is an established phrase in holy Scripture to represent the new Dispensation, the Kingdom of Messiah, not only in its earthly but its perpetual duration. And though the "Word of God" was always a "good" word, yet is there no claim to this title of equal strength with the "Gospel of the Kingdom"—emphatically "*the good word of God.*" It speaks hope and pardon and eternal life to the lost. To taste it daily, to eat its words and find them sweet, to derive strength from every gracious promise; to penetrate their mysterious depths and find light flashing from every holy oracle; to be nourished and fortified by the Bread of Life, to be refreshed and invigorated by the juice of the True Vine,—eaten and drunk in holy mysteries; to be hereby enabled to resist all infernal powers, to dispossess Satan, to over-master sin—is, indeed, in a noble sense, to "*taste of the powers of the world to come.*" But whatever Spiritual strength or power we may now possess, is only a faint shadow of what we shall possess in that blessed "world to come," where there will be nothing to hinder the full development of our Spiritual nature, and the grace of our Lord bestowed upon us.

All these spiritual influences have continued uninterruptedly in the church, are ministered to us in Baptism, in Confirmation, in Holy Communion, in Prayer, in the Word of God—from time to time, all our life through, according to our needs:—they are *the rain that cometh oft upon us.*

If all these holy influences, the purchase of the blood of the Covenant, make us fruitful—then shall God's blessing come upon us, and make us bring forth more fruit. But if, in spite of all, we are barren—like the sand that yields nothing in return for the rain and dews and sunshine, or nothing but briars and thorns—

then shall we be *rejected*. On such soil the great Husbandman will cease to expend the kindly influences of His ill-requited culture—nay, more, it will be *cursed* and devoted to the *flames*.

Shall not all of us who have received such favour from God, tremble at our responsibility, and fear such an end as this?

Let me address myself to those of you, brethren, who were confirmed years ago, and have not since gone forward towards perfection. Do you not hear within you a voice which verifies what we proclaim? As you recall in memory those days of comparative innocence, do you not feel how much more open you were then to godly impressions than now? how much more readily you listened to the voice of God and of conscience? how each year your hearts are less interested in devotion, and more entangled in sin? And then that *one* neglect, which is a summary of all neglects—the neglect of the Holy Communion! being the neglect of God, of Christ, of His Blood, of His Spirit, of pardon, of eternal life—how shall I speak of that! Oh, what a miserable thought, that we should have so many confirmed, and so few communicants! Such neglectors confirm *only* their damnation. *Onward!* is not their motto: nevertheless they have not stood still—they have been all this while posting to *apostasy*—to the irremediable state; they are still running hard to overtake the sin that shall never be forgiven! And we, brethren, who *do* wait upon God in this blessed Ordinance—O! let us take care to keep our hearts tender and holy—to *grow* in the love of God; to keep up spiritual warmth within; to banish all formality and coldness; lest “having a name to live, we be dead,” and the more guilty, and—for this reason—the more surely apostatize from the Lord.

But of you, my young friends, who have lately been confirmed, we say, in the words of the Apostle, “Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”

You, we hope, will not halt between two opinions, but, having confessed the Lord, will follow Him. You will not stop at this threshold of religion, as if it were the goal; but will go on to know the Lord, and will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. The voice of the Church is the voice of every faithful soul—“Tell me*

* Cant. i. 7.

(she says to Christ) O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one unknown*—a stranger—beside the flocks of Thy companions?" She asks after the green pastures and the sweet resting-places where the Good Shepherd leads His flock—that she may haunt them familiarly. He answers: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." He tells you to seek Him in the companies of His saints, under their appointed pastors; in the established ordinances of His church; not to forsake the beaten tracks worn from the first by the feet of the flocks—there may the kids, there may the lambs of Christ feed *in safety*—for there He will be ever near them.

Remember! God's seal is upon you. Christ's banner waves over you. The Eternal Spirit is within you. Angels minister to you. The Saints look with hope upon you. Heaven awaits you! And, oh, remember too, that devils watch for you, the ungodly wait to rejoice over your fall—to see you rëcrucify the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame!

What an object of interest are you to heaven, and earth, and hell! Can you, can you be careless of your ways? The soldiers, the servants of Jesus, be it your one purpose to honour Him: be it your joy to love Him: be it your glory to confess Him: be it your happiness to be united to Him.

JESUS! be that venerable Name your watchword in life, your confidence in death; and in that glad morn when the Sons of the Resurrection shall throng to Him in their robes of brightness, He will confess you before God and angels and the world—He will make you glad with the joy of His countenance, and crown you with an immortality of bliss!

* "קַטְוֶה (fem. part. קָטְוָה) *tecta*, hinc *occultata*, hinc *ignota*." Maurer. in loc.

SERMON X.

—
THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER FOR A
REMEMBRANCE.
—

ST. LUKE xxii. 19.

“ This do in remembrance of Me.”

THE most Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ are a subject in which, beyond all others, we have to trust to the guidance of *faith*—in which man's words and man's reasonings have least place. And therefore it is not without much diffidence, humility and reverence, we should venture upon such holy ground. If I have not as often perhaps as I ought, entered upon the full discussion of this great theme, I may assign this as my excuse; and I may add another, which is perhaps a better one, and that is, my firm persuasion that no discourses however acute, however solid or devout, can come up to our brief Communion Service in these particulars. The Communion Office of our Prayer Books will, if duly studied, instruct us in everything that is necessary to be known or believed respecting the Lord's Supper; everything that is to be done in order to make us worthy Communicants; and in such an elevated, tender strain of devotion as we wonder at and reverence, but hardly hope to attain in an age so worldly and unspiritual as this. I wish, my brethren, that I could impart to you my own settled conviction, that the careful, meditative study of the Communion Office, word by word, at home—not the inconsiderate repetition of it, there or at church, would be an incomparably more edifying preparation for the Holy Communion,

than any sermons you could hear in church, or any Communicant's Manual. However, I trust, by God's blessing, it will be found profitable for us all to expand the more important of the several points embodied in the Communion Office—or, in other words, the main parts of the whole doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, as I purpose doing in this Sermon and some others, which will follow at intervals, God willing.

The text, if fully opened up, would exhibit the whole doctrine; but we shall take only one or two points at a time. And FIRST, let us dwell on that which is the *most obvious view*—viz., that THE SACRAMENT IS A MEMORIAL.

“Do this in remembrance of Me,” or, more correctly, “Do this for My memorial”—*εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*. Do what? Set forth bread and wine—look upon them, eat them? More than this. That memorial which Christ bids us make is the *whole action* which He performed before the Apostles, which is described in the Gospels, and by St. Paul in 1st Corinthians, and which is separable into the following parts:—

“1. The benediction and consecration* (by prayer and thanksgiving) of bread and wine. 2. The breaking of bread and handling the cup. 3. The delivery and distribution of them to the persons present. 4. The declaration accompanying that delivery, that these symbolical things and actions did represent our Saviour's body given and broken for us, in sanction of the New Covenant. 5. The actual partaking of those symbols, by eating the bread and drinking the wine, done by all present.”

All this our Saviour bade us do in remembrance of Him. All this, and nothing less, constitutes the commanded memorial. But in setting before you this holy Institution, it would not be profitable, nay, indeed, scarcely possible, to proceed to the full exposition of it, as if it existed alone, and were instituted without reference to anything that went before in the divine dispensations. The whole contents of the Old Testament had reference to Christ: all the main rites and ceremonies and institutions of the old Church were symbolical of and preparatory to the great Act which our Lord points to in the Holy Supper. To pass over its ancient and divinely-established relationship, therefore, would be to miss the

* Barrow, Doctrine of the Sacraments.

full view of divine wisdom and goodness, the full meaning of the holy rite, and the comfort it was intended to communicate.

All the many and very various appointments of the older dispensations were designed to set forth Christ. He is the fulfilment of them all. Christ, in all the diversity of His abounding grace, was too great to be fully represented by any *one* type or figure that man could receive from God; and therefore there were many, to help us to a more adequate apprehension of that which even now, when the night of shadows is past, and the cloudless sunshine surrounds us, "passeth knowledge." Christ bears many relations to us. Accordingly, in one rite of the ancient Church we find Him presented in one aspect, and in another rite in another aspect. Let us at present fix our attention on that with which the Institution of the Holy Supper is most immediately connected—the *Passover*. You will remember that it was while our Saviour was celebrating with His Apostles the Feast of the Passover, that He instituted the Sacrament of the Supper—yea, converting* that very meal of bread and wine, which the Jews religiously ate after the paschal lamb, into the great mystery of the New Covenant.

Among the many wonderful works of power which God wrought for the deliverance of His people from Egypt, was the smiting of all the first-born of the Egyptians in every house, while the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites. On the evening which preceded this manifestation of wrath and distinguishing grace, the Israelites were commanded to kill a lamb for every house, to eat the flesh with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, to sprinkle the lintels and door-posts with its blood, and to keep within doors till the morning. The sprinkled blood was their protection from the angel of death. Thus, says holy Scripture, did God separate between His people and the Egyptians. That the thankful memory of so great a deliverance should never be lost, nor so great an assurance of the Divine favour and so powerful an argument for trust in it, be forgotten, God was pleased to enjoin the annual celebration of the rites we have briefly described. But though a memorial of the past, it was doubtless intended to refer to the *future* still more strongly, from the many marked points in which it had its fulfilment in our Blessed Saviour—pointing out

* ἐσθίουσαν αὐτῶν, "As they were eating."

to believing and illuminated eyes in former ages, the glorious eternal deliverance of a greater Passover.

Christ, by consecrating the Passover-meal as the Sacrament of His death, pointed Himself out as its end, and by this act silently confirmed the Baptist's ardent testimony—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" So that with the Apostle we henceforth sing—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Yes—He proclaimed Himself by this solemn act as the Lamb without spot or blemish, whose precious death was our life; whose holy blood, sprinkled by faith upon our souls, was to avert the stroke of death eternal; reconcile us to God, and cleanse us from all iniquity—*thus* separating between His believing Israel and the unbelieving world; making life and gladness our portion, but death and lamentation theirs.

After the eating of the paschal lamb, the bitter herbs, and the unleavened bread, there was a sort of appendix to or continuation of the meal, in which the master of the family took bread, and blessed God in solemn thanks for the fruits of the ground, and then added, with the unleavened bread in his hand, "*This is the bread of affliction which our fathers did eat in Egypt.*" This form, no doubt, sufficed to prevent, in the Apostles' minds, the gross carnal meaning afterwards imposed on the words, *This is my Body which is given for you.* In neither case are the words *corporeally* true: but in both they most perfectly represented what the speaker meant. The bread of affliction—or unleavened bread—baked only yesterday, could not be that which was eaten in Egypt: the bread in the hands of our Saviour could not be literally that *body given and broken* which was yet uninjured, but which was soon to endure what He now signified—the wounds and breaches by which it became a slaughtered victim for the sins of the world. In like manner God himself says to Abraham of circumcision, *This is my Covenant*, though Abraham was not then actually circumcised. And even when he was, *circumcision* was not the covenant, but the *sign* and *seal* of it, as St. Paul tells us. Moses, too, says of the paschal lamb, *It is the Lord's Passover*—when yet the Lord had not passed over their dwellings, till the lamb was actually killed, and their doors sprinkled with its blood. And afterwards the lamb could be nothing else than the memorial of

his passing over them. So perfectly manifest is it, that the sign in holy scripture has often the name of the thing signified. This indeed is the very nature of a Sacrament, that under sensible and visible rites something spiritual should be understood.

The words of the text, we might naturally suppose, would, if anything could, prevent men from misinterpreting the preceding words and acts of the sacred ceremony.

At the Paschal meal there were four cups of wine drunk by each person. The fourth was that over which the Hallel (a selection of psalms*) was sung—corresponding to which are the words of the Gospel, “and when they had sung an hymn, (or psalm, marg.) they went out into the mount of Olives.” (Matt. 26: 30.) But the third cup was the most important. The Rabbins recount *ten* rites which were to be observed in drinking it. It was called the Cup of Blessing, because the master of the family, or the president of the feast, solemnly blessed it. This cup† it was which our Lord consecrated as the memorial of His precious blood shed for us. “This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.” The observations that have been already made as to a corporeal meaning of our Lord’s words, will apply here also. His blood was not *actually* shed yet, and consequently could not be corporeally identical with the wine poured out—it could only be *represented* by it.

Here, then, we see our Saviour separating and sanctifying the elements of bread and wine to a religious use and signification—so that in this blessed Supper what were before only common food for the body, become holy memorials of our Redemption, the means of strength and refreshment to our souls, a eucharist or feast of thanksgiving, prepared for us on God’s own table.

1. That it was fit there should be some solemn instituted Memorial of the great deliverance then achieved, reason would teach us, and the divine procedure in former dispensations would lead us to expect.

Every great era was so inaugurated by a sacramental memorial. The Tree of Life was the Sacrament of the Covenant of Innocence, in the beginning of the world. The human race had, in a manner, a second beginning after the flood, and the covenant was altered,

* From cxv. to cxviii.

† 1 Cor. x. 16.

and the Bow in the cloud became its sacramental seal and memorial. God covenanted with Abraham, making him the very promises of the Gospel, and He gave Him the sign of Circumcision, a seal and sacrament and memorial in the flesh of God's covenant. He opened up to the bond-slaves in Egypt a career of liberty, and the Passover was the memento of divine mercy. And how fit that now at the *re-creation* of our race, when the floods of destroying wrath are made to subside, when the promises are fulfilled, when the slaves of hell are freed, and admitted into the liberty of the sons of God and heirs of heaven, when consummate deliverance is wrought,—how fit that there should be a new memorial, an unalterable sacrament; a perpetual stimulant to gratitude and praise and love; and, at the same time, a finger pointing forward to that Coming of the Lord when the imperfect memorials of earth shall pass away, and give place to the blissful Presence of Him whom they helped us to remember and to love.

Such a memorial is the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

2. There can nothing whatever be conceived more fit, natural, and effectual to remind us of what our Lord pointed to—His violent death, on the cross for us, the day following. Constituted as we are, of a material and spiritual nature, and preponderant as the material is all the days of our earthly sojourn, we *need* the aid of visible and sensible things in religion. He who knows what our nature and our need is, better than we do ourselves, has provided us with them, and in so doing has overlooked no part of our nature.

Many suppose that Imagination has no place in Christ's religion—that if it enter, it is a dangerous intruder. This is quite a mistake. No faculty of our nature is excluded from religion. All are God's handiwork, the result of His wisdom and goodness, and are embraced and sanctified by religion—nay, are necessary to her perfect work. So it is here. The bread broken into fragments; the wine poured forth into the chalice before our eyes, are a lively figure of the bitter agonies of our loving Lord. They help our imagination in picturing the scene when He voluntarily ascended the cross, on which, from every part of His mangled and torn body, that precious blood flowed down which was the healing and the redemption of the world; when his brow was torn by thorns, His

back with scourges, His hands and feet with spikes, His side with a spear.

God forbid, my brethren, that I should lead you to suppose that a picture of this in the imagination, however affecting for the time being, is enough. Your hearts, without any visible incitements, can and do bleed at the bare idea or recital of the sufferings of our fellow-christians in India,* and yet this is no distinctive mark of Christianity—it is only humanity. Why, then, is imagination furnished with aids in the Samaritan symbols? The answer is, that the imagination may in turn become an aid to *faith*.

3. This leads us to observe the final object of the Memorial—*what* it is we are to remember. Not merely that the Man Christ Jesus suffered on the cross—that may go no further than the imagination, and produce no more spiritual impression, than would a good picture of the Crucifixion. No—religion cannot go a step without *faith*: she begins in faith, and exists in faith; and here is the proper exercise of faith.

In that suffering Victim, with whose sorrows our natural humanity sympathizes—sorrows which so forcibly impress our imagination,—*faith* beholds the eternal God bearing the sins of His creatures, enduring the heavy strokes of relentless Justice, with every precious blood-drop washing away the defilements of transgression, with every sigh expiating our guilt, bringing us nigh unto God, and by His own death destroying death, and opening to us the gates of everlasting life. Faith is reminded by the Sacramental symbols of that “cross and passion” which she believes to be “meritorious,” “whereby *alone* we receive remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven.” The sacramental act directs our faith to the cross, and bids her meditate on all the wonders there accomplished for the children of men—God reconciled, man redeemed, heaven opened, sin subdued, death vanquished, despair banished, hope quickened into joy and triumph—and all this by Christ alone. Faith sees in Him the great Deliverer, the just claimant of all love, all gratitude, all homage—an eternity of generous devotion. Oh, blessed remembrance, freighted with such pervading joy, such tender sorrow, such ardent love, such calm, such holy, such assuring hope! May our faith in the Cross be

* Preached during the Indian mutiny.

ever worthy of the Apostle's definition—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen!" May it each day become more eagle-eyed, till it behold in the earthly elements of bread and wine all the mysteries of redemption shining in the sunlight of heaven.

When we thus perceive the sacrifice which Christ has offered for us to the Father, we offer it too by faith, and plead it before Him, as that which merits and procures all good for our souls and bodies. And hence the remembrance made in the sacrament has a *sacrificial* character. We not only call to remembrance therein what Christ has done for us, but we *reminde* God of it too, and steadfastly believing in the efficacy of the death of Christ, we present and offer it to God as the only sacrifice for the sins of the world, the only basis of all our hopes, our only but sufficient plea when God enters into judgment with us. Thus is the sacrifice of Christ—for ever actually presented by Himself in heaven—here on earth also continually offered by *way of faithful remembrance* in the holy sacrament, which is for this reason called "a holy commemorative sacrifice"—looking back to the one offering of Christ, once for all, as the Jewish sacrifices were prospective, and looked *forward* to that sacrifice.

This view is confirmed by the use of the word *ἀνάμνησις*, *remembrance* or *memorial*, which occurs very frequently in connexion with sacrifice. There are two uses of this word in the scriptures; the 1st, in reference to the act of human memory—our calling to our own mind anything past.* This is the sense in which I have taken the word, in reference to the eucharist, in the former part of this Sermon. Popularly it is the *only* sense allowed; but this is wrong; for there is a second use in the scriptures, expressive of the act by which we are said to *put God in mind* of anything, to bring it to His remembrance; this act being prayer or, usually, some sacrificial ceremony. Thus in Lev. xxiv. 7, "And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, [*i. e.*, of the shew-bread,] that it may be on the bread for a memorial *εἰς ἀνάμνησιν*, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord." By this memorial sacrifice of the incense, they brought themselves into mind with God, caused Him to remember them, and besought

* Gen. 9; 15, 40; 23, and often.

Him ever to be gracious unto them. Such too is the intent of the *remembrance* made in the Christian Sacrifice—such supplication do we make to God the Father, when we in faith present unto Him that sacrifice made on the Cross, and continued in the Sacrament by a perpetual representation and remembrance. By this appointed Memorial of the Lord's Supper we bring the sacrificed Lamb of God into remembrance with the Father, and ourselves in conjunction with Him and under His protection—and so we pray prosperously.

Again, in Lev. ii. 2, the handful of flour which the priest was to take from the sacrifice and burn upon the altar, with the oil and the frankincense, as “an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord,” is called the *memorial*, in many places, that is, a memorial to God, whom, after the manner of human speech, this puts in mind of His covenant and promise to be gracious to His worshippers.

