Peter Seddon

With the best wishes
of the Author.

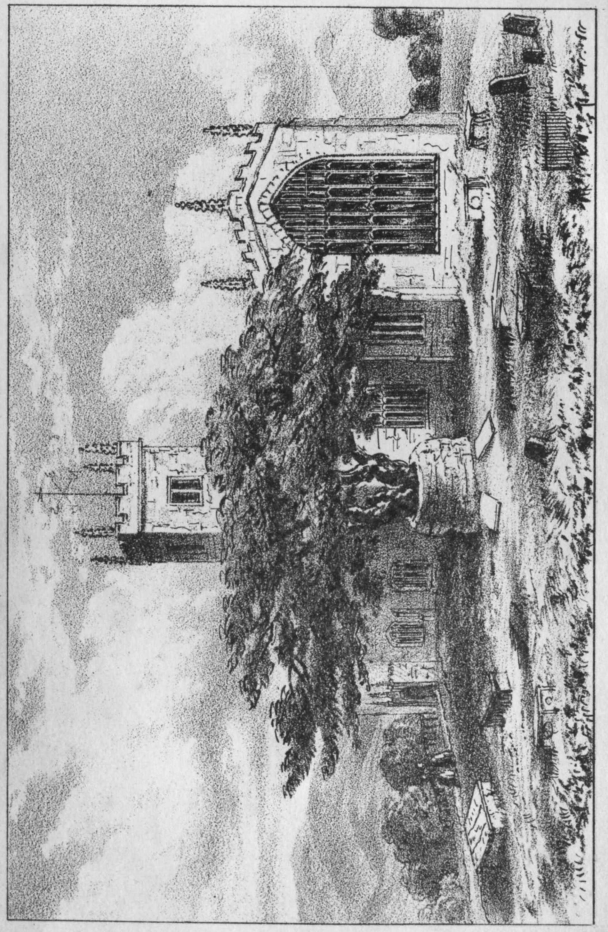
Jan 1 1855.

Ann Seddon at Edgefold Middle Hulton Died June 5 and was Intered June 9 = 1856 in the Eightieth year of her Age

Peter Seddon Farmer Edge Fold Middle Hulton Died Jany 31st and was Intered Feby 3rd 1860 in the 79 Year of his age —

James Seddon Died August 19th 1872 — aged 68. years and was intered at Deane Church on the 22. —

Mary Seddon wife of James Seddon Died July 18th 1880 aged 61. and was intered at Deane Church on the 21st —



Deane Church.

SERMONS

ON

Romanism and Unitarianism,

AND

OTHER SUBJECTS SUITED TO THE TIMES.

BY

EDWARD GIRDLESTONE, M.A.,

VICAR OF DEANE, LANCASHIRE.

LONDON:

PAINTER, 342, STRAND.

BERRY, DEANSGATE.

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SECOND EDITION.

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BOLTON-LE-MOORS: BRADBURY, DEANS-GATE.

"That innovations in matters of ritual do oftentimes go hand in hand with errors in doctrine has been abundantly proved in the recent instance of St. Saviour's."—*The Bishop of Ripon to the Clergy of the Ruri-Decanal Chapter of Leeds.* 1851.

W. E. PAINTER, 342, STRAND, LONDON, PRINTER.

PREFACE.

THE late Papal Aggression has stirred up, from John o'Groat's house to the Land's End, such a loud and hearty Protestant outcry as has had no parallel since the glorious days of the Reformation. This movement, on the part of the Roman Church, has thus proved as ill-timed for her own interest as favourable to the cause of evangelical truth. There is, indeed, little occasion for fear with respect to open and avowed Popery. The gulf by which this is separated from Protestantism is almost impassable, unless spanned by some artificial structure. Such a bridge is Tractarianism, Puseyism, Anglo-Catholicism—the preaching of Roman doctrine and adoption of Roman ceremonies in the bosom of the Church of England itself. The entrance to this bridge is most elaborately concealed by music, painting, sculpture, architecture—the revival of me-

diæval pageant, ceremony, and discipline—so that it is scarcely possible for any one to ascertain the precise moment at which the foot is first set upon it. It leads, nevertheless, as surely as insensibly, to an undue exaltation of the Prayer Book, the denial of the right of private interpretation of Scripture, the setting-up of the Church in the place of Christ, the recognition of a sacrificing priesthood; and so, by a certain and easy passage, to the bosom of Papal Rome itself.

