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DISCOURSE ON THE DEVIL.

INTRODUCTION.

This is far from being a popular subject, but it is nevertheless one of no little importance, whether we consider the place which it holds in the holy scriptures, or its practical bearing.

Both the Old and New Testament writers concur in giving their testimony to the existence, agency and power of the Devil.

He is spoken of under various names and characters as the Devil, Satan, the Old Serpent, the Dragon, the Wicked One, the Prince of this world, the Prince of the power of the air, Apollyon, Lucifer and many other appellations, which are more or less significant of the power he possesses and the influence he exercises. There is one thing respecting him, that all his influence is put forth for wicked and mischievous purposes, to defeat as far as he can the gracious and merciful designs of the Deity, especially respecting the human race.

The things that are said about Satan were fully believed by the Church in former ages, and much stress was laid upon them. But strange as it may appear in later times, these have been almost lost sight of, and all the evil that happens in the world, all the great and enormous crimes that are committed, all the crying iniquities which are perpetrated are all ascribed to human depravity alone. Without this undoubtedly the Devil could have no influence at all, but wherever it exists, much more prevails, there his greatest power is brought to bear and to manifest itself in the most fearful manner. One would suppose so little is the existence and power of the Devil recognized in the present day, that it is a mere myth, an empty useless dogma, a superstitious notion of a by-gone age, which was never intended to have any influence upon Christian belief or practise in these more enlightened times. But if there is any truth in the Bible, if there is any importance to be attached to the numerous declarations, facts and circumstances connected with the subject, it is evident that a very different opinion ought to be entertained respecting

it. In former ages of the Church, Satan was regarded as a formidable foe, who had to be resisted, and watched, and guarded against. But in the present day and for a long time back his very existence is doubted, if not altogether denied. His name is seldom or ever mentioned in our pulpits in the way of caution or admonition.

The passage of scripture which we have placed at the head of this treatise is one very striking proof of the importance which the Apostle Peter attached, in common with the other Apostles, to the existence and power of the Devil, and there are many others to the same purpose, which we will have an opportunity of considering in their proper place.

The Apostle Peter exhorts his converts to watchfulness and sobriety, why? Because their adversary the Devil, like a roaring lion, was continually walking about, seeking whom he might devour. Now it is plain if the Devil had no existence or was a mere imaginary being, this exhortation would have no meaning at all. The Apostle might have urged other considerations of undoubted weight, but all other arguments were swallowed up and absorbed in this one, of the tremendous power, untiring energy, profound subtlety, and insatiable malice of their great adversary the Devil, and therefore he gives it superior prominence and enforces his admonition to watchfulness by this alone. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

In the prosecution of our present design, we shall turn our attention in the first place to the facts and circumstances concerning the Devil contained in the scriptures. The Bible, it may be remarked may be said to be the only book, which gives us any information on the subject, and therefore to it we must refer and confine our inquiries in the first instance.

I. The first noticeable circumstance respecting Satan, which we meet with in scripture is that he was once an angel of light, and as such was a holy and a happy being, constantly engaged in the service and worship of God. But from this high and honorable condition he fell by giving way to pride and ambition, and rebelling against the

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Most, High, thereby incurring his righteous displeasure, driven out from the celestial abodes and cast down to hell, where he has his chief abode. We have no particular account given us of the origin, progress or final developement of this war in heaven, or of the manner in which the vengeance of the Almighty was poured out upon him.* The fact however is distinctly stated, or to speak more correctly, is pointedly alluded to in more than one passage of scripture. We are also made to understand that he was not alone guilty, but that myriads of angels were implicated in the same offence, and shared in his miserable fate. This we gather from the fact that there are innumerable myriads of these fallen spirits engaged in carrying on the Devil's wicked designs, as appears from those passages of scripture; which speak of their deeds of darkness, viz: the possessions spoken of in the Gospels and that notable passage in the Ephes. vi. 12—"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Milton in his Paradise Lost thus graphically describes the awful ruin and swift destruction, which the Devil and the rebel angels brought upon themselves by their own wickedness and rebellion:—

So spake the Son, and into terror changed
His countenance, too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the Four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night: under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon

* It is in vain for us to inquire for what reason Satan and his rebel hosts were permitted to conspire against God and to attempt His dethronement, (for their designs must have been fully known to his omniscience) why their evil designs were not nipped in the bud and they made to return to their allegiance. It is enough for us to know that such was the fact, and we may be sure that it was permitted for a wise and gracious purpose, and if for no other than to show the heavenly hosts even the most exalted of them how entirely dependent they were upon the grace of God for keeping their first estate, and that there was a possibility of their apostasy.

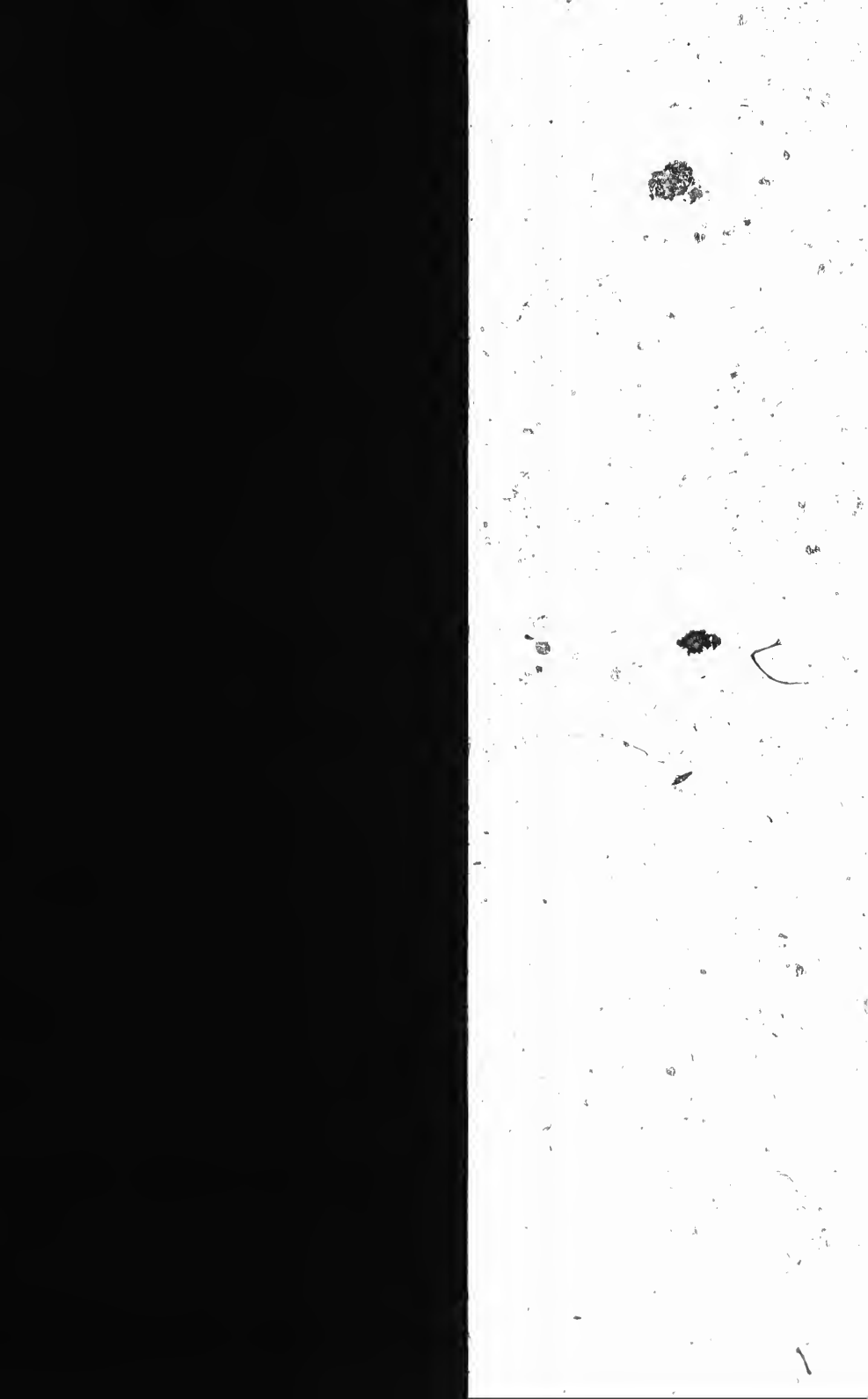
Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
 Plagues. They astonish'd, all resistance lost,
 All courage, down their idle weapons dropt;
 O'er shields and helms and helmed heads he rode
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
 That wish'd the mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold visaged four
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitudes of eyes;
 One Spirit in them ruled and ev'ry eye
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among the accursed, that wither'd all their strength,
 And of their wonted vigour left them drained,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen,
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
 His thunder in mid valley; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven,
 The overthrown he raised, and as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together thronged,
 Drove them before him, thunder-struck pursued
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 And crystal wall of Heav'n; which opening wide,
 Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
 Into the wasteful deep.

The next fact or circumstance relating to the Devil we find in
 the 3rd chapter of Genesis, where he is represented as compassing
 the ruin of our first parents in Paradise.