A sacred meaning attached to this word in the original language throughout the East, being exclusively, or almost exclusively, applied to the worship of God.* So the prayers and the alms of Cornelius came up for a memorial before God—a sacrifice more acceptable, doubtless, than the costliest that ever burned on Jewish altars, because the sacrifice of the heart, not of the hand—spiritual, not material; and thus effectually inclining the Lord to be gracious unto him. In Isaiah lxvi. 3, what we translate “he that burneth incense,” is in the margin, agreeable to the Hebrew, “he that maketh a memorial of incense.” Once

* Vide Lee's Heb. Lex. s. v. זָכָרָה (az'carah). Rosenmüller, ap. Barrett's Synopsis, on Lev. 2: 2, זָכָרָה autem spectat ad cultum Dei et commemorationem laudis ejus: nam Arab, ذَكَرَ (dakar) quod ejusdem est radicis et significationis cum זָכָרָה, peculiari quadam et absoluta significatione denotat celebrationem Dei, quæ sive interna sive externa commemoratione fit in cultu divino, adeoque ipsum cultum Dei." The whole note is worth reading. Sap. xvi. 6. συμβουλον έχοντες σωτηρίας, εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἐντολῆς νόμου σου: ubi ἀνάμνησις non simpliciter recordationem notat, sed eam, quæ cum observantia conjuncta est. Schls. Lex. Lxx. s. h. v. So in Isa. 57: 8. זָכָרָה, μνημόσυνα, (Lxx) remembrance in E. V., is understood to mean idols, objects of worship. Maurer. Com. in loc., and Parkh. Heb. Lex. s. v. "The Heb. verb zakar, with its derivatives, is used for any object, monument, or place of divine worship, as Dr. Spencer hath observed (De Legib. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 5)." W. Louth's Com. in Isa. 57: 8.

more, in Num. v. 15, we read of an "*offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.*" Hence we see how well established in the Scriptures is the ritual and sacrificial use of the word remembrance or memorial; and how unjustifiable it is to confine to a purely modern and secular meaning a word which had (where religion was concerned) its proper place only among divinely instituted rites.* So that you see what is implied by our Saviour's saying, "Do this in remembrance of me"—it is not only remembering Him, but it is offering to God His precious sacrifice—reminding God of it—and of the claims it has given us upon His mercy, that He may be merciful to us.

In celebrating the sacrifice of the death of Christ there is a remembrance made—and in the sacrifices of the Law there was a remembrance made, according to Heb. x. 3. But oh, the blessed, reviving contrast! Ours is the remembrance of a sacrifice that has *taken away* the sin of the world: "But (says the Apostle) in *those* sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of *sins every year.*" This character is given of them even in the Law, in the quotation already made from Numbers—"an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance:" quoting which place, the celebrated Jewish writer, Philo, says, "sacrifices bring each man's sins and transgressions to remembrance"—"they make not oblivion but remembrance of sins." The worshippers having to renew those sacrifices perpetually, are perpetually reminded of their guilt, and the impossibility that such sacrifices could ever take away sin. And God, as if He did not remember sufficiently well, was—oh, tremendous rite! formally reminded of them too on the great day of atonement.

A remembrance of sins year by year! A remembrance of the Sacrifice that took away sin; a remembrance of pardon and full

* This view is further strengthened by the sacrificial use of *ποιεῖν*, common through the Greek Scriptures. E.g. Ex. xxix. 36–39; Lev. vi. 22, ix. 27 (E. V. *offer*.) Ex. x. 25 (E. V. *sacrifice*.) Lev. iv. 20 (E. V. *do*.) In reference to the Passover, Num. ix. 2; Deut. xvi. 1; 2 Kings xxiii. 21; 2 Chron. xxx. 1, 2, xxxv. 1; Ezra vi. 9 (E. V. *keep* or *celebrate*.) Heb. xi. 28; and compare Luke ii. 27 with vs. 24. In the Lxx. *ποιεῖν* is used as the equivalent of *λεροποιεῖν*, or *λεροργεῖν*, and so *facere* in the Vulgate.

This note is condensed from Mr. Carter's book on the Doctrine of Priesthood.

forgiveness every time we celebrate the Holy Communion, or look in faith to Christ! Oh, glorious and consolatory contrast! how should our souls be glad in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation!

I think I have now said enough to show you, my brethren, that the *remembrance* which our Lord enjoins is much more than a bare intellectual calling to mind the fact of His Crucifixion. He shows the insufficiency of a mere intellectual remembrance, by commanding a sacramental one; and this should be a strong argument with all neglectors of the Holy Communion to attend to it, and not to comfort their consciences by arguing that they do not wholly forget Christ. Enough to say, they do not remember Him *in the way He has commanded*; and can anything stand instead of obedience?

Briefly now let us consider the qualities and affections which befit the Communicant who would worthily make the memorial of the dying love of his Lord.

First, and above all, *faith*—an inwrought persuasion of the truth and reality of the sufferings of our Saviour, both God and Man, that those sufferings were for us, and that they were effectual—a sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and that to the believing Communicant is imparted the whole benefit of that sacrifice. If our faith waver here, St. James's words apply to us, "Let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord." Faith is the hand which must be outstretched to grasp all those rich blessings.

Then there should be, if not melting and vivid, yet steady and profound *sorrow* for those sins of ours which gave the thorns their sharpness, the nails their torture, death his power. Every remembered sin should be as hated, as if it were seen a living, fiendish shape, wielding the scourge or pushing the spear, or with the wicked Jews wagging the head or mocking the holy Saviour. The resolution should be felt, that death itself must be endured rather than the repetition of a single sin.

There should be *love and thankfulness*. What have we the faculty of love for, if not to love the most gracious and amiable and adorable of beings? How justly was it said, "If any man

love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha!" How can we refuse to love Him while we look upon His cross! What have we the faculty of *gratitude* for, if we cannot be thankful for an infinitely glorious benefit, to an infinitely generous Benefactor?—Then our hearts, filled with love to our Redeemer, should let it overflow upon our brethren, partakers in the same benefit, and equally dear and near to our Lord as we are. All this, brethren, is meant by celebrating the Holy Communion *in remembrance of Christ*. How far in advance of the few poor cold thoughts which, it is to be feared, so many Communicants never get beyond!

But what shall we say of those who scarcely get so far? who never think of Christ during the week—who never have one longing after Him—whose minds wander during the celebration,—even at the altar-rails thinking of their fellow-communicants, yea, uncharitable thoughts, rather than of the Cross—who, in a word, never remember Christ at all through the whole act. How terrible is this! May God be merciful to those who thus "kindle His wrath against them, and provoke Him to plague them with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death." May He grant us, brethren, to rejoice with trembling; to have Christ the Lord in all our thoughts; that He may be all our Salvation and all our desire; that He may be one with us and we with Him; that we may be strengthened and refreshed with the heavenly immortal food of His Body and Blood, and in the strength of that meat travel on with unflinching step, with triumphant march, to the mount of God—to whom, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory and honour, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

SERMON XI.

THE SACRAMENT A MEANS OF UNION WITH CHRIST.

ST. JOHN, vi. 57.

"As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."

WE have already, in the first of this series of discourses, spoken of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a *Remembrance*—an instrument for the perpetual commemoration and exhibition of "the sacrifice of the death of Christ" for the redemption of the world. We now propose, by the help of God's grace, to declare unto you what gift it is which is here presented for the apprehension of our faith: it is **CONTINUED UNION WITH CHRIST**—a central sun holding within its orbit every lesser luminary which can shed light or grace or glory on man.

Our whole race, in its present natural state, is dead—dead as to the exercise of those powers with which we were originally endowed, dead to those ends for which we were created. We were made to rise above this world, beautiful as it is, in holy contemplations of the Eternal, to be enriched and ravished evermore with His love, to shew forth His glory on a new theatre, and be ourselves ripened for a higher state of existence. But sin touched us with its leprous hand, and every power was paralysed; our newborn vigor was no more; the immortal aims of our being were forgotten; God, whom we were to glorify and who was to glorify us, disappeared, or rather was shut out, from the scene of our contemplations: life was no longer ours, because we were without

God in the world! An Apostle tells us, that *death* entered by *sin*; and a prophet tells us, that *sin separates between us and God*; and hence we infer that *our death consists in separation from God*. We need not now pause to lament such a loss, or waste a breath in sorrow—rather should the joy of its restoration entrance us, and engage every faculty to celebrate the praises of Him who saw us dead, and hath brought us life and immortality! Who is this “Prince of Life?” Jesus Christ—He is the Prince of Life! By Him alone we live. Of this the sure word certifies us. “Christ, who is our life,” cries an Apostle; “the Life,” echoes another—“the Word of life.”* “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,” is the Baptist’s testimony; while the Son Himself proclaims, “I AM THE LIFE!”—“because I live, ye shall live also;” and in our text, “He that eateth Me, even he shall live *by Me*.”

Now, as our death consists in separation from God, so must our life be restored by re-establishing our *union* with Him. Let us trace the method of this mystery of love—yes! we *should* trace it as far as God permits. The angels desire to look into it; and so should we, that every high discovery may add new depths to our humility, and more swelling tones to the hymn of gratitude.

In this majestic process we trace three great steps.

The *first*—how high, how awful it is!—the *Eternal Generation* of the Son of God! This Himself points out in the text: “As the living Father hath sent Me, and *I live by the Father* :” or, as we confess the mystery in the Nicene creed, “He is God of God,” eternally deriving His Divine Nature from the Father.

The *second* is, *His Incarnation* : “God sent forth His *Son*, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” None but THE SON could bring us into the relation of sons. But that it might be possible for us to become *the sons of God*, He must become *the Son of Man*. And having become man, He humbled Himself to the death of the cross, and in His holy humanity made that full, perfect, sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the world, which eternal Justice required. Every claim of Righteousness against sinners was satisfied, every barrier

* Col. iii. 4; 1 John, i. 1, 2.

between man and his God was for ever removed, and a way to God was opened—a way that remains for ever “new and living.” The Atonement did not of itself immediately give life, and union with God, but it removed all obstacles to such a purpose, and made provision for its actual accomplishment. This, then, is the second step in the mighty work—that the Son becomes our life, not simply as God, but as *God incarnate*—as entered into our ranks, as partaker of our nature. A perfect Man, the Eternal Son, in indissoluble union with humanity, He appears a *Second Adam*, the new representative of the race, bearing their sins, exhibiting that righteousness in which they had failed—an elder Brother, taking all the family under His protection; who, being identified with Him, become the sons of God, inasmuch as He is the Son of God; and as they are in the Son, they become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ.

Our natural birth identifies us with the first Adam, to our death; but how are we identified with, united to the *Second Adam*, to our life? For this is the third and final step of that process, whose first is hidden in unsearchable eternity. By no natural birth, by no natural operation: “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” By no mere ritual work: it is not “of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man,” that we are united to Christ. Nor is it by any righteousness of works that we have done, nor by any merit to which we could ever lay claim. No! the privilege is as *gratuitously* granted as it was mysteriously procured. Let every human ear drink in with wonder and gratitude the announcement of a Saviour’s mercy:—“As many as received Him, to them gave He power (right, or privilege, marg.) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.” And he who thus, with all his heart, believes on Him as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, may, in virtue of his faith, say with the Eunuch, “What doth hinder me to be baptized?” And “no man can forbid water that he should not be baptized,” and receive in the sacrament of the new-birth that *privilege* which Christ has accorded to His *faith*, the privilege of becoming a son of God. “Hereby (according to our xxvii Art.) as by an instrument are those who believe in Christ grafted into the church, the promises of the forgiveness of sins and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are

visibly signed and sealed"—it is "a pledge to assure us thereof." And those who now, in like faith, look back to the baptism of their infancy, may entertain all that assurance of their being Christ's which words of inspiration can give, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

So *begins* our Spiritual life, our union with Christ—*BY* faith; *in* baptism. But, observe, only *begins*. *Engrafting* is not the same with the ingathering of the ripe fruit. *Adoption* is not quite the same as proving ourselves in holy deeds the true and worthy sons of God. "Inheritors of the kingdom of heaven" we become; but we only "begin to possess" * the promised land. Our new birth to spiritual life is not one with the consummation of that life in glory. *Faith*, the foundation stone, is not one with "the head-stone," "*Charity*, the end of the commandment," and the perfection of our being. We must see, then, how the blessed gift of a new life is to be perfected, how our union with Christ is to be maintained till mortality be for ever swallowed up of life, and all the dangers which diminish it now and threaten to extinguish it, be themselves for ever extinguished.

For this end our Lord has appointed His precious Body and Blood to be our spiritual food and sustenance; by the constant and faithful reception of which we may repair the perpetual decays of the spiritual life, and more than repair them—grow up into perfection. All this intermediate period, therefore, must the words of our Lord remain in force—" *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you;*" † and positively, in our text, "*he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.*"

Now, that this *eating*, by which we continue our spiritual life, is not a bare faith apart from the sacrament, but the act of faith *in* the sacrament, a simple review of the context can hardly fail to convince us. In the neighbourhood of the sea of Galilee, a great number of those who were going up to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Passover, waited on our Lord's ministry—whose bodily necessities He supplied, feeding five thousand men with five barley loaves and two small fishes. This miracle has an honour put upon it chained by no other miracle—viz., that it is the *only* one related by all the

* Deut. ii. 24.

† John, vi. 53.

Evangelists: the Holy Ghost hereby signifying some great thing. And a great conviction it wrought in the minds of many, who said, "*This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.*" On the next day, at the other side of the lake, our Saviour made the memorable discourse recorded in this chapter, to the same crowd, who still followed Him. Their motives were not absolutely disinterested—"Ye seek Me, (said Jesus,) not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." And then, as ever was His wont, He turns their thoughts from the earthly to the heavenly, from the unreal and transient to the true and lasting. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you." That he *could* give it, that He had a right to their attention and their faith,—the mighty miracle which He had wrought the day before was an all-sufficient demonstration—as it was the most fitting introduction to so weighty and divine a discourse. Accordingly, the language of our Saviour seems intended, among other uses, as an exercise of faith. There is a remarkable ascent in His words: first He speaks of mere *bread*, what He had just multiplied, in the twenty-sixth verse; then the bread of *heaven*, in the thirty-second; then the *bread of God*, in the thirty-third; the bread of *life*, in the thirty-fifth; the *living bread*, in the fifty-first; and in the same verse He affirms *Himself*, yea, His *flesh*, to be this bread; and then He rises a step higher, declaring that it is necessary to *eat* His flesh; then His *flesh and blood*, in the fifty-third verse; and lastly, He re-affirms the same thing, using a *different* word, strange and difficult, and repeated four times. This word is *τρῶγω*. It is not properly applied to food prepared by man, and it expresses the eager appetite with which animals fasten on their food and devour it.* This was said by many to be "an *hard saying*"—truly it was; and there can be little doubt that it was intended so to be. To *faith* it was easy enough. Faith would say, "Lord, I believe that Thy flesh is meat indeed, and Thy blood drink indeed: I believe that we must eat, if we would live. I know not *how* it can be, but *Thou* knowest, Who hast said." But to carnal curiosity, it could not but be inexplicable: "*How* can this man give us His

* See Lidd. Gr. Lex. s. v., and Wordsworth's Gr. Test. *in loc.*

flesh to eat?" Because they could not *understand* the *how*, they would not *believe* the *fact*.*

Now, how can we think that language so studiously strange as our Lord's, was intended to mean absolutely nothing more than *believing* on Him, and receiving His doctrines? To *eat and drink* is a phrase undoubtedly used to signify receiving instruction, and accepting another's teaching; as in Prov. ix., "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts: she hath mingled her wine: she hath also furnished her table." She proclaims: "Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." But we may boldly affirm that the whole world does not furnish an instance in which to *believe in one and receive his doctrines* is expressed by *eating his flesh and drinking his blood*. Are we not, then, constrained to apply our Lord's words to the spiritual eating of His body and blood in the holy Sacrament by faith? Our Lord was not *understood*, nor was it possible that He could be, referring as He did to what as yet were only in intention—His death *on the Cross*, and the institution of the holy Supper as its perpetual memorial and the means whereby He would give Himself as "our spiritual food and sustenance." Our Lord's hearers were not to be condemned for not *understanding* Him. Can even *we*, with all the light of His after teaching and His after acts, *understand the manner* of our union with Him, take it how we will? Their *unbelief* constituted their guilt; and therefore our Saviour said, "there are some of you that believe not." And as their cavilling arose from unbelief, therefore He did not, when they murmured, make Himself clearer, but proceeded to use still more mysterious expressions. *Faith* received with open arms the glorious gift of *immortal life* through Christ, unbelieving curiosity stumbled at the inexplicable method of its impartation.

Here it may be interesting briefly to observe, that while the other evangelists give us the institution of both sacraments, St. John omits all mention of the institution, but gives us that for which we are indebted to him alone—that is, the divine philosophy of those mysterious rites; here, of the Lord's Supper, and in the third chapter of Baptism. Our Lord's similarity of method on both occa-

* *σαφής ελεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ θεοῦ λέγειν.* Justin Martyr. Exposit. Fidei de Recta Confess. 388. B.

sions is remarkable. Objections do not make Him explain—He only re-affirms with more confidence and more obscurity. Nicodemus stumbled exactly as the people at Capernaum, at the *how* of regeneration—“*how* can these things be?”—“*how* can a man be born when he is old?” And our Saviour’s only explanation is a more emphatic repetition and in more mysterious terms. Both these discourses agree also in that they are anticipatory or prophetic—spoken long before the actual institution of the sacraments. Some wrongly draw from this circumstance the inference that they do not relate at all to the sacraments;—hereby practically denying the prophetic character of our Lord, and forgetting of how universal application are the words in the chapter before us, “*Jesus Himself knew what he would do.*” Indeed if these discourses of our Lord’s do not relate to the sacraments, then have we no explanation at all from Himself of His two most important institutions, and then has His church from the very beginning been universally under a grievous mispersuasion.*

That it is no carnal eating which is here meant, I will not now stop to assert. It is impossible, unless for those who are unduly biassed, not to perceive that *faith* is the *hand* which alone does or can apprehend Christ in the sacrament, the *mouth* by which He is received into the soul, and becomes to us the food of immortality. His own words shew that His presence is not carnal—“What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?” If He has ascended in body, His natural body is not eaten carnally—for it is not here.

We return now to a more particular consideration of our text. “As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.”

This is the conclusion of His great discourse. How wonderful in itself, how important to us! We are infallibly told how our long-forfeited life may be restored, and more than restored, secured for ever: It is *by communion with Christ, and mutual indwelling in Him.* “He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood *dwelleth in Me and I in him.*” But how does this save us—how give us life? Our Saviour explains in the next words, *i.e.*, our text:

* On the matter of this paragraph vid. Plati. Commentary on the Holy Gospels, Wordsworth’s Annotations, and Bengel’s Gnomon.

"The *living* Father hath sent Me, and *I live by the Father.*" The Father who hath sent Me is the *living God*, the original fountain of life; that life, undiminished, is in Me: for "I live *διὰ τὸν πατέρα*—*by reason of the Father:*" *i. e.*, as He says elsewhere, "the Father is in Me and I in Him." There is between the Father and the Son a mutual indwelling; and our Saviour goes on to make the amazing declaration, that as He lives from all eternity on account of the Father dwelling in Him, so we live on *account of Himself, the Son, dwelling in us.* "He that eateth Me, the Life, and so hath received the very Life into himself, he shall live *by reason of Me.*"

Here is a life for us transcending that of angels—a participation in the divine life of Christ, flowing down to us from the very Fountain of Deity. We eat His flesh and drink His blood—and Himself declares "we dwell in Him and He in us," and His Church adds, "we are one with Him and He with us." How strong the foundation of our life, the life that is originally in the Father! How certain its derivation to us! As truly do we live by the indwelling of the Son, as He by the indwelling of the Father. Of that infinite life does He impart to us, and lo! we live for ever. We said, at the outset, that not simply as the Son of God is He our life, but as God incarnate; and therefore it is that He speaks of His *body and blood.* His *Humanity*, enriched by indissoluble union with His Divinity, is the well-spring of life and blessing to us. Apart from it we are dead: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." And St. Paul, in 1 Cor. x., gives us an infallible interpretation of our Lord's words—he shows us, beyond power of mistake, by what means we are so to receive His body and blood: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Communion—*κοινωνία*, *i. e.*, either the *participation* of it, or, the *means* of imparting it to us.