With such a bridge, courting on every side the approach of the unwary, the Author would have thought himself very remiss had he not availed himself of the powerful means supplied by the life and death of his martyred predecessor for providing his people with a practical safeguard against Popery, and all which savours of it, or leads to it. The great interest which the announcement of the four Sermons on George Marsh, the Martyr, excited, and the attention with which they were listened to by overflowing congregations, led him, in the first instance, to hope that the circulation of them in print might, by the blessing of God, be instrumental for good. The demand for a second edition, in a very

short time after the publication of the first, has not a little confirmed this hope; and has led to the reprint being made in the shape of the present volume, which, in addition to the "Martyr," contains a number of other Sermons, many of them, particularly those delivered in Lent, preached with special reference to the present times. Whatever savours of Popery, even if it does not end in downright apostacy to Popery, is, as far as it savours of it, destructive of the life of the soul. So that Tractarianism is to be dreaded, not merely as one of the shortest and surest ways to Rome, but as in itself directly subversive of evangelical principle, and indirectly conducive not a little to the spread of that scepticism and downright infidelity which is one of the most dangerous signs of the present times.

With the Bible interpreted by God's Holy Spirit for his only rule of life, and the grace of Christ the alone Mediator to be sought for by diligent prayer for His only help in time of need, the humble disciple can scarcely fail of living and dying, as his forefathers did, in the truth as it is in Jesus, and as it is set forth in the pure doctrine and simple ritual of the Reformed Church of England.

The parish church of Deane, or, as in the earliest existing documents it is called *St. Mariden* or St. Mary of Deane, is one of the oldest churches in the county of Lancaster. The place is spoken of in many old deeds connected with the family of Hulton, as having been at a very remote period the site of a cell or oratory. A Latin deed has been lately discovered in the Chartelary of Whalley Abbey, an offshoot from the more ancient Abbey of Stanlawe, bearing date 1st of Edward I., A.D. 1276, in which is recorded the grant of the glebe land by Thomas de Pierpoint; its boundaries as they still exist distinctly traced; and trustees appointed, many of them the ancestors of the present landowners and principal inhabitants of the parish and neighbourhood. Mr. Hulton, of Hulton Park, the chief landed proprietor in the parish, whose ancestor, David de Hulton, was one of the above-mentioned trustees, has in his possession many curious relics—such as old Papal indulgences, letters from Lord Leicester to Queen Elizabeth, endorsed with remarks in her own hand, and the original silver and ebony stamp, representing Chaos reduced to order, with which the act of

restoration was sealed. Amongst these is another and much longer Latin deed, dated 23rd Henry VIII., A.D., 1542, in which is recorded the separation of the parish of Deane from the demesne of Whalley Abbey by royal authority, and the endowment of the chapelry with all the rights and privileges of a parish church. Most of the present structure was, in all probability, erected in the reign of Henry VII., or early in that of Henry VIII. But parts of the foundation, possibly even parts of the structure—certainly the place itself as the site of a cell or oratory—may be traced back as far as Edward I., or even much earlier. The venerable yew-tree which is shown in the annexed sketch, and the age of which it is impossible to estimate, is a faithful witness of the antiquity of the building, which it still continues to adorn and shade. So many proofs of great antiquity cannot fail of investing the parish church of Deane with corresponding interest. It is not surprising, therefore, that it is regarded in the neighbourhood with much affection; and that in the parish so strong is the feeling of respect, that, notwithstanding the impossibility of collecting a church-rate in any of the adjoining parishes,

the fabric, as well as everything connected with it, is maintained in the greatest possible state of efficiency and order by an annual rate cheerfully contributed from every part of the parish.