The sacred historian introduces the account of this matter in a
 very peculiar way. He observes in the 1st verse of the chapter:
 "Now the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which
 the Lord God had made, as if to prepare our minds for what is to
 follow." He then proceeds to relate the conversation which he
 held with Eve in order to induce her to take of the fruit of the
 forbidden tree. And he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said,
 "ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." And the woman
 said unto the serpent. We may eat of the fruit of the trees of
 the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of
 the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye

"touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." Now it is evident from this narrative that it was some other being speaking through the medium of the serpent, and not the serpent itself, that spoke to the woman, in a word, that it was the Devil. Indeed, he is spoken of expressly as the Old Serpent by the Prophet Isaiah and also in the Book of Revelation. Again, it is clear that the person who spoke on this occasion was a being possessed of the most acute powers of reasoning, which he could employ with the utmost skill to compass the end he had in view, viz: the ruin of our first parents, and as we know from the fatal result, he succeeded too well in this and prevailed upon Eve to transgress the commandment of God and to set at nought his threatening.

Again, the sentence which was pronounced upon him shows that he was held responsible for all the mischief which he had brought upon our first parents, and the serpent, in whom he had taken up his residence for the time being, was accordingly punished by being degraded from the condition which he once held as a creature of God. We infer from the nature of the sentence that when the serpent was originally created instead of crawling on the ground as it generally does, it held itself erect and was maintained by some other kind of food than the dust of the ground. But the great point, to which our attention is directed or ought to be directed, is the fact of the Devil's existence, which appears clear from this passage, as has already been stated. Now, is it possible to conceive that this narrative is a fiction, as some infidels have been bold enough to affirm, or a figurative description, of a real occurrence. Then there is no truth in history, and all the accounts, which have come down to us of former times are little better than a tissue of falsehoods. But as such an opinion is too monstrous to be adopted, it follows that this is a true unvarnished tale, a plain statement of facts, and if so, the actors in the scene must have had a real existence and by parity of reason, the Devil, one of the chief, must have an existence also. There are difficulties confessedly in this narrative, which no one has been able to remove, but these do not affect the general argument as to the Devil having had a hand in this plot.





The next fact concerning the Devil is in the 1st Book of Kings, (22nd chap.) where he is represented as offering himself to become a lying spirit in the mouth of the Prophets, whom King Ahab consulted, whether he should go up to Ramoth-Gilead to battle or not. And upon being permitted by God to go forth on this evil errand, he succeeded in persuading the king of Israel to go up thither by the prospect of certain victory, though he was forewarned by Micaiah a Prophet of the Lord, that he would be slain. Now though this passage is to be taken with certain allowances for the high-flown language of the East, yet the very circumstance of an evil or the evil Spirit being introduced on this occasion is a decided proof that the existence and agency of the Devil or his angels was fully recognized by the sacred Historian.

The next fact respecting the Devil is contained in that passage in the Book of Job (chap. i. 6, 12), where Satan is represented as presenting himself in the court of heaven, and being questioned by God himself as to his servant Job, he appears to have doubted Job's sincerity.

The Devil is represented as saying to God upon being asked what he thought of his servant Job, "That there was no man like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that eschewed evil," replied, (judging of others by himself,) it might be so, but he would just ask one question, was Job's goodness quite disinterested. Does Job fear God for nought? And then he immediately suggests that if God would put forth his hand and touch all that he had, he would throw off all restraint and curse him to his face. Upon which God told the Devil that all that Job had was in his power, only he was not to meddle with himself. Accordingly Satan having obtained this liberty lost no time in putting Job's integrity to the test, of which we read in the subsequent verses. Here again we would remark that in this passage Satan is represented as a living, active and independent being, conversing, reasoning and making suggestions, and moreover carrying out into full effect his own wicked designs upon the Patriarch Job, so far as he was permitted. Not content with depriving him of part of his property, he sweeps it all away from him in one day, and not only so but bereaves him of all his family. Now all this plainly demonstrates that there is such a

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being as the Devil, who is continually going about seeking whom he may devour and doing all the mischief he can possibly accomplish.

The next scene where Satan appears in a visible form is in the Temptation in the Wilderness. Here we find him putting forth the utmost extent of his craft and subtlety to tempt Christ to sin. First he endeavours to induce him to satisfy the cravings of hunger by providing for himself in a miraculous manner by commanding two stones which he probably held in his hand to become bread, whereby it might appear that he was the Son of God, and at the same time his pressing necessities might be supplied. Then finding that this mode of attack would not do, he took Christ up to a pinnacle of the temple, and suggested to Him the propriety of his casting himself down from thence; but this also failed. He then took him up to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and offered them all to him and the glory of them if he would fall down and worship him; but this temptation did not succeed. Now it appears from all this that the Saviour had a subtle cunning foe to deal with, a being who had a real existence, a being who was possessed of the most singular powers of reasoning and was well versed in all the arts of strategy. These seem to comprise all the facts and circumstances contained in the Bible respecting the Devil, and they furnish a most satisfactory and convincing proof of his existence, and agency and power.

II. Let us now direct our attention to the principal epithets which are applied to the Devil. These are of greater importance as they are all descriptive of his character and operations.

DEVIL.—This word comes from the Greek word Diabolus, which signifies a Calumniator or Accuser, who accuses us before God day and night, i. e. continually. Rev. xii, 9, 10. Hence he is called the accuser of the brethren. Having been condemned himself to eternal dishonor and misery, without any hope of reconciliation or of forgiveness by the great and almighty Being, whom he has so grievously offended and whom he is continually offending, he makes it his chief and favorite employment to tempt men to sin and then to accuse them of it, that they may be brought into the same wretched condition as himself. He is particularly spiteful and malignant towards the professed servants of God, as we see from the case of Job, whom if he had been permitted, he would have utterly des-

troyed. He has cast off all allegiance to God, and finds a wicked and malignant pleasure in going contrary to his will and thwarting all his good and benevolent designs. In saying these things we are only stating the plain truth, and yet how dreadful it is to think of any being deriving his chief happiness from doing everything in his power to provoke the vengeance of the Most High and to compass the ruin of his creatures. Many sin from ignorance, or want of consideration, or from the strength of temptation, but the Devil practises iniquity deliberately, knowingly and determinately, having a fixed purpose of doing evil, nothing but evil, and that continually.

BELIAL.—He is likewise called Belial, which is an Hebrew word, and signifies one who is good for nothing, a libertine. One that is extremely wicked. 2. Cor. vi, 15. What concord hath Christ with Belial? Well might the Apostle put this question in order to mark the awful distance, the rooted enmity, the decided and ever increasing opposition and contrariety subsisting between Christ and Belial, and by consequence between him and the children of Belial or wicked men, who are his willing slaves and obedient servants, being led captive by him at his will, whether they be open profligates, or cold and formal professors, avowed infidels, or mere triflers.

SATAN is another of those epithets which are applied to the Devil. It signifies an adversary or an accuser in a court of justice, Job ii, 1. "Satan came also among them." In this latter respect it corresponds with the term Devil. The constant and determined opposition, which subsists between God and the Devil has given rise to the notion, which was entertained by some of the ancient Heathens, that there were two beings in the universe, the one good, and the other bad, who were possessed of equal power, and were continually engaged in thwarting and defeating each other's designs. It has also given rise to the different kinds of worship, which obtain among idolatrous nations, at one time seeking to appease the wrath of their deities by cruel and bloody rites, such as the sacrificing of human victims, at another by obscene and voluptuous ones.

THE SERPENT.—The Devil is likewise called "the Serpent" or "the Old Serpent." Gen. iii, 1, Rev. xii, 9. He is so called because he conveyed himself into the serpent, when he tempted Eve, and in respect of his serpentine disposition, his poison is always

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"the Serpent" or . He is so called on he tempted Eve, s poison is always

ready, and runs continually as in full streams both against Christ and against all his members for His sake. He is also crafty, wise, and subtle as a serpent. What this subtlety consists in is mentioned by naturalists, and several instances are given of it, and the resemblance between the serpent and the Devil in this quality is remarkable, because most of his deeds are done in a stealthy, cunning manner, and it would appear that he succeeds better by this method than by open violence, besides that it affords him the most unmingled satisfaction, when he sees his evil designs taking effect by subtle and covert means.

DRAGON.—This epithet is applied to the Devil in scripture on account of his great strength and bloody cruelty against the saints of God. He is spoken of under this appellation in the Book of Revelation, in several passages, Rev. xii, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17. In these verses a fierce and long sustained contest is described between the Devil, under the similitude of the Dragon and the woman or the church, which demonstrates that the chief enemy of the church is the Devil, and that all the evils which have come upon her are all owing to his agency and crafty policy.

THE PRINCE OF THE WORLD is another of the epithets which are applied to Satan, chiefly because he exercises a great deal of his power over the kingdoms of the earth by making them subservient to his wicked purposes, and the seats of his authority through the Papacy and other false religions, also because he employs the allurements of the world as his baits to effect the eternal ruin of immortal souls. He lays claim to his authority as exclusively and indisputably as in the temptation in the wilderness, when he proposes to Christ to fall down and worship him, and that for this transient act of homage he would give him the kingdoms of the world in full and free possession.

BEELEZUB.—This means literally "the master or god of the fly." This is applied to the Devil by the Jews in the way of derision to show their contempt for idols or false gods. However this may be, this appellation is one that was well known among different nations, with some variations, as another name for Satan or the Devil. He is said in the New Testament to be the Prince or Chief of the Devils, either because he was so in reality, or was reputed as such.

PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR, an appellation this, which is

given to him from an opinion prevalent among the Jews that there actually are some evil spirits, who inhabit the air, and under their chief, exercise their powers in exciting the winds, storms and tempests, or other malignant influences such as destructive diseases or epidemics, when permitted or commissioned so to do. To this the Apostle Paul seems to allude in the second chapter of Ephesians, 2^d verse. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

These are some of the principal epithets applied to the Devil, and surely it is evident that these were not given him without some good and substantial reason, proving as they do beyond all controversy his real existence and agency.