In this mystical union with Christ are included all the blessings required by our souls—which, in the Catechism, are summed up in two words—*strengthening* and *refreshing.*

There is FORGIVENESS. This stands first—it is what the sinner needs to remove the very first barrier in his way to God and life. And our Saviour has given it prominence: "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, *for the remission of sins.*" God who admits us to His table, will not regard us as enemies. He who *gives* us His Son, will not be slow to *forgive* us our sins. What *strength* is this to the soul! Is not *sin* the weakness of the soul? Is not this the parent of all its diseases and infirmities? Is not the *consciousness* of sin the agony that eats away its vigour? And when sin is forgiven, and God gives us "a pledge to assure us thereof"—our strength is renewed: "the joy of the Lord is our strength." The blood of the sacrifices always made holy whatever it touched—much more *this* blood, "which cleanseth from all sin." This blood of sprinkling cleanses the conscience from dead works, and refreshes the soul with the consciousness of restored purity. The weary soul shakes off its burden, and rises on the wings of hope and love towards its native clime.

Joy is another blessed fruit of it. The three hours' darkness of the Crucifixion has illuminated the heavens for ever. Faith now sees no frowning thunder-cloud of wrath, but the whole firmament gilded with the brightest rays of mercy. God is atoned. There is access for man. Yes—much more. It is not now merely that we may come to God—but He comes to us, and dwells in us, and we in Him, God, the Life, within us! Let us but once realize this, and the world could not furnish tongues enough to proclaim our joy, to express the ocean of transport within. We shall be fain to ask the angels to help us in so delightful yet impossible a task; yea, we shall invoke the sea with its sounding tones to join our hymn, the mountains and hills to break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field to clap their hands. The joy of the Church from the beginning has burst forth in that most ancient (I will not say *uninspired*, for probably it is an *inspired*) hymn, "Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty." No words seem adequate to express the thankful rapture of him who receives into the temple of his

heart the God that inhabiteth eternity. "They are things wonderful which he feelth, (says our holy and venerable Hooker,) great which he seeth, and unheard of which he uttereth, whose soul is possesser of this Paschal Lamb, and made joyful in the strength of this new wine." Here have the prophetic words their full accomplishment—"How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids!" (Zech. ix. v. *ult.*)

ENERGY is another of its blessed products. In how great an enterprise is the Christian embarked! an enterprise involving escape from the greatest of evils; the attainment of the greatest good; a conflict with the most powerful, vigilant, and subtle foes. Yet how languidly is the great work of salvation prosecuted! One would suppose, to judge from the conduct of the mass of professed Christians around us, that Christianity was the easiest religion in the world, the most favourable to self-indulgence—that it required no sacrifices whatever of mind, body, or estate; that the mind might soar to heaven in a delicious dream, the body pampered by indulgence, and not a farthing or an acre of the estate be left behind. Enemies, battles, ambushes, difficulties, indeed! What nonsense, they think, to say such things belong to our religion; or, if they do believe them, they say with the old banqueting Greek, "Serious matters to-morrow;" and, like him, they often see not the morrow. Oh, how lamentable is it to see the frightful deadness and indifference of those bearing the Christian name, in all things relating to Christ! But what wonder, when they come not in contact with that *flesh* of Christ which is a quickening Spirit! What wonder, when Christ Himself says, that if we eat not His flesh, we have no life in us! "But he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me;" and partaking of a divine life, it shows itself in every appropriate expression—zeal in devout and religious acts, fervour of affection to Christ and Christians, readiness and forwardness to every good work. Little difficulties do not appal and paralyse the possessors of such life, whether in their own private course to heaven, or in their exertions for the good of the Church at large: they feel a divine energy within them, buoying them up above the waves of despair, and impelling them irresistibly onward to success. And though we cannot, dare not say, that *all* communicants come up

to their high privileges—yet we can fearlessly say that, in every congregation, (with very few exceptions, indeed,) the communicants are the persons who feel and show the greatest interest in religion, and make the greatest exertions for the good of the Body. And if our congregations, instead of furnishing a mere handful, gave a goodly proportion, we should soon, as a church, put on a new aspect. The Dead Sea, with the sullen plash of its dark waters, would be exchanged for the river of life, proceeding out of the throne of God; its waters dancing in the sunlight of heaven, the soothing murmur of their endless ripple bringing to the ear and the soul assurance of undecaying life and untiring activity.

I come now to the last sublime effect of the Sacrament, which seals and consummates all others—THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY. It is the true creed of the Catholic Church, that “*All men shall rise again with their bodies in the last day;*” yet not in the same way. Christ is the first-fruits, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then the wicked—who shall be raised by the simple omnipotence of God, and for the simple purpose of being judged for the deeds done in the body; that in soul and body they may suffer for those deeds in which both were participators. But the case of the righteous is not simply parallel: they, too, shall be raised by Omnipotence, it is true, that they too may be rewarded in soul and body for the deeds in which both shared; but not *solely* for this reason—Scripture gives another. In Rom. viii. 11, St. Paul says, “*If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies (according to the margin, which follows the best reading) because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*” And two verses before our text, our Lord says, “*Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.*” This He had twice before asserted in the same chapter. In the 5th chapter He had declared that *all* that are in the graves should hear His voice, and should come forth, some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of *damnation*. His power is indeed concerned with both. But in a peculiar manner is He the Raiser of the Saints, and for a special reason,—because of their union with Himself, through the participation of His body and blood. With this He

connects our Resurrection—making it most plainly a consequence and effect of the sacrament—“ Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life,” not only a spiritual life for the soul, but for the body too ; for He adds, to show the intimate connexion, “ *and I will raise him up at the last day.*” Here I may adduce the luminous and well-known words of Hooker,* to illustrate and confirm this teaching : “ Our souls and bodies quickened to eternal Life are effects, the cause whereof is the Person of Christ ; His Body and Blood are the true well-spring out of which this life floweth. So that His Body and Blood are in that very subject whereunto they minister life, *not only by effect or operation*, even as the influence of the heavens is in plants, beasts, men, and in everything which they quicken ; but also by a far more divine and mystical kind of union, which maketh us one with Him, *even as He and the Father are one.*” And again : † “ Our general consolation departing this life is, the hope of that glorious and blessed Resurrection which the apostle St. Paul nameth *ἐξανάστασιν*, to note that as all men shall have their *ἀνάστασιν*, and be raised again from the dead, so the just shall be taken up and exalted above the rest, whom the power of God *doth but raise, and not exalt.* This Life, and the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, is for all men, as touching the sufficiency of what He hath done ; but that which maketh us partakers thereof, is our particular communion with Christ ; and this Sacrament is a principal mean, as well to strengthen the bond, as to multiply in us the fruits of the same Communion. For which cause St. Cyprian termeth it ‘ a joyful solemnity of expedite and speedy Resurrection ;’ Ignatius, ‘ a medicine which procureth immortality and preventeth death ;’ Irenæus, ‘ the nourishment of our bodies to eternal life, and their preservation from corruption.’ ” I would simply add, that those three, whom Hooker quotes, are the most illustrious and venerable names in the times immediately following the Apostles, as is his own in the Church of England, since the Reformation.

How entirely agreeable this is to the express teaching of our Church you will perceive from the following passage, taken out of the first part of the Homily “ Concerning the Sacrament ”—which, on several accounts, it will be profitable to quote. Treating of the

* Eccl. Pol. B. v. 67.

† § 68.

knowledge required in worthy Communicants, it says: "Neither need we to think that such exact knowledge is required of every man, that he be able to discuss all high points in the doctrine thereof: but this much *we must be sure to hold*, that in the supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent: *But*, as the scripture saith, the table of the Lord, the bread and cup of the Lord, the memory of Christ, the annunciation of His death, yea, the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the Holy Ghost (the very bond of our conjunction with Christ) is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful, whereby not only their souls live to eternal life, *but they surely trust to win their bodies to a resurrection to immortality*. The true understanding of this fruition and union, which is betwixt the body and the Head, betwixt the true believers and Christ, the ancient Catholic fathers both perceiving themselves, and commending to their people, were not afraid to call this Supper, some of them, the salvo of immortality and sovereign preservative against death; other, a deific communion; other, the sweet dainties of our Saviour, the pledge of eternal health, the defence of faith, *the hope of the resurrection*; other, the food of immortality, the healthful grace, and the conservatory to everlasting life. All which sayings, both of the holy scriptures and godly men, *truly attributed* to this celestial banquet and feast, if we would often call to mind, O how would they influence our hearts to desire the participation of these mysteries, and oftentimes to covet after this bread, continually to thirst for this food!" As we contemplate this list of benefits, so glorious, communicated through this blessed Sacrament, surely we are well reminded that "it is our duty to render most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God our heavenly Father, who, for the perpetual remembrance of the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ in dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us,—hath instituted and ordained these holy mysteries, to our great and endless comfort."

This Sacrament, is thus an open, visible demonstration of His intention—a *pledge*, addressed at once to the sight of our eyes and the faith of our minds, of His gracious purposes towards us—of all

that He binds Himself to accomplish for us. What faithlessness, then, to doubt not only His *word*, but that word confirmed by His solemn *seal*, a pledge like this! Happy is he who believes simply in God, and, in the Church's thanksgiving, expresses his own persuasion that "God *does hereby assure* us of His favour and goodness towards us, and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of His Son." To the contrite, humbled soul how welcome, how consoling an *assurance*! How much more stable and secure than the varying testimony of our fickle, uncertain *feelings*—the deluding witness to which so many wholly trust in a matter of such eternal moment. If penitent and troubled souls, instead of searching for the marks of their being Christ's among the jumble of mere feeling, according to the directions of some unskillful guides,—were rather to go on in the ways of penitence, were to wait patiently for God in the holy Sacrament; He would, in His good time, grant them the assurance which their hearts long for, He would say to their *faith* in audible tones—"Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee! Fear not! thou art mine! Thou art in Me, and I in thee. By Me thou livest, and I will raise thee up at the last day." Here also let me add what the Homily lately quoted says on this point: "Thus much more the faithful see, hear, and know the favourable mereies of God sealed, the satisfaction by Christ towards us confirmed, and the remission of sins established. Here they may feel wrought the tranquillity of conscience, the increase of faith, the strengthening of hope, the large spreading abroad of brotherly kindness, with many other sundry graces of God. The taste whereof they cannot attain to, who be drowned in the deep, dirty lake of blindness and ignorance. From the which, O beloved, wash yourselves with the living waters of God's word, whence you may perceive and know, both the spiritual food of this costly supper, *and the happy TRUSTINGS and effects that the same doth bring with it.*" *

* Milner observes, "well-disposed persons who often gain both spiritual comfort and strength through sermons, gain nothing from the Sacrament. Why is this? They are in too lazy a posture of soul; they do not reverently esteem, as they should, this precious mean of grace, as the channel in which the comforts of Salvation may be expected richly to flow. Our Reformers speak differently of the importance of this Institution. From the expression,

['dost

To Communicants I would say a parting word. Are we so closely united to the eternal Lord and Saviour, that we as truly live on account of Him dwelling in us, as He lives on account of the Father dwelling in Him from eternity—and shall we not feel bound to a thankfulness beyond the world's poor measure, and a *holiness* somewhat more than a step removed from the morality of a pagan? Can we believe ourselves *one* with Christ, that *He is one with us*, and allow ourselves to continue in *sin*, in *any sin*? "As He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," is St. Peter's exhortation: we may go higher than this—As He who is in you, and dwells in you, and is your life by His indwelling, and is one with you—so that you are "members of His body, and of His flesh, and of His bones"—as *He is* holy, so be ye holy in every thought, and aspiration, and act.

These souls, inspired by His Spirit, and sprinkled with His blood, and living by His life—how shall they ever admit a thought of revolt! Shall they not follow, with the eagle-eye of faith, their ascended Lord, and aspire to an ever-increasing conformity to Him? Shall they not pant and sigh to receive more of His fullness? to represent more exactly His every lineament? to thrill with ecstatic delight at his every command? to glow with the fervours of that divine love which, kindled here, shall flame immortal in the heavens? These *bodies*, on which He has set the *seal of the Resurrection*, and which are yet to shine in the dazzling lustre

'dost assure thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us, and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son,' *it is evident that the blessing of assurance was in their idea connected with the right reception of this ordinance.*" BICKERSTETH'S Treatise on the Lord's Supper, Pt. ii. chap. iv., near the end.

The following is from W. BATES, D.D., a Nonconformist Divine of the very highest and most deserved reputation: "His body and blood are the feast of love upon His sacrifice, *the clearest assuring sign of God's being reconciled to us.*" "How many drooping souls have been raised, how many wounded spirits have been healed, how many cloudy souls have been enlightened in that ordinance!" Spiritual Perfection, Chap. xii.

This Treatise is published by the London Religious Tract Society.

MATTHEW HENRY says, "We here receive the earnest of our inheritance; that is, *we here receive the assurance of it.*" Communicant's Companion, Chap. ix. v.

of His own glorified body—in which He intends to reveal to principalities and powers the might of His mercy and the fulness of His redemption—which are to take no obscure place among the brilliant throngs that now look forward to our accession,—these bodies, on which Christ has lavished the stores of His glorious mercy, and which He destines for such great things—take *them* and defile them with the grossness of the earth? Oh, my God, is it possible, all heaven reclaiming against the frightful sacrilege! The gentle Dove ceases His unavailing remonstrances, and quits His desecrated temple; and Christ, with awful outraged justice, severs from Himself the branch that is fruitful only in dead works. Oh, brethren, it is not from above and around you merely that you hear the cry “Be ye holy”—from within evermore its echoes proceed. Blessed voice! let it never cease, till every thought of the Communicant’s heart and every action of his body is “**HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**” Amen.

SERMON XII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER AS A COMMUNION.

1 COR. X. 17.

“ For we being many are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

I HAVE already, in two former Sermons, treated of the Lord's Supper—first, as a Remembrance, and, secondly, as a means of continued Union with Christ. I now propose to view it as a COMMUNION.

God, my brethren, is not the author of confusion or dissension. He cannot be ; for so He would contradict the eternal unity of His own nature.

In His glorious works of creation there is a beautiful diversity, but a diversity in Unity—the impress and Symbol of the Godhead. And so it is in the moral creation.

But sin entered—and disunion was the result. Sin separated God's creatures from Him, and from each other too. Such is its repellant nature, that it is ever striving to overcome all the bands and laws which hold together the works of God and secure their unity, while it would reduce the glorious whole to its original atoms.

What mournful instances of this does each day furnish ! Nations are perpetually at variance, desolating whole countries with every evil that man can fear. And, as individuals, men are still more dreadfully separated ; so much so, that scarcely *two* persons can be found, however connected by the ties of nature, affection, or

interest, between whom something may not spring up to interrupt or mar their union—yea, which will not be *sure* to do so without the exercise of a pious and prudent vigilance. Such are the unhappy, wide-spread effects of that disturbance which sin has caused in the very frame-work of human nature and human society.

There is just enough of our original nature left, to make us feel the misery of our disorders, and long for their correction. As the outgrowth of this feeling, we may perhaps regard those many associations, in all ages and countries and states of society, in which men have sought that more intimate union which their souls naturally crave, but which a universal society, disturbed by sin, could not afford. And so it has been in regenerated society, the church, when the vital principle languishes, and the bonds of the divinely-instituted community are relaxed through prevailing iniquity. Then is the tendency greatest to draw off into societies or sects more or less select and secret. We read of no such clubs, meetings, associations, or societies among Christians in the early days of Christianity; for then the spirit of new-born love was strong, its glow suffused the whole church: in that regenerated society the discords of earth found no abiding home, and the human spirit found all its cravings satisfied.

Vain, ever vain, are all the efforts of mortals to supply the needs of their fallen nature by their own independent efforts, or from any earthly source. From *without* them, from *above* them, must they look for relief. "From the hills, the everlasting hills, cometh all their help." And, therefore, God hath built us a city, whose foundations are upon the holy hills—"the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem"—cherished with His presence, filled with His love, where we have fellowship with Him and with His Son Jesus Christ, with angels, with the spirits of just men made perfect, and with one another. This *fellowship one with another*, as it has a more than human origin, so has it a basis stronger and more stable than the weak foundations of our human nature. *It is altogether of God, through Christ*; whose merit procured it, whose incarnation is its everlasting foundation, and who has ordained the Holy Sacrament of His body and blood as the instrument by which His Spirit presents it to our faith. In the text the Apostle affirms the Church's *union*—"we being many are

one bread and *one body*;" but to shew how utterly this is of Christ's grace and gift, he first says (in the preceding verse) "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" In which words the Apostle asserts our *union with Christ*, by the participation of His Body and Blood in the Sacrament; and then, by virtue of that union, our communion with one another, as expressed in the text; in which he reiterates the cause—"for we are all partakers of that *one bread*," which is the Body of Christ.

This union which we have with one another through the Sacrament, or Communion, is two-fold:

I. It is real and internal; II. It is outward.

I. 1. It is *real and internal*, since, as I have already partially indicated, we are hereby made partakers of Christ. For the bread and cup are respectively asserted to be the *κοινωνία*, *communion* or *participation* of the body and blood of Christ. Hereby He dwells in us and we in Him. We become very members incorporate in His mystical body. Hence, being engrafted into the *one* Lord Jesus Christ, abiding in Him, deriving life and nourishment from Him, our union with one another in Him is of the most real character. We become, in the Apostle's language, "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones;" and, consequently, in the words of the same Apostle, "*members one of another*"—than which nothing conceivable by the human mind could express a more close and real union. This is by our eating that *one bread*: "we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." Instead of our assimilating It to our discordant minds, as our bodies assimilate their food to their own substance; *It*, working by a supernatural law, the direct opposite of that natural law which prevails in our bodily nourishment, conforms our discordancy to Christ's own unity. As that bread is one, so it makes us one. Such is the omnipotent power residing in the Lord's Body. What elevated, ennobling views does this give us of our mutual relationship—of its sacredness and closeness! "*Ye are all one in Christ Jesus!*"

2. Our *confidence* in the reality of this union and our reverence for it, must be enhanced by considering the *agent* of it—who is

the Holy Spirit. It was He who first united us to Christ; "for (says the Apostle) by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body;" and every additional bond of union with that body—our continuance in it, our nourishment by it, is by and through the Blessed Spirit. It is by the mighty operation of the Spirit alone that earthly elements of bread and wine become the celestial life-giving food of the soul—the body and blood of Christ. Hence our union in Christ is the work of the Spirit, and our union with one another is called "*the Unity of the Spirit:*" *for we are all made to drink into One Spirit.*" And hence—

3. Another view of this *internal* union—that *harmony of thought and feeling* wrought in the hearts of Christians by the Holy Spirit herein. However discrepant our tempers and judgments may be by nature, how is it possible that they should continue so when they come under the transforming influence of the Framers and Teacher of all hearts? The same lessons are taught, the same motives are presented, the same grace is at work, the same plastic hand is upon all—henceforth dissension is expelled, and "*with one mind and one mouth*" God is glorified. In faith, and hope, and charity, and judgment, and will, and purpose, their minds are conformed to one blessed standard. Oh, were Christians but all united to Jesus Christ by faith and charity, and with one another in the constant reception of the Holy Communion, how speedily would heart-burnings and quarrels in daily life, and all schisms in religion, vanish, and for ever! No wonder that there should be so much disunion when we have so few Communion, and so few Communicants at them! No wonder there should be so many bitter diversities of religious belief, when men allowed themselves first to part company at this point. Were they to continue devoutly communing together, might they not more reasonably have hoped that God would equally illuminate both sides, and in the end perfectly unite them, as with Christ, so with one another? Now we hear of this Communion, and that Communion—instead of all partaking of that One Bread, in the communion of all Christians.