Deane Church, however, is in possession of a much greater charm than even its antiquity—that, namely, which has given rise to the present volume. For, as there is still existing in the parish, in the possession of and inhabited by Mr. Ainsworth, Smithills Hall, the beautiful old house in which George Marsh, the Martyr, was first imprisoned; so in Deane Church there may still be seen the beautiful old carved oak pulpit in which he preached. The existence of such an invaluable relic, while, even more than the antiquity of the building itself, it commands the respect and affection of Protestants, at the same time imposes upon all the successors of the blessed Martyr a heavy additional responsibility. May there never be wanting to stand in that place a faithful witness to the truth as it is in Jesus! May the trumpet blown from it never give an uncertain sound!

E. G.

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Interior of Deane Church - the Martyr's Pulpit

SERMON I.

GEORGE MARSH, THE MARTYR OF DEANE.

PRAYER.

"He being dead, yet speaketh."—*Hebrews* xi. 4.

He is dead. He has been dead nearly three hundred years. He once lived in this very place. He was born in the parish of Deane. He commenced life as a farmer; but he "afterwards went to the University of Cambridge, where he studied and much increased in learning and godly virtues. He then became a minister of God's holy word and sacraments, in which condition he continued for a space, earnestly setting forth God's true religion, to the defacing of Antichrist's false doctrine, by his godly readings and sermons" in this very place. He bore a name still very common in this neighbourhood—the name of Marsh; and was very likely akin to some of those who are now listening to me. You will by this time

profit of my neighbours and brethren in the world, and obtaining of my eternal salvation by Christ in heaven." Think of these two Christian friends, brethren, kneeling down on the bare ground on yonder Moor which you just now crossed on your way to church—that Moor, not as now enclosed and cultivated, but as it was three hundred years ago—bare, bleak, and lonely: think of this, brethren, and then never deem that any either place or time is unfit for prayer. Having, in answer to these earnest prayers, received such guidance from above as had quite determined him that, at a time when the very existence of the truth was at stake, it was his duty not to run away from the danger, as under more ordinary circumstances might have been allowable, but by facing it boldly afford an unquestionable proof of the sincerity and stedfastness of his faith, we nevertheless find the future martyr, none the less earnestly and by exactly the same means, preparing himself for the difficulties and trials which he was well aware were now awaiting him. "So betimes in the morning, he says, I arose, and after I had said the English Litany, as my custom was with other prayers, kneeling on my knees by my friend's bedside, I prepared myself to go towards Smithills; and, as I was going thitherward, I went into the houses of Harry Widdows, of my Mother-in-law, of Ralph Yeton,

and of the wife of Thomas Richardson, desiring them to pray for me." From Smithills he was summoned to Lathom, at that time the residence of the Popish Earl of Derby, concerning which he says; "So the next day, which was Wednesday, we arose, *prayed*, and came to Lathom." The daily use of the Litany as a part of his private devotion is a striking proof of the value which these faithful men were wont to set on, and the comfort they were accustomed to derive from the incomparable Liturgy of the Reformed Church of England. It serves to give also a useful hint to those who complain that the services of the Church are long and wearisome, or fancy that they are not sufficiently plain and pointed to form an edifying part of domestic or private devotion. Those who, like George Marsh, were in hourly danger of sealing their testimony with their blood, found these prayers neither long, wearisome, nor inapplicable; but very edifying and full of comfort.