III. Let us next consider the *Works of the Devil*. In considering the works of the Devil, we can only select a few of the most prominent.

The first that we shall refer to, is the Fall of Man, or the great *Apostacy*. Man when he came from the hand of his Creator was an innocent and upright creature, his Maker's glorious image was enstamped upon his soul; His law was his only rule, and His glory his chief end: He delighted in the service of God and in communion with him and the holy angels.

His understanding was clear and unclouded, his will in perfect conformity with the divine will, his affections were pure and heavenly and spiritual, being set upon the things that are above.

Such was man in his primeval state, he was a glorious happy creature, he was, if we may so speak his Maker's pride, being only a little lower than the angels. But the Devil could not behold so fair and beauteous a scene without envy and hatred. It filled him with the direst malice to think that a creature, that was but of yesterday should be so happy and distinguished, while he, who had once held so high a place among the hierarchies of heaven should be cast out from his Maker's presence and regards. Accordingly he formed the fell purpose, the wicked design of putting an end to so much happiness and introducing discord and enmity and confusion, where all was peace and love and perfect order.

When once he prevailed, all was changed for the worse. The soul

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of man became spiritually dead and deformed and altogether unfit for the society and communion of his Creator; he no longer felt any love towards Him, a sense of guilt and fell despair was substituted for love and trust and unbounded confidence. But this was not all. He not only deprived man of all his original happiness, but entailed upon him and his posterity to the latest generations a vast amount of misery, distress and eternal ruin.

The reign of death had commenced, and God's fair creation was marred. The Devil had triumphed, and as we may readily suppose exulted in his fiendish work. If there is joy in heaven among the holy angels over one sinner that repenteth, and much more over a number of sinners brought to repentance, we may easily conceive what joy and exultation there would be in hell among the rebel angels over such an achievement as this, the ruin of man, the favoured creature of God.

(2) But not to dwell too long upon this theme, let us turn our attention to another of the works of the Devil, viz: *Idolatry*. Idolatry or the worship of false gods, was in effect the worship of the Devil himself and his numerous associates, who though far inferior to him in many respects, yet succeeded in directing the religious homage and regards of mankind to themselves. Idolatry was the natural consequence of man's departure from the living God. Man is possessed of religious sentiments, in so far that he is haunted with the idea of some superior invisible power, and if he is left in ignorance of the true God, he will certainly frame to himself some god or gods whom he will worship according to his varied fancies, with cruel, voluptuous or obscene rites as we find from the various systems of idolatry, of which we read.

The first and most ancient form of idolatry, and that which was (if we may so speak the purest and most sublime) was the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon and stars. But this kind of idolatry was apparently too simple and too unsophisticated to remain long in force, and some more complicated form was substituted in its room. The sun might be adored for its splendour, the moon for its brightness, the stars for their beauty, and the heavens for their vastness, but something more was required, to form a god of a proper description, who had some perfections residing in him, which would fit him to wield the sceptre of universal empire over

all other creatures, animate and inanimate. Now, though some might suppose the gods to be a set of indolent luxurious beings who passed their existence in ease and pleasure, altogether indifferent to the wants and miseries of inferior creatures, yet there were others and they the majority, who thought it was far more becoming in the gods whom they worshipped to concern themselves with the affairs of their adorers. But I forgot I am not writing a treatise upon idolatry which would, I presume fill volumes, but my object is to show that the Devil in conjunction with the depraved and corrupt inclinations of man has had everything to do with all the different kinds of idolatry that have prevailed in the world, and the more absurd and irrational they were the better. Like a proud Usurper he has endeavoured, alas! with too much success, to withdraw man's regards from the only true object of divine worship and to divert it all to himself and the rest of the fallen angels. This not only ministers to his individual exaltation, but affords him the most unbounded satisfaction in detracting as much as possible from the glory of God, who is the only proper object of worship.

We have more than hinted that the great cause of idolatry was ignorance of the true God, and this too the Devil managed with great art to extend and prolong, to obscure the knowledge which man once had of the true God, and to mislead and confuse and obliterate all remains of light, which he might have retained on the subject of religion, and render the human mind, even the most cultivated, a perfect chaos of doubt and scepticism.

The more Philosophers reasoned, the further they went astray and got into such endless labyrinths, from which they could not by any means extricate themselves. No doubt God had a great design in view, in leaving the greater part of mankind in ignorance respecting himself and the method of salvation as the Apostle Paul says in the Book of Acts, "the times of this ignorance God winked at," inasmuch as he wished to show how far they might proceed in wandering away from Him, and how easily after being so long led astray from the truth, they might be recalled when the fulness of time was come. But God's purpose had no connection whatever with the wicked attempts of Satan, or the depraved inclinations of man, except in so far that they were both overruled for good. Here then was another wicked design, another work of the Devil, which can be clearly traced to his machinations.

(3) Another of the works of the Devil, to which we shall next refer, is Popery. This as has been well remarked was one of the Devil's cleverest tricks, his *master-piece*. For while it had the semblance of Christianity, it was altogether opposed to its great author and the spirit of His religion, and in consequence it has been well styled ANTI-CHRIST. This horrible travestie, or caricature, or parody if you will, of Christianity, arose from small beginnings, chiefly from that lust of power and of dominion which is inherent in man, and which only requires to be evoked in order to attain its native ascendancy. It shewed itself in the Apostles, while they were under the immediate eye and tuition of their master, when they contended which of them should be greatest, for which they incurred his well merited rebuke, and afterwards it manifested itself in a still more conspicuous form in the Christian church, poisoning all the sources of instruction and discipline. Some Pastor or Elder desirous of pre-eminence for learning or some other quality assumed a higher degree of authority than usual. This may have been thought at the time necessary for the suppressing of heresies and maintaining the unity of the faith. In the course of time it might be thought expedient to make degrees of ranks among the office-bearers of the Christian Church, and thus the idea of assuming greater powers than what was originally intended crept in by degrees till Bishops, or overseers came to signify a person or persons invested with higher authority than others of his brother Elders, who had oversight over several churches or congregations, and thus we have the beginning of Episcopacy. There might be some opposition at first to this arrangement or constitution, which was overborne and at last became the established order. Indeed, all liberal-minded Episcopalians in the present day admit that it was an innovation upon the original constitution of the Christian Church, and take their ground on the idea, that it was found expedient. But all this time the Devil was working out his own ends, and gradually leading the Church of Christ towards the great Apostacy, in other words to Popery. Though it took several centuries before the Papacy arrived at its full development, yet it had begun to manifest itself in the days of the Apostles. And these inspired men foresaw, clearly and distinctly foresaw the awful state of corruption into which the Church of Christ was to be thrown, as we may see from the predictions, which they

uttered respecting it. St. Paul's Prophecy, which we have in the 2nd epistle to the Thessalonians, which by the way is more like a history of past events than a prediction of what was to come to pass, and also John's Prophecies in the Book of the Revelation. It is hard to say whether the corruption began in the government, the doctrine, or the worship or discipline of the Church. But we are inclined to think, as we have hinted above, it was in the government of the Church, then it gradually spread itself over the doctrine, worship and discipline till the whole became a hideous mass of corruption. Thus was the temple of God desecrated, and made little better than a den of thieves, thus was what was designed for the conversion and complete renovation of the world turned into an instrument of unmitigated evil, thus was God's word marred and polluted by the counter-efforts of his arch-enemy. Let any one examine the past history of the Romish Church, and compare it with the declarations of scripture, together with her present condition, and they will be convinced that she is no other than what she is described in the Book of Revelation as "the scarlet whore, who sitteth upon many waters, whose name is MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." It may be thought that this description, though true at one time, is no longer so, and that the Church of Rome is very different from what she once was. But this is an entire mistake. Her doctrines are the same, her worship is the same, her intolerant and persecuting spirit is the same, and the only reason why she does not manifest it is, that she is under restraint and cannot do as she would. The Devil will uphold her as long as he can and use her as the instrument of carrying his nefarious purposes into effect against the saints and people of God.*

(4) Another of the works of the Devil is the divisions which he has had a hand in bringing about in the Christian Church.

Contention and strife is his favorite element, and he delights to set Christians by the ears, to stir up their evil passions against one another and induce them to regard each other with hatred and

* It is quite unnecessary for me to go into details, and yet it were easy to show at much greater length how well the Papacy may be called one of the works of the Devil.

aversion. Whatever may be the cause of controversy, whether it be about a point of government, or doctrine, or worship, it suits his purpose to make the contention as sharp and bitter as possible so as to lead them to separate and to look upon each other with a jealous eye. Hence his emissaries upon earth, Infidels and sceptics and worldly men rejoice when they see Christians engaged in fierce animosities against each other and using the most opprobrious language they can find against their brethren. We do not deny that such controversies are sometimes necessary for the development of the truth, but alas! how seldom are they conducted in the spirit of meekness, and with that candour which ought ever to distinguish the followers of Jesus. On the contrary they have too frequently shown whence they have arisen, and by whose agency they have been carried on.