But as the communion of Christians in the reception of the Blessed Sacrament is *real and internal*, so is it—

II. *Outward* too. 1. Inasmuch as it is the LORD'S SUPPER. The very name imports communion. It is the Feast made by

the great Head of the Church. The food is that Divine humanity which was given for all—which tasted death for every man—that blood which was shed for many for the remission of sins.

Consequently there are no private rights or interests at this table. Christ made distribution to all alike. "Take, eat—drink ye all of this," are His words. Hence all baptized Christians, of what condition soever, if they do not deny their Baptism by an ungodly life, have right of access to this Supper, and should not fail to enjoy their right. It is a Supper, then, not made for a few, but *common* to all—and hence, in some sense, its very name, Communion.

2. Again—Christians have an *outward and visible* communion with each other, by partaking of the one bread or loaf. From the beginning *one* loaf or piece of bread used to be consecrated in the Sacrament, because it was the symbol of Christ, who was *one and undivided*, and because it was to symbolize *our union* with Him and *with each other*—"that we are all one in Christ Jesus." There is an aptness in the thing itself to represent unity: for as the one loaf is compounded of many separate grains; so we being many, and partaking of Christ's Body, which possesses a divine transforming power, are incorporated into His one Body—and so become one in the sublimest sense.

We learn from ancient authors* that the eating of a loaf of bread, after breaking and distribution, was a mode of contracting friendship in use among the ancients. And the Jews† of a particular neighborhood used to enter into friendship by each contributing a loaf, of which, after one had pronounced a blessing, all immediately partook. But nothing could be so impressive a symbol of unity as the partaking of one loaf, and that itself the symbol of Christ's Body.

And here we may observe how far the Church of Rome has departed, in her celebration of this Sacrament, from the *institution of Christ, the express words of Scripture, and the meaning of the rite*, in that she both consecrates and administers it in *separate* wafers. There is no one bread or loaf (as the original properly means, and as it is translated in the narratives of our Lord's mira-

* Vide Whitby, Com. on 1 Cor. x.

† Lightf. Hor. Heb. in 1 Cor. x. 17.

cles) to be a symbol of that One Divine Bread which came down from heaven, of our incorporation into the one body, and of our becoming thereby "one bread and one body." There is no "breaking of bread"—one of the very names by which the sacrament is indicated in Scripture, which also our Lord commanded and delivered to be received, in token of His body broken for us; and consequently no distribution of the same loaf, indicative of the equal interests of all in the common supper of the common Saviour. And these are only part, as you know, of the many grievous corruptions with which that Church has encompassed this holy sacrament.

It is to be lamented that among ourselves, too, there is great misapprehension as to the mystical import of the *one loaf* of our text: for I have observed that most of our people, when they prepare the bread for the Holy Communion, *cut it or break it up into fragments*—thereby destroying all the significancy of setting forth one whole piece of bread, and afterwards breaking it in the act of consecration, which is, of course, the peculiar office of the priest. If you were to read carefully the accounts of the institution in the Gospels, and in the tenth and eleventh chapters of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, and compare them with our Communion Office and the Rubrics, you could not fail to have a much fuller and more satisfactory view of the doctrine and uses of the Sacrament than people commonly have.

3. The *Communion of Saints* is also evidenced herein by the *mutual intercessions* which are made in this celebration. This, in our office, is done in the prayer "for the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth:" in which we make prayers, supplications, and give thanks for all men, especially for all *Christian kings, states, and people*—for all in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Nor do we forget our brethren departed this life, and who have entered into rest: for *them we give thanks* to God, and beseech Him to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom. This is a noble instance of the Communion of Saints. If, then, there are any for whom we would make most special intercession, whom we would make mention of in all our prayers, who are specially dear to us, or specially intrusted to us—when can we

hope so devoutly or so effectually to recommend them to the Divine mercy, as in the celebration of this feast of love and unity? And, as in the Sacrament the church opens wide her heart of love, and prays for all, so ought our hearts to be more than ever expanded with universal charity, particularly to *all Christians* throughout the world, and embrace in our private prayers every part of the great household.

In these suggestions probably all communicants will be able to recognize their own continual practice.

4. Another sign of the love and fellowship of the Saints, as witnessed in the Holy Communion, existed in the apostolical and ancient Church, but being corrupted in the course of ages, was finally abolished—I mean what St. Paul calls “*the holy kiss*,” St. Peter “*the kiss of charity*,” and the ancient Church “*the kiss of peace*.” After the preliminary prayers were over, just before the celebration, a deacon said aloud*—“Receive one another; salute one another with an holy kiss:” whereupon the clergy saluted the bishop, the laymen of the congregation the men, and the women the women.† A kiss is the natural token of peace and unity, of love and friendship; and it is called *holy* by the Apostle, to show how unfeigned and sincere and pure and fervent should be that charity which we profess thereby. For what could be a viler hypocrisy than, Judas-like, to give our brother the token of love, while our hearts were actuated by bitterness and hatred? Let those who come now to the Sacrament remember that though the kiss of charity is not practised, yet all that it imported is required—in a word, the *heart* of charity. And those who come to the very Sacrament of *union* with hearts full of strife and envying; who entertain uncharitable thoughts over the very Body of their Lord, and while celebrating the most amazing love—love at which all heaven stands by in wonder, cannot but eat and drink damnation to themselves.

There can be no doubt that the very frequent reception of the Holy Communion in the primitive ages—at first (as most think)

* Suiceri Thes. Eccles. s. γ. *φιλημα*, or Bingham's Eccles. Antiq. B. xv. cap. iii. sec. 3.

† The men and women, in the primitive Church, sitting not intermingled together, but each class apart by themselves.

daily, for several centuries three times a week, and certainly at least every Sunday—must have been one of the chief causes of that strong and ardent piety, that fervent love to one another which so distinguished the first disciples, and made the very pagans exclaim, "Behold how these Christians love one another!" Those constant communions, that oft-recurring kiss of charity, left no time for hatreds to grow inveterate and invincible; they nipped them in the bud. How should we pray for the return of such a spirit!

5. There is another way by which, in the Sacrament, the ancient Christians did illustriously prove their mutual communion and fellowship, and which still remains among us—in form at least, (thank God, in some instances a grand reality,)—and that is, *the offering of alms*. We have nothing certified to us on better authority than that all the offerings made to religion, for all purposes—the support of the clergy, the relief of the poor and destitute, the maintenance of the widow and the orphan, the burial of the dead, the redemption of captives, assistance to Christian brethren in foreign parts—were, in the apostolical and first days, ordinarily made in the Holy Communion.

An apostolical injunction probably originated the custom, but Christian *instinct* would also have probably led to it. For when may we so naturally offer to God of our possessions, as when we receive from Him the sublimest gift of all, the gift of His Son, and feel that that gift is the cause of all other gifts; when we most feel that all we have is His gift; when our hearts are most opened in love to Him, and affection and sympathy towards our brethren? Giving in this way becomes what the Scriptures design it to be—*a religious deed, an act of worship due to God, an acknowledgment of His sovereign ownership, as well as an expression of love.*

Very different this from giving as practised in the present day—under the stimulus of sermons, and meetings, and speeches, and subscription lists, and collectors. How perfectly worldly are most of our schemes of the present day! In many cases our giving can by no means be denominated religious, or be looked upon as within the limits of religion. I must say that I fear this is especially the case with what are so favourably regarded by multitudes—I mean *bazaars*. If the eating of our common food is a worldly act and unlawful for a Christian, until it "is sanctified by the word of

God and prayer,"—how can that giving be deemed religious, or be acceptable to God, which is so far from being sanctified by prayer, that it is coupled with all the accompaniments of ordinary traffic? And every now and then, too, you hear of a *soirée* or a *tea-meeting*, held in the very houses of worship! Alas, that Christians should ever have come to this!

It was said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms have come up for a memorial before God." Our Saviour joins alms with fasting and prayer. The primitive Christians offered all their alms in the Holy Communion, and our own Church teaches us to do the same; for in the prayer "for the whole state of Christ's church militant," after the alms have been reverently placed on the Holy Table, and the oblations—that is, the bread and wine for the Holy Communion*—solemnly offered to God by the priest, we beseech Him to accept our *alms*, and oblations, and to receive our prayers.

You see, then, in what sacred conjunction alms are placed, how solemn an act of religion they should be regarded. One thing is extremely remarkable in the epistles of St. Paul, viz., that, to express alms, (the assistance afforded by Christians to one another,) he never uses *ελεημοσύνη*, the word which was ordinarily in use, and is common in that version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) which the Jews and Christians used—though it is a most appropriate and expressive word, implying *mercy and pity*. He uses a far higher, nobler word, expressive of the new, and close, and loving relation into which men have come by their union through Christ—*κοινωνία*—a word which never before was used to express alms by either Jew or Greek. Hence we see how far above the measure of mere humanity is the Christian idea of mutual love and help, when an Apostle, in order to represent it, has to put an old word to a wholly new use. The verb means to *make common*, to *have or share in common*, though the noun is translated variously in the New Testament by *communion*, *communication*, *fellowship*, *contribution*, *distribution*. It is the very word, translated, by which

* "And when there is a Communion, the Priest shall *then* place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine, as he shall think sufficient. After which done, the Priest shall say, Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church," &c.—Second Rubric after Offertory Sentences.

we most commonly, and perhaps most expressively, call the Sacrament,—i. e., the *Communion*. This is the word by which St. Paul denotes alms. And why? Because *ελεημοσύνη*, the common word, might imply, (from its meaning—mercy or pity,) some idea of *superiority and condescension* on the part of the giver, that he gave as a matter of mere bounty, and not of right and obligation: whereas *κοινωνία* indicates that the goods of Christians, so far as their real necessities are concerned, are *κοινά*, *common*, just as the first Christians “had all things in common”; that the poorer brethren are to be relieved as a matter of obligation; and especially does it indicate the hearty, free, and brotherly temper with which such relief is given—not an alms proudly and disdainfully cast to our brother, but an *affectionate sharing with him* of the bounty of our common Father.*

How fragrant, how reviving is the memory of those days of love! How humiliating, how dispiriting the contrast presented in the present age! Amid the bustle of Benevolent Societies, the ostentation of Subscription Lists, and the costly and elaborate machinery of Charitable Organizations, it is much to be feared that the delicate *flavour* of Christian love has largely perished. In the very Sanctuary it hardly revives. Are the few cents cast into the plate, or the smallest silver coin that can be secured for the occasion, offered on even sacramental days, or, still worse, on the special occasions of charity,—a lovely illustration of this Communion of Saints, think you?—Let not the poorest fail to offer their alms at the Sacrament, *since it is an essential part of its public celebration*—and let all see that they do according to the ability which God has given, and not be afraid that they can be too liberal. Oh, “let us not love in word or in tongue; but in deed and in truth!”

I have now touched on some of the many points in which the Holy Sacrament is emphatically a *Communion*, the Communion of Saints: first, because it unites us to Christ, and thereby to one another; and this in inward reality as well as in outward seeming. God, as the thanksgiving prayer in the Communion Office, says,

* The 5th Sat. of Juvenal, throughout, and especially from v. 66 to 76, will illustrate the change wrought by Christianity in the temper of the rich towards the poor, and, I think, remarkably fortify what is here said.

does assure us by the reception of this Holy Sacrament, "that we are very members incorporate of Christ's mystical body, which is the blessed company of all faithful people."

Now in what a truly wretched state are all those who, by habitual neglect of this Sacrament, break the seal of unity, and "separate themselves from their brethren!" They live in the constant violation of an article of the Apostles' Creed, "the Communion of Saints." They are guilty of a perpetual schism. They continually break the unity of Christ's church and body. They are no real members of the church—they are but as withered branches hanging on to the tree, but bound to it by no vital tie, and awaiting only the dreadful sentence, to be bound in the bundles destined for the fire. They do habitual despite to the love of Christ so graciously exhibited in the Sacrament, where He is evidently set forth crucified for us. They declare they have no love for the brethren, by refusing to communicate with them in the sign and symbol of love. In a word, *as far as they can, they cut themselves off from Christ here, and His blessings hereafter!*

May God give them a speedy repentance! And may He grant us all that *faith and charity* which will make our Communion real, spiritual, and profitable—through Jesus Christ.

SERMON XIII.

OF EATING AND DRINKING UNWORTHILY.

I Cor. xi. 27, 28, 29.

“Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s Body.”

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” This pole-star of Christian worship must attract the Christian’s eye most of all in that highest act of Divine Service, the receiving of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

In celebrating a worship so august and sacred as this high Memorial, we are bound to pay the most scrupulous regard to the disposition of our hearts, lest we be guilty of the sin of unworthy receiving—a sin of so great indignity to our Lord, and so “great peril” to ourselves.

I shall endeavour in this discourse to set forth the true meaning of “eating and drinking unworthily,” the nature of its guilt, and the punishment that ensues. And in doing this, I trust that the prejudices and misapprehensions, which have for centuries been gathering around this most comfortable sacrament, may, for you at least, be completely dissipated, and that thereby one very great

obstacle to the progress of religion amongst us may be happily removed.

Perhaps it may be well to remind you, at the very outset, once and for all,—that the Apostle is not speaking of our worthiness or unworthiness, in the ordinary sense, at all. There could be no question about this in the minds of those who had accepted the *Gospel*. For what is the Gospel but a declaration of God's *mercy* to the *unworthy*. Jesus Christ is the "*gift of God*" as well in the holy Sacrament as on the Cross; and Christians can urge no pretence of worthiness, in the sense of deserving; since the conviction of our ill-desert lies at the very root of all right faith in the Gospel. When, therefore, we speak of "worthy receiving," it is not meant that we are *deserving* of the gift of God presented in the Sacrament; but that we have that *fitness* of disposition, which makes our receiving a true and acceptable worship of Almighty God. And so of unworthy receiving. *It is the motive and manner of the action, and not the desert of the person, that is intended in our text.*

Now, in order to a just apprehension of the unworthiness we are liable to be guilty of in this action, the first and most natural step is, to examine that particular case which gave rise to the Apostle's discourse on the subject. But since this cannot be properly done without considering the parallel abuse of a Christian institution closely connected with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we must, as a preliminary step, investigate briefly the history and origin of that institution.

The Jews* of a particular street or neighbourhood were wont to express communion and fellowship, by contributing each a whole oake or loaf, which one of them blessed, and of which they all then partook in common. At Athens,† too, among the Greeks, it was customary, in the time of Socrates, for those who met to dine, to bring, each one, some provision: this, however, was not always served up in common, but each person ate what he had brought himself.

Upon such foundations, in all probability, was built a custom of the Apostolical Church—universal, so far as we know, and alluded

* Lightfoot, Hor. Hebr. in 1 Cor. x.

† Bengel in 1 Cor. xi. 21.

to in three places of the Epistles. The Christian feasts were animated by the new and divine temper of love that had lately appeared in the world, and so were of a dignity and importance infinitely beyond the friendly meetings of Jew or Greek. They became a natural and striking expression of Christian love and charity; and hence they derived their name of *Agapæ*—"feasts of charity." These feasts were provided by the wealthier Christians, principally for the relief of their poorer brethren; but being eaten in common, in the places where they usually assembled for Divine worship, they were a beautiful exhibition of brotherly love, and served as a bond of its maintenance. The *Agapæ* always accompanied the Lord's Supper—in the apostolical age before it, in later times, after it. The place, the time, the circumstances, all tended to make them, in the highest sense, *Christian feasts*; particularly as they were under the direction of the Bishop—it being, as St. Ignatius (A.D. 107) tells us, unlawful to make an *Agapæ* "without the Bishop."

You will not be displeased to hear an account of them from Tertullian, an African presbyter (A.D. 190). In his Defence of Christianity, addressed to the Gentiles,* he says, "Our supper shows its reason in its very name; for it is called *ἀγάπη*, which signifies love among the Greeks. Whatever charge we are at, it is gain to be at expense upon the account of piety. For we therewith relieve and refresh the poor. There is nothing vile or immodest committed in it. For we do not sit down to meat, before we have first tasted of prayer to God; we eat only to satisfy hunger; and drink only so much as becomes modest persons; we fill ourselves in such manner, as that we remember still, that we are to worship God by night. We discourse as in the presence of God, knowing that He hears us. Then after water to wash our hands, and lights brought in, every one is moved to sing some hymn to God, either out of Scripture, or, as he is able, of his own composing; and by this we judge whether he has observed the rules of temperance in drinking. Prayer again concludes our feast, and thence we depart, not to fight and quarrel, not to run about and abuse all we meet, not to give ourselves up to lascivious pastime; but to pursue the same care of modesty and chastity, as men that

* Apolog. c. xxxix.

have fed at the supper of philosophy and discipline, rather than at a corporeal feast." What a change did Christianity work from the riot and debauchery of paganism!

But from the beginning the tares were mingled with the wheat. Many a baptized Jew and Greek still retained their carnal heart, and brought with them into Christ's holy family the leaven of their former unhallowed ways. And the Agapæ suffered as well as the other parts of religion. St. Jude* complains of some—"These are *spots* in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear." From a terrible account of those same characters, by St. Peter,† I select a few similar words: "They count it pleasure to riot in the day-time. Spots they are, and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you." Without any reverence for the sacred character of these feasts, they ate and drank freely at them, in the open day, just as they would at a pagan revel by night. Such wicked preversions of their original use, ultimately led to the abolition of the Agapæ—the seventh century witnessing the last vestiges of them.

Now, it was this unchristian abuse of them, at Corinth, with some accompanying circumstances of aggravation, which led on to that further abuse of the Holy Sacrament, of which the Apostle here speaks so strongly. Looking back to the 17th verse, we see that the Apostle charges the Corinthians with coming together (on the occasions of public worship) not for the better, but for the worse. For when such assemblies took place, there were divisions and heresies (or parties, as the word here means) among them. The rich, contrary to their Christian profession, and that brotherly love which their Master had enjoined on all His disciples,—despising the poor and disdaining to eat with them,—feasted apart, and thus made divisions in the very church or public assembly convened for religious worship. How deplorable a preparation for the Sacrament, which was to follow. "This" (says the Apostle) "is not to eat the Lord's Supper." But there is something even worse. They were so destitute of all bowels of compassion, as not even to share their repast with the poorer brethren, that needed such refreshment. As each arrived, he proceeded to eat what he had

* v. 12.

† 2 Peter ii.

brought, without waiting for, or thinking of, others. "Every one" (says the Apostle) "taketh before other his *own* supper, (what he had himself brought,) and one is hungry, and another is drunken." What a temper, what a behaviour for Christians in such a case! Well might the Apostle say, in indignation and astonishment, "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" If you are so hungry as not to be able to wait for the rest, can you not eat at home? "or, despise ye the church of God"—the assembly of His Saints? They did despise it, by their indecent disregard of the poor, and their selfish refusal to impart to them of their abundance. By the same act they became guilty of another wrong: "ye shame them that have not." They that have, are the rich; they that have not, are the poor; and how they were shamed in this instance we all instinctively perceive. True Christians are indifferent to neither the wants nor the feelings of their poor brethren.

Thus, we see these persons, with the most carnal tempers, proceeding to receive the Holy Supper; with the most horrid *selfishness* celebrating an act which was the greatest exhibition of *unselfishness* which the records of eternity contain; with *pride* celebrating the *humility* of an Incarnate God, which the angels wondered at; with *uncharitableness* celebrating the glorious, boundless *love* of God, who spared not to give His life for His enemies. What a practical unbelief in the great object of our Lord's death, did all this demonstrate! His blood was shed for many for the remission of sins, and all were bid to drink of the sacramental cup in pledge of receiving that remission. But these proud Corinthians deemed those who shared the Redeemer's mercy, unfit to share their feast—to have membership in their select church within the church. Thus did they deny, practically, the universal extent of the Redeemer's mercy and atonement, and the whole doctrine of the communion of saints. Add to this their dreadful irreverence—coming to the holy Supper, overwhelmed with meat and drink—drunken! Thus coming to celebrate the sacrifice which was designed to redeem us from such ungodly lusts! Nor is there any reason to suppose that the Apostle uses a hyperbole; on the contrary, he uses language studiously moderate, as any one may see, who reads over this Epistle.

