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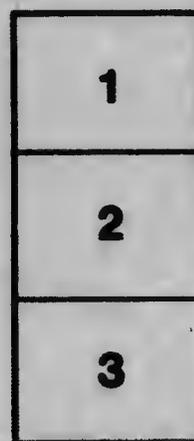
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The Slocum Lectures, 1901

THE ETERNAL LAW

BY

J. PHILIP DuMOULIN, D.D.

BISHOP OF NIAGARA



TORONTO

THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY, LIMITED

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THE CHARLOTTE WOOD SLOCUM LECTURES.

The Charlotte Wood Slocum lectureship on "Christian Evidences" was endowed in 1890 by the lamented lady whose name it bears, the wife of Elliott T. Slocum, Esq., of Detroit, in grateful memory of the life and labours of the Right Rev. Samuel Smith Harris, D.D., LL.D., the second Bishop of Michigan. Mrs. Slocum departed this life in Dresden, 6th June, 1891. Bishop Harris—to quote his own words—"moved by the importance of bringing all practical Christian influences to bear upon the great body of students annually assembled at the University of Michigan," undertook to promote and set in operation a plan of Christian work at said University, and collected contributions for that purpose, of which plan the following outline is here given, that is to say :

To erect a building or hall near the University, in which there should be cheerful parlours, a well-equipped reading-room, and a lecture-room, where the lectures hereinafter mentioned might be given ;

To endow a Lectureship similar to the Bampton Lectureship in England, for the establishment and defence of Christian truth, the lectures on

such foundation to be delivered at Ann Arbor by a learned clergyman or other communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church ;

To endow two other Lectureships : one on Biblical Literature and Learning, and the other on Christian Evidences, the object of such Lectureships to be to provide for all the students who may be willing to avail themselves of a complete course of instruction in sacred learning and in the philosophy of right thinking and right living, without which no education can justly be called complete.

The first of the Lectureships projected by Bishop Harris, that for the establishment and defence of Christian truth, was endowed in 1886 by the Hon. Henry P. Baldwin and wife. The second to be founded is that on Christian Evidences, and it is in fulfilment of the earnest wish of the founder that the first course is given by the Rev. John Fulton, D.D., LL.D. The lecturer is appointed upon the nomination of the Bishop of Michigan.

As Mrs. Slocum executed no deed of trust when she placed in my hands ten thousand dollars for the object above named, I have thought it advisable to appoint as Trustees of this fund those gentlemen who are charged with the trust of the foundation for the Baldwin Lectureship, viz. : Messrs. Henry P. Baldwin, Henry A. Hayden, Sidney D. Miller, Henry P. Baldwin, 2nd, Hervy C. Parke, with the addition of Mr. Elliott T. Slocum.

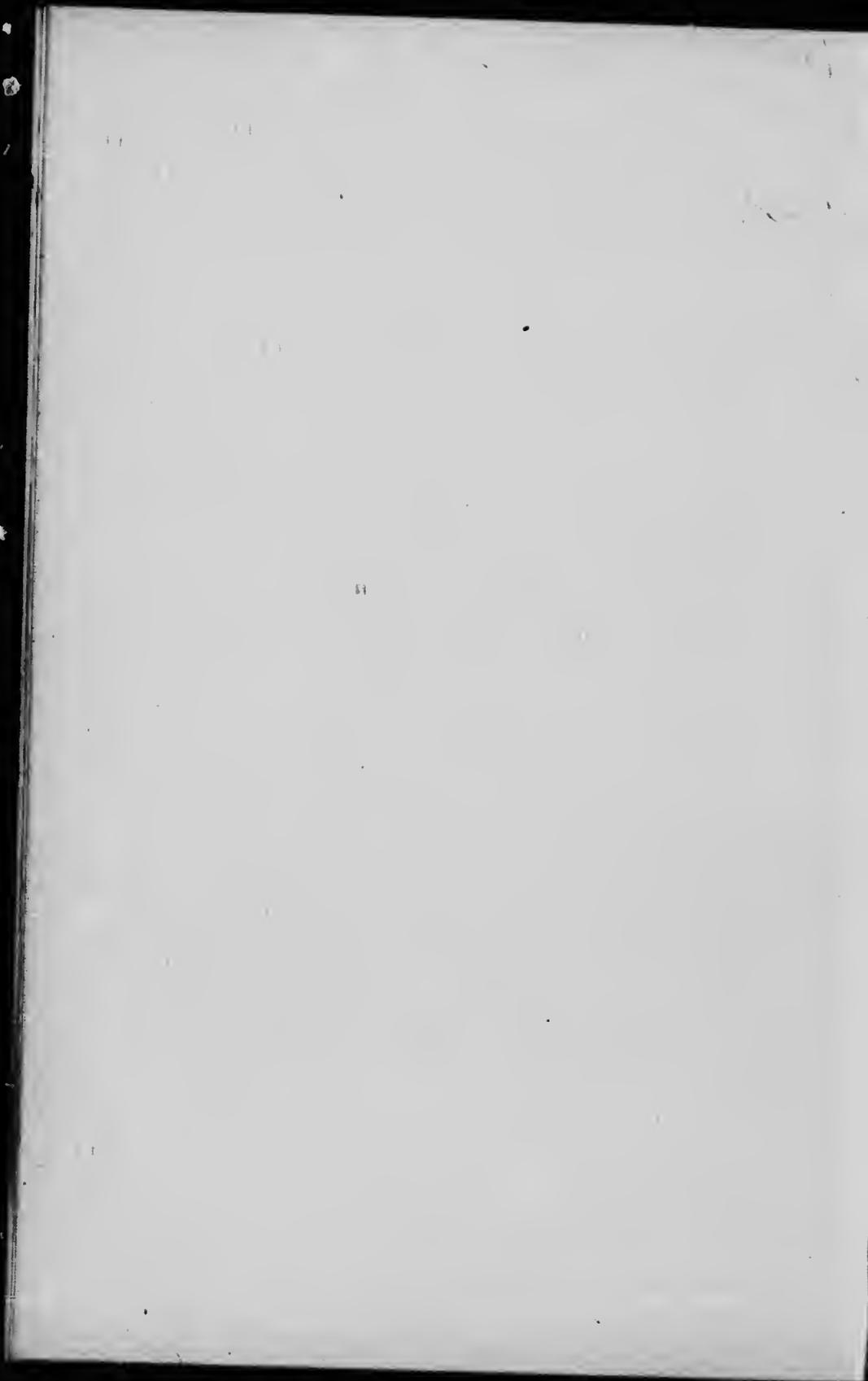
THOMAS F. DAVIES,
Bishop of Michigan.

Detroit.

PREFACE

THE following Lectures are published only in compliance with the requirement of the foundation under which they were delivered: and not because the Lecturer deems them at all worthy of publication. The selection and treatment of the subject were also suggested by the terms of this foundation: "the importance of bringing all "practical Christian influences to bear upon the "great body of students annually assembled "at the University of Michigan." For such a purpose the Law of God appeared to the Lecturer to be eminently appropriate. The Law might be treated in two ways: (1) By unfolding its good and wholesome influences upon the minds of men; and (2) By displaying the many ways in which the Law is disregarded, together with the consequences of such disregard. The latter is the treatment chiefly adopted in the following Lectures.

See Home—Hamilton, 1902.



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I.
**THE LAW : ITS HISTORY, DELIV-
ERY, AND NATURE.**



THE LAW : ITS HISTORY, DELIVERY, NATURE, AND OFFICES.

IT is at once my pleasure and my privilege to invite your companionship in studying the Eternal Law of God.

I submit that our subject is of the very highest importance to us all. The law is intended to guard our most sacred interests, and in doing so it comes in collision, day by day, with the mighty forces of all world life. *This law* is very far indeed from being an obsolete piece of legislation, which, having accomplished its appointed work is now reposing in dignified retirement. *Far from it. It is a rampart* against which the most furious billows of life are dashing continually. This law is as much challenged, broken and trampled upon now, alike by savage and civilized peoples, as it was in the world's worst days. In the British Empire, in America, in the Continental Nations it is as greatly sinned against as in Rome before her

fall. *It is daily contravened*, precept after precept, as we see by rampant Idolatry, by Blasphemy and Infidelity, by Sabbath-breaking and Irreverence, by disregard of all family relations and obligations, by Covetousness, Theft, Falsehood and Murder, and all this under the gaze of the most advanced forms of modern life and civilization.

Therefore this living law is an ever fresh and most necessary study for all who would escape the damnation of sin and "live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

I propose to submit to you the Divine Code according to the following order and arrangement :

1. The Law : Its History, Delivery and Nature.
2. Laws Relating to God and His Worship (1 and 2).
3. Laws Relating to God's Name and Day (3 and 4).
4. Laws Safeguarding Family Life (5 and 7).
5. Laws Safeguarding Social Life (6, 8, 9 and 10).

6. Results of Obedience and Disobedience to Law.

We begin with some notes on the Law : Its History, Delivery and Nature.

It may fairly be assumed that no great potentate ever lived and reigned in this world without promulgating His laws. What indeed is His reign but an administration of law? This is true of the greatest of all potentates, the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." This "great King above all gods" gave forth His laws to His creatures, and, as might be expected, delivered them in matter unexampled and in manner most impressive.

Government is perhaps the greatest of problems. The government of a State, a Kingdom, an Empire is a business of supreme difficulty, but the government of a world no finite mind could grasp. The government, too, of a world all dislocated and out of joint suggest difficulties of the largest and most multiplied kind.

God's plan of world government, as we see and read it, was indeed unique and compre-

hensive. In this world of human government we see it in various forms, Kingdom, Republic, Empire, Commonwealth, and the like. When the Almighty Ruler took this matter in hand He set up a model government. He selected one people, placed them in the centre of the earth, reigned over them Himself. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut. 32: 8). "You only," said He, "have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3: 2). "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King" (Isaiah 33: 22.)

One of this very nation in after days described the system of government by God Himself in a word which has become current ever since. He called it "*The Theocracy.*"

It was an essential part of this plan that a law should be proclaimed to this people, and that accompanied by every circumstance and demonstration calculated to invest it with impressiveness, with solemnity, with authority,

with the awful sanctions of God, and with the power of the Lawgiver to avenge every transgression, and reward every obedience.

Accordingly, the period in the history of the people chosen for the delivery of this law was well calculated to enforce such ideas. It immediately succeeded the mighty deliverance of God's nation from the land of Egypt, the house of bondage. While the recollection of the desolating plagues and the final catastrophe of the Red Sea, the wilderness journey, the water from the rock, the manna from Heaven, was all fresh in their recollection, this same Almighty God convened His congregation that it might hear His law.

The place of law-giving was also chosen with a view to its majestic and awe-inspiring influences. In the grandest solitudes of the Desert, Sinai arose to the height of 10,000 feet, and looked down with stern and frowning brow upon the wanderers. *We know full well the feelings produced in our minds by a passage through the indescribably grand and imposing mountains, gorges and canyons of*

this our American Continent—awe, wonder, reverence, a silent attention to the footsteps of the Creator of objects so lofty, so massive, so splendid. In their presence even the fool becomes wise, the giddy sober-minded, the flippant silent and thoughtful. The cloud-capped mountains stand with heads exalted, with heights and cavities and precipices most awful; they stand as the very sentinels of God!

To all this the Almighty Lawgiver added wonderful effects to suit this great occasion. The mountain burned with fire. The mountain was covered with clouds and thick darkness. The lightning flashed, the thunder pealed. *Unlike Egyptian scenes,* here was no visible presence of God—no figure stood upon the Mount. God the invisible was there. "Clouds and darkness were round about Him, justice and judgment were the habitation of His seat," and from out that awful pulpit the voice exceeding loud proclaimed the ten words of the everlasting law.

This sublimely dreadful occasion, with all

its accompaniments, is best portrayed in the matchless passage of the writer to the Hebrews: "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more . . . and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake" (Heb. 12 : 18).

The law thus delivered was worthy of such an introduction. Worthy of Him from whom it proceeded, and of all the accessories with which it pleased Him to surround it. Never in human history was anything approaching this law promulgated among men. It is at once the shortest and greatest of all codes.

The work of law-making amongst men is, and ever has been, laborious and ceaseless. The law's prolixities and "the law's delays" are proverbs in the world. Of making many laws there is no end. A statute drawn of human hand, discussed by representative as-

semblies and finally passed, is no sooner put in practice than its weaknesses and imperfections show themselves. Professional astuteness discovers flaws and loopholes. *A great Irish barrister* once declared his ability to drive a coach-and-six through any Act of Parliament. This is done daily in our courts. Consequently Acts are amended and repealed and others substituted. So that this process is likely to run evenly with the course of society. *There is nothing in our experience of life more constantly* exhibited than the inability of the wisest men to construct a perfect system of jurisprudence. Great minds have in past times applied their power to this business from Justinian to Napoleon, and have left behind them great legal monuments. *We have* freely availed ourselves of their labors in the herculean work of law-building, but how far, how immensely far, from perfection are the best works of this sort. *Nothing* in all the world of letters covers so much paper as human law, and yet there is not anything so imperfect, so fluctuating, so full of con-

stant change. *No man*, no body of men since the world began has succeeded in framing a universal code applicable alike to all peoples, nations and languages, and so perfect as to need no amendment by flux of time or fault of construction.

In this the law of God is differentiated from all others, and is as far above them as the summit of Sinai was above the desert plain. In ten short words the all-knowing Lawgiver has forbidden all vice and commanded all virtue, and that for all mankind and for all time and space. No amendment of this document has ever been offered, nor ever will. There it stands to-day in all its perfection as when the voice uttered it from the Mount. From its commands and prohibitions there is no escape.

A survey of the long and endless business of legislation as practised among men, with its onflowing and ever-increasing unsatisfactoriness of result, is evidence full and fair that the mind from which the law of Sinai emanated was superhuman, was infinite, was

Divine. *The working* of that mind, as we see it in the Ten Commandments, is as far superior to the working of the mind of man in the department of law manufacture as the landscape furnished by nature's plains, valleys, rivers and mountains is superior to the painted scenery behind the garish lights of the stage.

The presence of the Divine mind in the law of God appears conspicuously in its spirituality. "The law" (writes St. Paul) "is spiritual." *Man-made law* does not, cannot reach the spirit of man. Man can only be subject to its action by overt acts. It fails to notice his thoughts, his intentions, it can only interpret when he has acted them out. Thus most plainly is man dealing with man. There is no supernatural mind at work in this machinery. Transferred to the higher tribunal of God and arraigned under His ten words, we realize that "the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intentions of the

heart." *The collect* prefixed to the commandments in the highest office of the Church suitably reminds her children that to God "all hearts are open, "all desires known, and from Him no secrets are hid," and implores Him "to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts."

The great Preacher on the Mount thus unfolded and taught the spiritual heart-searching power of the law of God as contradistinguished from all others. *If there* be any command demanding evidence of its actual breach it is that which says, "Thou shalt *not commit* adultery." Yet is this the example seized upon by the Preacher from the Mount to fix and expound the spirit-reaching power of the law. "Ye have heard that it was said." But I say unto you, "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her the same hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5: 27, 28). *So also the prohibition*, "Thou shalt *do no* murder." That the *doing* is necessary under this act would be the argument of a lawyer in any law court in the land. *But this law goes behind*

the doing and lays hold of the thoughts of the heart of which the overt act is but the realization. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, Whosoever shall be angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. 5: 21, 22). "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," is the subsequent teaching of the disciple whom Jesus loved. *The Church's prayer* after each particular commandment is her acknowledgment of its spiritual heart-reaching, "incline *our hearts* to keep this law."

The penetrating character of the Divine law is again observable in its integrity. It stands or falls as a whole and altogether. *In this respect* also it stands alone and apart from all human enactments. An indictment under each particular statute for a specific offence is a well understood procedure in all our courts. Not so here. According to the reasoning of St. James a breach of one commandment is

the breach of all. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2 : 10).

This, as the Apostle argues, is the necessary effect of a perfect law proceeding from a perfect being. Sin against any particular clause is sin against the Lawgiver, and therefore a transgression of the entire law. It is like a chain to which a weight is suspended. Cut any one link of the chain and the weight falls to the ground as effectually as if every several link were divided.

What an answer is returned by this closely searching and convicting law to all cavillings and special pleadings. It is customary to revile the history which records the severest, the most far-reaching penalty for the taking of an apple. At Sinai we learn it is not the article stolen but the stealing; neither is it altogether the stealing but the disobedience, nor the disobedience to a particular precept but to the Lawgiver. Every sin is a trampling upon the whole law, because it is committed against Him from whom the whole

law proceeds. *This will* be found to work itself out in our morals. A man may claim that he is honorable, keeps his word, meets his engagements, is a good son moreover, and a good employer, and benevolent and public-spirited, and generous and a good citizen, and what not. He pleads guilty only to what he calls a youthful peccadillo. He admits he has crossed the line of virtue. That is all. What shallow pleading is this and heartless, too? How plain it is that in sinning against an infinitely pure God he has sinned against Him altogether. How plain it is, too, that he has transgressed not one law only as he pleads, but the whole Decalogue. *Where is the truth* and honour and word keeping, and good sonship and good citizenship, and generosity and benevolence of him who has lied cruelly and robbed shamefully, and violated every bond by one act of adultery or uncleanness.

How practically plain it is that He who breaks one commandment step by step breaks all others, and justifies St. John's brief, com-

prehensive, undeniable definition, "Sin is the transgression of the law."