George Marsh was now repeatedly examined before the Earl of Derby and his Popish counsellors at Lathom; and afterwards at Chester, before Dr. Cotes, the bishop of that place and a most bigoted and persecuting Papist. In the intervals he was imprisoned, first at Lathom, in, as he describes the place, "a cold, windy, stone-house, where there was very little room; and here I lay two nights, it was early in March,

without any bed, saving a few great canvass tent-cloths; but afterwards I had a pair of sheets but no woollen cloths, and so continued till Palm Sunday, occupying myself as well as I could in meditation, *prayer*, and study; for no man was suffered to come to me but my keeper twice a day when he brought me meat and drink." At Lancaster he was brought up before the court in the company of "common malefactors." Christ was crucified between thieves, and so they that confessed him were tried in the same company. Of his imprisonment at Lancaster, he says, "The truth is, I and my fellow prisoner Warburton, every day kneeling on our knees did read morning and evening prayer with the English Litany, every day twice, both before noon and after, with other prayers more." In the course of his examinations, and in the intervals between them, he was much harrassed and perplexed by the subtle questions and arguments of wily priests, and by the solicitations at once of his enemies and his friends, who both strongly pressed upon him the expediency of denying his faith in order to save his life, and left no stone unturned to induce him to recant: the one, in order to glory in his shame; the other, out of a sincere though mistaken affection for his person. In these, perhaps, almost the greatest of the trials allotted to him, he did not neglect the means

which had already so much contributed to his strength and confidence. To his friends he writes from his prison at Lancaster, begging them thus, "Pray for me, and all that be in bonds, that God would assist us with His Holy Spirit, that we may with boldness confess His holy name, and that Christ may be magnified in our bodies; that we may stand full and perfect in all the will of God, to whom be all honour and glory, world without end—Amen." And after his mind had been very much harrassed, during and after one of the many examinations to which he was subjected, by the wily questions of his judges and the entreaties of his friends, he says, "This considered, I cried more earnestly unto my God by prayer, desiring Him to strengthen me with His holy Spirit; with boldness to confess Him and to deliver me from their enticing words; and that I were not spoiled through their philosophy and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men and ordinances of the world, and not after Christ." And now at length this man of prayer—whose daily habit having been to "come boldly unto the throne of grace," had so found "grace to help him in time of need," that neither the arguments of the most wily Papists could convince him, nor the entreaties of the most affectionate friends move him, nor threats even of faggot and fire seduce him from "holding fast the profession

of his faith without wavering," or frighten him into shrinking from the "good fight of faith," and laying hold "on eternal life"—was given up as hopeless, and condemned, and sentenced, as an heretic. "So the Bishop of Chester read out his sentence, and straight after said unto him, 'Now will I no more pray for thee than will I for a dog.' And Marsh answered that, 'notwithstanding, he would pray for his lordship.'" How truly and wonderfully one of the most lovely features in the face of the Divine Master was here reflected in the countenance of the poor and persecuted disciple! "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "I can pray for your lordship." The first words were those of the blessed Jesus, in behalf of those who not only nailed Him to the cross, but mocked at Him in the midst of His excruciating agonies. The others were the prayers of a Protestant martyr for the Popish bishop who not only sentenced him to the stake, but in doing so added the unprovoked insult—"Now I will no more pray for thee than I will for a dog."

But the end draws near. The sentence was passed. The stake was driven. The pile was heaped up high around it. The sheriffs and other officers of justice took their places. With bills and pole-axes the ministers of the mild and merciful decrees of Rome went to the prison in

the North Gate of Chester to summon their victim. "He came with them, we read, most humbly and meekly, with a lock upon his feet." Arrived at the place of execution without the city, near to Spittle-Broughton, "kneeling down he made his prayers." Prayer was still his main-stay. "He then put off his clothes unto his shirt, was chained unto the post, having a number of faggots under him, and a thing made like a firkin, with pitch and tar in the same, over his head; but, by reason of the fire being unskilfully made and the wind driving the flame to and fro, he suffered great extremity at his death, which, notwithstanding, he bore very patiently. Wherein this is to be noted, that when he had been a long time tormented in the fire without moving, having his flesh so broiled and puffed up that those who stood before him could scarcely see the chain wherewith he was bound, and, therefore, supposed no less but he had been dead: notwithstanding, suddenly he spread forth his arms, saying, 'Father of heaven, have mercy upon me;' and so yielded his spirit into the hands of the Lord." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Such were the last words of Christ, and of Stephen, the first to suffer for His sake. Prayer, as we have seen, had been throughout his eventful life the support of the Protestant Martyr. Prayer had given him