"The excess of riot" to which the pagans had been accustomed, too sadly followed them into the holy enclosure of the Lord; while the Jewish converts had been trained to believe that they *ought* to drink largely at their festivals—four large bowls of wine at the Passover, and at the feast of Purim, to be so drunk (as their Talmud says) that they could not know *blessed be Mordecai, from cursed be Haman*. Such roots of bitterness so soon sprang up in the Eden of the church.

When in such a state men came to the blessed Sacrament, they treated it as common food—ate it with just as little reverence; and this is what the Apostle means by *not discerning the Lord's Body*—the circumstance which constituted their guilt.* *Discern, διακρίνω*, means to set apart, to separate as holy: to make a difference between what is common, and what is sacred. This the Corinthians did not. They mixed up the holy supper with a drunken, disorderly feast.

What I have now endeavoured to describe, is the exact instance of unworthy receiving which the Apostle speaks of in our text. You need not be informed that any thing even distantly like it in outward seeming is impossible amongst us; and I have comfort in thinking it very improbable, that any thing closely like it in inward temper should often exist at this day. So far are we from this danger, that multitudes, out of a mistaken reverence for the Sacrament, never approach it.

Let us next hear and explain what the Apostle says of the *guilt* and *punishment* of unworthy receiving.

"*He shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.*" According to the most obvious meaning of these words,—he who receives the Sacrament in the profane and paganish manner described, shall be guilty of showing a most horrid contempt for that holy institution—a contempt which will most certainly exclude him, like profane Esau, from all hopes of God's blessing, if so great a crime be not thoroughly repented of.

* The critical Editions of the Gr. text of v. 29, omit *ἀναξίως*—and then the ground of condemnation is more simply seen: "For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, if he discern not the Lord's body."

But independently of the irreverence thus directly shewn to our Lord, a further indignity and injury would be done to Him by this profanation of His most sacred ordinance. Unbelievers would be induced to class the holy religion of Christ with the impious worship of the pagan; and, thinking it no holier, would be inclined to reject its claims. Thus would be the Name of God and of Christ be blasphemed, and that in the house of His friends—a result which ever excites His hottest displeasure.

This profanation would approach somewhat to the guilt of open apostasy from Christ, by which those who deny Him are said, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "to crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Irreverence to the symbols of His crucified Body in the Sacrament, bears no very distant proportion to the contumely of the Cross. "Guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord" must, in any sense, be something so fearful, that every Christian would avoid it with the most pious care. Nevertheless, though this guilt were the guilt of literally "crucifying the Lord of Glory," there would still be the possibility of pardon, so long as faith in Him was not utterly renounced, since we know that some of His persecutors and murderers were forgiven.

This guilt is further described in the words "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," in which we have punishment denounced by a general term. Had such an outrageous irreverence been allowed to pass, in the very outset of the Christian religion, without some signal punishment, expressive of the Divine displeasure, no one can conjecture how hurtful might have been the consequences. Accordingly it was heavily punished. This, moreover, had been the method of God in the former dispensation. The first recorded violation of the law of the Sabbath was punished with stoning to death. Nadab and Abihu (the sons of Aaron) for offering strange fire, were devoured by fire sent on them from the Lord,—that the newly ordained service of the Tabernacle might be guarded and preserved in honour. The intruders upon the sacredness of the Ark at Bethshemesh were slain. So was Uzzah, not a Levite, for touching it, though with well-meant zeal. Again, at the very first, to deter men from joining the Christian community through unworthy motives,—such as living upon the common charity,—as

well as to secure respect for the apostolic authority, God smote Ananias and Sapphira with instant death, for their sacrilegious dishonesty and falsehood. The result was according to the Divine intention—"great fear came upon all the church,"—and more than that, "upon as many as heard these things." In like manner did God to those who profaned the Lord's Body. He punished them with visible and bodily plagues; for invisible punishments could reach no farther in their effect than the individual sufferers. And so the Apostle, after mentioning the damnation which unworthy partakers eat and drink, adds in the following verse, by way of explanation, "for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep"—or, *die*, according to the scriptural use of the word *sleep*.

Bodily sickness, and infirmity, and untimely death—these were the punishments or *damnation* which they ate and drank.

How deeply is it to be regretted that this "damnation," heavy as it is, should have been exaggerated by ignorance and fear into the irreversible loss of soul. How many has such a misapprehension deprived of the comfort and blessing of the Sacrament all their days. Let me briefly state, more distinctly than I have yet done, the reasons why the expression of the text cannot mean *eternal damnation*.

1st. Because the original word (*κρίμα*) denotes any infliction whatsoever—any judgment or punishment, and generally of a *temporal* character. Thus St. Peter says, "*κρίμα*, judgment must begin at the house (or church) of God." *Eternal* damnation cannot here be meant; for that is the doom of those who belong not to the house of God. Persecutions and temporal afflictions alone are meant, since in the whole context* the Apostle is speaking of the sufferings which the church was about to endure at the hands of her enemies—fiery sufferings which were to try their faith, † as gold is tried in the furnace; not that they might be consumed for ever, but that they might be purified, and found more worthy of God and of His high approval.

2dly. To suppose that eternal damnation is meant, would wholly destroy the Apostle's argument. The Corinthians, he says, for their profanity, received *κρίμα* (judgment or damnation); and he

* 1 Peter iv. 12—19.

† 1 Peter i. 6, 7.

adds, "When we are *judged*, we are *chastened* of the Lord." This damnation, therefore, is a *chastening*; and can the ever-during loss of the soul be so called, by any abuse of language? *Damnation* hopelessly precludes from all good; *chastening* is a short punishment, designed for the improvement of the subject of it. Thus the Apostle, one would suppose, has completely shut out, by the very words employed, the thought of *everlasting* death. Nay, still more strongly, he declares the intention of this damnation or chastisement to be, "that we should *not* be condemned with the world." Therefore, that Christians may escape that endless punishment (κατάκριμα), which is the doom of the unbelieving world,—these temporal punishments (κρίμα) are sent upon them; and they are, consequently, more a proof of mercy than an act of vengeance.

That the idea of eternal damnation has no place here, further appears most evidently from verse 31—"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." That is, (taking the word judge in its ignorant mis-acceptation,) if we would damn ourselves, we should not be damned—a horrible and nonsensical interpretation. But how reasonable and comfortable its true meaning—If we would treat ourselves with a holy severity, we should not be treated severely by God.

The Translators of our blessed English Bible have been often blamed for employing here a word which has given rise to so mischievous a mistake. But they are not to be blamed. They have used the words *damnation* and *condemnation*, in the passage before us, with scrupulous exactness, according to their signification two hundred and fifty years ago. In this particular instance, that they aimed at such exactness is evident to every scholar. For damnation represents the lighter word in Greek, condemnation the severer—a relation that is now entirely reversed in these two English words. We must therefore blame the mutability of language, not the carelessness or incompetency of our venerable Translators.

I trust that I have now shewn with sufficient clearness, that the vulgar opinion, which makes eternal damnation the proper and inevitable punishment of receiving unworthily, is utterly mistaken, and is directly against the intention of the Apostle's discourse. But yet the penalty threatened is great enough to make us fear;

for, in the language of our Communion Office, which truly expresses the Apostle's meaning, "if we receive unworthily, we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death." And then if we are not amended by His fatherly chastisements, if we are obstinate in our impenitence and irreverent contempt for the mysteries of our salvation,—the paternal rod will be exchanged for the executioner's sword, the refiner's fire for the unquenchable flames, and the death of the body will but prelude the death of both soul and body for ever.

There is little need, I am persuaded, to remind you that though the grossness of Corinthian irreverence is now all but impossible, there are other forms of unworthy receiving which belong to all times. All degrees of that irreverence, unbelief, and uncharitableness which the Corinthians exhibited, are degrees of unworthiness, and bring corresponding guilt, in reference to the Lord's Body. Any deficiency in repentance, faith, charity, and thankfulness, represents proportionately our indisposition and unworthiness; and if we are wholly destitute of these gracious "preparations of the heart" when we partake of the Sacrament, we do, without doubt, partake unworthily; we comport ourselves unbecomingly to the inward part of the mystery, whatever may be the decency or reverence of the outward celebration.

I intend on another occasion to set forth what is requisite to a worthy receiving; but now, to conclude—

Are there any present who have, in years past, been kept back from the reception of this most comfortable Sacrament, and so from fulfilling the law of Christ, by those groundless mispersuasions which I have endeavoured to remove; who yet, it may be, have left God's house Sunday after Sunday, and turned their back upon that ordinance of our Lord, where He Himself is most blessedly present, with many regrets, with sorrow of heart that they could not venture to obey, without adding to the score of disobedience? We pray you, brethren, lay to heart what this day God has caused you to hear for your comfort and joy of faith; that the great Memorial of Mercy, a Saviour's tenderest and most loving approach to us, may no longer be to you a frowning Sinai, muttering but wrath; that as heretofore, with St. John, you have fallen at the

feet of the Son of Man, as one dead—you may henceforth hear Him saying unto you, as He did to that favoured Seer, "Fear not." Let this day end the "agony of wavering thought" which has hitherto racked you, often as you heard the invitation, "Come, for all things are ready"—"Draw near with faith." Will you not even this day thus conclude—

"It is my Maker—dare I stay!

My Saviour—dare I turn away!"

Oh, that God would give our congregations more of that only true reverence which dares not disobey, of the fear that is tempered with faith and hope! And would that habitual Communicants became habituated to a tenderer sense of God's presence; more assimilated to His image, with every occasion of communion with Him; that, with every approach to these overflowing cisterns of grace, they drank larger and more satisfying draughts!

And why should it not be so, brethren? If we starve at the Lord's Banquet, if we grow lean in the midst of Divine abundance—must it not argue some rooted malady of soul, some secret, dangerous perversion? But we bless God, that the penitent, the desiring soul, has here "medicine to heal his sickness," as well as bread to "make fat his bones." Only let us bring the appetite of faith—of faith that believes the reality and desirableness of the things unseen; let us come hungering and thirsting after them, and all must be well. The promise that cannot be falsified is plighted—"we shall be filled."

God grant us evermore such hunger, such satiety, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

SERMON XIV.

OF WORTHY RECEIVING.

I Cor. xi. 27, 28, 29.

“Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s Body.”

IN my last Sermon, on this text, I showed the nature of that particular instance of unworthiness of which the Corinthians had been guilty, and that the punishment of unworthy receiving is not the inevitable loss of the soul. Having thus, I hope, removed some of the chief misapprehensions which keep many amongst us from communicating,—I shall now endeavour, for the guidance of those who are or intend to become Communicants, *the conditions of receiving worthily.*

First of all, it is necessary to bear in mind that the danger of receiving unworthily is no reason at all for entirely and permanently neglecting the Communion. For there is danger in misusing *any* Divine grace or privilege. We cannot sever the gifts of God, whether in nature or grace, from responsibility on our part and the possible guilt of abuse. Neglect of the Sacrament, therefore, is not the proper contrary to the danger of “eating and drinking damnation to ourselves;” but knowledge of our duty, and a pious and diligent care to perform it. Hence the Apostle

did not peremptorily forbid the profane among the Corinthians to come to the Sacrament. For profane men away from the Sacrament are no nearer eternal life than profane men at the Sacrament, though they may be farther from temporal death. But, after warning them of the danger of coming unworthily, he directs—“Let a man *examine himself*, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” Let him prove or try himself, as if by a touchstone; and if he find his mind fitly disposed, then, no matter what his past guilt, let him come.

In all trial, proof, or examination, there must be some standard or rule with which comparison must be made. What is that standard (in the present case) by which we are to try ourselves? by conformity to which our fitness for receiving the Lord's Supper is to be estimated? It can be no other than *the objects of its Institution*. We must therefore examine ourselves faithfully; for the purpose of discovering if we honestly and purely keep those objects in view. And if we embrace and consent to them, if we sincerely aim at prosecuting them—then, it is evident, a correspondence exists between the Sacrament and our souls. And this is the fitness or worthiness “required in those who come to the Lord's Supper.”

Of this worthiness we ourselves are constituted the main judges. For our Lord did not reject Judas from participation in the first supper, but warned him of his danger. St. Paul says, “Let a man examine himself”—and come or not as himself should decide. In like manner our Church excludes none absolutely but the scandalously and openly wicked. She, however, tells them, first to examine themselves, and if they find they are unûit, then to *exclude themselves*, by staying away—“repent you of your sins, or else come not to that Holy Table.”

Now the objects of the Sacrament are the rule by which we are to measure our fitness. They are, briefly—

To be a perpetual Memory of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby; To be a means of communicating those benefits to us; of nourishing us up in living Union with Christ; and To be both an instrument and a demonstration of love and unity amongst Christians.

The tempers and mental acts which correspond with these objects are obviously the preparation required. What they are, our Church has repeated in four several places—three times in the Communion Office, and once in the Catechism.

I shall take them as they are expressed in the Exhortation at the time of the celebration.

(1) "*REPENT you truly for your sins past.*" This is not the occasion to discourse at large of Repentance. It is enough to say, that Repentance is a hearty detestation of our sins, grief for their commission, shame for their pollution, and a faithful warfare of extermination against them.

(2) "*Have a lively and steadfast FAITH in Christ our Saviour.*" Believe that God's eternal Son, in our flesh, died on the cross "*for us men, and for our salvation.*" Believe that His death is an all-sufficient atonement for all the sins of all the world, both original and actual. Believe that it is His great purpose and His gracious desire to bestow remission of sins, through the merits of His most precious blood-shedding, on all who in this faith surrender themselves to Him. Believe that to the penitent and longing soul He *does* grant, as by the great seal of His kingdom, such pardon in this Sacrament, and whatsoever else may be necessary or conducive to our perfection. Believe what He says to our eyes and our ears and our heart in this Sacrament—"Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

(3) "*AMEND your lives, and be in perfect CHARITY with all men.*" Of amendment of life we have spoken in connection with repentance. With it here is conjoined a large and important part of our preparation—"Charity, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God"—Charity, which is the greatest of all the abiding graces of the Church's life—Charity, which is the end and aim of the Commandment—Charity, which is the temper and work of heaven—Charity, in a word, the only temper shared by man by which we can adequately describe the Eternal—which, in its fullest sense, is the most glorious, the most truly divine description of Deity—for "*God is love!*"

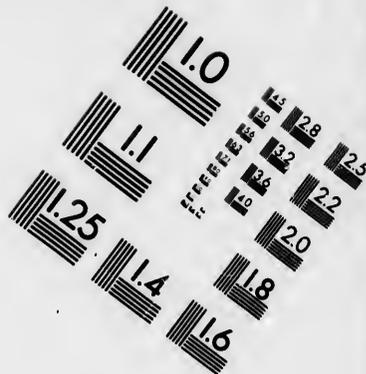
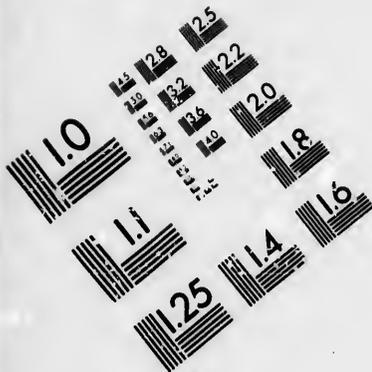
This Charity, which is the salt of every Christian sacrifice, and without which the holiest things turn in our hands into putrefaction,—is a pure, unfeigned, reverential love of God, and, flowing

from that, a hearty affection for all our brethren in Christ. Charity banishes from the heart envy and malice towards our brother, makes us tender of his happiness, and ready to promote it by every means in our power. If he be unkind and injurious to us—yet Charity remembers *he is still a brother*—redeemed of Christ,—and if not for his own sake, yet for our common Father's sake, he is loved and benefitted. Charity remembers the goodness of our Father to us *unworthy*, and will not nicely weigh the merits of a brother before allowing good-will to rest upon him. And, in a less degree, Charity loves all men—our brethren by nature, though not in Christ.

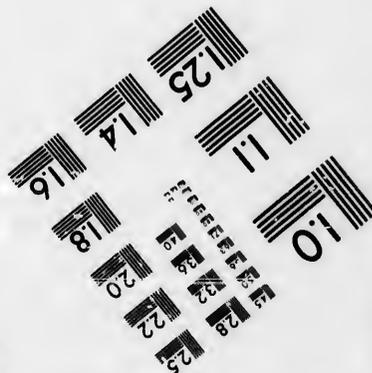
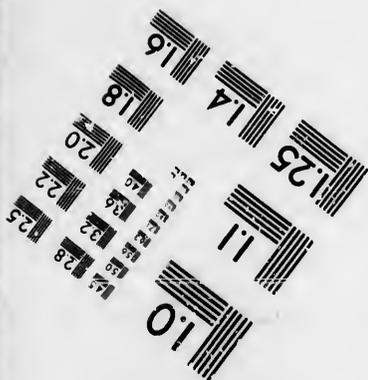
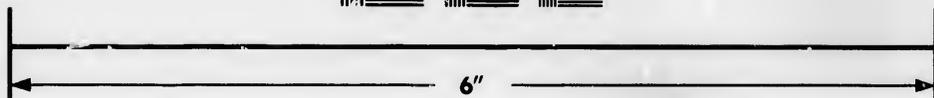
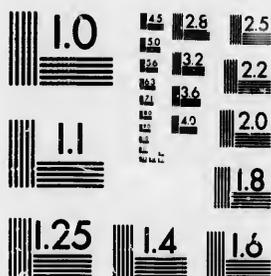
(4) “*And above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty THANKS to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.*” Yes—Thou one God! Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity! Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! most fitting it is, that “at all times, and in all places,” we should give thanks unto Thee; but chiefly are we bound to praise Thee with thankfulness that can never be enough, when we celebrate this blessed Memory of Thy love! We remember, O Lord, that we were miserable sinners, who lay in darkness, and the shadow of death. We remember, O Father, how Thou didst not spare Thine own Son. We remember, O Eternal Son, how Thou didst humble Thyself to the death of the cross, that Thou mightest deliver us from the horrible pit, make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. We remember, O Blessed Spirit, how Thou hast always striven to communicate these blessings to our souls, to unite us to Christ, to conform us to the likeness of our Father above, and fit us for dwelling in His house and in His presence for ever—and we give Thee unutterable thanks, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

It is not without reason, brethren, that the Church says to you, “*above all things*” you must thus give thanks. Such thankfulness is the fitting climax to all other preparation. Without it, our presence at the Communion is an *absurdity* as well as an impiety. The Sacrament is for the *memory* of those glorious benefits—and he who can remember such benefits without thankfulness, has not yet made the first step towards a worthy reception—is at an





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infinite distance from Christ—is infinitely provoking to God—is as yet fit only for that place where there is no love and no thanks—and is to angels and fiends alike an enigma and a wonder! But when you have these qualifications in however small degrees—mark, I say deliberately, *in however small degrees*, provided you *have* them, then God's Church says to you—"So shall ye be meet partakers of these holy mysteries." If repentance, and faith, and charity, and thankfulness to God, are the settled principles of our hearts, and give to our lives their prevailing bent,—then nothing should keep us back from the Sacrament. It is not a sufficient reason for our absence, that as yet these principles have not their full force, that our lives are as yet but imperfectly governed by them. The Sacrament was intended as an aid for such, and to them it will be the chief means of perfecting their weak religion—the religion of *babes* in Christ.