The moral law of God *is eternal*. It must be so. As He changeth not, so this fair transcript of His mind and will possesses the same immutability. Accordingly in founding and giving laws to His Kingdom the Messiah pointedly announced that "till heaven and earth shall fail not one jot or tittle of this law shall fail." This quality is imbedded in the Decalogue. So long as the eternal distinctions between right and wrong endure so long must this Divine rule obtain. Nothing could ever make wrong all that it enjoins. Nothing make right all that it condemns.

This obvious feature of the eternal code was foreshadowed in two distinct steps attending its delivery. (1) *It was written*. "Written with the finger of God." "The writing was the writing of God." It was guarded from the perils of oral transmission, and as a revelation intended to remain. It was committed to writing, and in this one single instance no

amanuensis was employed, God Himself engraved the words.

(2) *It was written upon tables of stone.* No perishable material, but the hard, rugged rock of Sinai, that it might stand like that imperishable Mount of God. *When* in the anger of Moses these tables were broken the command instantly followed: "Hew thee out two tables like unto the first." These latter remained down to the Babylonish Captivity, and the words engraved upon them survived the loss or destruction of the stones and passed onward to Messiah's day, and from the Jewish to the Christian Church. *By the Church* the eternal law has been written in every form from the very first, translated into every living language, printed in every Bible, Prayer Book and Catechism in the world, inscribed in homes, schools, churches. More than all this, deeply, indelibly written in the minds and memories of successive generations. The ancient charge delivered by Jehovah to His people has been literally obeyed. "These words which I command thee this

day" (Deut. 6 : 6) "*shall be in thine heart. Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children. Thou shalt write them.*" All this has been fulfilled, is being now fulfilled, and ever will be so long as right and wrong fill this world, and it is necessary to promote the one and repress the other.

In the wild rush and progress of our modern life let us never forget that no changing, advancing civilization can make obsolete laws that enter into our nature as radical and as fresh, as fadeless, as real to-day and as necessary as when God first gave them to man. *Vice and virtue* are part of humanity as it is huddled together in this present world, and so long as they stand together here so long must the everlasting law of God live and reign with its sanctions and penalties.

Thus existing in perpetuity amongst men the law has now, as in earlier ages, a great office to fulfil. Of this office St. Paul speaks, saying, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." In that famous saying the Apostle teaches that the whole machinery

of the law, with all its ceremonial accompaniments, was in those Jewish ages a pedagogue leading the people nearer, ever nearer, to Christ through sacrifice and type and shadow and symbol. *This truth, fully as we recognize it, does not exhaust the meaning of the Apostle's words.* The law continues its scholastic influence among men. The writer of the very passage under consideration was himself an example of the path by which the law leads a sinner to the Saviour of men. "I had not known sin," says he, "but by the law." "Sin that it might appear sin working death in me. That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7 : 24, 25). *It is thus the office of law to convict the soul: to find it guilty of sin. To expose its helplessness, and so to open the way for the vision of Him who came into the world that He might save sinners. Having accomplished its work so far, the law, in all its glorious liberty, becomes the rule of life to the saved man.*

St. Paul's personal experience has been brought out and reproduced in the elaborate argument with which the Epistle to the Romans is occupied. The leading points in that argument are punctuated by the four-times repeated "*Therefore.*" *The argument opens with a description of the Gentile world in all its ungoverned full-blown depravity. (Ch. 1.) Proceeds to shew that the people who did such things were under law and accountability to God. "When the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."* (Rom. 2 : 14, 16). *The conductor of this argument turns from the Gentile to the Jew. Of him he says : "Thou doest the same things."* (Rom. 2 : 1.) *The Jew, he argues, is under a higher law : "Unto them were committed the oracles of God."* (Rom.

3 : 2.) "What then, are we (Jews) better than they (Gentiles)? *No, in no wise*, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under Sin." (Rom. 3 : 9.) The equal guilt and responsibility of the whole human race, both Jew and Gentile, is thus concluded : "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, *that every mouth may be stopped*, and all the world may become guilty before God. *Therefore* by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. 3 : 20.)

If this Reasoner left the matter here, hopeless, indeed, would be the condition of Jew and Gentile. By the inspiration of God's good Spirit, he shows the way of escape from the moral prison of our guiltiness. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested. . . . Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His

grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3 : 21, 24.) Then follows an unfolding of the work of the Man Christ Jesus, for us men and for our salvation, in atoning to the broken law by sacrificial death, and in fulfilling the law's demand by perfect obedience, both in our human nature and by our representative, closing up with the ever blessed, ever welcome inference : " Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5 : 1.)

The position of the saved, the justified man, relatively to the law, is next taken in hand. This same man finds himself again in conflict with the law. His sanctified will, his renewed nature, dictate and set before him the things that are right and good. He delights in the law of God after the inward man ; but forasmuch as the good nature did not eradicate and expel the old altogether, but was rather engrafted upon it, the old uprises and asserts itself, and pulls in the opposite way. " I find a law in my members warring against

the law of my mind." (Rom. 7 : 22.) "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ." The honest strife with indwelling evil shall end when the body of sin is cast off. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15 : 57), and so comes in sight the next happy, encouraging conclusion : "There is *therefore* now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, *who walk not* after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8 : 1.) The hot and hard conflict between flesh and Spirit, new justified nature and old, will be carried on in every renewed man. It is proof to him that he is a new man. After tracing this same opposition, this writer demands : "What shall we say, then, to these things?" (Rom. 8 : 31) to which he promptly and satisfactorily answers : "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Some will lay many things to your charge ; some will condemn, a whole confederacy. "Tribulation," "Distress," "Persecution," "Famine," "Nakedness,"

“Peril,” “Sword,” will all labor “to separate man from the love of Christ.” “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” (Rom. 8 : 37).

And thus we reach the fourth and last condition of man, “saved by grace” relatively to the law of God. It first condemned him utterly and hopelessly. Then it stood against the law in his members. Now it becomes the guide and counsellor of this redeemed life. “I beseech you *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.” (Rom. 12 : 1.) This is the introduction to a noble and lofty line of duty in every relation of life, concluding thus : “Owe no man anything, but to love one another : for he that loveth his brother hath fulfilled the law. For this Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet ; *and if there be any other commandment*, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour : therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13 : 8-10.)

Such is the great office of the law as developed by a Great Teacher. The Eternal law finds man, as the good Samaritan found the traveller, "robbed, wounded, naked, half-dead." It does not diminish his wretchedness. It tells him how ill and helpless his plight. But it takes him up and brings him to Jesus Christ, and in Him there is justification, peace, support in conflict, rules and principles of holy living, and victory over evil, and life everlasting. Forasmuch, then, as the law is perfect, spiritual, united, eternal, and charged with an unending office toward man, it has ever been accorded the foremost place in all ethical and religious systems.

It was the centre of the Hebrew civilization. In Tabernacle and Temple it held its place in the most sacred central shrine. It went before the people. It was in their every-day lives and households. All other Scriptures gathered round it. "The law and the

Prophets." That familiar sentence describes its rightful supremacy. History, prophecy, poetry, "all Scripture given by inspiration," was an extended commentary and elucidation of the law—its delivery, its history, the blessings obtained by obedience to its precepts, the curses incurred by disobedience and neglect. All the Holy Writings revolved around this central luminary. The same position is readily assigned to the Decalogue in the Christian Church. In the order of the Church's worship, having reached the highest of all our services, the Communion office, it begins with prayer for purity of heart addressed to the Omniscient God, followed immediately by the heart-searching law, according to which Christian people are to try and examine themselves in the most sacred moments and acts of their religious life, by which the Church and the world are now to be regulated and finally judged. It is also to be observed that the same order of Divine Service most surely received amongst us preserves and recites the eulogies of the

sages and singers of ancient days. Their utmost enthusiasm enkindled around this most Holy Law, and their burning utterances celebrate the attributes of God's central revelation to us all.

The first Psalm is indeed a summary of all the following Psalms, setting forth the happiness of those who walk in the law of the Lord, the condemnation and failure of the godless. The 19th Psalm is a glowing commentary on the heavens and the firmament as bright witnesses for God, passing in the same spirit from natural to revealed religion and linking them together. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom unto the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." But, above all, in this connection stands unrivalled the great 119th Psalm, the beautifully constructed acrostic in which every verse is an encomium on the Eternal law:

"Thy statutes are my delight and my counsellors."

“ I am wiser than my teachers. because I keep Thy law.”

“ I remembered Thine everlasting judgments, O Lord, and received comfort.”

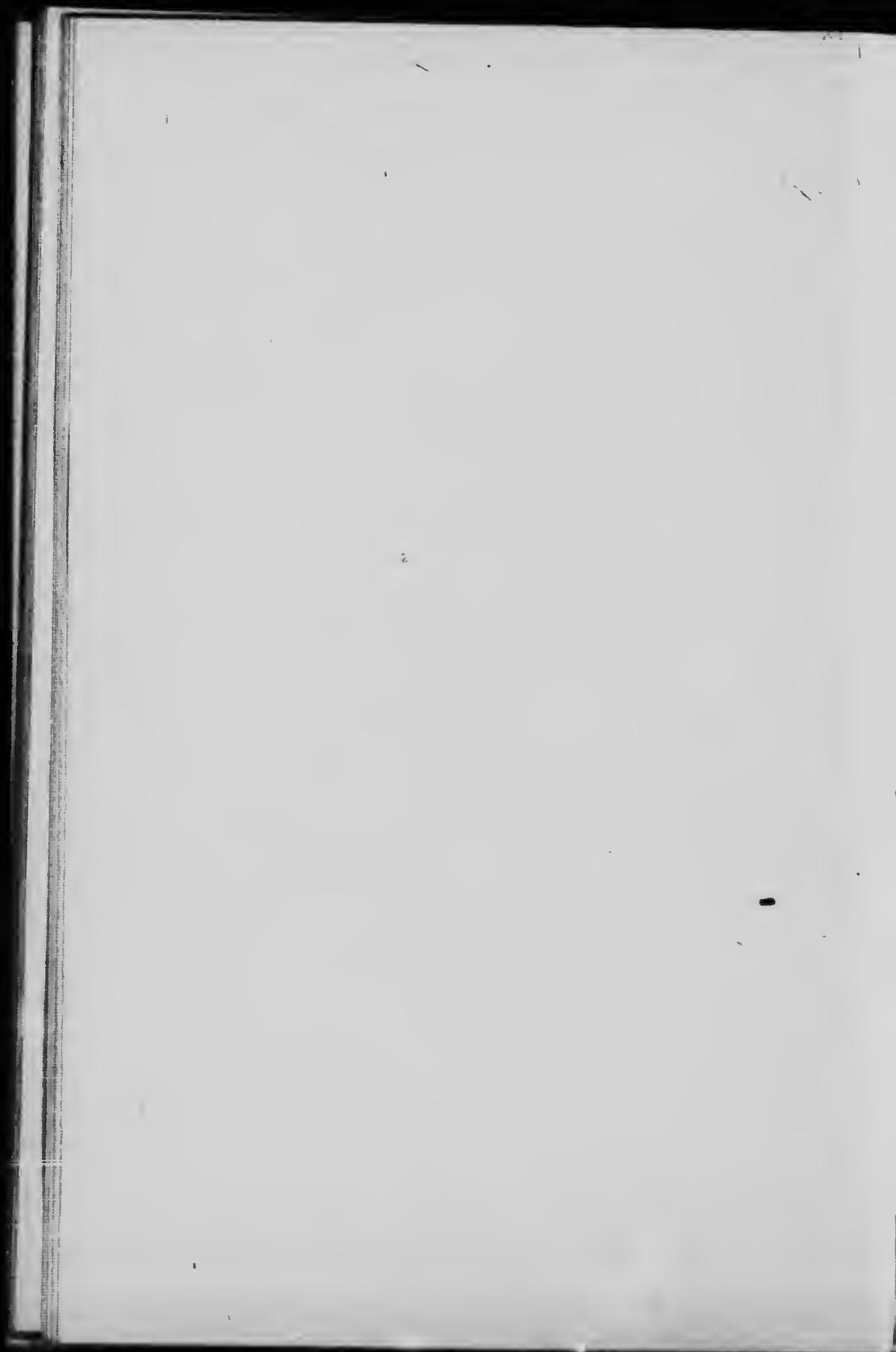
“ How sweet are Thy *words* unto my taste.”

“ Thy law is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”

“ Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.”

“ Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.”

“ I have seen an end of all perfection, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.”



II.
LAWS RELATING TO GOD AND HIS
WORSHIP
COMMANDMENTS I AND II

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP (I AND II)

How altogether according to the eternal fitness of things it is that the first word of the Decalogue should be about God. This accords with every right feeling of our nature. If there be a God He must be "over all blessed forever." The admission of His being contains the supremacy of His nature and position. *God* in our creed is the Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, the Almighty. *He is maker of all* and judge of all. *To Him* we owe everything. *Without Him* we can do nothing. Hence he is before all, and whatever concerns Him is the first commandment according to the most indisputable moral order.

How evident it is that God here asserts Himself, sets Himself up before us as the one object of service and adoration. This is nothing else than a following out and perfecting of the previously existing dictates of natural religion. *Conscience* within us witnesses first to

God the Supreme, to whom we are accountable ; *and all Nature* in her wide domain enthrones God as the author and finisher of all that there we see. *His mind* and design and workmanship are stamped upon earth and sky and stars and all the host of heaven. "He is before all things and by Him all things consist." *This is the foundation* of all religion, natural and revealed, and this is the First Commandment. *Its* companion, the Second Commandment, sets forth the manner in which this one and only God is to be worshipped.

The two commandments taken together and viewed in the light of their origin and bearing upon mankind—1. Assert the Being and Perfections of God. 2. Bear witness against Atheism. 3. Bear witness against Idolatry.

All reason obliges us to believe that when God made man, blessed him, and provided in every way for his temporal advantage, He also revealed Himself to His new-made children. "They heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden." He conversed with them. This

was but a continuance of a previously existing communion between God and man. *This was continued*, as we read in the early history of our race. *Abel and Enoch and Noah* were each and all in fellowship with God. *When God* called Abram from his country and kindred the call was not unfamiliar, and he arose and followed it in the spirit of a great faith. *After the same* fashion and anterior to the delivery of this law, when God was preparing to reconstruct things in the world, He communed with Moses, who was His chosen instrument. *When the time* came for commissioning Moses and sending him to Pharaoh, Moses naturally enquired how he should answer Pharaoh's demand for God's name and character. *In reply* God was pleased on this occasion to make a great, though brief, revelation of Himself, His being and perfections. "I AM THAT I AM." . . . I AM hath sent me unto thee." This great name, like God's methods in this very law, expressed every necessary idea in fewest possible words. It asserted the Eternal Being

and Perfections of God, His pre-existence of all things. As Moses afterwards expressed himself, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." *All the powers and perfections* that we call the "attributes of God"—*Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Love, Justice, Goodness, Mercy*, everything entering into the being and nature of God—is expressed in that pregnant sentence, "I AM THAT I AM." *This was at once intelligible* to Moses, and ever after to the Hebrew people. *The great "I am"* was to them a revealed, a well-understood God, infinite in all His being and character. So that when the Son of God stood among them, and boldly yet quietly and calmly applied this appellation to Himself, saying, "Before Abraham was I am," they could endure no longer. *Regarding this as the acme of blasphemy* "they took up stones to stone Him."

If indeed God made man and to man revealed Himself as Maker and Father and

Judge, it follows that God is to be loved, worshipped and served by His creatures. The venerable words oft recited amongst us are not only sublime poetry, but strong reason and sound argument. "Be ye sure that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. O go your way into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise" (Ps. 95).

Now there were two paths by which this consequent duty of the service of God could be evaded: (1) By denying God in toto. (2) By false worship. In short, by Atheism and by Idolatry.

By these two ways the sons of men in all ages from the very beginning have turned from God, and against those self-same wicked ways God issued and directed the two statutes now under consideration.

(1) *God spake these words and said: "I am the Lord thy God."* This fundamental Article was denied from the very beginning. *St. Jude* speaks of those who in his day "denied the only Lord God." *He then* connects such

with Cain and with Sodom and Gomorrah, pointing out how Enoch, the seventh from Adam, testified against all such. *Atheism* is of early date. *The Appearance, Action, Revelation of God* in this world provoked and evoked the opposition that we call Atheism, just as in the fullness of time the Incarnation and Ministry of Jesus drew out the personal appearances and counter-workings of Satan. *In the days of the Monarchy* we read of the progress and presence of the God-denying band: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." *Following the course of time we may observe* that the denial of God flowed onward in two streams: (1) *A practical denial that gave Him up* without argument or fencing of any sort; that dismissed God from the universe and from daily life without thought or trouble and lived without Him.

It is painfully evident that amid all our light and opportunity in these days, there is yet a vast number who come within the purview of this law upon which we are now

descanting, and under its provisions are guilty of actual though not of professed Atheism.

It may safely be averred that the congregation of those who are practically, though not theoretically, without God in the world is alarmingly great. It is a sad and depressing reflection, that multitudes of otherwise reputable men in our country to-day never stop to think about God. They do not oppose His claim, nor resist His law. They are absolutely indifferent. On this subject they desire to be let alone, if they desire at all in connexion with it. *He must* have lived in this world without observation who has not noticed the vast numbers of men whose business absorbs their entire being, and who in life and consciousness are as untouched by this First Commandment as if it had never been pronounced, whose lives are lived as apart from God as if He had no existence.

This is one of the most deplorable facts presenting itself to the Christian conscience. It

is a stirring appeal to all that is Christ-like and missionary within us. It calls upon us to pray and intercede; if occasion offers, to speak and plead wisely and with well-weighed words; to live and walk so as to commend God and His religion in us to all such men; and having done what we could, to leave the matter in His hands who spake these words and said, "I am the Lord thy God."