strength in weakness, comfort in distress, light in darkness; had, when duty was concerned, made his ear deaf, as well to the solicitations of friends as to the threats of enemies; and taught his tongue to bless them that cursed him, and pray for them that despitefully used him and persecuted him. Prayer, even when the faggot and flame were actually in his sight, had robbed of its terrors the chain which fastened him to the stake. At length all was well nigh finished. In the midst of tortures such as nothing but Popish malice could have devised, and the very mention of which makes the blood run cold, to the everlasting shame of those who gave it to be burned, the poor mortal body of George Marsh remained an heap of ashes. But, carried up more gloriously far than even in his chariot of fire and horses of fire the prophet of old, like his heavenly Master and the blessed Stephen, on the wings of prayer the never-dying spirit of the Protestant Martyr ascended to join "under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held" (Rev. vi. 9); and thence, "he being dead, yet speaketh."

Yes, brethren, he who once in this very pulpit, a living man, spoke to your forefathers by example, by faith, by the passages of his life just read to you, by his own words recorded by the historian and this evening recited by me, by his

own prayer which shall presently be offered with you, though dead, speaketh to you this night. He speaketh to you on a very important subject, a subject without great attention to which you cannot possibly be prepared either to live the life which he lived, or, if called upon, to die the death which he died. He speaketh to you about prayer. His words are, "Pray without ceasing." Pray in private. Pray in the family. Pray in the congregation. Pray whenever you are in emergency and need: for comfort when you are in distress; for light, when you are in darkness; for boldness, when you are weak. Pray without ceasing. Pray this very night. Yes, in the very words of the Protestant Martyr himself, which happily are still on record, and which cannot but be dear to every inhabitant of Deane: in George Marsh's own words, when the hymn is over, join with me, his successor, in prayer this night.

THE MARTYR'S PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the only physician of wounded consciences, we, miserable sinners, trusting in thy gracious goodness, do briefly open to thee the evil tree of our heart, with all the roots, boughs, leaves, and fruits, and with all the crooks, knots, and knours, all which thou knowest: for thou thoroughly per-

ceivest as well the inward lusts, doubtings, and denying thy providence, as these gross outward sins which we commit inwardly and deadly. Wherefore, we beseech thee, according to the inward measure of our infirmity, although we be far unable and unapt to pray, that thou would mercifully circumcise our stony hearts, and for those old hearts create new within us, and replenish us with a new spirit, and water us and moisten us with the juice of heavenly grace and wells of spiritual waters, whereby the inward venom and noisome juice of the flesh may be dried up, and custom of the old man changed, and our hearts, always bringing forth thorns and briars to be burned with fire, from henceforth may bear spiritual fruits in righteousness and holiness, unto life everlasting. Amen.

SERMON II.

GEORGE MARSH, THE MARTYR OF DEANE.

THE BIBLE.

"He being dead, yet speaketh."—*Hebrews* xi. 4.

Our parting prayer, brethren, on Sunday evening last, was in the words of George Marsh the Martyr himself. Plain, simple, unstudied, and unaffected, but at the same time, from the deep strain of devotion and humility in which it was expressed, eloquent and heart-stirring, such as saints might well utter, angels echo, and the Son of God Himself, the Almighty Intercessor, carry to the foot of the throne of grace, was this prayer of the faithful Protestant Martyr. *Psalm* xxxix. 3, "My heart was hot within me: while I was musing, the fire burned; *then* spake I with my tongue." This was the spirit in which that beautiful prayer was conceived. What, then, in the case of George Marsh, produced that hearty, earnest, affectionate, spirit? What is likely to produce the same state in us? Hear the Martyr's own words on this subject, written