5. Infidelity and Atheism is another of the works of the Devil which deserves to be noticed.

This is one of his most subtle and secret works, for it is carried on by means of the intellect, upon which he exerts a powerful influence. He begins by infusing doubts into the mind of his victim concerning the truths of religion. These "he knows are the most important to man, inasmuch as they are closely connected with his spiritual well being and eternal salvation, and once he can shake his belief in these, he becomes an easy prey to his machinations. Sometimes he leads his victims to call in question the very foundations of religion, the genuineness, authenticity and divine inspiration of the scriptures as we see in the case of Bishop Colenso, suggesting to him arguments and considerations on these subjects of a plausible and apparently unanswerable kind. At another time he directs his attacks against the doctrines of the Bible, representing them of such a mysterious and unintelligible nature that they are unworthy of belief. For instance, the doctrine of the Trinity. He asks with a sneer, "How can there be three in one"? He endeavours to detract from the essential dignity of the second person of the Trinity by bringing him down to the level of a human being; denuding him of his claim to divinity, denying his eternity, his power, his greatness, his majesty, his love. And in like manner the doctrine of the separate existence and personality and office of the Holy Spirit is called in question,

and finally expunged from the sacred record. And the general result of all this scepticism is a total disbelief of the existence and attributes of a God at all, or if he permits those who are under his influence to believe in God, what is it but a cold meaningless abstraction devoid of any quality to beget fear or love. In the same way the doctrine of Regeneration, which may be said to lie at the root of all practical religion is held up to contempt as the offspring of a heated brain and having no existence whatever in fact. In like manner the doctrine of a particular Providence, a doctrine which rests upon the most irrefragable evidence, and which has afforded so much comfort and support to the people of God in all ages is repudiated and treated with the utmost scorn. In short there is not one doctrine in the Bible, that the Devil does not endeavour all he can to strip of its savour and sweetness and render it useless for all practical purposes.

6. Another of the works of the Devil is Political revolutions, such as seditions, conspiracies, insurrections, rebellions, in a word every kind and degree of resistance to lawful authority. We hesitate not to affirm that all convulsions and revolutions in a state or kingdom are begun and carried on by the Devil. It does not affect the truth of our assertion that some revolutions or civil commotions have been productive of good in the end, for this is wholly to be ascribed to the over-ruling Providence of God, by which he makes all things in heaven and earth to work together for the accomplishment of his divine purposes. But all the evil designs, plots and conspiracies, the contention, the bloodshed, the misery the ruin, which arises in the course of any revolution is all the Devil's work. It is through his immediate agency that the wicked and unruly passions of men are inflamed to a pitch of rage and fury, which hurries them on to the perpetration of all sorts of cruelties and enormities, the very recital of which makes our blood run cold. Such was the state of things in the first French Revolution; in which more victims were sacrificed, more outrages committed, and gross injustice practiced than ever had been done since the creation of the world. The principal actors in the scene seem to have lost all sense of humanity and kindness and to have sold themselves to the Devil to do his work without let or hindrance. Goaded on by ambition, incited by malice, and drunk with blood, they were more like fiends than human beings. Let any

one read the history of that awful period with any degree of attention, and they will be constrained to admit that there was more than human agency at work, that there was one behind the scenes directing and controlling, instigating and impelling the discordant elements which had been set in motion chiefly through his wicked influence.

7. Another of the works of the Devil, and it is the last that we shall mention is persecution on account of religion.

True religion both for its own sake and also on account of the destructive influence it has upon his kingdom has always been as it will ever be an object of unmitigated hatred and detestation to the Devil, and therefore he makes it his constant endeavour to diminish its power, stop its progress, and even to stir up the enmity of men's hearts against it. He makes it appear as an odious and turbulent thing which unsparingly condemns all error and sin, sets itself in opposition to the corrupt practices and worldly amusements of men and therefore it ought to be resisted and put down. Accordingly from time to time he raises up opposition against it in the shape of ridicule or open violence, as it is said in the II. Psalm 2, 3. "The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying; Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Thus when Christianity was first introduced, he stirred up the Jewish Sanhedrim to oppose it with all their might, and they willingly and heartily engaged in the work. But still they were the Devil's agents to do his pleasure. They stoned Stephen to death who was the first victim of their lawless vengeance, and then James was slain next, and not content with killing all of that name in Jerusalem, they sent to Damascus to bring them bound to the capitol in order that they might be punished. And if the Devil had been permitted to do, as he wished the whole of Christ's followers even then would have been extirpated and the Christian religion annihilated. In later ages he has stirred up from time to time persecution of the most violent and bloody kind in order that he might induce every one who professed the religion of Jesus to renounce it and adopt some sort of religious belief and practice more in accordance with his own nature and that of his kingdom. At no time is the enmity of the Serpent against the seed of the woman put forth with greater effect than at seasons of revival by stirring up the profane and irreligious to pour contempt

upon it and ascribing what is the effect of the Spirit's operation to fanaticism and folly.

Such are some of the works of the Devil, and in reviewing this part of the subject we may see the vast extent of his power, the subtlety of his machinations, the wicked nature of his designs, the unscrupulous nature of his instruments, and the unwearied nature of his efforts. There are many more that might have been mentioned and enlarged upon, but let these suffice. We cannot suppose for a moment that he could have done these works of darkness unless he had been permitted by the Almighty Ruler of the universe and far less can we think that he will escape the righteous judgment of God on account of them. On the contrary we are assured that God will bruise Satan under our feet shortly, never more to rise again.

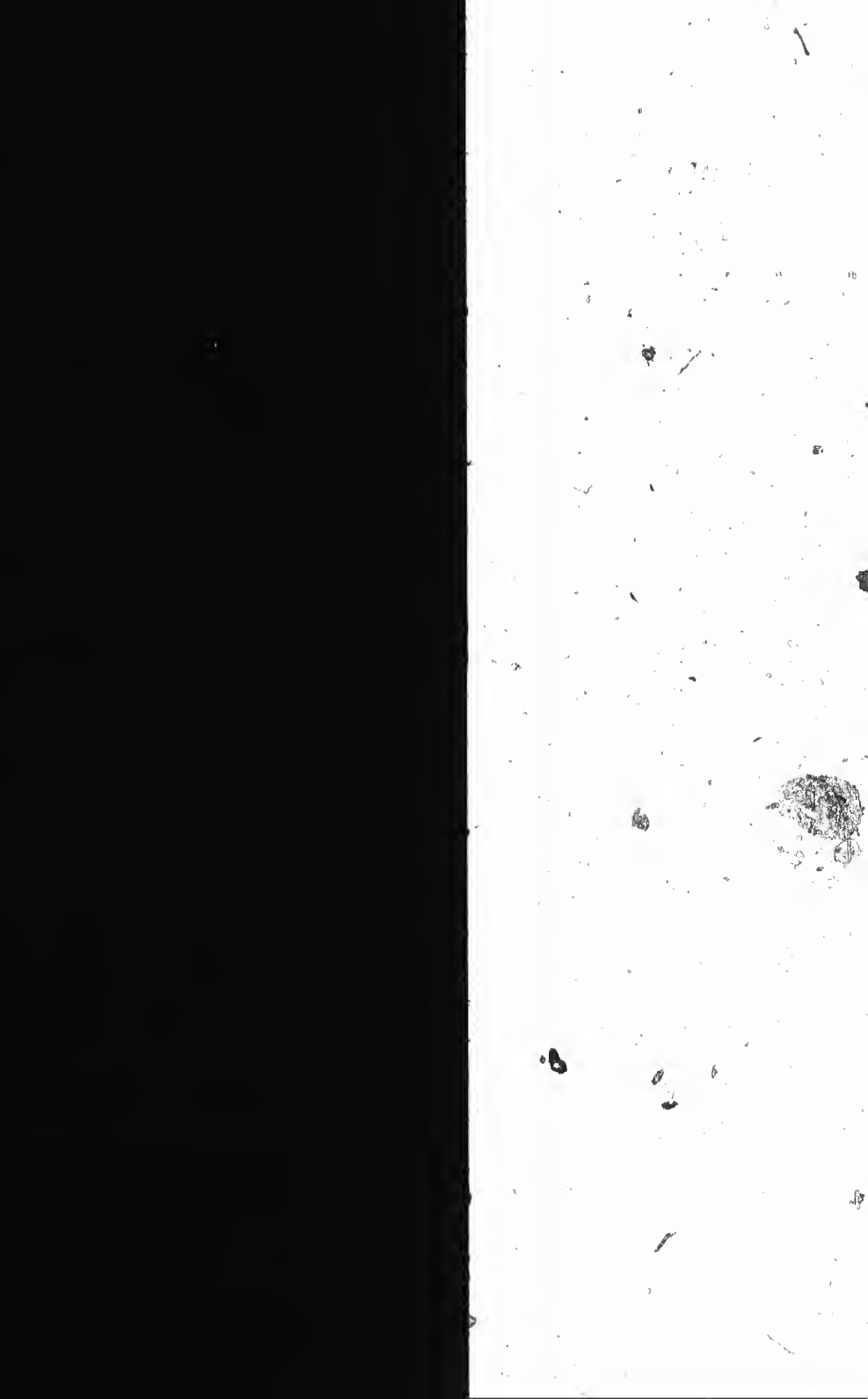
IV. Let us next consider the wiles of the Devil.