(2) *There is also a theoretical Atheism that tries to justify itself and argue God out of existence. The literature of this latter kind extends in some way over the last three centuries, being fragmentary and of small importance. In the last century, Atheism—Open, Assertive, Aggressive—was found in England, although not among the educated classes. Within our own memory an Atheist was returned to Parliament by an important manufacturing constituency. Many Atheists are doubtless to be found among the working classes, and the degraded classes, perhaps also among what are called the higher classes, in both England and America to-day. The*

open propagandists of the system are neither many nor conspicuous.

Atheism obliges us to notice two things concerning it, wherever it has gained foothold among the people.

(1) *That it asks us to believe what in our ordinary common-sense daily life we would never think of believing. Nature teaches us reason and experience, and Education teach us to seek the cause for every effect. A Causeless world we cannot believe in. "A fortuitous combination of atoms" producing effects such as surround us in this earth is beyond reason's pale. Wherever we trace correspondence we trace a contriver and builder also. The key that fits the intricate wards of a fine lock, the combination that opens a vault, the glove that fits a hand—all evidence a previously existing, wise, knowing, skilful constructor and maker. There is in all such examples the same correspondence that we see between the lungs of man and the atmosphere surrounding this world on which he lives and moves and has his being. We*

pass a fine family residence just completed— electric light, furniture, heat, comfort of every sort, adaptability the most complete. *Who made it? Did it pile itself up as we behold it? or had it an architect to design it and bands of artificers to execute the design, and a proprietor to say what he wanted, and pay for it all, and enter into it and enjoy it?*

On leaving a train after a long journey, we pause and stand to gaze at the mighty iron, panting giant engine that has pulled the long train through the night and into the station. Through what mental process do you go as you survey the locomotive? That it is a wonderful piece of invention and workmanship, demanding and exhibiting the intelligence of a son of God to plan and place it all together. That it is absolutely impossible for any sane person to imagine for a moment that it had no contriver, constructor and driver.

The most familiar of common objects, a book, at once suggests an author, a writer, a compositor, a proof-reader, a printer, a binder, a publisher. To say it placed itself

on the shelf without these would be to talk as man bereft of the most ordinary share of reason. *Nothing but an* absolute renunciation of our wits and a poor imbecility could make us think either that Chance made the fine residence, the book, or great engine trembling there with the very agitation of life, or that it made itself. *By parity of reasoning* we conclude that any system calling upon us to believe that the whole framework of the heavens and the earth and atmosphere corresponding with the being and necessities of the creatures living in them, came together without a mind and a hand, without a maker and God, runs athwart all reason and experience, as well as all reverence and gratitude.

(2) *The fruits of Atheism in the lives of its professors.* "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" Is that all? What follows? "Corrupt are they," etc. (Ps. 14. 1). *The same word fool* is applied to Job's wife, who said "Curse God and die." *If Sodom and Gomorrah* and the cities about

them are to be regarded as the outcome of Atheism, may God Almighty save all men and cities from the unmentionably horrible crimes that left Him no alternative but to utterly burn up and consume their irreclaimable filthiness.

France in modern days may be regarded as the chief seat of Atheism. There lived the philosophers who formulated and published the Encyclopædia in 1750. Mr. Buckle, in his "Civilization," says this publication was the first formal proclamation of Atheism. In 1764, Hume met a party of the most celebrated men in Paris, of whom seventeen were professed Atheists. In the same year Walpole writes of the educated Parisians: "their avowed doctrine is Atheism." In 1770, Mirabeau published a work so methodically arranged as to gain for it the name of "The Code of Atheism." It was read very widely by the savants, and by the ignorant, and by women. In 1774, Priestly reported that all the philosophical persons to whom he was introduced in Paris were professed Atheists.

The higher intellectual writers of the period and the more inferior openly advocated Atheism. *Buckle writes* that "the domination of Atheism was the mental habit of the generation immediately preceding the revolution." *What then? What fruits came of all this? In 1793* came upon that unhappy land and people the most awful, bloody and destructive revolution ever known in any land, when rulers, and the rich and noble were cruelly murdered, and the Seine ran red with blood—and God was formally dethroned and an harlot set up in His cathedral, and the Sabbath day abolished, and licentiousness reigned, and lust and blasphemy ruled. Then came Imperialism and Napoleonism, and twenty years of bloody war, a sanguinary, ambitious glory, going out in defeat and shame. *And then the Commune of 1872* and the defeat of France by Germany. And now the Republic and the unrestrained life of the wickedest city in the world. *The inglorious descent of France from the pinnacle of ambition to the place of a beaten, a third-*

rate Power in Europe. So much for Atheism. Now for Idolatry, the other path by which man forsakes God.

(3) The Ancient World, when not Atheistical, seems to have been largely involved in idolatry. The patriarchs and their families were the lights and witnesses of those early days. The mass of humanity made gods and worshipped them, living in those abominations which ever accompany the service of false gods.

This condition into which man in early days was plunged is a standing and a warning witness of the liability of the human race to lapse into the same paths of widespread and abominable idolatry.

The selection and separation of one family and people from the rest of the world, their erection into a peculiar people, a chosen nation, was designed to condemn and counteract the prevailing idolatry, and to conserve and exhibit the worship of the one true God. "Ye are my witnesses that I am God and there is none else."

This chosen nation sprang from idolatrous parentage. "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood and worshipped strange gods." (Josh. 24). By a wonderful and punitive course of events this people made its way into Egypt, and for 400 years lived amid all its false gods, idols, temples and worship. During those dark days the worship of their father's God must have been exercised with great limitations or well-nigh forgotten. *When at last* Jehovah interposed for their deliverance it was in the way of controversy with the gods of Egypt. On them He sent His plagues, over them He asserted His immeasurable superiority. *So soon as* His people had left Egypt and entered on their journey He delivered to them this very law. He established Monotheism for all generations. The education of the Hebrews in that system was careful and systematic. God never appeared to them in visible form. "Ye saw no manner of similitude lest ye corrupt yourselves and make a graven image." The Second Commandment of the law prohibited the making or worshipping of all

such. A descending and entailed curse was pronounced against all transgressors and the reason was given, "I am a jealous God." *Their sanctuary contained no representation of God. He warned His people that in the land and about the land whither they were going they would encounter the heathen and their divinities. With them they must have no commerce. Their gods they must not worship; with them they must not intermarry. It was impressed upon this people from the very first stage of their national life that they must remember their mission as the worshippers and witnesses of one God in the presence of all other idol-serving peoples.*

Never was there a system so perfect, so necessary, so clearly defined as this monotheism of the Hebrew people. *Never did people so frequently and fearfully fail to exhibit it in all its beauty and power as this same nation. Their long-drawn history from this time to the Babylonish Captivity is one checkered story of apostasy after apostasy, judgment after judgment, failure upon failure,*

It may be here observed that there are two degrees in Idolatry. Against the first, that of having other gods beside Jehovah the first command is directed, and against the second, that of worshipping the one true God through an image or symbol or likeness, the second, command is directed. The chosen people, the very witnesses for God, were guilty of idolatry in both degrees.

Here at the Mount of lawgiving, in full view of all its amazing terrors, the people led by the priest corrupted themselves and made an image of the god from whose land they had just escaped. They called it their god, and worshipped it with the filthy orgies of the Egyptians.

When they entered the land they "mingled with the heathen and learned their works. They offered their sons and daughters to the idols of Canaan, and the land was defiled with blood." The 400 years of the Judges' rule was a long record of idolatry and punishment alternating. *In the days of the Kings,* Jeroboam set up the golden calves and made Israel to sin. *The*

names of Ahab and Jezebel are forever accursed as Baal-worshippers, nor are they alone among the sovereigns who led the people in transgression. The lamentations of psalmist and prophet are loud and sad as they name the foul and false gods after which the tribes followed, till finally the King of Babylon, as the executor of their outraged God, carried them and all that they had captives till the reign of Cyrus the Persian. That last and bitterest chastisement, the loss of land and temple, the impossibility of singing the Lord's song in a strange land, the harps on the willows and the weeping recollection of lost days and opportunities, effectually purged and cleansed this people from idolatry. After their return and when their Messiah was among them He charged them with many a sin, but never with idolatry.

This history of God and idol worship, so strangely, wickedly, perseveringly intermixed, surely has been written under the sense of a great necessity and for a great purpose.

There it stands as a speaking witness to all

subsequent nations brought into the same relationship with Jehovah, of their fallibility in this same matter, of their temptation and inclination to forget the Lord their only God, and forgetting Him to put some other in His place, and so perpetuate the ancient standing sin of idolatry. *If plague, punishment, banishment, disaster, national calamity of every sort could have expelled this most obstinate sin from the world it would not be here to-day. It is still found in all the black marked places on the missionary map in Africa.*

It is the great incentive, or ought to be, to all Missionary operations. When the mighty Apostle of the Gentiles stood in proud Athens where, it is said, were more gods than men, "His spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to Idolatry."

When Bishop Heber looked upon Ceylon and India, so pregnant with nature's wealth and adornments, he sighed out his soul in his great universal hymn, for "the heathen in his blindness bowing down to wood and stone,"

for the lamentable fact that amid all nature's glories, "only man is vile."

From ancient days and peoples, filtering through the very people organized to defeat it, dwelling in this twentieth century world, is the old, old sin, and abominable, of rank Idolatry, with all its cruel and bloody rites and orgies.

That this same struggled hard for its place among civilized and Christian nations will be evident to anyone who calmly reads Church History through the Middle Ages and down to the Reformation period.

One of the first acts of the Church of England on emerging from that struggle was to issue a volume of "Sermons and Homilies appointed to be read in Churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory." In this book is found a sermon of great length "Against the peril of Idolatry."

In a note appended to the Communion Office in the English Prayer Book, any adoration of the Sacrament is forbidden and declared to be "Idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians."

It is not our intention, however, to turn at all to the Theological aspect of this matter, but rather to its practical side, by asking ourselves the question, the momentous question: Is it possible for Christian people now, amid all the light and intelligence of this twentieth century to be Idolaters, and, while outwardly holding to the Christian Creed and the Ten Commandments, to worship false Gods?

The answer to such an inquiry we would prefer not to give our own selves, but rather allow Holy Scripture to return it "with all weight and authority." This it does in at least three places. *In Eph. 5. 5, St. Paul* shortly and plainly says: "No covetous man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God." *In Phil. 3. 19, the same Apostle* says of some in that place: "Whose god is their belly." *In the closing words of his General Epistle, St John* utters this command: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."—(I. John, 5. 21).

Here, then, are three ways in which Christians may commit Idolatry. By covetousness.

By self-indulgence. By giving themselves to the service of unnamed idols.

(1) *Against covetousness the whole Bible in both Testaments is an extended warning.* How significant the fact that the first Idolatry of Israel was the setting up of a golden calf; and the first Idolatry of Gentile Imperialism was the setting up by Nebuchadnezzar of a golden image. This golden god has ruled men and nations in all the past, has enthroned itself in the innermost shrine of their hearts, has driven them to the commission of every conceivable meanness and crime. *A roll of names tell this story.* Laban, and Lot, and Achan, and Nabal, and Gehezi, and Balaam, and Dives, and Judas, and Simon Magus, and Ananias, and Sapphira, and Demas became slaves, traitors, thieves, liars, and apostates. *At this Golden Throne they sacrificed, body, soul, life and character.*

The greatest Teacher of men gave it a special place in His teaching. "Take heed and beware of covetousness," and then to expose its deadliness, he spake a burning parable of

a fool and a lost soul. *Was he singular?* "So is everyone that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." *Has this Mammon worship* at all decayed since this conspicuous example of it lived and died? *Is it not* now in constant evidence? *Is it not* the one distinguishing sin of our times?

Men there are who would not walk from their homes to the nearest church to worship God, yet would leave all and sell all, and undertake an indescribable journey to the Klondike, and perish in the attempt to get gold.

Is that the hard service of a hard God called Mammon? *Mammon worship, all absorbing, appears in other forms.*

The opportunities of this age to accumulate must be vast and numerous beyond ordinary conception. A millionaire is an ordinary being. To be extraordinary one must be a multi-millionaire. The concentration of wealth is amazing. We now hear of billionaires.

Place yourself in such a position. Think

of the crushing load, its variety of interests and investments; the sleepless vigilance demanded of them; the diligence necessary to keep off invaders; the all-absorbing nature of the whole life; its power to exclude all other thoughts; the self-importance it necessarily creates; the flattery it engenders. And if that one thing—that fortune—that money, around which all these gather, be not an idol, I desire to know what an idol is.

Such a man, possessed of such wealth, to keep him from idolatry would require more Divine grace, and daily prayer, and discipline, and desire to give, and humility, and godliness than I fear such men generally possess.

“The love of money is the root of all evil
“the which while some have coveted after
“they have erred from the faith, and pierced
“themselves with many sorrows.”

“Charge them that are rich” in this world
that “they be not highminded nor trust in
uncertain riches, but in the living God, who
giveth us all things richly to enjoy. That

they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, glad to distribute, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." (1 Tim. 6.)

These are the only safeguards in such cases against Idolatry.

Judge ye—judge ye in all charity, whether they are the general accompaniments of vast wealth.

We freely and gratefully praise and acknowledge the abounding liberality of many rich men, who in these days have given and are ever giving millions towards many noble and worthy objects. Thank God for such men, for such gifts. Every one of them is a witness to that generosity which Christianity inspires. Their illuminating influence is—alas! that it must be said—counterbalanced by examples more numerous, I fear, on the other side.

We have read and heard of those whose rule it was to give nothing to religion; of others whose inelegant maxim was "give nothing to anything"; of others who refused to com-

pensate a man for saving their lives ; *of one* who refused to fence his mother's grave in a desolate churchyard because she could not get out and others were not anxious to get in ; *of another* who did not even thank a man who at his own life's risk plucked him from the track of a flying Empire express ; *and so on, but how few* of all the kings of fortune have yielded obedience to this first commandment as drawn out by the great lawgiver of old: "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." "*All these* things come of thee and of thine own have we given thee."

The idolatry of wealth puts to silence such sentiments, and it is only the almighty grace of God that can save the wealthy from coveteousness, which is idolatry.

This country, so free, so prosperous, opens wonderful possibilities to every young man. I may now be addressing future millionaires and capitalists. I therefore take it upon me to suggest some practical antidotes to gold worship and all its accompaniments.

a. Recognize God always. "I have set God always before me," was the declaration of the greatest of men, while the wisest of men, next to Him whose word I have just quoted, puts the matter thus: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3 : 6.

b. Never gain money by a crooked road. "Gather gain by every means that is justified by honour."

c. Having made money, spend it. Be generous. Spend it. Lend it. Give it. Be generous at home. Be hospitable. Be kind to relatives and friends. To the poor. To philanthropy. To religion.

d. Remember how frail the thread that binds you to all your wealth. A fleeting breath. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field." "This night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided." "Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain. He heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall

gather them." In a recent railway accident a financial king offered a fabulous sum to any one who would dig him from beneath the ruins, but ere any one could reach him his life had ebbed away.

e. Remember, oh remember, that gold is not an idol, but a talent. You are a trustee. As such you will be called upon for your account.

Rules such as these, reasonable, scriptural, happy in fulfilment, will save from the loathsome greed of gain, from that miser life which is a degrading idolatry.

2. The Epicurean god found by the apostle among the Philippians was, indeed, a bestial one. "Whose god is their belly." "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Dives fared sumptuously every day, fast and feast day alike. "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." *This is to worship the beast. Such indulgence opens the way for every abomination in life.* Belshazzar the king made a great feast to 1,000 of his lords, and drank wine before the 1,000. Then followed harlots

and false and foul gods, and profanation of every sacred thing. *The Antediluvians* "did eat and drink till the flood came and destroyed them all." These tables are still spread amongst us. The gorgeous and extravagant banquets of the rich, course after course, wine after wine, till nature is violated by surfeit and gluttony. *The gin palace* and whiskey dives of the abject and the poor, where the fiery draught maddens, enrages and inflames.

The devotees of this bestial god are found in palace and foul tenement, on the coast of Africa, among the savage nations, and in the splendid mansions and clubs of the West End. *What* miscellaneous multitudes worship and serve these cruel divinities in every city in the world, and in the fair suburbs and rural parts. *In how many homes* are their altars erected and surrounded with broken-hearted victims, the dregs of a most miserable humanity. What millions of pounds are ever offered at their shrines ; more than the cost of army and navy and judiciary, and police and education of the people. More

than the total funds of all philanthropic, missionary and benevolent societies together. England spends annually 750 millions of dollars on strong drink. But what is the most incalculable cost in money compared with the sacrifice of human lives, of immortal souls for ever being made to these destroying gods.