immediately before the prayer itself. "Beloved, he says, amongst other exercises, I do daily on my knees use this confession of sins, willing and exhorting you to do the same, and daily acknowledge unfeignedly to God your unbelief, unthankfulness, and disobedience against Him. This shall ye do, he adds, if ye will diligently consider and look yourselves first in the pure glass of God's commandments, and there see your outward filthiness and uncleanness, and so learn to vanquish the same, that is, to wit, to fall in hearty displeasure against sin, and thereby be provoked to long after Christ." Here, then, is the secret spring of earnestness in prayer. A longing after Christ is provoked by a hearty displeasure against sin. This arises from a conviction of personal filthiness and uncleanness, and a desire to vanquish the same. All are produced by a diligent looking at ourselves in the pure glass of God's commandments. In other words, in order to be earnest in prayer, we must be diligent readers of our Bibles. And it is on this subject, the diligent use namely of God's written Word, that I intend, by citing a few passages from his life, to endeavour to make George Marsh the Martyr, though dead, yet speak to you a few living words this evening.

It was his desire of "Godly Studies" that first led the Martyr, as we heard last Sunday, to quit the much more profitable occupation of a farmer for preparation for holy orders at the University of Cambridge. We have already heard him tell us, during his imprisonment at Lancaster, "I and my fellow prisoner, Warburton, every day kneeling on our knees, did read Morning and Evening Prayer, with the English Litany every day twice, both before noon and after, with other prayers more." He adds, "And also read every day certain chapters of the Bible, commonly towards night." The diligence of his habit of reading the Holy Scriptures is further apparent from his always appealing to them as his sole and paramount authority, for either believing or not believing any doctrine, or adopting or not adopting any particular course of conduct. "I answered," he said, in one of his examinations before the Earl of Derby, "I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, according as the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments do teach." "I answered," he said, on another occasion, "my faith in Christ, conceived by His Holy Word, I neither could nor would deny, alter, or change, for any living creature whatsoever he were." Again, when asked by his friends to recant for the sake of his life, he says, "Again I answered that I believed and leaned only to the Scriptures, not judging things by prosperity or adversity." On another occasion, he says, "I answered, for my learning I acknowledge myself to know nothing

but Jesus Christ, even Him that was crucified; and that my faith was grounded upon God's Holy Word only, and such as I doubted not pleased God, and as I would stand in at the last day, God assisting me." And again, when pressed on the subject of denying the cup to the laity, he declares, "Wherefore, if I could be persuaded in my conscience by God's Word that it were well done, I could gladly yield on this point." George Marsh had evidently read God's Word with the careful, diligent, persevering, but humble spirit of one who, to use the words of *Article* vi., believed that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Such being the case, we shall not be surprised to find the Martyr, in his letters to his various friends, exhorting them to a diligent reading of the Holy Scriptures, and making a careful use of them, as a test of the truth or falsehood of the doctrine which they heard preached. "The weapon of a Christian in this matter (he says) ought to be 'the sword of the Spirit,' which is the Word of God." And again, "Christ earnestly warneth us to beware of false prophets who come to us in sheep's clothing, but

inwardly are ravening wolves: by their fruits ye shall know them. The fruits of the prophets is their doctrine: in this place are we Christians taught that we should try the preachers, and others that come under colour of setting forth true religion unto us, according to the saying of St. Paul, 'Try all things, and choose that which is good:' also, the Evangelist St. John saith, 'Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they be of God or not, for many false prophets are gone out into the world.' Therefore, if thou wilt know the true prophets from the false, try their doctrine at the true touchstone, which is the Word of God: and, as the godly Thessalonians did, search ye the Scriptures, whether those things that be preached be even so or not: for else by the outward conversation of them ye may be easily deceived." Here was recommended no withholding of the Scriptures—no reserve even in reading them. Here was no denial to the laity of the right of private interpretation—that is, of endeavouring, with God's blessing, with such ability as He had vouchsafed to them, to come at a right understanding of God's Word, and test by it the doctrines which their ministers preached to them.