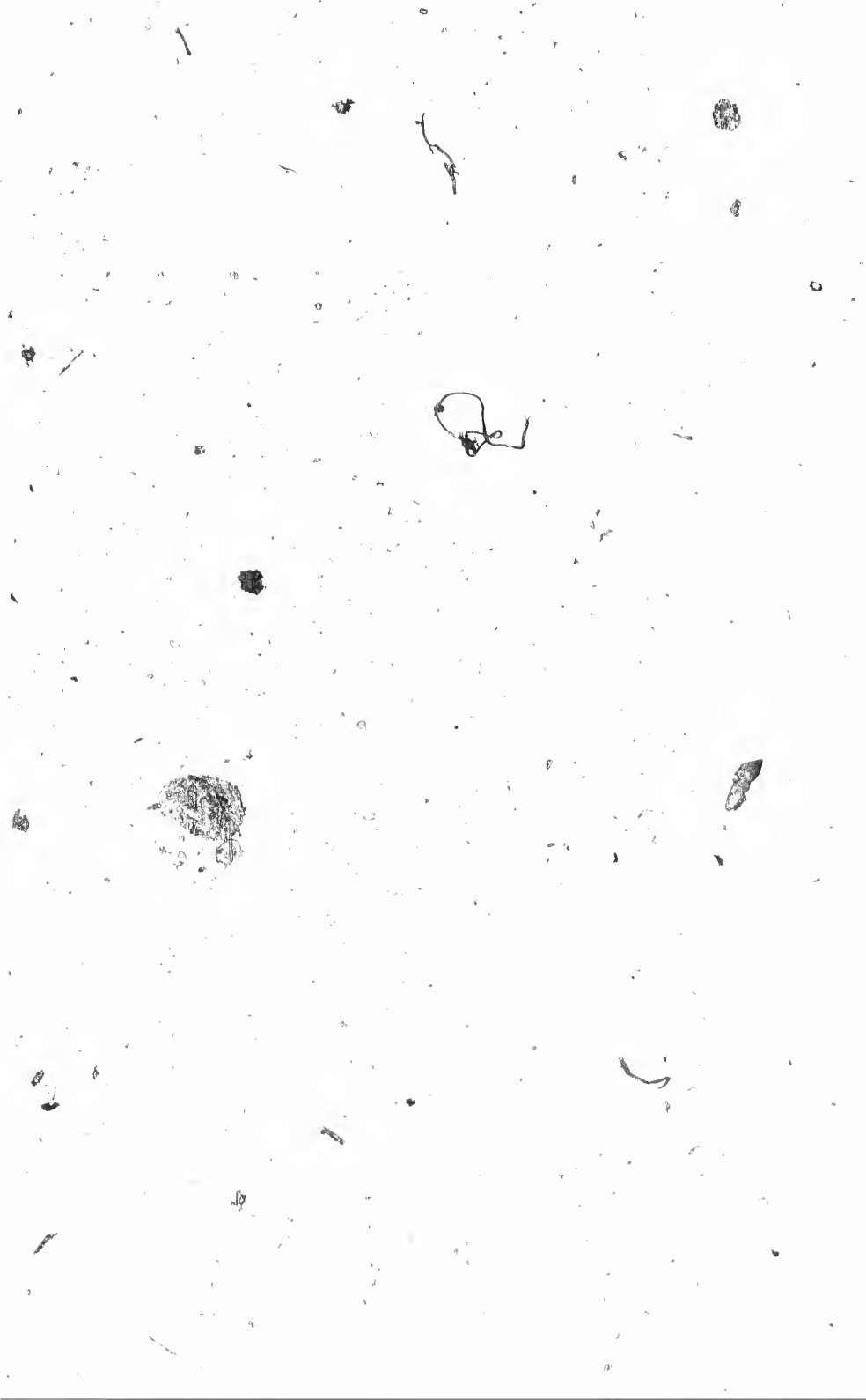
The words of the Psalmist in the 10th Psalm 8, 9, 10, may be applied with great propriety to the Devil when he says speaking of a wicked man.—“ He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages ; in the secret places doth he murder the innocent ; his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den : he lieth in wait to catch the poor : he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.” Nothing can more graphically describe the helplessness and exposedness to danger of the poor afflicted, ones and the relentless hatred and cruelty of their great Adversary, whose constant endeavour is to harass and perplex the minds of believers, by his evil suggestions, if he cannot compass their ruin. There are some indeed (and these constitute the majority) over whom he exercises unbounded sway, for he is spoken of as the spirit, that now rules in the hearts of all the disobedient, by which latter appellation we are to understand all unregenerate persons, who are not subject to the law of God, but walk according to their own lusts. These the Devil is said to lead captive at his will, and to influence in such a manner that he induces them in following after their own inclinations to do his pleasure. It must be admitted they are not all equally prepared to follow his suggestions. A great deal depends upon their habits, education, tastes, inclinations, and circumstances. And herein lies much of the subtlety and skill of our Adversary in adapting his temp-

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tations to the various persons he has to deal with. Among the thousands that are subject to his sway, few are ensnared in the same way or by the same means. Though Satan is a hard master, and his yoke is a heavy one, yet he succeeds too well in making his servants think it both easy and light till they find out their mistake when it is too late. The sinner fondly imagines that he is free from all control, that he is his own master and that he can do as he pleases. Now this is one of the wiles of the Devil, for it is he that inspires him with these false and absurd ideas, while all the time he holds him in his grasp and leads him captive at his will. Does he run in a course of licentiousness and debauchery? He becomes the degraded slave of his appetites and passions until he finds it impossible to break loose from their galling chains. And this result is just what Satan aims at, to render the sinner's return from the paths of sin next to impossible. Nay he makes use of the attempts and failures at reformation on the part of the sinner as an argument to go on in his evil courses. Thus he leads him on step by step until enfeebled in mind and body, ruined in character, deprived of fortune, he falls into the snare of the Devil.

(2.) Another of the wiles of the Devil are the pomps and vanities of this present world, viz: The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Under these three heads are included every thing that can allure us to sin. These are the baits, which the Devil uses and makes effectual either for preventing our getting to heaven or retarding our progress thither. The very circumstance of their being connected with a high state of civilization and refinement, and in many respects inseparable from our condition in society makes them all the more dangerous and seductive. Carnal desires and carnal delights are so congenial to the corrupt state of our hearts that we too readily give way to them, and thus Satan often obtains an ascendancy over us. Nothing can more forcibly illustrate the manner in which he presents the wealth and honours of the world to the mind than that part of the temptation in the wilderness in which he sets the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them before the eyes of Christ as an inducement to fall down and worship him. And there can be no doubt, though he was unsuccessful in his wicked design with the great Captain of our Salvation, and could not prevail with him to move from the path of rectitude one hairsbreadth, he succeeds in





hundreds and thousands of cases in drawing men into sin by an infinitely inferior and comparatively worthless reward.

(3.) Another of the wiles of the Devil is to infuse into men's minds false and erroneous views of religion both as to its true nature and their personal concern in it. We took occasion in a former part of this work to allude to this subject, and now we return to it again under a different view. First of all he deadens the conscience, and makes it proof against all serious impressions, leading men to entertain slight views of the guilt and heinousness of sin. And if ever they are led to think more seriously of it, he snatches away the word out of their hearts and they fall again into their former spiritual sloth and deadness. The Devil induces professors of the Gospel to rest satisfied with outward forms and external ordinances and keeps out of view that religion is a thing of the heart. Consequently all serious godliness is regarded by them as cant and hypocrisy. Christ's blessed work of atonement is made to appear in their eyes as altogether unnecessary and superfluous. Or if it has any efficacy or importance at all, it serves only to fill up their deficiencies and render their otherwise imperfect performances acceptable to God. Sometimes the Devil so to speak, goes on another tack and suggests that if their own works cannot save them, it is no use to make the attempt and not to be over scrupulous about their walk and conversation, in other words not to be very much concerned whether they obey God's commandments or not. Then as to the last judgment and the final awards of the last day that is accounted a very small matter and all those solemn passages, wherein the process of the last judgment is described and set forth are mere exaggerations and have little or no truth in them. As to hell, there is no such place, or if there is, it is not so dreadful as it is represented, and as to sinners being kept there to all eternity, that is not true; but after a while they will be delivered from it. The joys of Heaven on the other hand he represents as far from being so desirable as the scriptures hold out.

4. But let us advert now to the wiles which Satan practises upon believers, for although the arch deceiver is not permitted to go great lengths with them, yet he is allowed to annoy and disturb them, and in this for obvious reasons he takes peculiar delight. "Satan is too skillful to assault established believers, (says Scott in his Com.) in the

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full exercise of faith and love, at the first, with temptations to evident and gross iniquities. He is most dangerous to them when most plausible, and presents something profitable without evident criminality. He suggests to the poor or afflicted, that if they were indeed the children of God, surely they would not be left to such sufferings, or to experience such straits; thus insinuating hard thoughts of God, as if he were unkind or unfaithful: or he excites them to affect a sort of independence even of God, by attempting in a sinful manner, to supply their own wants. Sometimes he affrights their minds with gloomy prospects of still greater difficulties; and represents trusting in the Lord, with scrupulous conscientiousness as leading to distress and ruin. By his emissaries he persuades men, that some compliance must be made and deviations admitted, or else they must starve; or he tries to embolden them to venture on some convenient or gainful sin, because they are the children of God, and there is no danger of their being cast off for it. In these and numberless ways, he tempts us to impatience, distrust or sinful expedients of deliverance from trouble, and in opposition to our principles, to prefer sin to suffering. And having a party within us, we too often listen to his soothing flatteries, and are induced to dishonour our profession, or at least to honour it less than we ought to do." *

At no time does Satan more fiercely assault the believer than on his death-bed, suggesting blasphemous and horrid thoughts to the mind, filling him with gloomy forebodings of coming judgment, and making death appear in unwonted terrors. Young believers, who have but lately entered upon a religious life, he assails with poignant shafts of ridicule and scorn tempting them to renounce their allegiance to Christ and return to the world. Such are some of the innumerable wiles of the Devil, but time would fail to speak of them all and to recount all the different ways in which he works out his ends would be a hopeless task.

V. We now proceed to show how Christ destroys the works of the Devil, and we regard this as a far more agreeable part of our task than any other, however useful and necessary they may be.