3. *What of the unnamed idols.* Suppose we look at *Self*. Would you see and hear a self-worshipper. "What shall *I* do, *I* have no room, and this will *I* do, *I* will pull down, "and *I* will build greater; these will *I* bestow "all *my* fruits and *my* goods. *I* will say to *my* "soul, *Soul*, take *thine* ease." *How easy* it is, then, to make self an idol, to set up self, to love self, to worship self, to bow down to self, to make self the altar before which every one else, over whom we have power, shall make sacrifice. To consider nobody but self. To live largely at the expense, inconvenience and suffering of others. That is the ugliest as it is the commonest, of all gods. As Beelzebub was prince of devils, so self is the prince among idols. Is it necessary to name con-

spicuous examples of this idol-serving. Napoleon, Nero, Herod, and the like, whose existence was a wholesale and continual call for the tears and blood, the sufferings and miseries of millions. Can you not readily and this moment cite many such revolting self-worshippers from *families* you know, from *circles* you know, from *houses* of business you know. From every *place* known to you where one man has authority, patronage, influence, position and power. We instinctively abhor the adoration of self in others. May we as impartially denounce it in ourselves. May we keep ever in our sight the blessed and beautiful example of one of whom it is written, "He pleased not Himself," "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

What of gods more refined, it may be in nature, but as deadly in their influence on the sons of men? What of pride, which led to the fall of angels? That "goeth before destruction," which God hateth and bringeth down! What of ambition, which caused the ruin of kings and artists and poets, statesmen,

as well as of inferior mortals? *What of pleasure*, that living death which stupefies the soul on the downward grade, keeping it quiet till the last plunge is taken?

How full the world, the Christian world is of idols. What wholesale idolaters we are, gross, sensual, animal, bestial.

What infidelity is this, "Tush, God shall not see it." As if this had not been spoken and written by Jehovah, "I am the Lord, and thou shalt have no other." Yea, in a certain place a man who for years had lived a life of concubinage and clubism, to the neglect of home and family, "died and was buried," and the parish church tolled its bells and draped its furniture, and provided a great funeral, because he had placed a fine organ in the sanctuary. Is that singular? *Man is easily persuaded to hide and conceal the idols*, and memorial windows and sermons and dead marches and elaborate funeral services may screen and praise great idol-worshippers, but the searchlight of the eternal law and the piercing fire of law and lawgiver are turned on it all.

It is wholly a right and pertinent question wherewith to close our consideration of this portion of the law. How best may we avoid its transgressions and conform ourselves to its requirements.

I know no better way than that signified in our Lord's summary of the first table, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and mind and soul." "This is the first and great commandment." In human tactics the best way to exclude all noxious things from the ground is by having it preoccupied and filled up, so as to leave no room, no entrance for them.

A sure method whereby to exclude idols from the ground of our hearts is fully to occupy them with love to God. Love is a jealous thing, and once in possession, it will keep off and keep out all competition. Love is the greatest power in the world. By might I may conquer my enemy, and subdue him and chain him and punish him, but all this makes him hate me the more, and if ever I come within his range he will vent all that hate and

revenge on me. But if by love I make him love me, I have not only conquered but captivated him completely. All his powers are at my service.

Love is the royal law. Give it fair and full play in your heart and every idol and rival and enemy of the one God will go down. This is God's method. He loved us, and thereby made us His willing servants. "*The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that He died for all that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again.*"

III.
LAWS RELATING TO GOD'S NAME
AND DAY.

COMMANDMENTS III AND IV.

LAWS RELATING TO GOD'S NAME AND DAY.

The last two commandments on the first table of the law, legislate regarding the Name of God and the Day of God. The two possessions of God, His Name and His Day, are graciously shared with man, and so become his possessions also.

Our portion in God's Name is recognized in the third commandment. It is ours to guard it reverently.

Strange as it may sound, swearing was doubtless in its origin a result of belief in the Deity whose anger the swearer called down upon his enemies. Balak called Balaam to curse Israel.

The Philistine cursed David by his gods. Whatever of faith and justice may have suggested such imprecations, they were soon emptied of all such qualities, as swearing became an outburst of passion, spurred on by brutality of nature, by hatred, by drunkenness, by everything bad. This is its common

form at present. It is the profane expression of impatience, irritation, annoyance, anger, just or unjust. It is the language of quarrelling, of brawling, of wrong-headedness of those bereft for the time of reason and self-control, presuming to link the Holy Name with thirst for vengeance, calling upon God to curse the swearer himself or others who have crossed his path. When a man presumes to invoke God's judgments upon himself, sometimes his evil prayers are heard. "He delighteth in cursing, therefore let it happen unto him."

Taking the Holy Name in vain is a sin of wantonness for which God will not hold the sinner guiltless. It is one of that class of sin, presumptuous and provoking, indulged in for the sake of being vile, and bringing no advantage to the sinner. Sins of nature there are to which one is led by strong passion, by strong desire and inward impulse, by gain to be had, by advantage to accrue. Such are sins of impurity, gluttony, drunkenness, stealing, lying and the like. For

them the poor apology may be made that they are the products of human nature, fallen and corrupt, struggling to evade a penalty, to gratify a terrible longing, or to possess a coveted property. Profanity can hardly be excused in the same way. It is a gratuitous sin, it is a needless flying in the face of God. It is a "superfluity of naughtiness." It is not so much the outcome of human passion and desire as it is the inspiration of the devil. It is not so much the working of poor fallen nature from within as the suggestion of the devil from without. It is evidence of the infernal as well as of the fallen in man, and shows he is not satisfied with the act of violence, the blow stricken, or the goods stolen, when to these he adds the unnecessary torrent of blasphemy and insult. Shimei was not content with leading an insurrection against David, he threw dust at the troubled king ascending the hill and cursed him with all his might.

The redundant wickedness of profane swearing and its consequent provoking of the Most

High may be seen in another way. The thoughtless interlarding of conversation with irreverent use and mention of the Divine Name. At the beginning of the last century this custom pervaded all sorts and conditions of men. Mr. Greville, in his spicy Memoirs, tells how King William IV swore roundly on all occasions, how his court followed his example, how in the army it was the constant and common language of all, from the commander-in-chief to the rank and file, how venerable men in the highest offices stumbled over their sentences, and found it hard to refrain from expletives in the presence of the young Queen presiding at her councils. Whoever may have read the novels of this and preceding periods will abundantly recognize the prevailing habit. All this came to an end with the beautiful reign of Queen Victoria. She banished profanity with all other evils from her court and presence. It became unfashionable, and was soon relegated, as now, to the vulgar and lowbred of the land. Oh, brother men, let us pause here to behold and admire

the influence of one pure young soul in restraining evil habits throughout the Empire.

The Divine Preacher from the mount sermonizes that neither the business of life nor its conversations, not its pleasures, not its declarations nor its protestations require more than the plain yea and nay. "Whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." The judicial affirmation in God's Name He admits, to that He Himself submitted. For prayer and praise, for invocation, for all that is reverent man may have in his heart and on his lips the Holy Name. For all beside it is an unprofitable, most needless provocation, for which the warning is "No one shall be held guiltless." The useless, presumptuous employment of the Divine Name adds no weight to man's testimony to man's veracity, but the contrary. It was when Simon Peter was uttering the lie of his life that "he began to curse and swear."

We would construe this statute very narrowly in its legislation on the Divine Name if we read only a repression of cursing and

swearing of profane phraseology. It has another, and, wide as irreverence may be, a yet wider sweep. It reprovcs and condemns as guilty before God, not alone the multitudes of blasphemers and flippant triflers with the great name, but the greater multitudes whose lives are out of joint with their professions and inconsistent with the name they bear.

This will appear to every one who reflects that the name of God stands for His whole being and character, His name is the word-sound or vocable by which He reveals or declares Himself to His creatures. When the words of the law had been given from Jehovah to Moses, he made this request, "I beseech Thee shew me Thy glory," to which the answer came, "I will make all of My glory to pass before thee, and I will proclaim *the Name of the Lord* before thee," (Ex. 33: 18, 19). And the Lord descended in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the Name of the Lord, and the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering

and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, etc. "And they shall put my Name upon the children of Israel," (Num. 6 : 27). Accordingly Moses was summoned to the mount to stand before Jehovah, "and the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the Name of the Lord." This Name, this character of God was stamped upon His people, they were to exhibit it, they were to bear it before men, truthfully and faithfully. Any inconsistency, any unrighteousness on their part, was a taking, a bearing of the sacred Name and Personality, in vain. This would be a great sin, one of the greatest sins possible. This very sin is laid to their charge by their own countryman in his epistle to the Romans. After exposing their treatment of the eternal law, he adds : "For the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." (Rom. 2 : 24).

It is certain that in a higher and stronger sense the Name and character of God are upon Christians. "Go and teach the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Every baptized person has the name of God invisibly inscribed upon him. The character of God is given to him to keep, to bear aloft, to shew forth. This, according to the apostle, is one of the Divine seal marks. "Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. 2 : 19).

To live unworthy of this Name and Signature, to be inconsistent and unfaithful to this high calling is to take the Name of the Lord our God in vain. "Lest I steal and take the Name of my God in vain." (Prov. 30:9).

Than this no greater sin can be committed, and accordingly the warning is added, "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain." In New Testament times God vindicated His name by open and visible judgment and chastisement of those who lowered and dishonored it. "For this

cause many among you are sick and weak, and some have fallen asleep." (1 Cor. 11:30).

We are warned in the Holy Communion office that He does so still. There can be little doubt that the sin most generally committed by the people of God is the bearing of God's Name in vain. Their lack of testimony before the world to God's holiness and righteousness, their indecision, their colorlessness, their inconsistencies so many, so glaring. On the other hand, it is inspiring and helpful to mark how full the New Testament is of the fidelity of God's church to His Name. "He shall bear My Name before Gentiles and kings." "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name." "They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name." They "hazarded their lives for the Name of the Lord Jesus." "In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk." "Everywhere they called upon this Name." "His Name, through faith in His Name, hath made this man whole." "Do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

These are some of the acts and words of the men who were ever conscious of the Name that was upon them, who took it not in vain, whose rule was, "Whatsoever ye do, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him." This is to keep the great commandment, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain," and in keeping of that command there is great reward.

Not only is the honor of God's Name entrusted to our keeping, we are admitted to a share in God's day as well. "God rested from all His works." This Sabbath was not for God alone. "The Sabbath was made for man." Nothing, perhaps, is more calculated to commend any law to our obedience than the knowledge beforehand that it has been passed for our good altogether. Never was there a law so entirely to our advantage as that now before us.

In the Divine arrangement two things are observable. Man's bodily part, fitted and framed for use and for work, would, in the

daily process of employment, expend its natural forces and need replenishment by food and rest, while his higher spiritual nature would need converse with spiritual matters for its sustenance and elevation. Accordingly the all-knowing, all-loving Creator provided a day for bodily rest and spiritual refreshment.

If, at the beginning, while the world was young, man needed one-seventh part of his time for recovery by rest, how much greater is that need after the growth and progress of thousands of years. Mr. Gladstone declared that no man who works seven days in the week can continue to do so for any length of time. In so saying he stated a universal truth which grows plainer every day.

The ever-growing population of this land, progress in every department of labor, mental and physical, the keen competition in all trades, the restless activity of this age, endanger the health of man in body and mind. The early rising, the hasty breakfast, the long ride in train or trolley, the ceaseless worry of

telephone or telegraph, the wildness of the stock exchange, the "quick lunch," the fever of business, the long journey home, the restless night, all this repeated day after day, makes rapid advances and assaults upon the castle of life and health. Attenuation, loss of appetite, loss of sleep, dyspepsia in the most aggravated forms, nervousness, irritability, are amongst the well-known tormentors of a people whose lives are all work, without rest or recreation.

Such a strain demands imperatively the Divinely ordained day of rest, rest for the weary body, and rest, by change of thought, for the worn-out mind. We are face to face with two facts. Never was there a time in human history when man more sorely needed God's provision, a day of rest in every week. *Never* was there a time when man was so inclined to renounce his right to that day of rest, and to deprive himself and his fellows of it. Therefore there never was a time when it was more necessary to repeat old truths and to remind ourselves that God rested from His

work, that God commanded, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work," and that our Lord and Saviour rested on the first day of the week from His work of redemption. The six days' labor followed by one day's rest runs through human history from beginning to end.

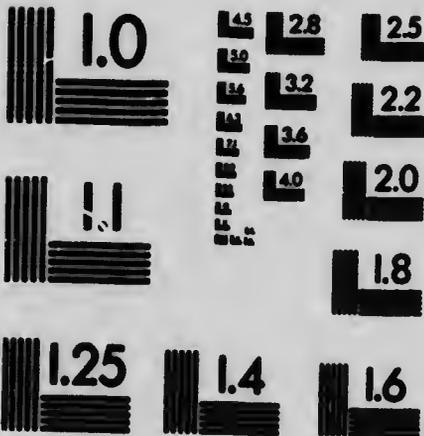
Not only is the Sabbath, in the old sense and in the new, a day of rest for God's creatures, it is a day of Holy worship as well. In both Testaments the day of rest and worship are one. They are never separated. Rest and religion together make up the Sabbath day, the Lord's day. *These things are necessary to constitute public worship, the presence of Almighty God, the presence, together, of His worshipping people, a time and a place of worship.* All these requirements have been carefully prescribed. So soon as God's people were liberated from the house of bondage, had passed the Red Sea, and were on the way to Canaan, God gave commandment for the erection and furnishing of the Tabernacle. "See," saith He, "that thou make all things

6



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according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount," and from between the cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat "I will meet with you and I will bless you." Here we observe the aforesaid essentials for public worship. When in the process of time the wilderness journey was ended, and the promised land possessed, "Solomon built Him an house." The transitory tabernacle gave way to the permanent and glorious temple that crowned the hill of Zion. In dedicating that house of prayer for all people, Solomon invoked the Divine Presence, and the answer came back to him "My name and My heart shall be there continually."

To that glorious shrine of Jehovah's presence the people from all outlying parts of the land made their visits annually, at the three great feasts, while the synagogue enabled all the people to keep their weekly Sabbath of rest and worship. The same elements of public worship passed into the Church of the new law. The passing of the moral obligations from the seventh to the first day of the

week, the change from the Sabbath to the Lord's day was foretold in Psalm 118, v. 24, "This is the day which the Lord hath made." This was claimed by the Saviour Himself, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath day." "This is the Lord's day," and in Rev. 1 the introduction to the great vision is: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The first day of the week, called the Lord's day, is mentioned at least four times in the New Testament as *the time*. The upper room, the home of some Christian lent for the sacred purpose, supplied *the place*. "On the first day of the week, when the disciples were assembled, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, 'Peace be unto you.'" On that day week the same event was repeated. There also is noticed, the *presence* of Christ with His people. This same ordinance of public worship has ever since continued, and holds its certain place unto this day. The Lord's day, and the Lord's worship on that day, have run concurrently with Christianity from the first Easter to the present.

It is necessary to observe that this ordinance of divine worship is both a divinely constituted and perpetual institution, and that because of the strong tendency in the present time to ignore it, to treat it as a matter of small moment. These days in which we live are days of note for many excellent things, great progress, enlightenment, advancement. They are at the same time days stigmatized by many great sins. One of the leading, growing sins of this generation is the invasion of the Lord's day coupled with neglect of public worship. Some of us can well remember the good old days when heads of families appeared regularly in church with their households. Now it is not so; the attendance at our churches is diminishing, particularly the male portion of it. It is averred that as in nature there are waves, now hot, now cold, now lukewarm, passing over the earth's surface, so in morals there are just such passing currents, infidelity, indifference, zeal, love, coldness, come and go. A passing tide of indifference at present threatens

the whole Church. What has produced it? Have the altered views of the last half century regarding the high inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, or have the great and ceaseless changes in ritual affected the lay mind and caused a letting go of its hold on the changeless verities of our holy religion?

However we may answer this question to ourselves, it is beyond question that Sunday observance and church-going among the people are at a very low ebb indeed. At the last Church Congress in England the wide desecrating of the Lord's day was described as led by the upper classes and followed by the lower, till the English Sunday has become more like a bank holiday than a day of rest and worship. A well-known New York divine (Dr. Rainsford) has lately written: "The change in Sunday observance is very great. Multitudes of men who used to come to church more or less regularly, now spend Sunday in outdoor recreation of one sort or another." He goes on to deplore the lament-

able increase in social entertainments among a class who have no excuse for so misusing the Lord's day, having plenty of time on other days for all such pursuits.

The same line of conduct is depreciated and condemned in the Pastoral at the close of the recent General Convention. A similar state of things obtains in Canada.

As if to forewarn us against this sin, Almighty God has placed His signature upon the first day of the week. As we affix crest, initials, monogram on our plate and property to mark it as ours, and to warn off any who would lay thievish hands upon it, so the Most High God has stamped His Name on this day, "The Lord's day," thereby giving notice to everyone who treats it as his own day that he is the greatest of robbers, for he is robbing God.

How general is this robbery every one may learn who marks the progress of vast numbers of people on a Sunday morning, on horse, on wheel, on foot, in carriage, train, boat or other conveyances, multitudes are

making their way from the city into the country. Multitudes more are staying at home with the Sunday papers, while numbers are visiting or entertaining friends and relations, all are with one consent laying violent hands on the Lord's day, and making it wholly man's day to the exclusion of God from it altogether.

One of the saddest features of this procedure is the levity with which it is accomplished. This generation has come to regard attendance at public worship on the Lord's day as a light and unimportant business, a small consideration, a rule as much honored in breach as in observance, a very ordinary, commonplace matter, the dispensing with which is of little consequence.

There are some weighty considerations which might well be set off against such easy lawlessness.

I. In the world round about us, Almighty God has made great results to depend on the observance of very simple laws.

Nothing could be more commonplace than

the laws of health, that we should have our daily bread and nightly rest, due exercise and attention to the business of our calling, that we should breathe pure air, drink pure water, avoid all that is poisonous and use that which is sound and healthful. Whoever, on that account, thinks that he may trifle with such rules and set them aside at his will, is certain to be brought up with a sharp rein. Declining health, loss of appetite, loss of sleep, inability to work, despondency, lunacy, are the tremendous penalties payable by him who sets aside the simple laws which God has impressed on our being.