But we are to take good heed that, because God's mercy receives those of imperfect piety to the Holy Sacrament, we do not therefore rest content in our imperfection. We must on every account, and especially out of gratitude, endeavour to go forward, to make continual approaches to the completeness of a true Christian character. The cases in which habitual communicants do not aim at this, the true end of communicating, are, alas, lamentably many—to the great scandal and the great injury of religion. If Christians will come to this holy solemnity, with (or, it may be, *without*) a few pious thoughts, purposes, and prayers, on the morning of the celebration, or the previous day; and then for a whole month are strangers to godly thoughts and emotions, have no solemn abiding impression of God's presence or grace upon their hearts; if they are worldly and undevout in their conversation, and careless in their daily walk,—how is it possible but that religion will be dishonoured? Nay, is there not even a darker picture than that just sketched? Is it a thing unknown among us, for communicants to be bitterly uncharitable in their speeches and behaviour to others? to be audaciously irreverent and profane, debasing themselves to the level of the vulgar swearer, if meeting only a slight provocation? to defile that mouth which has received the Truth, by the words of falsehood? and—to put the cup of hell to those lips which have tasted the cup of Salvation? to stagger with the drunkards in the

way to perdition, instead of walking with the upright in the paths of life? Oh, let me beseech such erring brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to consider what dishonour they do our Lord; what hurt they do the young, the weak, and the unsettled; how much they harden the openly and avowedly irreligious. It is an exceedingly common argument, and deemed an unanswerable one, for not coming to the holy Communion: "I am as good as many who go." Thank God, this is by no means as extensively true as it is confidently used; but yet how great must be the sin of those who give even a slight occasion for it! In great insincerity and perversity of heart is this objection urged, I am convinced; but *were it ever so true, it would not excuse those who urge it—let them mark that!* "For every man must give account of himself to God." For one who has for many years, or a whole lifetime, frequented the holy Communion, or who even occasionally communicates,—to be seen (if no worse, yet) no better than his neighbours, who irreligiously neglect it—cannot but prove a sad stumbling block. In love to such, and in zeal for the Lord's House, I would beseech them to remember the dreadful words of that Lord, "*Woe unto them by whom offences come!*"

But to return—

Let us be thoroughly assured that the least degrees of a *real* piety (where the heart, though in much weakness, resolutely determines for God) will qualify us to come acceptably to the Lord's Table. But let us not suppose that one who is destitute of the *principle* of godliness can come worthily in any other way than by casting away his ungodliness. To dream that "a Week's Preparation" (consisting of religious reading, prayer, forced efforts to feel some compunction, some poor purposes of amendment which there is no purpose to fulfil) is enough for such an one, is a positive insult to religion. It is a libel on the character of the holy God;—as if He could be put off—imposed upon, by mere shadows; as if He could not detect hypocrisy, or—worse still—as if He *required* no more than a mere word and show of homage; as if He did not require "truth in the inward parts." This week's dressing for the Lord's Banquet is more ghastly than would be the adorning of a corpse, with all the pomp of dress, for the brilliant ball-room.

But on the other hand, to suppose that no one must, under any circumstances, come without this preliminary, formal notice and preparation, though an error arising from reverence, is still an error, and one of very wide-spread and hurtful consequence. Where Communion is monthly, or even seldomer, and due notice is had, nothing can be more proper and natural, or more promotive of piety, than careful examination of ourselves, meditation on the Lord's death, and special efforts to revive and fan into strength the flame of sacred devotion. It is but ordinary respect to the Master that, when He makes a feast, we should come in festive attire—"in the beauty of holiness." But since the Sacrament is to be viewed as our necessary bread as well as a Feast,—if we have the wedding garment of habitual religion, we must not refuse to partake, though it want special adorning. Remember—the necessity of special preparation is not *absolute*, but only *prudent*. If you have this habitual preparation, which consists in the godly tenor of every-day life—come; even on sudden and unforeseen occasions. If you are *sure* that you have it not, you must undoubtedly stay away till you repent and amend. You must not come at Christmas or Easter (as some think they may do),—you must not come at all.

But take the middle case, which (I apprehend) is no uncommon one among a large number of constant, attentive, and apparently devout worshippers in our congregations, whose lives too are careful and conscientious. They are sure they are not profane, but they are uncomfortably uncertain whether they have that degree of faith, repentance, charity, which will fit them to communicate worthily. They wish to do so—they have a high estimate of the blessings of the Sacrament, but doubt keeps them back. Is this case incurable? God forbid! Let such pray earnestly for light from above. Let them seek His guidance who leads into all the Truth. Let them examine themselves honestly. Let them be faithful to their measure of light, and the perfect day will ere long shine on their path, and enable them to avoid the obstacles which the darkness alone made dangerous. But if, through infirmity or ignorance, doubt and discomfort still remain, so that they cannot come to the Holy Communion with a quiet conscience—for even this unhappiness a help is graciously provided in the Church of

God. Such are permitted and invited to come to their own spiritual guide, or to any learned and discreet minister of God's word, and open their grief—so that if it be only groundless scruples or ignorant apprehensions that trouble them, and not downright impenitence, their conscience may be quieted, and their scruples and doubtfulness removed, by the ministry of God's word, conferring the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice. Thus shall they come with comfort to the Table of their Lord—the God of their joy and gladness.

I candidly confess I know not how to account for the neglect of this help, by those who profess that uncertainty as to their fitness is the cause of their absence from the Lord's Table. There is a supposition which would explain the neglect, but which I am most unwilling to make, namely, that they are not sincere. In matters of worldly consequence, where great interests are at stake, and the removal of a doubt would admit to important privileges, no stone is left unturned to get at the truth. Why then should not Christians, who doubt their fitness for the Sacrament, and *cannot* settle this matter for themselves, have recourse to the *help* (for it can be but the *help*) of those whose very office it is to minister this aid, who do this by a Divine commission, and who have the promise of the special presence and assistance of Christ in this work?

To assist your memory, I would here briefly repeat the warnings needed on both sides. Let those who come without preparation, who never employ a thought upon the inquiry whether they are fit or not, who rush into the banqueting house and sit down at the table of the Lord with a rude familiarity—let such be assured that their presumption will meet with the repulse it deserves. But let those who allow their thoughts to dwell exclusively on the danger of such irreverence, beware lest hereby the devil take occasion to obscure fatally their views of the paternal character of God. They have need to beware lest that arch-sophist delude them into the apprehension that their Father in Heaven has no bowels of mercies towards His redeemed children, that He intends His Table to be to the weak and imperfect, what the table of the wicked is to them—a snare and a trap to draw them to destruction. Do not too many talk and act as if this notion had already pos-

essed them—than which what could be more horrid? O, be persuaded rather, that this table is spread in love, to feed the hungry, to assure the repentant prodigal, to help the weak, to enlighten the eyes of those who are fainting in the way—to be the declaration of all the love of a Father's heart to unworthy but yet trusting children.

I shall conclude with a few remarks addressed to those who have all their lives kept from the Sacrament on the plea of unworthiness, who are making no effort to remove this plea, and who yet have (it may be, with some conscience) very regularly attended the public preaching of the Word, and the public prayers of the Church. *Evidently* they must have thought they could worthily hear and pray, or, we are bound to believe, the same scrupulousness which keeps them from the Sacrament would keep them from these as well. But how great, how shocking a mistake is theirs! The man who is destitute of repentance, faith, charity, is an unworthy communicant—and he is just as unworthy a worshipper in our public assemblies. What! is he a worthy hearer of the Blessed Gospel, who does not *believe* it? Is he worthy to say *Our Father*, who has no *love* to the brethren? Is he worthy to be heard when he prays *forgive us our trespasses*, who does not *repent* of—does not cease to love and repeat his trespasses? Is that hymn of praise and thanksgiving worthy to rise up and mingle with the anthems of angels, and be accepted of the glorious God, which proceeds from the lips of him in whose heart is not a spark of genuine gratitude? We should rather think, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not even *hear* me”—any more than He will accept me as a worthy communicant.

Let none, then, vainly suppose that God will accept unholy prayers, while He rejects the unholy from His Table. Let no one suppose that a life-long observance of one Divine institution will profit, while a still more solemn one is disobediently slighted. Let none, out of a mocking pretence of reverence, defraud God of the obedience which He claims. And let all remember, that if he who “eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself” (even though we take that damnation in its heaviest sense); just as surely does he who eats not at all ensure his spiritual death—first, by *disobedience*, and secondly, by the *very*

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force of the Law of Life—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

SERMON XV.

THE DUTY OF FREQUENTLY COMMUNICATING.

1 Cor. xi. 26.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till He come.”

HAVING in five preceding Sermons on the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper treated of those points which are of prime importance to every Christian, I shall conclude this short series by setting before you, in the present discourse, the bounden duty of a *frequent reception*.

This duty rests upon two chief grounds—

1. The Character of the Sacramental Rite in its several parts; and
2. The Institution of Christ, the supreme Lawgiver of the Church.

I. The Character of the Sacramental Rite in its several parts. That there should be solemn assemblies for the public worship of God, no Christian denies, and therefore it does not come into dispute. If, then, we find in the celebration of the Sacrament all the acts of worship which are deemed essential in public assemblies, and those acts having an additional aid and heightening in the Sacrament, we shall have at once an irresistible argument for the frequency of Communion and their reception.

For those acts we need not search far. For

1. *Confession of sins* is indispensable in the public assemblies of the Church, and in our own offices comes first in order. Now, we

have confession in the Communion rite—nor was there ever a Communion Office of the Catholic Church without it. I lay no stress upon the fact, that the form with us appropriated to the Sacrament, is much more solemn than that in the Daily Prayer (for they might be made arbitrarily to change places); but it is of the highest moment to consider, that the barest celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's death implies a confession necessarily—is an *acted* confession.

By celebrating a Sacrifice for sins, and by sharing the Memorial of it, we acknowledge that we are sinners, and need and desire "remission." By thus acknowledging the death of Christ *for* us, we admit ourselves *worthy* of death, and *doomed* to death for sin. Thus also is the demerit of sin fully declared. And since the rite of celebration calls up a mighty train of remembrances of the most moving character—the most calculated to beget the very spirit of confession; gathering round the cross the sin of the world, and picturing in that scene its history from its beginning to its end; awing the soul by the most alarming demonstration of God's indignation against sin, and melting it by the most amazing assurances of His love;—surely it must be believed that the Sacrament is the most suitable occasion for confession, and is itself the most real act of confession. In this Sacrament we acknowledge our sins, and lay them on the head of that holy Victim—the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

2. *Prayer* is another essential of public worship. And what is the Sacrament but a *ritual prayer*—a more solemn form of beseeching God? What were the sacrifices of the Old Law but rites of prayer, by which the worshippers intended to supplicate God? Was not the Sacrifice of Christ on the cross a *prayer*—a meritorious prayer, by which pardon was asked and obtained for sinners? Is it not in the strength of that prayer, that we have courage now to address an offended God? In the mental ejaculation, in the outpourings of the closet, in the Litany of the Congregation—is it not that great Prayer of Sacrifice that gives us "boldness and access with confidence?" "The Blood of the Lord!" What would our prayers be without *that*? What, but presumption. And if pleading thus *in our own words* be effectual—if "through Jesus Christ, our Lord" secure acceptance; how much more shall we

prevail in the conjunction of our own words and that Act which the Lord appointed as the perpetual Memorial of His effectual Prayer. Hence, too, the Sacrament is called an *impetrative sacrifice*—that is, that obtains from God by prayer. Because Christians forget this, and degrade the Sacrament into a mere *recollection* of the death of Christ, they think not of celebrating it as a means of effectually imploring God for such blessings as they require. This very week I have seen it stated, in a religious newspaper, that it would be utterly unsuitable and absurd to celebrate the Communion at those meetings for prayer held lately, “to supplicate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” As if, where *union* is at all times pre-eminently necessary,* the Sacrament of Union were improper! As if, when the highest gift is asked, the most solemn mode of asking were not indispensably proper! Temporal blessings were sought (and rightly) in olden times through this solemn intercession. How much more should spiritual, since the Sacrament itself is the Church’s and the Christian’s great Prayer.

3. Is *Thanksgiving* a necessary part of all service done to God? Behold it here in its earthly perfection. Where and when else is so gratefully, so triumphantly sung—“We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee?” Is not *Eucharist*—*Thanksgiving*—one of the best known, as it is one of the most ancient, names for this holy Sacrament?

Where the most illustrious displays of divine benignity are made, and the most certain “pledges” and “assurances” of our interest in it are given us; “the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving” must surely be most pure and precious, as well as most timely. Oh, would to God we saw more of those Eucharists! that there were not such a dreary dearth of praise! such a proof of our little gratitude, our little sense of obligation!

4. Again. Does all devotion imply in its very name the *offering of sacrifice to God*—devoting to Him? Most specially, most expressly is it done here. We dedicate our substance in alms; “and *here* we offer and present unto God ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him.” What more can we offer? What more have we to offer? And is this likely to be done at any time so utterly as when we see with

* Matt. xviii. 19.

the most aided faith and in a divine representation, the Lord giving Himself for us; the Father giving His Son to us, and "with Him freely giving us all things"—yea, even our very selves?

5. Is *Preaching* an important object of public assemblies? In the Sacrament is the plainest, the most powerful, the truest, and most touching of all preaching. Preaching is, strictly, the setting forth, the proclaiming of divine mercy to sinners, through the perfect Sacrifice of our Lord—His offering of Himself to justice in our behalf.—Where is, where can that proclamation be so plainly, so affectingly made, as in the Sacrament? If Christ crucified be the great theme of Christian preaching—then "He is here before our eyes evidently set forth crucified among us." What preaching so softens the heart, so kindles devotion, so stamps every tone and feature with awe, so thaws the fountains of joy or penitence, as those blessed words, "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee"—"The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee?"

For many centuries, where there was very little preaching but that of the Sacrament, Christianity was kept alive; but where there are harangues from the pulpit, without this great Preaching Act, it is not prophecy which says that faith in a crucified Lord will die, but *history*. Nor is it at all too much to say, That the little band which, in the face of the world's desertion and contempt, celebrates the Sacrament of the Lord's death, does more to keep alive in the world the memory of that fact, and faith in its power, than eloquent preachers and their crowded auditories, where the Sacrament is put aside. Our text implies all this. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death"—*καταγγέλλετε*—*announce, declare, publish*; and in the *completest* manner, too, as the composition of the Greek word denotes. Elsewhere we translate it *preach*, as in St. Paul's words, "Be it known unto you, that through this Man is *preached* unto you the forgiveness of sins." The Sacrament, therefore, is emphatically a Preaching of the Lord's death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

You see, Brethren, that this holy Celebration comprises all the acts deemed essential in assemblies for the service of God—

Confession of sins, Prayers, Thanksgivings, the Offering of Sacrifice, and Preaching; and that with rites of special ordination and higher solemnity, and with circumstances of heightened devotion. Can you then doubt the benefit of *Frequent* Receiving? If it be both reason and duty, to employ the aptest and most efficacious means for accomplishing a great end, then are we most sacredly bound to celebrate this Sacrament with *frequency*, to *hunger and thirst* after this celestial food.

II. The second and all-sufficient argument for what I am now urging, is the *Institution* of Christ. He is the supreme Lawgiver, not bound to give a reason for His institutions to any, and it is by obedience to Him that our character as Christians is to be determined. God has always tested men's faith and obedience by *positive* institutions; and they are a natural and necessary test. For, in regard to those laws and institutions the full grounds of which we suppose ourselves to understand, (and which are therefore called *moral*,) our own reason furnishes us with some arguments for obedience—an obedience which may be as much paid to our reason as to God; but in a matter of *positive* institution, obedience is wholly of faith—it is a sacrifice to God of the best we have, our *will* and our *reason*.

We now inquire what bearing the Institution of this Sacrament by our Lord has on the duty of frequent reception.

1. It was "ordained (our Church Catechism says) for the *continual remembrance* of the Sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby;" and in the prayer of Consecration, similarly, it is said that God "hath commanded us to continue a *perpetual* memory of His precious death, until His coming again." Now *continual* and *perpetual* mean *unbroken, uninterrupted, without ceasing*. Can a yearly, or a quarterly, or even a monthly commemoration be deemed such, in the natural signification of those words? We are commanded to pray *without ceasing*. Would a monthly prayer fulfil such a command? Such huge gaps as now exist between our Communion, can hardly consist with *perpetual* memory—they are much more likely to allow a perpetual forgetfulness.

The language of the Old Testament, respecting the rites of divine worship, throws light on the force of the word *continual*

employed by our Church. Two lambs were ordained by God to be offered daily—one in the morning, and one in the evening; intended, doubtless, to typify perpetually to His people "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Now the phrase which was early appropriated to this rite, and which remained in use to the end, was "the *continual sacrifice*."*

Was the Actual Sacrifice of the Lamb of God worthy of a *daily*—a *double* daily prefiguration, and is it not worthy of, at least, a *weekly* commemoration? † Surely anything seldomer than the grand stated days and occasions of the most numerous assemblies, comes up neither to the force of the word "continual," the meaning of the types, the importance of the Sacrifice commemorated, the necessities of our spiritual life, nor the prompt and thankful remembrance which befits the obligation of a Christian to his Redeemer.

2. But, again, this is *the only rite of public, united worship ordained by our Lord*, and therefore it is the only really *distinctive* rite of *Christian* worship. Prayer and praise will not distinguish us from Jews, Mohammedans, or even pagans. Neither will moral instruction. It is true, the use of the Lord's prayer and the Name of Jesus Christ would make a distinction. Yet neither would be a visible "sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men might be discerned from others that be not christened." And can we suppose, that while the people of God in all former dispensations were taught how to approach Him in rites of acceptable worship—so necessary for the unity of the Church in a world of sin and disorder—that the Lord Jesus would leave His Church without such prescribed mode of access? No, He did not—this holy Sacrament is His prescribed mode; and—hear it, ye neglectful Christians, and tremble! those who have wilfully neglected it, have

* Ex. xxix. 42; Numb. xxviii. xxix; Ezra iii. 5; Nehem. x. 33.

† It may be said, Why not a *daily* Communion, as the type seems to indicate? In reality it does not, I think, indicate this. On the Sabbath the sacrifices were *double* the daily one (Numb. 28: 9, 10)—which arrangement may well correspond with the Sunday Eucharist; while the diminished daily sacrifice would be represented by the Church's Daily Prayer—the continuation of the Sunday Eucharistic worship. One thing is certain, that nothing short of Sunday Communion and Daily Prayer can fulfil the types of the Law.

never offered to God a truly and distinctively Christian act of public homage!

In sacraments only have we pledges and assurances of God's working. By the Sacrament of Baptism He puts us in a position to say "the children's" prayer—"Our Father;" and, without this, our joining in the prayers of the Church for a whole life, would be a horrible anomaly—a miserable nonsense. By the other Sacrament does He establish and continue this union with the Body; and it is only by virtue of this union that we have a right to participate in the prayers and sacrifices and hope of the Body. While therefore we neglect to maintain our Communion with the Body, we are rendering ourselves unworthy of it, we are incapacitating ourselves for it, and we disqualify ourselves for any part in its holy Services to God. It is only as members of the Body, and not *merely* as individuals, that we can draw near to God, and find Christ a Saviour and Intercessor; for "He is the Saviour of the Body." It is only as He comes to us in His own way that we can "touch" our Lord—either to derive "virtue" or to offer homage. The ordinary and occasional services and prayers of the Church, therefore, are but the maintenance and continuance of this Communion with our Lord, the extension of the Eucharistic—the distinctively Christian worship. And were the Eucharist wholly thrown aside, those ordinary acts of worship would cease to have any truly Christian character—the ground of them being removed; and in the same proportion as the Eucharist is laid aside, ordinary worship ceases to be Christian.