The Apostle John tells us in his first epistle, iii. 8. "That the Son

* Scott's Commentary on Matthew iv. i—ii.

of God was manifested for the single and express purpose that he might destroy the works of the Devil." 1. c. "for the purpose of destroying, abolishing, or undoing the works of the Devil. He came to deliver his people from that condemnation and slavery, into which the influence and temptation of Satan had reduced them and all mankind; and to restore them to the favour, image, and service of God.*" And to this testimony agrees that notable passage in the xii. chap. of Matthew's Gospel, in which our Saviour vindicates his character and work from the aspersions cast upon both by the Jews. † How or in what manner this great design of the manifestation of the Son of God upon earth was accomplished shall be my business to show.

(I.) We would remark in the first place that Christ destroyed the works of the Devil by his personal ministry in conjunction with the labours of the twelve apostles, and their co-adjutors the seventy disciples. When he entered upon his personal ministry, which was immediately after his fasting and temptation in the wilderness, Christ may be considered as engaged in destroying the works of the Devil, both by his teaching and miracles. Many and direful were the ravages which the great enemy of souls had made among the members of the human family, which often drew tears of bitter anguish from the compassionate soul of the Redeemer, and it was no easy matter to repair these ravages.

There was need for a *power* that was altogether divine, and which no power in earth or in hell could withstand or resist. Among the very first miracles, which Christ performed was one upon a man possessed with a Devil. This was a most appropriate display of his power, for unless he had been fully competent to the task of driving him out of him, he would have been completely baffled, and he could never have recovered the prestige, so to speak, which he had lost. This then was a notable instance in which he destroyed the works of the Devil. And every successive miracle of the same nature was a fresh conquest, a further inroad into the territories of the great enemy. And we are made to understand the true nature of the conflict, which was going on between the Prince of light and the powers of darkness from the dignified and unanswerable reply, which our Saviour gave to that blasphemous ascription on the part of the Pharisees of these

* Scott's Commentary in locum. † Mat. 27-30.

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wonderful works to the agency of Satan himself that it was deadly, and determined and for the mastery, aye for a kingdom, for nothing short of supremacy. Though in a great measure concealed from mortal eyes, yet it was not the less real, and the less mortal. In one point of view the whole of Christ's miracles might be said to be all subversive of Satan's kingdom, inasmuch as all the evils removed by them were the fruit of sin, and therefore were the works of the Devil. If there had been no sin, it is clear there would have been no disease, nor suffering, nor infirmity, nor defect, nor lunacy, nor death. I repeat it again, all these were the works of the Devil, even though they could not be all traced to his own immediate agency, yet they were all undoubtedly the genuine offspring, the branches from the deadly root of sin. Upon these did the mighty Redeemer deal destruction on the right hand and on the left throughout the length and breadth of the land of Judea. But this warfare instead of being attended with noise and shouting, and garments rolled in blood, was carried on in silence and was accompanied with the most beneficial results, as the numerous cures, and the no less numerous dispossessions which were effected by the power of Christ bear witness.*

Not only however was the irresistible power of the Saviour conspicuous in his miracles, but also in his teaching and preaching. With what matchless skill did he elucidate divine truth by his parables, similitudes and discourses! With what readiness did he unmask hypocrisy and the specious and soul-destroying errors of the Scribes and Pharisees and Saducees! so that at last none of them, not even the subtlest among them durst ask him a question, far less dispute with him. Now in all these errors and delusions, the devil had a hand, for he is a liar. † If he can get men to adopt some specious form of error he eventually makes them his prey. Therefore when Christ as the Prophet of his church opposed the dangerous nature of these errors and taught the contrary truths, he might be said to be destroying the works of the Devil. Thus for instance when he exposed the folly and baselessness of the doctrine of the Pharisees about purifying, he was

* *Note.*—We may observe that there are great numbers of cures and dispossessions, which are not particularly detailed, but only referred to in a cursory manner, included in long catalogues which give us some insight into the immense number of wonderful works performed by Christ.

† The only truth the Devil ever uttered was that notable saying in the Book of Job. "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath, will he give for his life."

in effect establishing the truth of the contrary doctrine that however obligatory these external washings were according to the law of Moses and their own traditions, yet inward purity, of which these were only the emblem was of far more importance. And thus he was pulling down one of the strongholds of sin and Satan, which had been set up in the hearts of the Pharisees and the people whom they had deceived.

(2.) By the conjunct labours of the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples. This great work of destroying the works of the Devil was not confined to Christ's own individual exertions, but he called in the assistance of the twelve apostles as well as that of the seventy disciples. There was much work to be done and but a little time, in which to do it. The cities and villages had to be visited and to be apprised that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand". And not only so, but mighty works had to be performed in proof of their divine mission as well as to serve as earnest and foretastes of the invaluable blessings in store for them. The Apostles were sent beforehand in different directions by two and two, probably in order that they might support and encourage each other. They were commissioned to do the very same things which their great Lord and Master was engaged in doing. They were to carry the glad tidings of the Gospel to the remotest corners of the land, and to accompany their teaching with miracles as occasion offered, and amongst other mighty works, which they were to perform, they were expressly enjoined "to cast out devils." Here then was a great additional agency set on foot for the same great end, viz: "destroying the works of the Devil." And we can perceive by the joy and satisfaction which they express on their return from their missionary tour that they had not laboured in vain, nor spent their strength for nought. And one of the chief causes of their joy be it remarked was, "the devils being subject to them through the name of Christ." Nor does the Saviour think proper in the first instance to check their exultation at this circumstance, for he adds in the next verse that so efficient had their labours been, he had beheld Satan as it were falling as lightning from heaven, which seems to intimate that though Satan had once held a very high place in point of power and authority he was in a great measure deprived of it and cast down from his seat: No doubt he cautioned them not to be too much elated at the devils being cast out, (as this might

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lead to vain glory and pride) but he directs them to rejoice rather, because their names were written in heaven. But still it is evident that he cordially reciprocates their joy and that he considers it a just cause of rejoicing on their part that they had been so far honored to be fellow workers with Him in destroying the works of the Devil.

(3.) By His atonement. Nothing has more directly contributed to destroy the works of the Devil than that noble sacrifice which Christ offered up on Calvary inasmuch as it has delivered those from death, who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage, and this as the Apostle says, because Christ has overcome death, and him that had the power of death, that is the Devil. Here is the solution of the first promise, "That the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the Serpent and that he should bruise his heel, i. e. obtain a partial and shortlived triumph over the seed of the woman by bringing him to the dust of death. But eventually the seed of the woman should prevail. This shows us in what close proximity these two have stood to each other, and in what a perpetual struggle they have been engaged. The truth of this Prophecy has been verified in several ways, but chiefly as we have already said in the blessed effects, which have flowed from Christ's atonement. Satan tempted our first parents to sin by eating the forbidden fruit, and thereby cut them off from all hope of Salvation and left them exposed to the righteous judgment of God, even to everlasting exclusion from his face and favour, to all that wrath and tribulation and anguish, which is the portion of transgressors. And had justice been permitted to take its natural course, this would inevitably have taken place. But Christ interposed for their deliverance. "Upon me said he, be the curse, upon me let the penalty fall." And it did fall, and divine justice was completely satisfied and thus the lawful captive was delivered out of the destroyer's hand, and thus was the Devil baffled in his evil designs. So that Christ's atoning sacrifice may be considered as the foundation, or if you will, the crowning point, the chief cause of that destruction which Christ effected with respect to the works of the Devil.

4. Christ destroys the works of the Devil by his Providence. It need scarcely be remarked that the Devil like all the other creatures of God has a certain degree of freedom of action, otherwise he would not be responsible for his actions. He is permitted so far to follow the

bent of his will. But then on the other hand, he is completely subject to the control of the Supreme Being. At no time was he free from this, nor can he by any means shake himself free from it. Great and mighty as he is, he is a creature still. The Divine Being, or rather we should say the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great disposer of all events for wise and good reasons permits Satan to exercise a certain degree of influence over the minds and actions of mankind. But he still reserves to himself the inalienable right to restrain and control his actions. It is perfectly obvious that these observations would lead us into unprofitable metaphysical discussion, and therefore we would rather direct attention to such remarks as are more suitable to the design of this treatise, which is chiefly of a practical nature. We have seen how Christ destroyed the works of the Devil during his personal ministry upon earth assisted by the twelve Apostles and the seventy disciples. But now we have to take a more extended view of the subject, and to show how he destroyed the works of the Devil since his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and his exaltation at God's right hand.*

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was more than a match for the old Serpent. No sooner had he ascended his mediatorial throne than he renewed that spiritual conflict with the old enemy, which he had carried on for ages. In consequence, says Scott of Christ's death, resurrection, ascension, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Satan

* We might have taken a retrospective view of the manner in which Christ destroyed the works of the Devil in Old Testament times; but as we have more to do with what he did since he was manifest in the flesh, we have thrown a few observations on this part of the subject into a foot note. In the case of Job we see when the Devil's aim was to drive the Patriarch to curse God to his face, the afflictions which he was permitted to bring upon him only made his virtues shine the brighter, especially that of patience, by which he became the most illustrious example of that most excellent grace. We do not read of the Devil's agency in the case of Joseph, but there is no doubt that Satan had much to do with the trials to which that lovely and loving son and brother was subjected. It was he that put it into the hearts of his brethren first to take away his life and then to sell him for a slave. And yet we see in the mysterious workings of Divine Providence, Joseph was not only delivered from that sad condition, but raised to the highest honour. We do not read of the Devil's agency in the case of the Jews, when captives in Persia; but who can doubt that he had a hand in inflaming Haman that bitter enemy of the Jews with black malice against them first through mortified pride, and then with a strong desire of revenge not only against Mordecai in particular, but against the whole Jewish nation, and yet how signally was Satan's evil designs against the People of God defeated, and what would have been an occasion of weeping and lamentation and mourning and we was turned into one of joy and triumph.

the ruler and prince of this wicked world, whom all idolators worship as their God, and all unconverted sinners obey as their king was to be judged and condemned with all his subjects, the sentence began to be executed in his expulsion from his usurped dominion by the conversion of sinners, the subversion of the heathen temples, and the destruction of idolatry. Scott's commentary on John xii. 31.