So is it also in the spiritual and moral domain. Open the pages of the Acts of the Apostles and read the story of the Church's onset in the world. When about to ascend into the heavens, the Lord called and commissioned His apostles. He at the same time commanded them not at once to enter on their work, but to return to Jerusalem, and there await the power from on high. That command might have appeared unimportant,

even unnecessary. It involved just a walk from Olivet to Jerusalem, and a patient waiting for ten days, very simple and uneventful requirements, but upon these everything in the work and progress of Christianity depended. If the first apostles had reasoned among themselves, saying, "Such a command is so small that we need not be particular in obeying it, God can bestow His Spirit here as well as there, now as well as ten days hence, we will not return to Jerusalem but proceed at once to work," then they had been the greatest failures of their age, upon them the power had not descended, and by them the work of evangelizing the world had never been done. It was their ready, unhesitating obedience to a plain command that equipped them with every necessary power, making them the apostles, missionaries, martyrs and heroes of the world.

Of such a nature is the command now under consideration, and such the magnitude to us of the results of disobeying it.

Almighty God has, as already evidenced,

appointed an earthly meeting place between Himself and His creatures. Whoever reasons out this matter and concludes that because it is so simple a requirement, necessitating only a short walk to God's house, concludes also that God can be met and worshipped as well in man's house or field or garden, most certainly cuts himself off from the meeting with God and from all that it means. If an interview were granted me with the President of the United States of America, in order that I might lay my case before him, it would unquestionably belong to the President to name the time and place of meeting, and if I concluded not to observe his appointment, the inevitable result would be that no such meeting would take place, and that I would deprive myself of all the benefit and advantage to me of such an interview. None the less does he sever himself from God who declines the appointed meeting in the Lord's house on the Lord's day. He separates himself from God, is without God and without hope, is what the Scripture calls in

so many places, godless, and than this nothing can be more hopeless. That a man in all his weakness and necessity should be left alone in this world, separated by his own deliberate act from the one and only source of life and light and hope, is surely the most destitute and deplorable condition imaginable.

II. It is well that we should set before ourselves and keep in view the example in this behalf, of great and good men, the illustrious of the earth. The feeling is growing, alas! that church-going is a befitting exercise for women and children, and the conforming to it on the part of strong men and intellectual is an occasional and gracious condescension.

A fitting antidote to such conditions of mind is the recollection that the Church's glorious history preserves the record of men in all times, not weak, but strong, great, wise, distinguished, who held it not only a duty but a privilege and an honor to yield obedience to the law.

David, the King, Soldier, Statesman, Poet, did not hesitate to say "I was glad when

they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord ;” and in modern times such men as Washington, Gladstone, Wellington and the like, were regular church-goers.

The one perfect man, the man Christ Jesus (Luke 4: 16), went into the synagogue where he had been brought up, *as His custom was*, and stood up to read.

This describes His life of eighteen years as a young man in His native home and among His people.

This He continued in His public ministry.

He worshipped, taught in and loved His father's house.

Twice He cleansed it.

He called it a house of prayer for all people.

When His act of resurrection transferred the sacred obligation from the seventh to the first day of the week, He marked the observance of that day in such a manner as to correct all false notions regarding it, and to leave us an example in this matter.

The prevailing view is that the Christian

Sabbath being a yoke of bondage, is to be resisted, and man's liberty on this day asserted. This is a great misrepresentation. The Lord's day is none the less His because it was made for man and designed in every way to benefit man. It is his for body and soul. It is unfolded and exhibited in Christ's keeping of that pattern Sabbath, His own resurrection day. According to the sacred narrative, it falls into three divisions, the early morning, the afternoon, the evening, the three parts of any day. Christ appears conspicuously in each part, and by His appearance and actions has taught His followers, for evermore, how to spend and occupy a Sunday of peace and content, of rest and recreation for body and soul.

The first hour of this Sunday was devoted by Christ to God, His service and His company. He arose very early in the morning. His first thoughts and acts were thus given to His Heavenly Father. In those bright early hours of communion with God He ministered to God's people, to Mary first, at the sepul-

chre, to the holy women, to Peter, to the rest He sent messages of love and assurance.

Then came the afternoon and Jesus is found in close fellowship and companionship with His disciples and friends. The walk of some miles into the country, the fields, the fresh air, the sunlight of life and spring, the conversation, the opening out of the Scriptures, the burning rapture with which He filled their hearts, the revelation of Himself, the breaking of bread, the recognition, the vanishing, the evening calm and quiet succeeded, the disciples were assembled, the doors were shut, then came Jesus and stood in the midst and bestowed the blessing of His peace.

So He kept with His own the Lord's day. There is no justification here for modern misrepresentation of the Christian Sunday. No gloom, no rigour, no complaint. There are only bright interviews with God and man, afternoon walk and talk in open air and field. There is the visit to friends. There is the return over the same path, and the evening worship closes the day with peace and rest.

So we have the Lord's day as kept by the Lord himself, so let us learn to keep it.

III. It is self-evident that there is and must be in the public assembly certain elements not obtainable in our solitude. Whoever thinks and says he can worship God as well at home by himself as in the congregation runs contrary to all known experiences.

There are in the Church chief elements noticed in apostolic days: "Fellowship," "the breaking of bread," "the prayers," "the coming together," the magnetism passing from soul to soul in a large gathering, the sympathy, the contact of spirit with spirit, the communion of saints, the common prayer, the holy conversation with Christ and with one another. These are results impossible in the seclusion of one's chamber, but distinctly promised to the gathered together in Christ's name. Hence the apostle, when warning the Hebrews against the very degeneracy so prevalent in our own day, says: "Let us consider one another, not neglecting the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." (Heb. 10: 25.)

IV. We apply to this subject one of the most undoubted and solemn of moral truths. This life is a preparation for the next, a progress upwards. We are now in school, under training and preparation; we are forming and building up, step by step, that character which shall endure forever. Accordingly, the man who can live without God, His worship, His day, His home here, is preparing to live without all these there. The man who has no transactions, no dealings with God here, will have no dealings with God hereafter. That is awfully plain.

Let no man deceive himself by supposing that they who seldom, if ever, enter God's temple here nor lift up the voice of praise, the hymn of thanks, will, after such a life, at once pass into the temple eternal in the heavens, and with angels and archangels and all the choirs of heaven worship God and the Lamb. The supposition is unnatural and inadmissible. It is above all things reasonable and certain that they who love and frequent God's house and worship here on earth, will do the

same in perfection in that high future state for which we are now making ready. Such was the consistency of hope in him who said: "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness, I will be satisfied when I awake up with Thy likeness." (Ps. 17 :)

IV
LAWS SAFEGUARDING FAMILY
LIFE.
COMMANDMENTS V AND VII.

LAWS SAFEGUARDING FAMILY LIFE.

The creation of this world and its inhabitants by Almighty God, being assumed, or proved, all subsequent transactions will be found to be in harmony with that admission or proof.

The Fatherhood and proprietorship and government of God follow in a rightful, moral consistency. *That* the Creator should be active and interested in the good of His creatures, providing and ordaining all things necessary for their happiness, is precisely what reason would look for and expect. *Accordingly* these primeval institutions set up by our Maker, all benevolent and good, will be found to be in our best interests, and solid and lasting, every one. *Such* is the ordinance of daily work for daily bread.

When God made man, God also made a garden where was everything pleasant to the eye and good for food. There God placed

his new-made son to dress the garden and to keep it. In his first innocent state man was not to be an idler, but a worker, and that for his health and happiness, as well as for his food. *This wholesome provision* led to another; occupation must of necessity lead to expenditure of mental and physical forces, and such expenditure must be met by replenishment, hence the Lord our Governor ordained that out of the seven days one should be set apart, consecrated to rest and religion, by which a regular change was secured to man, in mind and body.

To the institutions just mentioned, God added another of the highest importance, because without it there could have been neither continuance nor succession. *God, the Originator of all we are sensible of, was Himself a Social Being, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God.* He was, so far as our knowledge penetrates, ever surrounded with creatures and creations of His Almighty will and power. *This divinely social Being* "made man in His own image, male and

female created He them and blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and have dominion." *The foundation of the first human home and family is a story as touching as it is familiar.* In God's wonderful creation man was the only solitary being. Every creature had its mate, but for Adam no helpmate was found, and the great Father declared, "It is not good for man to be alone, I will make him a help meet for him." "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead, thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man, and Adam said: This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man, therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2 : 21.)

We have now before us the old historic account of the first home and family, the first

society set up on earth. This was and is the model and the producer of all social life in this world. The family expanded into the tribe, and that into the nation. As it was in the beginning so it is to-day, the man, the nation, the state, the church, all forms of social life and being are derivatives from God's original and originating institute the family. It is the foundation of the entire social fabric.

Now the elements, the component parts of this typical society or family mark it out clearly for perpetuity. It is composed of authority and submission, of law and obedience, of communion, companionship, and as growing out of these, common interests, all regulated by love. In this perfect structure love is the balance wheel, rectifying and beautifying and blessing all. Authority might become tyranny. Obedience to such distorted authority would be reluctant, if not rebellious. This, in turn, would upset communion and conservation of common interests. Love reigns over all and amid all, makes authority a guide

and a blessing, and obedience sweet and pleasant, and the working of the whole machine harmonious and happy.

The joining together of one human pair in lifelong, loving bonds, the gathering around them of children of their own flesh and blood, the gentle parental care going down from parent to children, and given back in affectionate gratitude, the dwelling together of these, The Family, "Home, Sweet Home." This blessed original lies at the root and continuance of all human society and happiness.

Whosoever in this life by misfortune or disappointment or neglect or idiosyncrasy misses God's plan for securing to his creatures the purest earthly happiness, misses that which conduces to health and long life and joy of the individual as well as to the promotion of the general good.

This divine institution has been defined and guarded in every possible way. It was instituted by God Himself in the time of man's innocency, instituted absolutely and without any limit or condition whatsoever.

Twice in the course of His ministry did the blessed Son of Man refer to this original institution, quoting the very words used on the occasion, and adding His own, "What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder." In answer to cavilling and questionings He declared that the subsequent permissive legislation of Moses was not part of the divine original, but an accommodation to man's hardness of heart and corruption of life.

The apostles liken marriage to the mystical union betwixt Christ and His Church. St. Paul thus expresses himself: "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband . . . and let not the husband put away his wife." (1 Cor. 7: 10.)

In her service for the solemnization of matrimony the church has most carefully completed this most sacred transaction, and in such a way as to show that she regards the bond as of lifelong continuance. (a) By the publication of banns on three successive Sundays in the respective parishes c^f the intended

bridegroom and bride, the fullest opportunity is afforded for objection to the proposed union.

(b) By ordering that on the day of marriage, the persons, with the friends and neighbors, shall come into the body of the church, she makes marriage an open and public service.

(c) When so assembled the officiating minister refers to the origin of Holy Marriage, declaring the causes for which it was ordained, and uttering clear warnings against its being enterprised unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly.

(d) Then follows a searching charge to the couple "as they will answer at the dreadful day of judgment," to confess any impediment to their union.

(e) The way being thus prepared, each is called and given consent to take the other "so long as both shall live."

(f) This is followed by the demand "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man," calling for parental consent and bestowal.

(g) The contract is now entered into, each separately repeating with joined hands the words of taking "till death us do part, according to God's Holy Ordinance."

(h) This lifelong

contract is sealed by giving and receiving of a ring in the name of the Holy Trinity. (i) The priest, after prayer, joins the hands together, saying the great words of the Lord Jesus, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder." (j) All this is concluded with prayer founded on the one primal marriage by which God taught that "it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom Holy Matrimony has made one," and a blessing that the married "might live together in holy love unto their lives' end," and a sermon in the words of Holy Scripture enunciating those virtues and graces and forbearances by which the married life is to be cemented and formed. In all this great service, from publication of banns down to the final syllable, there is not one word that contemplates or looks forward to the dissolution of the holy tie by any other event than the parting hand of death. Its entire structure and expression in every part declares that holy marriage is indissoluble by any other cause than death.

How in the face of such precautions marriage has come to be the rope of sand that we hear of to-day is one of the most astounding features of our life and civilization.

In any attempt at accounting for this it should be remembered that there is a truth, profound and awful, commended to our reverent attention both by revelation and experience. *By revelation* which discloses the dark facts that when a good Being had completed the world's creation, and had clothed it with every necessary provision for man's happiness and good, had blessed both man and his world, *an evil being*, in revengeful hate and opposition, set himself to spoil and destroy both man and his earthly home and paradise, his personal and family life.

The same revelation unfolds the malignant perseverance of him who is called man's Adversary and Destroyer, and Tempter and Accuser. When our good God loved a wicked world and gave His only begotten Son to redeem it, when that beloved Son appeared among us and began His saving work, this

same ancient foe came forth from his place to meet Him and to overthrow Him, once more thwarting God's loving ideas and plans for bringing His sons to glory.

By experience of this life from day to day, which teaches us, if we be not impenetrably dull pupils, that whatsoever in us or about us, whatsoever in ourselves, in our church, in our social life is designed by God for our good, is, in the same old persistent manner, waylaid and disputed by our Adversary, the devil. *This daily experience* is ever backing revelation and teaching the lesson we are so slow to learn, that there is not *a good thing* which God has planned for us, *nor a good thought* or resolution He has originated in us, *nor a good intention* of ours, *nor a good work* in pursuance of such intention, *nor a good institution* erected amongst us by God or His church, which is not an object of attack or spoiling or overthrow by this same unchanged and watchful opponent and rival of God and man.

It is, therefore, not at all surprising or un-

precedented to find that this one divinely planned ordinance for the perpetuity, the continuance, the cementing together in social happiness of the human race and family, is the conspicuous object for assault and destruction of the old hater and antagonist of God and man.

In this organized plan of besetment and overthrow the devil employs as agents ourselves, makes us his instruments; alas! how often his willing instruments to overthrow our own good. The multitudinous, the desperately wicked ways in which all this is being accomplished every day and night in this world, even under its best governments and civilizations, is truly a dreadful study, requiring much nerve to pursue through its foul and fatal ramifications. The investigation, however, is as necessary as it is painful, and as the surgeon must encounter the virus of the wounds he would heal, so, on occasion, must he who would guard himself and his fellows against the pestilential poison of social sin.

God, the lawgiver, having by one commandment defined the family, has by another guarded it, saying, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." *This is the social bulwark surrounding and prohibiting everything that could in any wise invade or shake family establishment and settlement.*

There are two classes in the community whose duty it is, whose deepest interest it is to uphold and work out in their lives the social law of God.

I. The Married.

"All ye that are married," is the language with which the church closes the service. Hear what the Holy Scripture doth say as touching the duties of husbands towards their wives, and wives toward their husbands. Then follows a noble exhortation, declaratory of those duties in the very words of the Bible.

The very pith and essence of this address is that the safest and surest way to preserve the conjugal estate is to keep alive all along that love which led up to it, with which it began. "*Because iniquity shall abound, the*

love of many shall grow cold," is a divine warning applicable to the matter now before us. *The departure* from first love is the fruitful cause and beginning of all matrimonial infelicity. *The maintenance* of the love, the gallantry, the attentions, the presents of the affianced will guard and keep the holy estate to the end. The endearing names, the celebration of birthday and wedding day, and such little attentions will prolong and keep alive the golden days and years of married life.

Those happy, honored years are spoiled and destroyed whenever love wanes. *Then follow* lightness of conduct by man or woman, *neglect* at home, *undue attentions* abroad, *the* arousing of suspicion, *jealousy, alienation, bitter words, quarrels, coldness, indifference, hate*, all steadily leading up to one of the greatest crimes of our age, *divorce*, followed by the profanation of *re-marriage* with all its family complications and bitternesses. It is a matter of deep regret that neither the General Convention of the church in the United States nor the General Synod of the church

in Canada, at their last meeting, succeeded in making such pronouncements on this vital point as would have satisfied the conscience of the church, and restrained a virulent and growing cancer in the body ecclesiastic. In both cases the way was blocked by the lay vote. *At the risk of repetition* let it be said again, the one power within the reach of all by which such an evil can be banished, and the blessing of home and married life continued to every couple in the land, is the almighty power of love.

Mr. Thackeray, in his lectures on The Four Georges, makes a telling comparison between King George IV prosecuting and persecuting his neglected wife and Robert Southey, the poor poet-laureate of that day, writing to the wife of his youth, after years of married life, such words as these: "I will not go to Lisbon without you, for though not unhappy when away from you, still, without you I am not happy. On these things we will talk at Lisbon, only, dear Edith, we must not part."

What are the grounds of that contrast?

Love absent in the one case, love present in the other. Albert the Good and Queen Victoria were shining examples of domestic love and happiness maintained to the end, under the fierce light which beats on a throne. Indeed, we might ransack all history yet never find so bright an instance of wedded love after many years, as that furnished by the homelife of your late lamented President. From the Presidential seat, through all the people down to the humblest citizen, that beautiful pattern was observed and felt. *The most delightful social function one is privileged to witness is a golden wedding.* Once in my life the privilege was mine. Its impressions and recollections are fadeless. The venerable couple, king and queen of such a kingdom, children, grandchildren, "troops of friends," every heart touched and satisfied, the church's benediction realized, "Almighty God, who at the beginning did create our first parents, Adam and Eve, and did sanctify and join them together in marriage, pour upon you the riches of His grace, sanctify and bless you,

that you may please Him both in will and in deed, *and live together in holy love unto your lives' end. Amen.*"

II. The Unmarried.

Very sensible are we of the delicacy and difficulty surrounding any exposition of this side of the subject. We must be satisfied and sustained by a great example. To a young unmarried bishop the veteran apostle wrote: "Keep thyself pure." These three words cover the whole ground, furnishing an all-sufficient safeguard, (a) pure in thought, (b) pure in speech, (c) pure in teaching, (d) pure in company, (e) pure in body.