If there be any truth in all this, one inference is inevitable, and that is—that the public worship of God, as it is conducted in most parts of the Christian Church in the present day, *labours under a grievous defect.*

3. That such a defect really exists, approaching to a species of apostasy, the notices of the original practice in the apostolical and primitive times will demonstrate. That the Eucharist was celebrated by the Apostles daily, and that too, according to the Divine intention, has been the opinion of most Christian* divines for many

* As a specimen, let the following divines, who were most thoroughly conversant with Christian antiquity, suffice: *Suicer. Thea. Eccles. s. v.*

[ὁμολογίαι,

centuries past throughout the world, and especially in our own Church; and even those who deny* the fact, yet admit that such is the general impression. On the *daily* celebration, therefore, in the Apostles' days, since it is not *absolutely* certain, I build nothing. But that the Sacrament was celebrated on *Sundays*, from the beginning, as an essential part of the Church's public devotions—there is neither dispute, nor doubt, nor gainsaying. Nothing in Christianity is more certain, or agreed upon.† The Church's conviction has imprinted itself for ever in the name by which the Communion Office was called—*ἡ λειτουργία*—*The Liturgy*, or *Divine Service*. The lessons from Scripture and the preaching, which, to a greater or less extent, always accompanied the celebration, were accounted edifying and important adjuncts; but they had not, as now unhappily is the case, engrossed the name of the Liturgy or Divine Service, and usurped its place. Now the Holy Communion is the occasional circumstance; its ancient appendages are now the Liturgy. That word, so often in our mouth, is a solemn rebuke of our apostasy.

How are we instructed and rebuked, also, by the simple narrative of holy Scripture: St. Paul and St. Luke were staying for seven days at Troas; "and (St. Luke narrates †) upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to *break bread*, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." The celebration of the Holy Communion, denoted here by the breaking of bread, was the work for which they assembled; and this is the more striking when a great and venerable apostle was to preach his last to them. Good and glorious as was his preaching, it was not to hear it they assembled. Even St. Paul's preaching is but an inferior thing where his Lord's death is to be declared

συναΐς, vi. 2. *Thorndike*, *The Right of the Church in a Christian State*, chap. iii. p. 90; Ed. of 1841. *Jer. Taylor*, *Worthy Communicant*, chap. v. sect. iv. question iii. 1.

* *Eg.* Mr. Freeman, in his *Principles of Divine Service*.

† *Bingham*, *Antiquities* B. xv. chap. ix., is full and sufficient; and will be likely to lead most readers to a disbelief of the *daily* celebration in the Apostolical times. That was the *varying* exception—Sunday celebration the sacred and inviolable rule.

‡ Acts xx. 6, 7.

in the Lord's own way. St. Paul would be the last to let his own preaching jostle aside the Lord's Sacrament.

The evidence of the Sunday celebration grows more decided and abundant within a few years. In the beginning of the second century we find a Roman governor informing his imperial master, from the voluntary and extorted confessions of Christians, that (as the whole sum of their guilt) they were used to meet before light on a stated day, (doubtless Sunday,) and sing a hymn to Christ as God, and bind themselves by a *Sacrament* against the commission of any sort of wickedness. Persecution could not stop them from this; for it was to avoid persecution that they secretly held their assemblies before day-light.

Justin Martyr,* in the middle of this century, describes the Sunday Service of the Church: "All who dwell in towns or country assemble together; the Scriptures are read; the president (either the bishop or presbyter) makes a sermon or exhortation; prayers are said; bread and wine are consecrated, and received by *every one* present; while a portion is sent to the absent—the sick or the otherwise inevitably detained—by the hands of deacons." Here again we perceive how the Eucharist was the *Liturgy* of the Church, and what an anxiety was manifested that not one Christian should be without a share in it.

Ample evidence also exists that the Eucharist was celebrated three or four times in the week, besides festival days, in various parts of the Church, throughout the East and West, and in some parts *daily*, within the first three centuries; while, from the earliest times, the Church allowed none but penitents (that is, those who were under public censure and discipline) to omit the Sunday celebration, under the heavy penalty of excommunication.

The unvarying practice of the Church in *Sunday* Communion must strike us the more forcibly in contrast with the considerable diversity which existed in week-day celebration.

Now, I ask, can the nearly universal departure from the practice of the apostolical and primitive Church, the neglect of the *one* distinctively Christian ordinance of public worship, be regarded as anything short of a grievous apostasy from Christ, a serious corruption of His religion? Can it be wondered at that all the talk-

* 2d Apology, § 87.

ing and preaching and bustle about reformation should end in such miserable results, so long as men "speak not a word about bringing the King back"—so long as they contentedly neglect the chief legacy and institution of Christ, their Saviour?

With the majority of Protestant sects the Sunday Eucharist has dwindled into an *annual* or *quarterly* one. Among ourselves few think of anything beyond a *monthly* reception. And though in the Romish Church there is a Sunday mass, yet that mass is only a private reception by the priest, while the people ordinarily communicate but once a year, and ther of a mutilated Sacrament.

Here I may suitably observe, that *private masses*, one of the worst corruptions of the Romish Church, took their rise in that very course of neglect, of which most of you, my hearers, are guilty. For the Sacrament was continually celebrated on Sunday, from a sense of the apostasy implied in abandoning it; while, as faith decayed, communicants decreased in numbers, till the priest was left alone: and then, in evil days, the gift of life degenerated into a rite of superstition, and was perverted into an engine of even filthy lucre. See what neglect, similar to yours, has wrought! Consider its guilt.

It is not likely that the same result will or can be brought about in our own Church, with the warnings of the past before us; but another, no less anti-Christian, must occur, without our amendment. As in the one case, the *priest* engrosses the whole worship of God; so in the other, the tendency is to give all to the *preacher*. Thank God, in our truly Catholic Church there are checks on this, but the *tendency* is none the less certain; while, among the sects, that tendency has produced its legitimate result—human inventions, no less human than the devices of Popery, have wholly supplanted the pure worship of God. The Almighty, rejecting the corrupted and dishonoured rites of the old law,* declares the evangelical worship which should be offered to Him in Christian times by "the holy Church throughout all the world:" "From the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering: for My Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of

* Mal. i. 10, 11.

Hosts." This "incense" and this "pure offering," by which it is the will of God His great name should be universally honoured and celebrated, are, according to the unanimous interpretation of the Catholic Church, *holy prayers and the holy Eucharist*. Alas, that any who profess themselves zealous for the faith of Christ, and who value the faithful preaching of it, should neglect, and further the neglect of the Sacrament! Can there be any way of preaching Christ so effectual as that which Himself ordained for declaring His death?

4. Consider also another danger which this neglect incurs—*losing the lively faith of the Lord's Second Coming*. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death—*till He come!*" This Sacrament, you see, connects the beginning and the end of the Christian Dispensation together. It acts as a mighty *bond*—and without it, does not Christianity fall asunder? The Lord, by this Sacrament, would not only keep us in mind of His death, but direct our thoughts continually to His reappearing, the consummation of His glorious designs. He would hereby keep Himself for ever present to and with us. "Whatever (says a pious Commentator*) we seem to lose by the departure of Christ, is repaid us, as if by a sort of equivalent, in the holy Supper; so that from the departure of the Lord out of the sight of believers, unto His visible and glorious Advent, we yet have Him whom, meantime, we see not. '*What was visible of our Redeemer,*' says St. Leo the Great, '*has passed into the Sacraments.*'"

We should be thankful for the testimony which the English Church bears to primitive practice, as well as to the primitive doctrine of the Eucharist. "The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, to be used at the ministration of the holy Communion, throughout the year,"† indicate her desire of conformity to the ancient standard. Also the Proper Prefaces, in the Communion Office, for certain important festivals, and *eight days after*, show that she contemplates the continued celebration of the Sacrament. Then, there is her solemn injunction ‡ (alas, how despised by her own

* Bengel, in 1 Cor. xi. 26.

† Table of Contents of the Prayer Book.

‡ Rubric in Com. Office.

ungrateful children!) that "every parishioner shall communicate at least three times every year, of which Easter to be one." Now that each might communicate so often, would require a much more frequent celebration than three times—as a variety of circumstances would be sure to hinder many on those three occasions.

Then, in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, all priests and deacons are bound to receive every Sunday *at the least*.*

Then, she encourages the reception of the Communion on the more important occasions of life, as Marriage and the Churching of women—or soon after, by the persons concerned.

On some occasions the Communion is enjoined, as Ordinations to all degrees, and the Consecration of the Sovereign.

Following her better instincts, too, without the stimulus of law, † we find the Communion celebrated on all occasions of special or general interest in our Church. And, thank God, the time has never been when we had not a goodly number of even weekly celebrations, in every part of the Church. ‡

My brethren, we can all do something for God and His Church—for the revival of religion, by amending our own neglects. Let us use to the full the small opportunities which we now possess; but let us not be content with them—with nothing less than the Church's first standard, which is Christ's appointment. Remember there is nothing in reason, nothing in Scripture, that erects *monthly* Communion into a rule, any more than the annual Communion, which Calvin (perhaps not so untruly) denominated "a device of the devil." If we are to follow a rule at all, let it be the rule given by Christ, our Ruler, and followed so long by His undefiled Bride. What that rule is, enough has been said to shew.

But if a weekly celebration and reception is the rule of the Christian Church, what shall we say of those who never commu-

* Rubric in Com. Office.

† "The laws of the Church must be his least measure. The custom of the Church may be his usual measure; but if he be a devout person, the spirit of devotion will be his certain measure," *Jer. Taylor's Worthy Communicant*.

‡ In an ill time, and by a person whose admirers of the present day would hardly suspect of it, a weekly Communion was begun and maintained in London—I mean the well-known Mr. Romaine.

nicate at all? Surely, their danger must be great! and it is great, experience testifies it as well as the Word of God.

I would alarm the neglectors of the Communion among you, by the danger of what I have so often seen myself—not merely the danger of hardness of heart and contempt of this holy Commandment delivered to us, but of superstitious repugnance, of invincible unwillingness at the last—instances which I really shudder to think of. I know many, many, many at this time of the very oldest people in the Mission, who never have received the Communion, and who most probably (I might almost say, certainly) never will. “They (said the greatest master of Holy Living in our Church*) that delay their Communion that they may be surer, do very well, provided that they do not stay too long; that is, that their fear do not turn to timorousness, their religion do not change into superstition; their distrust of themselves into a jealousy of God; their apprehension of the greatness of their sin into a secret diffidence [distrust] of the greatness of the Divine mercy.”

One word respecting the only objection that has a shadow of plausibility—namely, that *such frequent reception would beget irreverence*. Are there any so made irreverent? Let not such receive at all; for surely *their* hearts must be wholly wrong, who grow profane by their admission to the shrine of the temple—in whom life turns into death.

If this objection be of *real* force, we should pray little, and hear little of God. No, no! Where there is a spark of grace, it is communion with God through prayer, and His word, and the Sacrament that awes as well as consoles and purifies the spirit; and, as we try to catch a glimpse of the brightness of mingled majesty and mercy, the more abased do we fall before it.

It is not indeed to be denied that there is danger of irreverence. It is inseparable from that gracious nearness to God, to which, in Christ, it is our awful privilege to be admitted. But it is part of our trial, and it is even highly valuable as a constant stimulus to watchfulness and attention.

May it please the all-merciful Saviour to visit His fallen Church; to awaken or chastise her into repentance and doing her first works; to kindle within her bosom such love to her glorious Lord, that

* *Jer. Taylor*, Worthy Communicant, chap. v. sect. iv. quest. i.

Serm. XV.

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Serm. XV.] THE DUTY OF FREQUENTLY COMMUNICATING. 185

she may again rejoice to shew forth His death, and triumph in the hope of His Second Coming, when, without spot or wrinkle, she shall bear His perfect image, and be exalted from sharing His sufferings to a participation of His throne for ever. Amen.

SERMON XVI.

“ NUNC DIMITTIS. ”

(The Season of the Epiphany.—Leeds, Megantic, 1857.)

ST. LUKE ii. 29, 30, 31, 32.

“ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word :

“ For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation,

“ Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people ;

“ A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of Thy people Israel.”

I AM sure that you must all feel, brethren, whether you understand the full grounds of the feeling or not, that this portion of Holy Scripture is of more than usual importance, from the place which it occupies in the public worship of our church, and which it has always occupied in the liturgies of the universal church, whether reformed or unreformed, from the remotest times. The place moreover which it holds, and the manner in which it is introduced in the sacred narrative, seem designed by the Holy Ghost to show how instructive, and profitable, and comfortable it would be for the people of God, as long as the Scriptures should continue to be used at all in this world.

“ *Behold,*” says the Evangelist, to arrest our attention—“ behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon ; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel : and the Holy Ghost was upon him.” This exordium might well prepare us for something of consequence : and is it not of conse-

quence to hear anything relating to a saint of so exalted a character, and so dear to God? "And it was revealed unto him *by the Holy Ghost*, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms," and burst forth in this glad hymn of devout thanksgiving, which the church has ever since sung with a holy exultation, and in which many of the saints of every age have offered up their souls to God.

The hymn declares briefly but clearly the object of the Saviour's mission—"to be a *Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of His people Israel.*" And hence it is that the Christian church (which has been as yet well nigh wholly Gentile) loves to repeat perpetually this first Gospel prophecy of the call of the Gentiles, this first explicit declaration of the New Testament, that the salvation of God was for "*all peoples.*"

This subject may well claim our attention during the present holy season, which is dedicated to the perpetual memory of the calling of the Gentiles. Accordingly, the manifestation of Christ to the wise men from the East, as a symbolical declaration of the gracious purposes of God towards the Gentile world, leads the way in the church's Epiphany celebrations. And since the Song of Simeon translates the Symbol into such divine and glorious words, how can we more suitably or profitably employ ourselves, than in the reverent study of their meaning, in all its fulness of development? To this study I would now invite your attention.

It is observable, that we are indebted to St. Luke alone for those three inspired hymns which are incorporated into the Church's public devotions—viz., that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that of Zachariah, and Simeon's. The three are evidently related to one another, and should be studied in connexion. In fact they are composed in a striking gradation, and form a progressive development of the Divine truth and counsels. Mary's is first, and is *personal*—like Hannah's; she magnifies the mercies of God to herself: Zachariah's is *national*, on the model of the Psalms, and commemorates the loving kindness of the Lord to Israel: but Simeon's most resembles the prophecies of Isaiah, from which, as I shall shew you presently, he draws his very words and expres-

sions; it is therefore *Catholic*, proclaiming, like the evangelical prophet, not only glory for Israel, but light for the Gentiles—salvation for all peoples—the love of God to the whole human race.

It is the general opinion that St. Luke wrote his gospel for the special use of the Gentile converts. Hence he delights to record every word and event that could declare God's purposes of mercy to them, and that tended to elevate them to a firm confidence in their high calling. It coincided, therefore, with his sacred design, to relate for their comfort, and for the consolation of the Church for ever, this utterance of inspired Simeon, which, though brief in extent, condenses all the glorious predictions of Israel's prophets, and which would, for every pious Jew, flash them past the eye of faith and memory in quick and glittering processions. The mask of rabbinical glosses is pulled off, and the prophets of the Old Testament, read in their first evangelical interpretation, proclaim the Christ as the common Saviour of all mankind.

The *terms* which Simeon employs are all drawn from Holy Scripture, as would naturally be the case with every pious Jew. But, as I before said, it is from the prophet Isaiah that he chooses them. It will be manifest, therefore, that it is especially to the prophet Isaiah that we are to look for the explanation of the terms of this divine hymn.

First, then, the term *salvation* contains the subject of the song. *The salvation of God*, in general, means any deliverance wrought by God for His people; but it has also a more restricted sense, being regularly employed to express that great spiritual deliverance which the Messiah was to accomplish; and, though an abstract noun, is applied to the very *person* of our Saviour. In this sense it is used in the text. "*Thy Salvation*" is Christ Himself, the incarnate Saviour in Simeon's arms, as appears from the context. "It was revealed unto Simeon by the Holy Ghost, that he should not *see death*, before he had *seen the Lord's Christ*." It is in reference to the letter of this promise that he says, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant *depart* in peace, for mine eyes have seen *Thy Salvation*."

This use of the word *Salvation* is very ancient. Thus we find Jacob, in the prophetic blessing of his children before his death,

suddenly exclaiming—"I have waited for *Thy Salvation*, O Lord!" And in those Psalms which are used, like the *Nunc dimittis*, after the Lessons in the evening—and which are used for *this very reason*, that they are identical with the *Nunc dimittis* in subject, setting forth the purposes of Divine love to all our race—we find the Saviour of the world spoken of in the very words of Simeon. In the 98th Psalm :

"The Lord declared *His Salvation* :

His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
He hath remembered His mercy and truth toward the house of Israel:
And all the ends of the earth have seen *the Salvation of our God.*"

In the 67th Psalm :

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us,
And shew us the light of His countenance, and be merciful unto us:
That Thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy *saving health* (or *Salvation*) unto *all nations.*"

In these Psalms are prophetically exhibited the *Saviour* of the world, and the universal spread of His gospel. Again, in the 85th, a Christmas-day Psalm, especially predictive of Christ, we have :

"His *Salvation* is nigh them that fear Him ;
That *glory* may dwell in our land."

But most frequent and emphatic is Isaiah's use of the term :

"And it shall be said in that day,
Lo, this is our God ;
We have waited for Him, and He will save us :
This is the Lord ; we have waited for Him ;
We will be glad, and rejoice in His *Salvation.*"—xxv. 9.

"Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness :
Let the earth open, and let them bring forth *Salvation*,
And let righteousness spring up together."—xiv. 8.

"Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world,
Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy *Salvation* cometh ;
Behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him."—lxii. 11.

These quotations, out of many that might be made, are enough. Jacob's fervent exclamation, the prophet's animating predictions,

find fulfilment in Simeon. "He was, (we read,) "in that day, waiting for the Consolation of Israel"—he saw It and was glad.

"Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem:

For the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations
(or Gentiles);

And all the ends of the earth shall see the SALVATION of our God."—lil. 9, 10.

These were the glowing visions on which the heart of Simeon had long loved to dwell, which nourished his vigorous faith, which kindled his longing desires, and fitted him for that instance of Divine favour—the promise that ere he died he should see with his bodily eyes, what by faith he had so long loved to contemplate. By the impulse of the Holy Ghost, he came into the temple at the very instant that Christ was being presented by His mother, according to the law, and he takes Him in his arms. Never sight so welcome met mortal eyes, since the new-formed world glowed in the freshness of its beauty and lustre upon the gaze of its first beholder. The hopes, the wishes, the aspirations of four thousand years were met in Simeon, and in the Babe he embraced found at length their object. Oh, we can but faintly conceive with what rapture was beheld that Blessed Deliverer, who, as a vision of heaven, had for forty centuries floated before the entranced imagination of prophets, and filled every pious soul with ecstatic hope! How natural is the Saint's abruptness—"Now Thou dismisses Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace! for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation." Like as Israel said to Joseph in Egypt—"Let me now die, since I have seen thy face." He not only saw with his eyes, but embraced in his arms, the Word of Life, Him who had created the world, and was come to redeem it; and having thus witnessed the fulfilment of God's promises to his nation, and specially to himself, there remained nothing which he cared either to know or enjoy. "Now has come the aim of my life, the fulfilment of my expectations—my work is done—what more have I to live for? Now indeed as a gracious Master dost Thou dismiss in peace Thy favoured servant." *In peace*, to denote how the sight had consoled and quieted his spirit—to shew what a holy craving, what a restless desire he had after the Consolation of Israel. *Thou dismisses*—so abundantly satisfied with the Divine mercy, that he thinks of

immediate departure, foreseeing that he should never more find comfort in any other object that this world could minister.