With these observations we entirely concur. Satan had set up a kingdom in the world of the very worst description and it was Christ's business to undermine and destroy it. This may be said to have begun on the day of Pentecost when no less than 3000 souls were converted to the truth as it is in Jesus, expressing their heartfelt contrition on account of that very sin, which had afforded a short-lived triumph to the Devil; viz: the having killed the prince of life and glory. Then afterwards by the successive inroads made upon the territory of ancient heathendom, when the temples were deserted, her oracles silenced, the worship of idols abandoned, and the worship of the living and true God substituted in its room. In consideration of the work that was done, it might truly be said that Satan's kingdom was shaken to its very centre, and that within a very short time the whole then known world was pervaded with the Christian religion through the zealous and unwearied labours of the Apostles and first teachers of Christianity, with the blessing of God upon them, or as it may be differently expressed with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The Acts of the Apostles, and also the epistles and the Book of Revelation bear ample testimony to the terrible destruction which the works of the Devil underwent in the primitive times of Christianity. In the later ages Popery or the man of sin has received some dreadful shocks in the Reformation under Luther and many other champions of the truth, again at the time of the first French Revolution, when Napoleon the first reduced the Pope to a mere cipher. The divisions of the church have been overruled for good and are gradually healing, and a spirit of unity, love and concord prevailing, more and more, so that the breaches of Zion are fast filling up. Infidelity and Atheism though alas! too prevalent among all classes of society are kept in abeyance and not allowed to assume a bold front. Political revolutions too are still breaking out in various quarters, but we may fondly hope that they will ere long be brought to an end. And as to religious persecutions, there are none at present existing,

and though they may for wise and good reasons be permitted to return, yet there is every reason to think that as mankind become more enlightened, especially rulers, they will see the utter folly of persecuting and maltreating their fellow-men for their conscientious opinions. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." Yea the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. His kingdom is that which shall never be moved. His power is irresistible and his wisdom unsearchable, and with these two infinite perfections on his side he can overcome all opposition, and make every thing bend to his purposes.

(V.) Christ destroys the works of the Devil by the preaching of the Gospel and other means of spiritual improvement.

The great end of preaching, as the Apostle Paul affirms, is to pull down the strongholds of sin and Satan, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. When the Gospel of the kingdom flourishes, the kingdom of Satan is shaken to its very centre. It cannot stand before the truth. Even when the Devil has had the powers of this world on his side and they seemed leagued for the destruction of God's people and cause, yet it has maintained its ground, and has finally triumphed over all opposition. The most efficient weapons against a spiritual and invisible kingdom are of a spiritual nature. The outward and material weapons are too unweildy to do much execution in such a warfare, and this the Devil knows full well. If therefore he can manage to poison the sources of truth with polluted admixtures he does far more harm than when he raises up the most strenuous opposition to the cause of religion on the part of the kings and rulers of this world. Indeed, by having recourse to such methods Satan sometimes overreaches himself and converts what he intended as a weapon of offence into one of a contrary character. The ministers of the Gospel of every name and denomination who preach the Gospel in all its native purity and power, though many of them may be men of inferior talents are doing more for the destruction of Satan's kingdom than can be well imagined. We hesitate not to say that under Christ with them rest the whole business of undoing the works of the Devil, and delivering the souls of men from under his despotic sway and investing them with that liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. Would

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that all invested with the sacred office would keep this in mind as the great end of all their preaching, viz: to destroy the works of the Devil. This would impart a life and energy to their preaching, which perhaps it does not at present possess, the idea that they are appointed to undo what the Devil has done, to build up what he has thrown down, to revive what he has deadened and rendered lifeless, to restore what he has crippled and diseased, to bring back to usefulness and honour what he has made contemptible and unprofitable, in short to be fellow-workers with Christ in the great work in which he is engaged, viz: to bring men to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jesus.

All the diversified forms of error and of sin and consequently the power of Satan disappear before the light of truth. Every Christian effort, that is put forth, every sermon that is preached, every missionary enterprise, every benevolent exertion that is made for the good of mankind gives a fresh blow to Satan and his kingdom. If any thing would convince us of this it is not only the positive advances which are made by such means, but the strenuous and determined opposition by which all such movements are met with on the part of Satan.

VI. We now proceed to speak in the sixth and last place of the final doom of the Devil, together with all the rebel angels and damned spirits subject to his control.

(1.) Let us speak of the justice of his doom. This arises from the nature of his doings, which have ever been of the most malignant kind, and diametrically opposed to the divine will and which evince a most intense hatred towards him. Whilst the worst and most abandoned sinner amongst mankind can be brought to repentance, there is no place for repentance in Satan's case, for he glories in his shame, and revels in wickedness, and would as soon go out of existence as confess himself in the wrong.

We have had occasion to mention some of his works and wiles, and even from the imperfect view given of these, we may be able to judge of their character as being altogether and decidedly wicked and injurious. The works of the Devil have not only been evil, but have been so continually for a long succession of ages without the smallest admixture of good, and instead of becoming less wicked, have always been increasing in that hateful quality, being more extensive in their

range, more destructive in their effects, and more diabolical in their character. Has there been a single scheme of benevolence on the part of the Deity that he has not endeavoured to countervail and to render nugatory? God made man upright and holy at the first, but the Devil made him a sinful and guilty creature. The scheme of redemption, intended for the recovery of man from his fallen condition, the Devil in various ways has tried to thwart and to render abortive. The worship of the true and living God, he sought to abolish, and introduced in its stead various forms of idolatry and superstition, thereby as we have shown robbing God of the glory due unto his holy name and transferring that worship and glory to himself and his base associates. The sources of truth he has corrupted, and introduced floods of error so that the whole of society has been at times infected with infidelity and atheism, the apostles of which have evinced as much zeal and diligence in spreading their doctrines broadcast as ever was shown by the apostles of the truth. Nor has the enmity of Satan against God and his truth at all abated. But lately we have seen Bishop Colenso contravening the facts of the old Testament history and turning them into ridicule, and Renan denying the miracles and misrepresenting the history of our blessed Lord's life given by the evangelists. It is not necessary however that we should pursue this line of argument in order to show the justice of his doom, for it is self evident. If the Devil should go unpunished, after all that he has done, then God's moral government could not subsist, it could not stand, for then all other transgressors must be permitted to go free and to sin with impunity. But God will vindicate his justice in the sight of assembled worlds, and the Devil will most justly be punished and made to feel the weight of his almighty arm.

(2.) Its certainty. The doom which awaits the Devil is not a matter of doubtful disputation, but of undoubted certainty. It is only a question of time. This some of the evil spirits that were cast out by the power of Christ freely acknowledged.—And he cried out, saying, "Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy one of God. Mark i, 24. And another said "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not?" Mark v, 7. And a third says, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son

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of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? What time? The time appointed in the decrees of heaven, viz: the judgment-day. So we see from these passages that though the damnation of the Devil is delayed for a time, yet it slumbereth not. It is sure, it is certain, and this he and the rest of his associates know full well. If hope be the well-spring of life, surely despair must be its counterpart. There are innumerable hosts of Rebel angels, as well as the Devil himself, who have no other prospect before them but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. And if they are capable of looking into futurity through the long vistas of eternity, which we have reason to suppose, how dismal it must be! They know full well from their present and past bitter experience how vain it is to attempt to resist God's power or to escape from it, and therefore they remain passive, being kept under chains of darkness unto the Judgment of the great day with the gloomy prospect ever in their view. When permitted, they may continue in their wicked career, but the time will certainly come when they will be deprived of all power to do mischief.

(3.) Its dreadful nature. We can form but a feeble and inadequate conception of that wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish which Satan and all his rebel hosts and damned spirits are treasuring up for themselves against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Nothing can exceed the dreadful terms in which their doom is spoken of in Scripture. In general it is said to be the blackness of darkness for ever. We are made to understand that it consists not only in being deprived of all happiness but positive misery. Tribulation and anguish and misery without mitigation or relief. But what renders it more awful still is the eternity of its duration. The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. And these (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment. Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. But the doom of Satan will be uncommonly severe, as he has been preeminent in wickedness, so shall his punishment be beyond expression dreadful. He has been the cause of ruin to thousands and tens of thousands, and though they must bear their own iniquities, and suffer the just judgment of God on account of them, yet even their doom will be light in comparison to his. First of all he will be cited before the judgment-seat

of Christ and amidst the universal curses and execrations of those whom he has deceived and ruined, he will be condemned to endure such an accumulated weight of suffering of which all his previous sufferings were but a shadow. He will be deprived of all power to do any farther injuries either to the bodies or souls of men and consequently his misery will be increased tenfold, he will be made to feel the full thunder of the power of the Almighty's vengeance. But it is in vain for us to attempt to describe the kind and degree of vengeance which will overtake that apostate spirit and therefore here we must drop the curtain and leave it to the imagination of our readers.

REFLECTIONS.