That obedience to such a command is possible, that such precepts are strong bulwarks against the rush of youthful passions, is abundantly evident to every man in the life of Joseph. He was not a superior being, but a man of like passions with ourselves. Not once, but daily and persistently was he tempted in this direction. Notwithstanding, he held himself in hand, he kept a level head, a clear moral judgment and a strong will

to carry it out. He faced his tormentor, he reasoned the matter out with her in his interests and hers, and then taking the higher ground, he said finally and decidedly, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God," and though at first he seemed to have lost the game, that pure decision secured for him in the end such an exaltation as is reserved for few men in this life.

When once this innocence is lost the flood-gates to all moral pollution are wide opened. The flood that pours in is a devastating deluge, nothing can arrest it, nothing can stop it. It carries all before it. It is like the craving for intoxicants, once aroused who shall lay it? The young man in whom it burns is its slave. He is tied and bound with the chain of his sin. It paralyzes his life and hopes day after day. His manly strength begins to weaken. His upright gait and elastic step to slacken. The brightness fades from his eye, self-respect and masculine valor give place to shyness and effeminacy. Paleness and emaciation, want of sleep and

vigor, *all set their mark on the outward man. The mind shows the wreck, memory is impaired, close attention is impossible, study is out of the question, a coming examination is a nightmare. The whole manhood is shaken. No one knows this better than the victim himself. He shuns his comrades and sits alone. He is no longer an agile, athletic figure in the field and game. The infirmities, the withering of age have come upon him in the bloom of youth; nor is this all, the waters go even over his soul. His moral sense is drowned, his heart is hardened, even his mind and conscience are defiled. So sang Robert Burns out of a bitter experience :*

I waive the quantum of the sin,
The hazard of concealing,
But, och, it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling.

Nothing in the wide range of autobiography could more powerfully avouch all this, and the possibility of salvation and escape from it, than the pathetic language of St. August-

ine in his "Confessions." Surely he was endowed with the grace and courage to unbosom and confess himself for others' good as seldom man has done. He tells it out for the admonition of every young man like himself, how for fourteen years he "rolled in the filth of sin," groaned under "the distemper of concupiscence." Toward the end of these years "I am still a slave," said he; "from the nineteenth to the twenty-eighth years of my life, I lived deceived and deceiving others, seducing men into various lusts, a slave to the lust of the flesh."

He rehearses plainly how he lived in uncleanness with one and another, how he rushed into the sins with which he desired to be captivated, how he corrupted a youth like himself who was saved by God's grace, reproved him and died a Christian, how he well-nigh broke the heart and spirit of his mother, "and such a mother," how through all her grief and solicitude she prayed unceasingly for him, how bishop, physician and friends all expostulated with him in vain till

a great storm and a weeping rain swept over him, and as he bowed to its fury he heard a voice, "Take up and read, take up and read," wherefore he opened the Testament near by and read, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." He arose, obeyed the Voice Divine, was pardoned, cleansed, relieved, and, like another Saul, arose and was baptized, and in after years, as a bishop in the church of God, preached the faith which once he destroyed.

If these dark waters swept around the individual alone, it would, God knows, be sufficiently sad. They overflow, they reach all around, they flow down with a terrible gravitation. *This* is a conspicuous example of the impossibility of sinning alone. *This impure sin*, like many another, must have a partner. Although it be true that its most deadly and destructive forms are solitary forms, yet in this present view of its impurity it involves companionship. *Multiply this idea* and you

have the floods of hideous and revolting vice that sweep over our large cities. It was computed at the census of 1891 that in England there are 315,000 fallen women, and in France 467,000. It is reported by the police that well-nigh one hundred thousand fallen women walk the streets of London every night. *What of Paris? What of the Continental cities?* In them this direful sin is gilded and administered and catered for to meet alike the demands of the aristocrat and the dregs of the people. *What of New York and Chicago and such cities?* *Not so open in lewdness* is this soul-and-body sinking damnation, but there nevertheless for everyone who seeks its ruinous path. *Were it possible to uncover* houses and tenements and throw the search-lights over lanes and alleys, what sights would be disclosed to an astonished, half-ignorant, half-blinded Christian civilization. *What ruined lives and miserable beyond the power of tongue to tell, of men, women and children. Hell already anticipated, its fires already lighted and burning. And yet the recording*

angel and the eyes of the All-seeing Judge are on these sights and scenes night and day.

Oh, men and brethren, this appalling ruin is round-about us on every side, and youth is all unconscious of its bitter curse and trifles with it and laughs at it, while it grins back with the jaws and teeth of the skeleton that it is. "Her ways go down to hell, and where the dead are there is she."

From this wide, dread level these foul waters descend. The curse and blight attending this sin is a descending curse. If it expended its vengeance on its immediate culprit, on the man taken in the act, it would be dreadful enough, but the next generation and the following and the succeeding, all inherit the taint and vices of their forefathers, and tell it in shattered constitutions, in feebleness, in poisoned blood, in youthful deformities and premature graves. "He hath visited the sins of the fathers upon the children," and that by no arbitrary enactment, but by the working of nature's indisputable, inevitable laws of contagion and transmission.

Oh for the voice of the Archangeli and the trump of God to warn the young and the unwary, the innocent and unsuspecting against such perils, to set them on their guard, to arouse them from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, to cry aloud in every ear, "The wages of sin is death," "Keep innocency and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last." *A virtuous youth* followed by a serene old age, with wife and family and home. The *nunc dimittis* of a good life *are on the one side*, and *on the other* the diseased and worn-out frame, the tormenting conscience within, failure and solitude, remorse and death, if not the added horrors that hang around "the second death."

If married and unmarried have alike a duty and an interest in the daily working out of God's social idea, let them combine and work together "as fellow-workers with God,"—what incalculable suffering and curse would be lifted from this earth, what blessing would descend instead.

However unpleasant the task, let us not shrink from setting before ourselves next in order some prevailing obstacles to the realization of God's social plans for human happiness. I will mention first some modern conditions of life amongst us.

(a) *A generation has widely altered the course of life. The family is not what it was. It is soon broken up, there is a restless impatience of home life. The thirst for money-making in cities scatters young men broadcast over the continent. Farms are not settled by united families as formerly. Sons and daughters seek life in the cities. Female labor has been taken away from the household and transferred to the store and the office. Men are accordingly deprived of positions rightfully theirs. The working out of this is that marriages are few.*

(b) *There is yet another and a very much more deleterious phase of modern social life, the extravagant phase. A generation or two back our fathers or grandfathers, with strong self-reliance began at the beginning, worked*

hard, married, brought up their families, attained to fortune, gave to their children every advantage and indulgence. This latter was, perhaps, their destruction. Young people growing up in luxury, nowadays, disdain to begin life where their fathers began it. They must begin where their father's ended, with fortune and abundance. Till these be theirs marriage is out of order.

(c) There yet remains the worst phase of all of modern life in relation to holy marriage and its sacred duties, the deliberate purpose to fight down nature's eternal law and be free from the burden and the blessing of a family. For this wickedness of the old pagan days the poor make their poverty their excuse, while the rich, the mercantile, the professional classes feel that child-bearing and child-rearing interfere with their comfort and abridge their selfish pleasures.

God blessed the first human wedded pair with the never-to-be-forgotten words, "Be fruitful and multiply." Other Scriptures repeat the primeval blessing, "He maketh the

barren woman to keep home and to be the joyful mother of children." "So children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage that cometh of the Lord." "Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine home, thy children like the olive branch round about thy table." The Church in her marriage service prays along the same lines. The selfishness of men and women who take the holy state of matrimony upon them, determines for itself that neither blessing of God nor prayer of Holy Church shall be realized in this particular. Hence we have a childless race. The annual falling off of the birth-rate among the English people was discussed in the Church Congress at Stratford last year. The Dean of Ripon declared that if this state of things went on it was a case in which the nation must go down. It would be a case of national suicide. For what? For the sake of wretched calculation and childless homes where luxury and ease might dwell. In Canada, at a recent session of the Provincial Synod, a resolution was passed expressing

deep anxiety at the abnormally low birth-rate in the Province of Ontario, and a committee was appointed to consider the whole subject. In France the annual excess of births over deaths is only one for one thousand inhabitants throughout the whole country. In the great United States this same evil obtains, so that immigration and not generation is the source of supply. In whatever country such an upsetting of the law of God is found, there must be a depleted national population, a self-indulgent generation, given more to ease and pleasure than to family and home-life and social advancement, and the ever increasing of a foreign population, alien in thought and feeling to the great land which they are more and more making their own, ruling and governing, and often cursing and hindering.

DEFECTIVE PARENTAL RELATIONS.

This is, indeed, a sharp, two-edged sword cutting both ways. The wide lack of parental guidance, of home religion, of family worship, of good and wholesome parental

example deeply marks our day of strenuous life on the one hand, and all-absorbing worldlings on the other.

Assuming that in these times parents do their duty by their children, the benevolent working of God's laws for the good of the people is greatly hindered by the failure of children in the rendering of their duty to parents.

In the vast and overwhelming majority under our civilization parents act well by their offspring. Of the brutality to be found among the scum of every urban population, of the neglect, nay, the vicious training and bringing up or letting loose of children born in misery, poverty and crime, every observant person must be painfully aware.

Notwithstanding, the preponderance is on the side of a well-brought-up generation. The care and solicitude of our people for their children during their tender years, the sacrifices made for them continually, the unselfishness, the devoted love for those too young to care for or help themselves, the continuance

of the generous love through the subsequent years, education, travel, the highest culture, the most liberal outlay upon the upgrowing, places them under an eternal obligation to their parents. The pitiful side of this picture is that the objects of all this care are largely insensible of it, regard it as their due, and regard themselves as the rightful recipients of all this and much more.

Young people, forget not your enormous debt, nor the eternal law of a just repayment. In the appointment of Almighty God a time comes when there is a reversal. In your early days you were weak, your parents strong; you were full of need, they of means and will to supply it; if you were helpless they were helpful. A few years brings a reversal of all this. They are as steadily going down hill as you are going up. You take their former places, they, in a measure, take yours. This is your glad, God-given opportunity to be grand in character, grateful in life and duty and noble altogether. It is here that the Divine command comes to you with full force,

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“Honor thy father and thy mother.” The Church, in that venerable form of words called the Catechism, explains this word “honor” to mean, “Love, honor and succor.” All that they did for you you are to return, and that not grudgingly or of necessity, but from a loving heart.

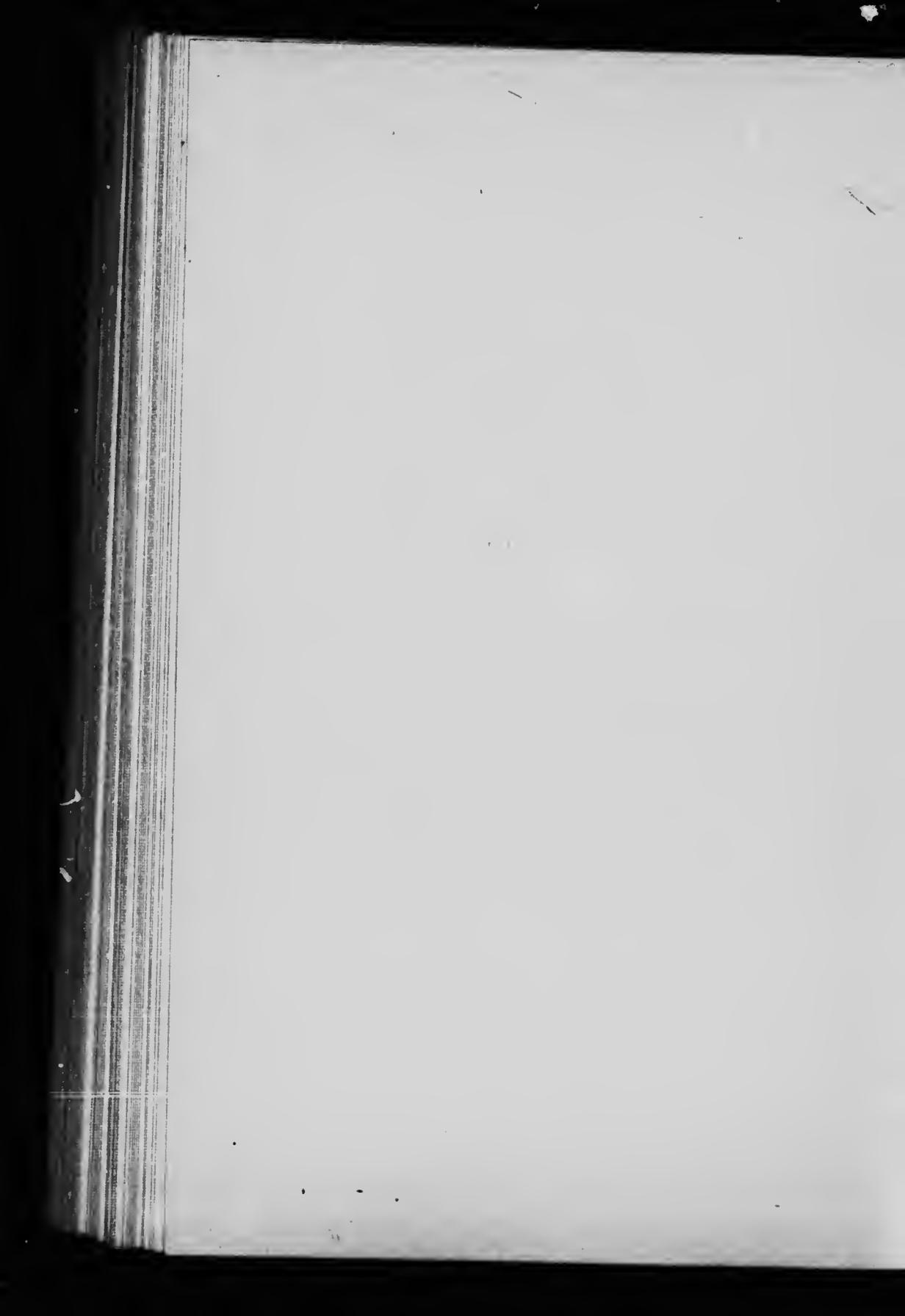
This is what Lincoln did, and Garfield, and the last martyred President, the noble William McKinley, who in his life never failed to visit his mother, and in his will provided for her comfort and support.

One of our prominent public men, on the recent royal visit, was knighted. His first act was to send a telegram to his humble parents, ascribing all his success and distinction to their love and care for him.

But oh, men and brethren, am I forgetting to name the Name that is above every name, whose bearer from His cross looked down on His mother and His dearest friend, and said, “Son, behold thy mother,” and from that hour the disciple whom Jesus loved took her to his own home.

Such men and deeds lift this world out of its slime and make it as the place where the tabernacle of God shall yet be with men.

The laws reviewed to-night were given for our good, were framed to make all men happy, by making all men obedient. The organized opposition to this beneficent design is all abroad, but whenever human hearts incline to God and do His bidding, all is well. The wisdom of God must prevail. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her."



V.

LAWS SAFEGUARDING SOCIAL
LIFE.

COMMANDMENTS VI, VIII, IX, X.



LAWS SAFEGUARDING SOCIAL LIFE

Upon these four commandments, as upon four strong buttresses, our social system rests. For strength and for beauty they are perfect. If only man would obey these and give full force to them, the system resting on them would be as perfect as its supports. It is self-evident that if in this present state of things, there were no murders nor any thefts, nor any evil speaking, lying and slandering, nor any covetousness, this world would be as peaceful and as happy as God intended it to be.

Instead whereof we live in a world of trouble and turmoil. It is described as "lying in wickedness," "All that is in this same world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life is not of the Father." It is "out of course." Our experience of it and in it corresponds with such descriptions for it. It is guarded by standing armies and

fleets, and is everywhere policed and furnished with the whole costly paraphernalia of Justice and Law, with prisons and penitentiaries, all to restrain and keep men and women from devouring one another and breaking down any one of these social props and safeguards which God's eternal law places under us and about us. Alongside of it we have the presence and uniform machinery of the Church of God applying every moral dissuasion from evil, and repeating constantly in the ear of mankind that one law, which, if observed, would make every other provision unnecessary.

If compelled, in considering the Divine laws, largely to emphasize their widespread violation, we beg that we be not set down as one-sided and censorious. It is needless to say that we are fully conscious of the volume of obedience and lawkeeping, of honor and honesty, of truth and care of human life flowing wide and deep through this life of ours. It would be a delightful duty to set forth at length the fruits of righteousness

abounding in the earth, and resulting from the presence and prevalence of God's laws. To shew that the Lord reigneth, that He is above the waterflood governing and working out His will, that His law is not a failure, that it is respected by vast numbers of our citizens, that the acknowledged and established courses of our life, national, commercial, political, domestic, are all founded upon it and influenced by it. In one course of lectures it is impossible to say all that might be well and truly said on both sides.

It appears to the lecturer that he is now rather called upon to warn men, and particularly young men, of the countless ways in which they are tempted every day to break the law; and therefore it is that he dwells upon the less pleasing side of the theme.