Is it thus, my brethren, we repeat these burning words? embracing the Salvation of God, the Consolation of Israel, the Lord Jesus, in the arms, not indeed of the body, but of our faith; beholding Him with the eyes, not indeed of our body, but with those of faith? with the same fervent delight, and thankfulness, and peace? Ah! it will be ill-departing with us, if we have not first seen the Lord's Christ, and rejoiced in Him; ill-departing with us, if we have not first obtained that peace which comes from the faithful and loving embrace of the holy child Jesus! But let us have seen this sight, and obtained this peace—and oh! how changed both this world and the next! The eyes that have seen the Lord's Anointed, are themselves anointed, and they see things in their true colors. The brightest joys of earth become lustreless and unattractive; their hold upon the heart is relaxed; and it is felt to be not only the worst of profanations, but a thing *impossible*, to allow aught that could here be named to stand as rival in our regards with the Incarnate Lord, the Desire of all nations. The next world too appears in other hues. The shadows of death brighten into clouds of golden light. That valley from which nature, uncheered and unsanctified by a Saviour, shrinks with dismay, the Saint, with God's peace in his heart, longs to tread. The splendors of heaven shine in their changeless glory on eyes purged by faith and love, and which, by looking upon Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, are fitted to bear the blaze of eternal day. Oh, let us take heed how we fall short of the sublime and noble happiness, the heavenly elevation which God has designed for us, and offers through Christ—the peace, the joy, the transport of holy Simeon! God Almighty grant us, brethren, to sing with joy this our evening hymn when the last shadow of life's evening is departing into the night of death! “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation.”

This *Salvation*, he says, God had prepared before the face of “*all peoples*”—for so it is in the Greek, and not *people*. Herein giving us that first view of the Gentiles' share in the Saviour, which, as I have said, has endeared this hymn so specially to all

the Gentile churches ;—and herein, too, echoing the predictions of the very Psalm which follows in the Prayer Book :

“ Let the *peoples* praise Thee, O God ;
Yea, let *all the peoples* praise Thee.”

O let the nations rejoice and be glad ;
For Thou shalt judge the folk righteously,
And govern the nations upon earth.

Let the *peoples* praise Thee, O God ;
Yea, let all the peoples praise Thee.”—lxvii. 3, 4, 5.

And similarly in many places of the Psalms, particularly in one place, quoted by St. Paul :

“ O praise the Lord, *all ye nations, or Gentiles* :
Praise Him, *all ye peoples*.”—cxvii. 1.

And so the Evangelical prophet :

“ In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make to *all peoples* a feast of fat things,”

“ My house shall be called an house of prayer for *all peoples*.”

SALVATION is the subject of the hymn ; *salvation* expresses the whole work of Christ—all that God had prepared for the world—*salvation for ALL*.

With what thankfulness and joy should our minds dwell on this highest of all subjects, and to us most awfully interesting and important. Salvation—the burden of so many ancient prophecies, the end of so many wonderful and divine arrangements, the climax of infinite goodness !

“ Salvation ! oh, the joyful sound !
What pleasure to our ears !”

If long and obstinate habits of sin had not blunted our perception of spiritual danger, and dulled our sensibilities, what a tumult of happiness and adoring gratitude would the bare mention of Salvation raise in our souls ! When we think of the abyss of guiltiness from which we are delivered, of the pit of punishment from which we are snatched as brands ; of the light which streams upon the dense ignorance which encompasses our souls ; of the unknown and unimagined glories and felicities of a future state ;—when we think of these things, ought we, can we think of anything else in comparison ?

It warms old Zachariah into a rapture of grateful blessing. In the mighty Salvation raised up in the house of David, he beholds salvation from enemies, and from the hands of all who hate us; the fulfilment of every gracious promise since the world began; a fearless security; perpetual holiness and righteousness; remission of sins; light to the dwellers in the shadow of death; and peace, through the tranquil ages of an immortal existence.

Mary, the "blessed," found in it, and proclaimed, the secret of true blessedness, which made her "spirit rejoice in God, her Saviour." Henceforth "His mercy," without let or limit, "is upon them that fear Him, throughout all generations." Through Christ He evermore "filleteth the hungry with good things."

Well might they say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!"—"My soul doth magnify the Lord." Well may men and angels unite to adore that "mercy which is great above the heavens," and which sent us such Salvation. The Son of God is sent to redeem, and, lo! "for us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven, and was incarnate, and was made man, and was crucified also for us." The prophet that spoke so much of Christ as the Salvation of all the ends of the earth, the Light of the Gentiles, the Glory of Israel,—predicted as clearly by what means He should become so. He foretold how He was to be born of a Virgin; how the Lord was to bruise Him, to put Him to grief; and how His Soul was to make an offering for sin. Dear-bought salvation! Simeon comprehended, by divine illumination, the whole amazing process. He saw in the Babe his arms embraced, not only the Salvation that all the prophets had been speaking of from the beginning; but he saw, as he gazed into the calm, awful face of divine Infancy, the Sacrifice that every bloody rite, from Eden downward, had prefigured. From the Presentation in the Temple, he looked forward with prophetic vision to that tremendous Presentation on the Cross, which the Man of Sorrows, as Israel's great High Priest, was to make—the presentation of Himself for the perfect propitiation of the sins of the world. Simeon saw in Him the Rock on which fallen but believing Israel would rise again to higher glory, but the stone of stumbling, the rock of offence, against which the unbelieving would be dashed, never more to rise. He saw, in a word, that atoning sacrifice which is to all a savour of

death, or a savour of life. A few words reveal the completeness of Simeon's illumination: "Yea (said he to the blessed Virgin) a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." He knew how pierced her holy soul would be when she saw her divine Son "a sign spoken against;" but most, when standing at the foot of the Cross, she saw the last triumph of human guilt, unconsciously instrumental to that death, which was the guarantee of endless life.

It is not guilt merely that is now cancelled, but the triumphant tyranny of the devil is broken, the captives tied and bound with the chain of their sins are loosed, the long, long reign of righteousness is at length inaugurated. The Victim is become a Victor, and His cheerful proclamation to His redeemed is, "SIN SHALL NOT HAVE DOMINION OVER YOU," "HOLINESS BECOMETH MINE HOUSE FOR EVER," and its rightful ascendancy is decreed.

But it is not possible here to exhibit this Salvation in all its manifold aspects; for these fill up the Sacred Volume. We can only follow Simeon, as he proceeds to describe its aspect towards each of the two great divisions of the human race. This he does in the concluding words, "*A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.*"

Of the *salvation*, LIGHT is given to the Gentiles, GLORY to Israel.

The words *light* and *glory* are in themselves and their use mainly synonymous, while *glory* more grandly represents the superior privileges and honours of the ancient people of God. It cannot of course for an instant be supposed that the *essential* and *permanent* blessedness of Jew and Gentile, in the One Body, is various. The Apostle of the Gentiles, himself an ardent Jew, will tell us, that "in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile—that we are all one in Christ Jesus." But yet there may be adventitious advantages very precious and very honourable. Some of these we shall notice as we proceed; and what further instances, in favour of ancient Israel, the future may disclose, it is not for us to conjecture. However, before we attempt to define those terms of eternal grace which we are now considering, let us see how they are used and distinguished by Isaiah long before:

"I have given Thee for a Covenant of the people,
A *Light* of the Gentiles."—xlii. 6.

"I will give in Zion Salvation;
To Israel I will give My *Glory*."—xvi. 18, (Lowth.)

"It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the desolations of Israel:
I will also give Thee for a *light* to the Gentiles,
That Thou mayest be My Salvation to the ends of the earth."—xlix. 6.

"Arise, be enlightened: for thy *light* is come,
And the *glory* of the Lord is risen upon thee.
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
And gross darkness the people:
But the Lord shall arise upon thee,
And His *glory* shall be seen upon thee.
And the Gentiles shall come to thy *light*,
And kings to the *brightness* of thy rising."—lx. 1, 2, 3.

In all these passages we see *light* allotted to the Gentiles as their share in the promised grace; while the Jewish participation is spoken of in warmer terms, as a *Covenant*; a *raising up of the tribes of Jacob*, a *restoring of the desolations of Israel*; and where *light* is promised, it always rises to something more—to *glory*. Thus is given the chosen people, in the hymn before us, the highest gift.

Now, if we consider the meaning and propriety of this distribution, in the case of the Gentiles it is not hard to be seen. The whole world outside the little enclosure of Judæa was, in all moral respects, a wilderness, a mighty sepulchre, a very land of the shadow of death. Even where civilization and arts and sciences had made the greatest progress, and the most elegant literature, that the world has yet had to boast of, arose, the moral darkness was only the more dreadfully visible from contrast with the brilliant light of mere intellect. Alas! it was not some savage tribes that laboured under this palpable darkness of all that man cannot be safely ignorant of. No, "the world *by wisdom* knew not God"—their very boasted wisdom became an instrument of blindness. "*Professing themselves wise*, they became fools, (emphatically fools, fools to the very utmost extent of human

possibility, in that) they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." And as the just punishment of this insulting folly, they were given up to a mind void of judgment, to the belief of a lie, and to the absolute control of passions the most degrading and worse than bestial, which are not to be named except in the words of Holy Scripture. If you would see the truth of Isaiah's words—"darkness covers the earth; and gross darkness the people"—read St. Paul's description of the *most enlightened* heathens in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. They had lost all true notion of God, the soul, and its future state; almost all just distinctions of morality; and, as a matter of course, every gleam of spiritual perception, and all comprehension of the nature of that spiritual worship which is due to the Holy and Blessed God. Everywhere in the New Testament heathenism, or Gentilism, is called *darkness*, as is implied in those places of the prophet I have quoted,—and *Light* is the great blessing which the Gospel proposes to them. *Light* was indeed what they wanted in the first instance. So the Lord Jesus to St. Paul, at the moment of his conversion—"Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." So St. Paul himself—"What communion hath light with darkness?" that is, Christianity with Gentilism. Again, to the Ephesians—"Ye were sometimes *darkness*, but now ye are *light in the Lord*"—that is, Ye were once ignorant pagans, but ye are now Christians, illuminated by our Lord Jesus Christ. In the same epistle, he speaks of "the Gentiles walking in the *vanity of their mind*, having the *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God, *through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.*"

The words and turn of the original of our text, will, when literally observed, help us to understand the manner of this illumination: they are—"a *light FOR THE REVELATION of the Gentiles*"—or, still more literally—"for the UNVEILING, UNCOVERING of the *Gentiles.*" Here their spiritual ignorance is figured as a close, impenetrable veil of cloud and mist completely enshrouding them, and utterly concealing from their moral vision the moral universe in

which they dwell, their place and relations in it, and the lights and splendours that glow above them; or more briefly, and very beautifully described, in the words of Joel, ii. 2, "*As the morning spread upon the mountains.*" And now He comes forth who hath said, "I am the Light of the world," He "who lighteneth every man that cometh into the world"—"the Sun of Righteousness"—and darts forth His bright beams with resistless force, disperses the clouds and mists which concealed heaven from the earth, and brings out all the landscape below, and all the glory of the sky in their proper lustre, without a single interposing speck of envious cloud. Then the new-enlightened inhabitants walk in the day, and stumble not, because they see "the everlasting Light" of the New Creation; they behold the path of duty in the sunshine of heaven; they see far off in the distant horizon its glorious termination in the realms of immortality; they read the proclamations of eternal love and mercy in glittering characters; their "eyes see the King in His beauty; they behold the land that is very far off," and, despising the inferior attractions of the present scene, they fly to the dazzling prospect opened before them, and attain its substantial and unfading bliss. This interpretation of *the revelation of the Gentiles*, is in close agreement with a celebrated prediction of Isaiah, in the 25th chap. and v. 7, "He will destroy in this mountain (Jerusalem) the face of the *covering* cast over all people, and the *veil* that is spread over all nations"—that is, by the glorious light of Christ's gospel he will destroy (or as it is literally in the Hebrew, *swallow up*—as the light seems to swallow up the darkness) the ignorance of the nations of mankind. Oh, what hosannas are due to the Father of Lights and Mercies for the accomplishment which thus far this glorious promise has received! Over how wide regions, upon what countless millions has that cheering light shone! What loads of despair has it removed, what anguish has it soothed, what passions has it vanquished. What multitudes of noble martyrs, of hermit saints, of active Christians has it guided to the portals of paradise! Is the veil, brethren, the face of the covering, sufficiently removed from *our* hearts to enable us to see, to rejoice in these effects? to feel as warm a transport in the very view of these glorious achievements, as Simeon felt in the prophetic anticipation?

Let us now, at last, consider the predicted lot of the *chosen people* in that salvation which is for *all* peoples. It is GLORY. I need not repeat again these several places of Isaiah before quoted, in which, when *light* is promised to the Gentiles, *glory* is assigned to the Jews; or when *light* is promised the Jews, immediately *glory* is added, as a heightening of the gift. The Jews, as a nation, were supposed to know God, to be acquainted with His will—as undoubtedly they might have been from His revelations made to them; and therefore it was not *light* absolutely which they wanted—but increase of light, indicated by *glory*. This word is used to denote the greatest splendor and effulgence of light—light in its most pure and dazzling form. Thus St. Paul (Acts xxiii. 11) describing the appearing of Christ to him on the way to Damascus, says, “when I could not see for *the glory of that light*.” It is used of the celestial light which surrounds the angels of God—of the glorified Messiah and His saints—but particularly of the *splendor, the divine effulgence, the dazzling majesty, the radiant glory*, in which God sits enthroned, and which the Jews called the Shechinah. *Glory* was a sort of technical word with the Jews—a name for their God, who was their glory; but with reference chiefly to that visible presence of Himself which He vouchsafed in the tabernacle and temple, over the mercy seat—a bright cloud, in which He was said to dwell. Hence, when the ark (with which this cloud was connected) was lost to them, (being taken by the Philistines,) they said “*THE GLORY was departed*.” So in a place of Isaiah, which I have not yet quoted, (lx. 19,) “The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting Light, and thy God thy *Glory*.” In Zechariah ii. 5, again, “I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be *the glory* in the midst of her.” So is her God spoken of in Jeremiah ii. 11, “Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but My people have changed *their Glory* for that which doth not profit.” A reference to the 24th Psalm will also help us much to understand what ideas the Jews would attach to this expression. There the Lord of Hosts is called “*the King of glory*,” because to them His visible dwelling was in the cloud of glory which we have described, and which first entered the tabernacle after its construction by Moses. He was their confidence, from whom they looked for victory, the Lord of Hosts,

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strong and mighty in battle—and hence they brought with them into battle, as an infallible means of victory, the Ark of His Presence.

The cloud of glory, however, was, after all, but a *symbol* of God's presence. They were taught by their prophets to look for a higher manifestation, a Presence more real and more consolatory in the Blessed Messiah, Immanuel, God with us, an Incarnate God, a Child born as well as a Son given unto us—of whom the Psalmist sang, in our Christmas psalm, in words once before recited, "Surely His Salvation is nigh them that fear Him, that *glory* may dwell in our land"—wondrously fulfilled when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (more properly *tabernacled in us*) (and we beheld His *glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." Yes, "he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father," for "He is the brightness of His Glory, and the express image of His Person." All then that the *Shechinah*, that glory visible to mortal eyes (and which they lost in the Babylonian captivity) was to the Jews of old—the object of their holiest reverence, the basis of their highest hopes, the strength of their hearts, the centre of all sacred emotions, the pledge of safety, the procurer and preserver of all their glory—that is the true *Shechinah*, the Son of God, tabernacling in human flesh, to believing Israel.

Here is the key to that careful distinction of terms observed throughout the prophet Isaiah, and retained so markedly by Simeon. If the birth of the Lord in our nature has bestowed such a superlative honour upon mankind, and raised believers to a superangelical dignity; if His birth of one highly-favoured woman, has made her blessed beyond all the daughters of Eve—how can we sufficiently esteem the favour shewn to that special race which the Son of God vouchsafed to call "His Own," and in which, when He would manifest the infinitude of His "philanthropy," it was His good pleasure to enter the ranks of humanity? Unless we undervalue the Incarnation, how can we think little of this favour, or think it aught but the highest glory? This is specially noted by St. Paul, whose words are an apt comment on Simeon's: "Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the *glory*, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and (as the climax

of all possible privileges) *of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*"

But whatever spiritual blessings God has in store for His ancient people, are not to be had or enjoyed by them in their old isolation. "Together with all the saints" they are to have their lot; and that lot, we have abundant reason to believe, will, in the day of their conversion, have ample heightenings of glory—however little we may be able now to define their precise character.

Light He bestows on the Gentiles: *Glory* He procures for and gives to Israel. What glory? Not victory over the nations of Canaan, and the proud Philistines; but complete conquest over their spiritual foes—the world, the flesh, and the devil: not settled peace in a land flowing with milk and honey; but spiritual peace within the borders of His church, the peace of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost; not estimation in the eyes of surrounding nations, as a prosperous and powerful people; but the applause of angels, the admiration of saints, the approbation of their God, as accepted candidates and heirs of "a kingdom that cannot be moved, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." O Glory that is rightly so called! May our hearts long and burn for it! "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy salvation; that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance!"

But, woeful reflection, Israel has forgotten this her own prayer. Israel doth not yet know, the chosen people do not consider. While long since the Gentiles have been enlightened—while long since "all the ends of the world have remembered, and turned unto the Lord, and all the kindred of the nations (or at least some out of all) have worshipped before Him"—Israel, His own, still receive Him not, still obstinately reject Him. Upon them has fallen the dark veil of Gentile ignorance, a double veil upon their hearts, so that they see not their King and their Glory. O inscrutable are the ways of God! mysterious is the heart of man! From the faithless heart fade away, as a vision of the night, the awful predictions of prophecy, or, if believed, how apt is it to complain, just like a very scoffer, "All things continue as from the beginning!" But peace! God hath spoken! "Hath He said,

and shall He not do it? hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" Glorious and glowing as are the predictions of Israel's future, we look for a full realization, a majestic completion. Cold and impassive as we may hear of this, we know not how near it may be to us, nor how much it may touch our interests. St. Paul warns us Gentiles not to be wise in our own conceits on this subject, for that blindness has happened in part unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, and then (it is said expressly) "*all Israel shall be saved.*" And is not this hinted by Simeon, when he speaks of light to the Gentiles *before* glory to Israel? The effect of this event upon the Gentiles St. Paul describes in startling terms: "*through their fall* (that of the Jews) *salvation is come unto the Gentiles for to provoke them to jealousy.* Now if the fall of them be the riches of the universe, and their loss* the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead." *Life from the dead!* Can this mean anything less than such a revival and increase to the Gentile churches as shall quench the lustre of all that went before in Christianity, in comparison—as though now, for the first time, light and life did in reality visit the Gentiles. May God hasten the happy day! He will hasten it—it is His work. Nor let our faith be disheartened by the present unpromising appearances. It is true that it is impossible to conceive anything more utterly spiritually dead, than the stock of Judaism. Not a pulse, not a sign of life can be perceived. But should this make us despair? Rather the contrary. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. It is in the hour of extremest need that God ever interposes, that the glory may be visibly His. Never were the pulses of the national life of Israel more feeble than just before their deliverance from Egypt—the great, standing, authorized Type of God's deliverances. Never is the darkness deeper than before the rising dawn. And now, (as we ardently and not unreasonably hope, from prophetic signs,) should the dry bones begin to move—an unbelieving world will be awakened to faith by the visible working of God again, or the more awfully condemned to their own place. How should we endeavour, by prayers and gifts and personal exertions, to realize the sublime

* Margin.

consequences beheld by Simeon's faith, that Christ may be known as the Light of the Gentiles, and the Glory of His people Israel ! How should we recognise, by faith, in every lesson of Sacred Scripture, that Saviour whose grace is endlessly celebrated by the holy church throughout all the world !

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