1. From all that has been said we may learn in the first place what we ought to do with regard to the Devil. Has he a real existence? Is he the powerful, active, cunning and malignant being, which he is represented in scripture to be? And does he still persevere in his wicked designs against the human race, both saints and sinners, to annoy the one and ensnare the other? Then it is clearly our duty to stand on our guard against the Devil. There are several passages which exhort us to resist and withstand him, and also to flee from him. 1 Pet v, 8,—The passage which forms the motto of this discourse, Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. Ephes. iv, 27. "Neither give place to the Devil." Ephes. vi, 16. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." James iv, 7. "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith." These admonitions will have little or no weight with those, who have slight and superficial ideas of Satanic influence. And this is undoubtedly the tendency of the present day. But very different will be the impression which they will make on the minds of the pious and reflective. There is no need in their case to point out the importance and necessity of watchfulness against the wiles of the Devil. For they are persuaded both from scripture and their own experience that their only safety lies in being fully alive to the power and subtlety of their great adversary—in not trusting in their

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own strength and resources, but in the power and might of the Redeemer, in being clad in the panoply of the Gospel, and above all in taking the shield of faith, wherewith they may be able to withstand the fiery darts of the wicked *one*.

2. We may learn further from this subject that a continual and determined warfare has been going on between Christ and the Devil. This appears very distinctly from the many facts, which have been stated and illustrated respecting the Devil's history in the course of our enquiries. This warfare has been going on for ages with varied success, sometimes on a large scale, sometimes in a smaller, sometimes in an open and undisguised manner, sometimes in a secret and invisible way, sometimes through human means, sometimes through demoniacal agency, but always followed with important results either for the weal or woe of those who were interested in the issue. The length of a contest generally arises from the inability or weakness of either one or other of the combatants to decide the matter in dispute, so that though each may be able to stand his ground, yet they may lack the ability to bring it to a final issue, as has often been the case in human affairs. But we cannot suppose for a moment that such was the case in the conflict between Christ and the Devil. For if we refer to the fact of Christ being possessed of infinite power, as being equal with God, and the Devil being possessed only of limited power, as one of his creatures, it follows that the latter can bear no proportion to the former. And then again if we refer to the history of his conduct and take into consideration the numerous defeats with which Satan has met in all his wicked designs, and moreover the perfect ease with which they have been defeated, we must have recourse to a different mode of accounting for the long continuance of this controversy, and the only solution we can find of the difficulty is, that such was the sovereign will of Christ, and that the great end and purpose he had in view was to illustrate his glorious perfections of power and wisdom in this manner.

3. We have seen in a former part of this discourse how Christ destroys the works of the Devil, and in like manner how he destroys his influence over individual believers, believers we say, for he rules in the hearts of the disobedient with despotic sway. But though Satan is permitted to tempt and annoy, nay even to harass and perplex





the people of God, he is never allowed to prevail against them. He may tempt them to sin in various ways, but they are enabled through grace to resist him. He may cause them to doubt their interest in Christ and his salvation, but they are not left to sink into despair. In the dark hour of affliction, he instills into their minds hard thoughts of God, leading them to doubt his goodness and his wisdom, but these are soon put to flight by brighter and more consolatory considerations. When drawing near the gates of death, Satan not unfrequently takes advantage of believers, to obscure their evidences, to darken their prospects and to fill them with groundless apprehensions, but the Captain of their salvation does not leave them long in such afflictive circumstances, but appears for their deliverance and fills them with all joy and peace in believing. Ye tried servants of the Lord! who have often experienced the baneful effects of the Devil's influence, ye know what it is to endure temptation, and ye know also what relief, what consolation, what peace have been imparted to your souls in these trying moments, and ye would not claim exemption from them, (distressing and painful as they are), that the power of Christ may rest upon you in a more sensible manner. Be not then discouraged, but rest in the blessed assurance that he that is for you is greater than all that can be against you. He will shortly bruise Satan under your feet, and you will be made conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved you, over the Devil and all your spiritual enemies.

4. We may infer in the fourth and last place from this subject the marked difference there must be between the children of God and the children of the Devil.

Whatever be the opinions which are entertained on the subject, of which we have been treating in the world, the difference which actually subsists betwixt these two classes of persons is immense. The children of God are holy, good and righteous, while the children of the Devil are unholy, evil and unrighteous. The children of God love him supremely and devotedly, while the children of the Devil are at enmity with him. They hate him, his people, his cause, his worship, his law, all which shows the very same kind, though perhaps not the same degree of enmity as that which the Devil feels and evinces, and

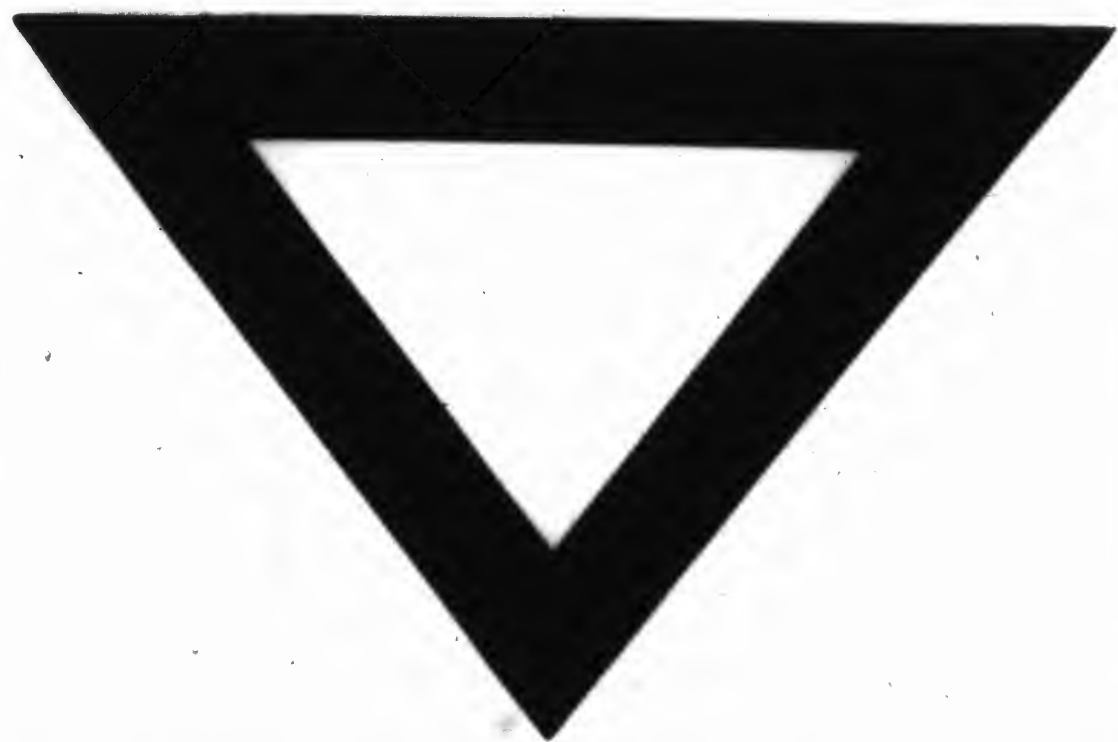
therefore they are to all intents and purposes his children. Neutrality in this case is altogether impracticable, we must either belong to one or to the other. This is an unpalatable truth, especially to those who would wish to be thought to belong to the ranks of the true servants of God, while they are living altogether inconsistent with their christian profession, yet it is true nevertheless, and will be found so at that day when God shall call them to judgment.

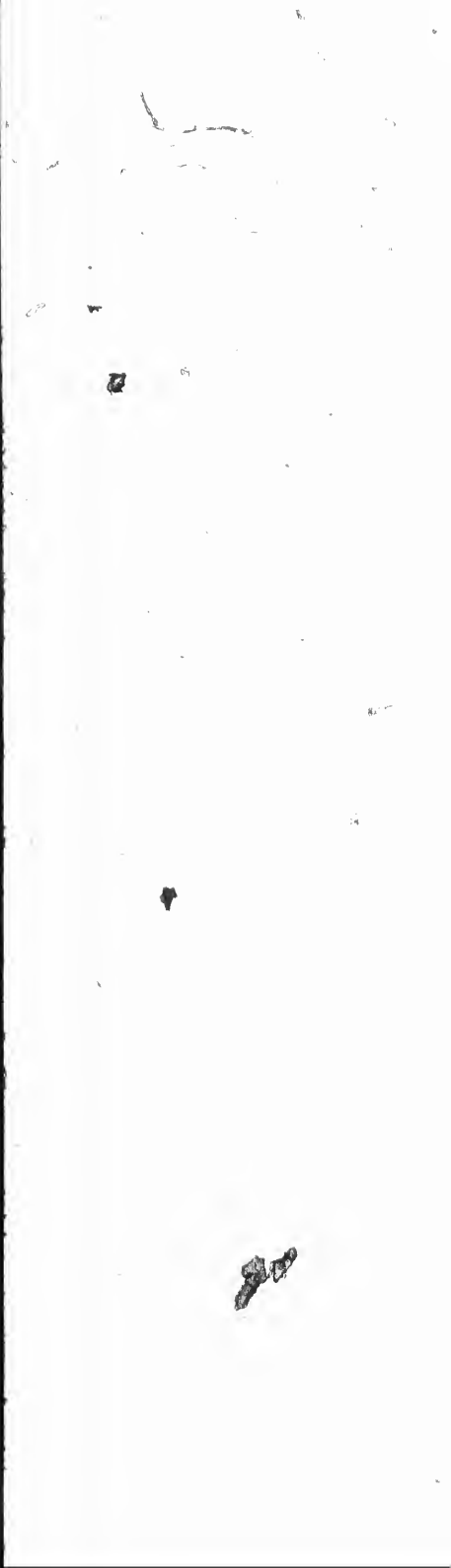


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