Among the first, if not itself the very first, of the laws given by God to man, is that by which his person, his life, is safeguarded. The wisdom of God is in that precept, for if the life of man were not secure, the continuance of the race would be just as insecure.

Accordingly, when murder was first perpetrated, the statute went forth "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." "The avenger of blood" was, up to the time of the Jewish economy, a recognized executor of the judgment of the Almighty against this crime. Notwithstanding legislation and execution, murder has ever since increased and multiplied. Its forms are now so many and heinous that they baffle the skill of lawmakers to legislate against them.

(1) It is well-nigh incredible that one of the most prevalent forms of murder is that by which man's hand is raised against himself. One of the blindnesses born of sin seems to be the opinion of the suicide that he has power over his own life. He is so darkly illogical as to claim the life that he did not give. This sin of sins is committed with a frequency and levity altogether appalling. The man tired of life, suffering from a passing depression, ruined by losses, the farmer suffering from ennui, the girl disappointed in

love, the child chastised at school, makes an end of all by the frightful act of self-murder.

(2) *It is not at all surprising in view of these things, that people should hold cheap the lives of others than themselves*, that a slight offence, a fancied wrong, a hot dispute, a suspicion, an insult, a fit of jealousy, and the like, should be held sufficient cause for cutting off the life of a man and a brother.

(3) There is a phase of this bloody subject as black as it is unnatural. "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" This is the question of the Lord, who made and blessed woman and wife and mother. Behold the desolations of the devil. That woman, never a wife, but a mother, has added this to all her sin, that she has slain her child to cover her transgression. This is, in the broad phraseology of the apostle, "An abounding sin." The law will visit this deed, will punish the miserable woman if it can lay hold upon her, but the man, the double murderer in this business, escapes, at least here and now.

(4) I am well inclined now to use the language of the prophet and to say, "Son of man, hast thou seen these things; turn thou yet again and thou shalt see greater abominations than these."

I point now to a kind of murder threatening all society with dissolution, and with which all civilized nations are face to face. The blood-shedding heretofore spoken against has been excused in some way, of no part of it could the defence be made, it is the outcome of our convictions. Caused it may have been by passion, by despair, by insanity, by revenge, by a sense of wrong, real or imagined, by a desire to cover up sin and shame, but not caused by a deliberate doctrine of slaughter. In this the modern anarchist stands alone in his infamy. His creed is that all rulers are his sworn victims. We read of men who bound themselves under an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had slain Pauli. That is the bond of the modern anarchist, to slay all rulers. They are the enemies of the people, the enemies of

liberty, the representatives, every one, of tyranny and oppression, and, therefore, he belongs to a fraternity sworn to destroy them every one. It matters not what their constitutional status may be. In his system the Sultan and the President are alike. The ruler may be an hereditary sovereign king, emperor, autocrat, or he may be a man chosen by the people to represent them and in their name to administer a government. He rules by the people and for the people. He may be beloved by the whole nation, but he is marked for death by every anarchist, and when opportunity offers he is to be slain by revolver or dynamite.

This is one of the most base and bloody forms of murder, and it is as widespread as it is base. We shudder at the name and deed of him who said "Hail, Master," and kissed Him and betrayed Him all together. We have his successors everywhere hidden amongst us, as ready to take the outstretched, confiding hand while dealing the murderous blow that fells the benevolent ruler.

This stamp of murder is a menace to society in its most vital forms. With it we have to reckon, we should not be slow to do so with un pitying determination. The country, wherever it be, which by its elective act, calls upon one of its citizens to leave the quiet and security of his home for the responsible administration of its affairs, is bound to surround that man with every possible protection. His murder is not to be treated as the murder of an ordinary citizen only. It is treason. It is a blow aimed at the State. It should be treated accordingly. The men holding and avowing the principles of anarchism should be treated by every state as murderers in the highest degree in which it is possible to commit murder. The times and their recent disasters call for the strongest repressive measures that the combined wisdom and power of all governments can divine and put in action.

(5) Murder may become wholesale. Every unjust war is just so much murder. The deaths caused by life and work in "sweating

shops" and tenement-houses, in the service of wealthy corporations, who neglect necessary precautions, are all, in the sight of the righteous Judge, so many transgressions of the law "Thou shalt not kill."

(6) History's page is red with murders of another kind, and of a kind that must be the most abhorrent to God our Saviour, because committed in His own blessed Name. These, as might be supposed, have been the most cold-blooded and cruel. "It shall come to pass that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God service." It came to pass, indeed. The pagans slew the martyrs, but the Christians slew one another. "Lord," asked St. John, "shall we cause fire to come down and slay them?" Notwithstanding the Lord's loud negative the thing was done through after centuries. No torture was too refined, too excruciating, no death too bad for those who denied a doctrine or renounced a name or a despotism.

It is a dreadful sight, indeed, but who can hide it, the ground of the world, as early in

its age it did, is continually and everywhere opening its mouth to drink the blood of man shed by the hand of his brother and calling to heaven for vengeance.

The Divine law which protects the sacred person of man, made in God's image, throws a fence around man's property.

One of the first to leap over this in a large way is the socialist. As the anarchist is the professed murderer, the socialist is the professed destroyer and distributor of property. His doctrine is that all things are common to the sons of men, that no man has any right to his property. These are alarming defiances of the law of the Most High. It is easier to take a man's life than to take his property, and for this reason only, the socialist is not so successful in downing his victims as the anarchist. But the former looks onward to the day when his principles will have so leavened the lump of society as to end in a general division of every man's goods, share and share alike. It will take a long time and a great revolution to substitute this

social law for the social law of God's by which every man's right to his property is protected, but the revolutionists are now at work.

Those who work in factories, amid the unceasing noise of machinery, become quite insensible to its thunder. Those who live and work in the world's great mill are most liable to grow unconscious of its sins and wickedness, notably of its inroads on this eighth commandment. Their range is immensely wide and inclusive, from picking and stealing to gigantic frauds, from petty peculations to monster robberies. We forget that as there are professions to which men devote themselves for the public good, so there are professions to which men give themselves for the public ill. The professional thief is as much a reality as the professional physician, licensed he may not be, but practising he is. In crowds, street cars and theatres he has his fingers in your pockets; on the racecourse he mingles with the throng and sets up his tables and thimbles. On the street he bids for your confidence. In splendid establish-

ments, brilliantly lighted, amid music and champagne, he takes your money while your eyes are open and stakes it and keeps it on your "luck." In fraud and baseless speculation, and bubble enterprise and fictitious company and security, in hollow investments, he leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind. The police know him well under all his guises and aliases. It is only the simple and unwary that he succeeds with. There are greater dangers infecting our civilization than this. "Customs" that corrupt the world, that pass muster, that, save in a very few glaring instances, are let alone to do their work. The adulteration of food sold to many and needy customers over the counters every minute in the long day. The misrepresentations under which inferior articles are floated off as first-class. The rottenness of goods and work supplied to the individual or the state under "contract." The buildings that are "scamped," that totter and fall in years after they have been heavily paid for. The ships that in like manner go down at sea. The food

and clothing, yea, even the medicines supplied to our armies and navies in the field and on sea.

There remains, perhaps, only one class of scandalous frauds more despicable than these. That class of which we have heard so much and so needfully of late, by which the wealthiest and the greatest cities are manipulated by "rings" and "gangs" and "bosses" and turned into inexhaustible mines of boodle and roguery.

Three great preachers in New York, on the Sunday preceding the recent elections, thus described the condition of things in that city:

Dr. Parkhurst led the van in denunciatory vehemence, but he had many followers. Speaking to his congregation, Dr. Parkhurst said: "We have in the last four years been touched in our pockets, and have been inordinately bled, for that is what Tammany exists for, and the only thing it exists for. But the supreme point of our distress is that men and women have been morally degraded. I would almost say that the Holy Spirit cannot

protect us from the taint and infection of so diffusive a pollution. And there is no proof of this so convincing as the fact that the whole town in its civilized portions is not rousing itself in the fury of holy indignation.

“It is enough to make heaven put on mourning and hell take a vacation. The town disgraced, womanhood openly bought, and sold, children damned from babyhood up, the city a stench even in the nostrils of unregenerate heathen, who get their Bible from it, yet not one of us but is afraid we are to have two more years of it.”

Rev. Dr. John P. Peters, Rector of St. Michael's Church, in the same connection said: “The question is not whether the vicious can be made virtuous by law. It is whether we shall continue a system under which the corrupt money-making combination of lawbreakers with the servants of the people destroys the virtue of our sons and daughters. The fight is against those who use their control of the city government to make procurers

of our young men and harlots of our young women."

Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, likened Mr. —— to Beelzebub, "with apologies to Beelzebub." Describing the conditions of New York, he said: "Conditions so abhorrent to the moral sense exist nowhere else on earth among civilized people. Our reputation abroad as a city governed by hoodlums, murderers, embezzlers, thieves and cut-throats, had been fully established. For four years we have been an offence and a stench in the nostrils of the other great cities of the world, and the issue of the present campaign has at last narrowed itself down to the moral issue."

Not alone the civic life in great cities is corrupt and dishonest as thus laid bare, but the private life of numerous citizens is just as dishonest but not laid bare. That splendid establishment, that costly equipage, that extravagant entertainment, that veneer of great wealth and resources, that would-be leadership of fashion, that invitation of the mag-

nates of society, that rivalry with great capitalists is utterly and horribly dishonest, because it has nothing behind it but the agonizing efforts of a man driven mad and sleepless and thin by a thousand strainings and devices to hold his ground a little longer ere the inevitable crash reveals the hollowness of all this glitter, and the bankruptcy upon which it was resting.

This same encroachment on the Divine law in our midst in forms so multifarious, shows itself in another and a very painful way. Who can con over his morning paper at breakfast without having his appetite spoiled as he reads of his young friend and schoolfellow, who, to cover a false step or float a speculation, took the money of the bank, of the trust company, intending to replace it; or his old friend who, to stave off failure and disgrace, invited heavier disgrace still by misapplying trust monies in his hands and keeping. Such cases are as sad as they are numerous. These men, the young and the matured and family man, did

not apprentice themselves to the business of thieving. They were, within your recollection, children like yourself, boys like yourself, well educated and inculcated in right principles, but the waters came round about them, one error led to another, and all to that bitter end, the forgetting of this word thundered out by the voice of God over this busy stirring world, "Thou shalt not steal."

As the former commandment deals with everything false in deed, so does that now to come before us with all that is false and wrong in word. As we hear it we are at once possessed with an idea of the utter feebleness of the human law to grapple with the many doings of the tongue. Who would not rather be defamed than embark in an action or a prosecution for slander or defamation of character. Only when defamation goes beyond all bounds can it at all be reached by law.

It is not alone the solid structure of character that is thus assailed with impunity, but there is abroad, looked upon and condoned,

a steady current of untruth and misrepresentation, so that people have come to discount, and discount as a matter of course, almost every item of daily news. The report of a man's utterances not infrequently convey the very opposite to his real statements. The cables, despatches or telegrams published every morning and evening await in every one's mind a later verification before full acceptance. A statement appears to the effect that the German Emperor is afflicted with insipient cancer. This is copied in a hundred papers. The same thing in another form proceeds from other places, becomes the talk of the clubs and of the town. The court journal positively denies it, still it appears and appears again. It all recalls the proverb, "Make money honestly if you can, at all events make money," with a slight variation, "Make news truthfully, if possible, at all events make news." The public must have news. The demand creates the supply. But what and where is truth? This is a moral disease so general and so beyond rem-

edy that nothing could ever heal it, but a widely diffused public sentiment founded on the spirit of this eternal law, "Thou shalt not bear false witness."

By this one word the tongue with all its mischief is regulated. It was made most truly for the noblest purposes. To speak truth, to comfort, to encourage, to instruct, to utter words of love, to touch the heart, to preach God's messages, to sing God's praises, to govern the world, to differentiate man from all inferior creations. It is therefore well called by the inspired singer, "The best member that I have."

By Satanic agency and human frailty, here as elsewhere, the best may become the worst, so that it is said again by the same authority, "What shall be given, what shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue." "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; it setteth on fire the course of nature and itself is set on fire of hell. It is an unruly, evil member full of deadly poison."

The same apostle who gives the foregoing

accounts of the tongue's evil, prescribes remedies therefor. "Let every man be swift to speak and slow to speak." It has been remarked by another that God seems to have made us to obey the last injunction, for He has made it easy to hear and hard to speak. The ear is ever open, there is no impediment to the entrance of sound. As water or air rushes into a vacuum, so words, sounds, into the ear. Not so with speech. Several sets of muscles must be set in motion. Lungs must be filled, the vocal cords must act, the teeth must be thrown open, the lips parted, the tongue must move ere a single articulate sound can be produced. Notwithstanding all such provisions we manage to reverse the Divine arrangement, and are swift to speak and slow to hear. "Thou lovest to speak on all words that may hurt, O thou false tongue."

The muscles are all set agoing, the machinery is swift to work and to pour a flood of words. It is said that the length of the tongue is in inverse ratio to the weight of the brain.

“ In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.” What sort of words? Blasphemy, deceit, indecency, gossip, slander, folly, jestings, “ These things come forth from the heart and defile the man.” “ From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

Against the turbulence, the agitations of this flood of falsehood God places His barriers saying to every tongue of every man, “ Your mission is to bear true witness, to speak the truth from the heart, thou shalt not bear false witness,” and St. James declares and insists that as a great ship is turned about by a very small helm, a horse by bit and bridle, a wild beast by the will of his master, so the tongue will turn the whole course of nature as a little spark kindleth a great fire. It must, therefore, be influenced aright. The restraints of the eternal law must constantly be laid upon it. It must be awakened and inspired to speak for truth and for God till all mankind shall with one word and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The tenth and last commandment differs from all the rest in that it deals wholly with the inward man. It is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Therefore I will now take occasion to point out how the four commandments now under consideration are joined together, how from the tenth commandment the others open and spread themselves out, how originating in the heart, act after act follows in the very order here laid down. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife." Observe now how in the breach of this command the breach also of the three already considered are contained. What is the usual order in such cases, as we constantly read and hear of them? The coveting of another man's wife, the stealing and taking of her, the lying and falsehood screening the act. The murder, the killing to which it generally leads. Behold all this in a sadly notorious instance. David walked on the roof of his house. From there he saw and coveted the wife of Uriah, then he sent and took or stole her. Then he resorted

to all sorts of lying devices, telling the soldier husband to return to his home, etc. Then finally came the murder of the brave Uriah. "Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle and retire from him that he may be smitten and die."

This is quite parallel with many a modern tale. The guest at a great man's palace covets his friend's wife, takes her, is from thenceforth a living lie to his friend and host. Then all comes out, and the enraged and outraged husband and host shoots his treacherous friend. There are the sixth and the eighth and the ninth and the tenth commandments all broken together. As one beautiful cut glass ornament they fall and are shivered to fragments on the hard stones of this world's wicked ways.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house."

Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Israel. You know the story right well. The king coveted the possession, together with his wife the

royal culprit invented a tissue of lies against his neighbor, sent and slew him, arose and took possession of the property. This, in its endless, false and bloody repetitions, runs through life's story. What is the darkly splendid tragedy of Macbeth but the working out of the union of those quadruple laws. Macbeth beholds the heir, covets the kingdom, plots for it, lies for it, murders for it, steals for it, and has peace never again.

Great princes in all times have trampled on those four laws in such a tremendous and wholesale way as to make history one standing witness of the integrity of this group of laws protecting life, person, character and property.

What were the long and bloody wars of Napoleon but a constant overthrowing of these four precepts regulating social life? He looked forth on three continents with covetous eye. He would work all the powers into one great world-empire under himself as another Cæsar. For this he disregarded treaties and constitutions and broke his parole, and

through rivers of blood and slaughter laid violent hands upon kingdom after kingdom. How many did the same before him. How many have tried to imitate him. How like all this the history of most of the world's great wars?

This same fourfold likeness is traceable in most of the cases in our criminal courts. Mr. Montague Williams, a London barrister of long standing records in "Leaves from a Life" numerous cases of this sort. Pluck one at random from the "Leaves," The guardian—next heir also—and a physician, covets his ward's property, sympathizingly persuades the boy that he is ill, gives to him medicine which is poison, kills him thereby, then steals the property.

All this is so common amid the corrupted currents of this life as to deprive its occurrence of anything like novelty. It is so common as to create no sensation at all. God's fourfold safeguards planted round the lives, characters and properties of His creatures are levelled all together by one plot conceived

and carried out by the brutal or by the educated and subtle criminal. There may be a wonderful difference in detail. In one case it all lies horribly open, in another it requires all the trained skill of experts to unravel its meshes. But they are alike in the combination against the wisdom and love of God in His holy preserving laws of life and character and person and property, that majestic quadrilateral shielding and protecting mind and tongue and hand and life.

One thing presses itself upon us as we review the conspiracies by which great evils set themselves against the great laws of the "Most High and Mighty Ruler of the universe."

The wise man said in his day, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with." *That is a priceless principle.* Here we may apply it. The beginning of all those evils just traced out is within, is covetousness. The evil eye. "Look not on the wine cup when it is red."

“Look not on another man’s wife to lust after her.” “Look not upon his house or lands or business or property with desire to have them from him.”

Covet not nor desire any man’s goods. So shall you be safe from the pack of lies and thefts and murders that quickly fill up the dark outlines. Pray from that heart and inward seat of all plans and purposes, the constant prayer, “Turn away mine eyes lest they behold vanity, and quicken Thou me in Thy way.” “Cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit.” “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

VI.
REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

Every system of law must have in it and as a necessary part of it, rewards for obedience and punishments for disobedience.

Every human law is thus sanctioned and strengthened. Wherever rewards and punishments are preserved there is a repetition of the Divine method. When God spake all the words of His eternal law, He annexed to their fulfilment His blessings and to their breach His curses. The first law was thus a covenant. All was set before the people by Moses, God's requirements, His promises and threats. Then answer was made: "All that God hath said we will do and be obedient." *Their first transgression was summarily punished.* The makers and worshippers of the golden calf fell in thousands by the sword and by the plague. All these things (says the apostle, 1 Cor. 10, referring to this page of history) were written for our admonition. The blessings and the curses were again

repeated in the book of Leviticus, and again before entering the land the law was written and set upon great stones. The tribes were divided into two companies, and from two mountains the blessings and curses were pronounced. "Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."

All this was well understood by the people to whom this law was originally given. Their experiences of obedience and consequent blessings, and disobedience and consequent punishments, were so many that they did not, in theory at least, deny this system of Divine government. Not so all generations of professing Christians. They have often encouraged themselves in false and daring security and have left out of sight the penalties sure to attend their acts. "Because sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil." (Eccl.)

In the eighteenth century English-speaking people had so far forgotten their respon-

sibilities and accountabilities under the Divine law that Bishop Butler elaborated his great argument for the government of God by rewards and punishments. That argument shews that our present happiness and misery are made to depend upon our behaviour, and that the knowledge of this is the essence of government, which is simply annexing consequences to acts, and giving notice of the arrangement. Hence, if told that God will reward and punish hereafter, such is in harmony with the whole course of nature, and so credible.

Butler proceeds to argue thus: We are under government by punishment now, and so may be hereafter. Present punishments are analogous to future.

(a) Oftentimes they follow actions which procure many present advantages and pleasures. For example, sickness and untimely death are consequences of intemperance, though it be accompanied by mirth and jollity.

(b) These punishments are often much

greater than the advantages or pleasures obtained by the acts of which they are punishments or consequences.

(c) They are often delayed a great while, sometimes till after the actions occasioning them are forgotten.

(d) That after such delay these natural punishments or miseries often come suddenly, violently and at once.

(e) Then, again, though youth may be alleged as an excuse for weakness and folly, as being naturally thoughtless, and not foreseeing consequences, this does not hinder but that these consequences follow and are felt throughout the whole course of mature life.

(f) The general course of nature is an example that opportunities once lost may never be recalled.

If during youth persons are indocile and self-willed they inevitably suffer in their future life for lack of those acquirements which they neglected the natural season for attaining, just as the husbandman who lets his seedtime pass without sowing has the whole year lost

to him without recovery. There is a certain bound to imprudence and misbehaviour which being transgressed, there remains no place for repentance in the natural course of things.

(*g*) It is further in this argument remarked that neglects from inconsiderateness, want of attention, and the like, are often attended with consequences as dreadful as any active misbehaviour from the most extravagant passion.

(*h*) Finally, many natural punishments, like civil, are mortal and final to him who incurs them, and seem inflicted by natural appointment either to remove the offender out of the way of being further mischievous, or as an example to those who are left behind.

(*i*) Butler argues further that such things are not accidental or occasional, but matters of daily experience, and that the present course of punishments and the future are so closely analogous that both may be described in the same words as in Prov. 1: "How long," speaking to those who are passing through it, "how long, ye simple ones, will

ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning and fools hate knowledge. Turn ye at my reproof. Behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my ways unto you." But upon being neglected, "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded," etc., "I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh, then shall they call upon me but I will not answer, they shall seek me early but they shall not find me."

The whole passage (says Butler) is so equally applicable to what we experience in the present world concerning the consequences of men's actions, and to what religion teaches us is to be expected in another, that it may be questioned which of the two was principally intended.

The inference from such an argument had better be stated in the words of Butler himself: "Reflections of this kind are not without their terrors to serious persons, the most free from enthusiasm and of the greatest

strength of mind, but it is fit things be stated and considered as they really are, and there is in the present age a certain fearlessness as to what may be hereafter under the government of God, which nothing but an universally acknowledged demonstration on the side of atheism can justify; and which makes it necessary that men be reminded, and, if possible, made to feel that there is no sort of ground for being thus presumptuous, even upon the most sceptical principles. For may it not be said of every person upon his being born into the world, he may behave so as to be of no service to it, but by being made an example of the wilful effects of vice and folly? That he may, as anyone may, if he will, incur an infamous execution from the hand of civil justice, or in some other course of extravagance shorten his days or bring upon himself infamy and disease worse than death! So that it had been better for him, even with regard to the present world, that he had never been born. And is there any pretence of reason for people to think themselves secure

and talk as if they had certain proof that, let them act as licentiously as they will, there can be nothing analogous to this, with regard to a future and more general interest under the providence and government of the same God." (Analogy, Chap. II.)

The analogy thus pursued makes it possible, makes it easy for us to see that God has written the truth of His judgments clearly in the page of His revelation, and as clearly in the constitution and course of nature, that He is a righteous Judge, visiting iniquity, transgression and sin, both here and hereafter, and now also, as in the life to come, rewarding and blessing all righteous doers.

Butler's argument enforces the undeniable view that God is not perpetually watching over His creatures, lash in hand, but rather, having fixed and established certain natural laws, He allows such to work out their course, each deed being followed by its consequences, which, indeed, is either its reward or its punishment.

This truth we cannot escape. We have

read the Bible carelessly, indeed, and the book of daily life just as heedlessly if we have not learned this. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." There is like for like in this life present. Our acts recoil upon us. Whatever hard, cruel, unjust deeds we do to our fellow-beings, in this present world, the same will come back upon us ere life closes in.

I look upon this in patriarchal days. *Jacob* deceived his father, old and blind, with the skin of the kid upon his hands and the smooth of his neck. *Jacob's* own sons deceived him with the little coat of many colours dipped in the blood of the kid, and with the false, cruel words: "This have we found, know now whether it be thy son's coat or no." Oh, bitter retribution, but not all. *Jacob* took unfair advantage of his careless brother coming in from his hunting, faint with hunger and inhaling the flavour of the red pottage, took advantage of the thoughtless, starving man to drive a hard bargain with him for his birthright, and in years after the

same Jacob found himself in the hands of his uncle Laban, just as crafty, and of whose long course of dealing, hard and sharp, Jacob gives this account. "This twenty years have I been with thee, that which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee, I bore the loss of it, of my hand did thou require it; whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house, I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters and six years for thy cattle, and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty." Poor Jacob! Surely he got back what he had given, with interest. And so the history proceeds, furnishing example after example. "And they found Adon-bezek, and they cut off his thumbs and his great toes, and he said: "Threescore and ten kings having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table. As I have done, so God hath required me." (Judges 1: 6, 7.)

And Agag came before Samuel delicately

and said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past," and Samuel said, "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women," and he hewed Agag to pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." (1 Sam. 15: 32).

Ahab and Jezebel slew their neighbor Naboth, and shed innocent blood, and made themselves the wholesale murderers of God's prophets; and they and their sons and grandsons were slain with ghastly imitation of their own methods. "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." And of Jezebel spake the Lord also, saying, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs shall eat, and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat." (1 Kings 21). "The whole house of Ahab shall perish." (2 Kings 9).

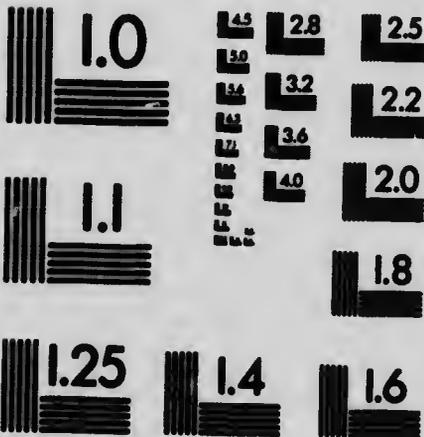
An avenging and merciless Nemesis follows the whole train of sins that we comprise under the one pregnant word "Impurity."





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The body is cursed and plagued beyond description, and at the same time the mind and the whole domestic and social circle. The complications that gather round such sins, and the avengers that pursue and wreak vengeance, are as numerous as they are terrible. The 34th chapter of Genesis may be taken and read as a sample of the witness of Holy Scripture to the avenging of this class of sins by the society against which they are committed.

A book entitled "The Martyrdom of an Empress" reveals an appalling record of pollution and punishment. A father's infidelities imitated by his son, his wife neglected, cast off, another chosen in her stead, the impossibility of the royal sanction to such a base proposal, the disappointment and reckless will of the misguided pair sealed in their simultaneous death. The dread chilling mysteries enveloping the midnight transactions in the far-off forest, the stealthy burial, the despair of father and mother, the astonishment of the world stunned by such wick-

edness in high places, and their manifold and far-reaching penalties.

Another book, "The Love of an Uncrowned Queen," tells a frightful tale. How a heartless father sold his unwilling child to a king, who took her for her fortune, who never loved her nor regarded her, but neglected her and misused her, till her young heart, blighted and wronged, sought another. How their steps were marked, and when about to elope how her lover was assassinated, and the faithless young wife imprisoned for thirty-two years. How she cursed her husband, and prophesied his death immediately upon her own. How he feared and trembled when she died, and he heard it in his journey. How then and there he fell mortally ill, and urged and commanded his drivers to drive furiously that he might reach his palace. How all was in vain, and the bolt fell and he died on the road.

What a fell confusion is sin and its ways. What an infernal conspiracy. Heartlessness, covetousness, neglect, hatred, marital mock-

ery and infidelity, murder and life-long imprisonment, and curses and death upon death, all jumbled together in such a heap of utter wretchedness as history goes beyond all fiction in depicting and painting.

Whoever would see the working out of a cluster of commons sins — drunkenness, gambling, debauchery, debt and dishonesty, extravagance, blasphemy, quarrelling, name-calling, violence and shame—may turn over Hogarth's pictures of "The Rake's Progress," and "The Two Apprentices." "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are made ashamed, for the end of these things is death." (Rom. 6).

George Eliot in "Romola" leads her readers through the paths of vice to their end in judgment, showing that a young life, begun with every promise and provision for happiness, is broken to pieces through falseness and want of principle and viciousness, and ends in utter ruin and shipwreck.

The oldest and best and most reliable of books holds up for our warning and example

those upon whom, in every age, the judgments and penalties of the broken law of purity, has fallen. Zimri and his partner, who were punished immediately (Num. 25). Samson, who wrecked his strength in the lap of a harlot, till he became the weakest of the weak, and ground as a slave in the mill. Sodom and the cities about it, giving themselves over into fornication, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. David falling from his high estate to be an adulterer and a plotter and a destroyer of his brave captain all together, and awaking to the dread consciousness of his position, weeping for his sin, weeping for his lost son, watering his couch with his tears, carrying with him to the grave the avenging sword and the unending sorrows of a penitential life. Solomon, led astray by women till made to take and drink to its dregs the cup of bitterness and reproach, to write on all his unsatisfying splendor, "vanity of vanities," and coming back at the end of his wide and dark experience to remember his Creator

and lament all his lost years and opportunities.

All books—all books since the world began—tell the same invariable truth, “verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth,” and after consulting all the books that God and man have made and are ever making, there is perpetually in our sight the wide, open, unmistakable book of our daily life and experience in which we cannot help reading and seeing the same characters walking in the same ways and receiving the same punishment, year after year—in which we cannot help seeing the painful sight, that not alone is guilty man or woman visited for his or her sin, but the innocent children and the home and their aged parents, and all their relatives have to bear the heavy penalties of grief and shame and sorrow and disgrace such as no tongue can fully tell.

Such are a few of the witnesses appearing in court from the records of Holy Scripture, History, Literature, Art, Conscience. He would indeed be a bold man, who, looking into

their faces and listening to their testimony, could feel it and say it, "God is indifferent to sin. Virtue is not its own reward. Vice is not its own punishment."

Every example of sin avenged here is a strong presumptive argument that sin will also be avenged hereafter. The unhappiness of the wicked may last as long as their wickedness lasts. Sin and its penalty surely may run concurrently. What is there, it might well be asked, likely to change the sinful nature of those who pass from this life to the next? A purgatorial process is stoutly denied in the Articles of the Reformed Churches. The last words of Holy Scripture seem to warn us that as our moral nature is built up here so it continues there. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, he that is filthy, let him be filthy still, he that is holy, let him be holy still, he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." What is the last judgment but the stamping of those moral conditions as final?

While uttering such warnings, we do so with this reservation, and desire to guard

ourselves with this statement. Holy Scripture, from which chiefly all such admonitions are drawn, does not lead us to think that every instance wherein the evident penalty is executed upon sin here is an assurance that such execution will of necessity be followed by final punishment hereafter. Rather is it very plainly intimated to us that the judgments following sin here are the chastisements of a merciful God, inflicted on the body for the saving of the penitent soul. This is indeed the case wherever there is conviction of sin and penitence and confession. In such cases the temporal penalty only is visited, the eternal is remitted to the penitent. Thus David, under the heart-cutting words of God's messenger said, "I have sinned against the Lord." This confession was followed by the absolution, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die," and by the declaration, "Nevertheless, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme, therefore the child that is born unto thee shall

surely die." Then follow announcements of chastening corresponding with the erring king's transgressions. He had destroyed the peace of Uriah's home, so "I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." "Thou hast slain Uriah with the sword, therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house." (2 Sam. 12).

According to the same rule, when St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, who had profaned the sacrament, he says: "For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep." "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world," and again the same apostle commands the same church "to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (Ch. 5). He also writes "Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan *that they may learn not to blaspheme.*" (Tim. 1).

How evident it is that the bitter consequences of transgression falling upon us in mind, body or estate are not always certain preludes of everlasting destruction, but merciful chastisements and chances and calls to repent and forsake sin that the soul may be saved. Only in the case of the hardened and impenitent are such temporal judgments presumptive proof that God who sends them can and will follow the man who disregards them with the heavier penalties of an eternal doom, "Is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

All that has so far been considered is an extended preparation of our minds for what revelation enunciates of a coming judgment, where every secret shall be made known, and every deed shall have its final reward or punishment, where all the failures and wrongs and injustice and miscarriage of this imperfect state shall be rectified by "a juster Judge than here." This final day and scene are revealed and invested with language and scenery befitting so weighty a matter.

The wise and royal preacher thus closes his weird and piercing sermon, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12).

The last of the four major prophets relates his sublime vision, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the fine wool. His throne was like the fiery flame and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth before Him, thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The judgment was set and the books were opened." (Dan. 7).

The last of the great line of prophets declares his vision in language identical with the foregoing, "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was no place found for them, and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. The judgment was set and the books were

opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20).

The Son of Man, when closing His earthly ministry, sat over against the temple and city, and uttered His great prophecy of its downfall. To this He added parables, weighty and warning, concluding these great instructions with a description of the judgment-day: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory with all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." (Matt. 25).

The apostles of Christ followed their Master closely in this as in all things. Indeed, their bold, uncompromising language on this subject is a great contrast to the suppressed utterances of their successors in modern days. Thus St. Paul, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one

may receive for the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether they be good or bad." "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5: 10.) "The day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (Rom. 2.) "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. 1.) And St. Peter argues at length that if God spared not the angels that sinned, not the old world, nor the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the same Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 St. Peter 2.) St. Jude follows the same line of thought, and cites the same examples. To him it belonged to revive

the unrecorded prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment."

Preacher, Prophet, Christ, Apostle, each has with marked similarity of language depicted the eternal Judge presiding at the day of judgment. These wonderful word-paintings have been unfurled and floated over all the world. They have passed into the creeds and songs and prayers of the universal church. "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." (Creeds.) "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge." (Te Deum.) "At the last day He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead." (Coll. for Ad. Sun.) "In the day of judgment good Lord deliver us." (Litany.) "Day of wrath, oh day of mourning, see fulfilled the prophets' warning." (*Dies iræ.*) While Art, in the inspired ministry of Michael Angelo, figures the last judgment on the living canvas.

Thus ancient and wide the belief in that closing scene in this world's awful tragedy. I would not risk the doubting or disbelieving of it, for if it should never come, to have beheld it will do me no harm; and if it comes, as come it will, to have disbelieved, it would find me "all unprepared to meet Him."

When we turn up the side of the subject on which "Rewards" is inscribed, be it observed that everything heretofore advanced as to the righteous judgments of God is a guarantee that rewards shall be just as certainly distributed by the unerring Judge as penalties. The justice of God makes one just as secure as the other. As for the present, "In keeping of Thy commandments is great reward" (Ps. 19.) Every act of obedience carries its own reward. "The cup of cold water given to a disciple shall in no wise lose its reward," but be regarded as done to Christ Himself, "Whatsoever good thing that any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." In one comprehensive prayer St. Paul embraces both worlds, and the

rewards meted out here and hereafter. "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day" (2 Tim. 1.)

We have thus reviewed the eternal law of the eternal God. Its nature, its groups of words, its mandates guarding God's unity and worship, God's name and day, man's social and family life, man's social and business life and relations, and the rewards and punishments by which the eternal law is and will be enforced. It is all before us. We can only hear and face it in the light of the everlasting gospel. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

*"Beneath Thy cross I view the day
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
And thus prepare to meet Him."*

Through His obedience to the law for us, and His atonement on our behalf, the law is shorn of all terror to the true penitent and believing heart. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin the law, but thanks be to God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The law becomes to us a blessed rule of life, and "Love is the fulfilling of the law," therefore we pray, "Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law," and "Write all these, Thy laws, in our hearts, we beseech Thee."