George Marsh, however, did not think that the duty of Christians, as regards the Word of God, ended with diligently using and reading it

themselves. *Matthew* x. 8—"Freely ye have received, freely give." On this principle he urged his friends to make known the Word of God to all with whom they had any conversation or influence. Now, to the extracts from the letter of the Martyr which I am about to read to you on this head, I beg your more earnest attention, because the letter is one addressed to the then inhabitants of Deane—Jenkin Crompton, James Lever, Ellis Hogg, Ralph Bradshaw, and Ellis Crompton—names all of them still familiar amongst you, some of whom are without doubt the descendants of the "well-beloved in Christ" above-mentioned, to whom the letter is addressed:—"And though all men for the most part defile themselves with the wicked traditions of men, and ordinances after the world and not after Christ, yet do ye after the example of Tobit, Daniel and his three companions, Matthias and his five sons, be at a point with yourselves, that ye will not be defiled with the unclean meats of the heathen, I mean the filthiness of idolatry and the very heathenish ceremonies of the Papists; but, as true worshippers, serve ye God in spirit and in truth according to His sacred Scriptures; which I could wish and will you above all things continually and reverently, as both St. Paul and Christ command you, to search and read, with the wholesome monitions of the same to teach, exhort, comfort,

and edify one another, and your brethren and neighbours, now in time of this our miserable captivity and great starvation of souls, through want of the food of God's Word. And doubt not but that the merciful Lord, who hath promised to be with us even unto the world's end, and that wheresoever two or three be gathered together in His name He will be in the midst of them, will assist you and teach you the right meanings of the sacred Scriptures, will keep you from all errors and lead you into all truth, as He hath faithfully promised." And again—"Make provision for your households, chiefly that they may be instructed and taught in the law of God. Bring up your children in the nurture and information of the Lord, and teach them, even as the godly parents of Tobias and Susannah did their children, even from their infancy, to reverence God according to His law." So thoroughly did the Protestant Martyr feel the truth of that which is written, 1 *Peter* iv. 10:—"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Diligent as we have seen Marsh was in the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and anxious that the knowledge of them should be as far as possible spread abroad, he was, nevertheless, none the less urgent in impressing upon all with whom he had conversation, that knowledge with-

out practice was nothing worth. "Read (he says) the parable of the sower, and among other things note and mark that the most part of the hearers of God's Word are but hypocrites, and hear the word without any fruit or profit, yea, only to their great condemnation: for only one-fourth part of the seed brings forth fruit." And again: "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, receive the Word of God with meekness, that is grafted in you, which is able to save your souls. And see that ye be not forgetful hearers, deceiving your own selves with sophistry, but doers of the word, whom Christ doth liken to a wise man, who buildeth his house on a rock, that when the rain descended, and the floods came and beat upon that house, and the winds blew, it fell not, because it was founded upon a rock: this is when Satan, with all his legions of devils, with all their subtle suggestions, and the world with all the mighty princes thereof, with their crafty councils, do furiously rage against us, we faint not, but abide constant in the truth, being founded upon a most sure rock, which is Christ, and the doctrine of the Gospel, against which the gates of hell, that is, the power of Satan, cannot prevail." "They only (he afterwards adds) receive the Word of God who do believe it, and also frame their lives after it, and be ready to suffer all manner of adversity for the name of the Lord, as Christ and the apostles

did, and as all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must do." But it is useless to quote more of the blessed Martyr's words on this head. His own life and death, the meekness, patience, and perseverance with which he bore all the trials and resisted all the temptations to which he was exposed, the courage with which in the end, rather than give up one jot or one tittle of the Bible, he embraced a cruel death, are a stronger proof than anything which he ever said or wrote can afford, that he felt the full value of the declaration, *Romans* ii. 13—"For not the hearers of the law are justified before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified;" and by these "he, being dead, yet speaketh."

Last Sunday, brethren, George Marsh, the Martyr, spoke to you about prayer. This night he speaks to you about a no less important subject—the Bible. Pope Pius IV., in 1564, in the creed which is called by his name and is still considered its principal and most authoritative confession of faith by the Church of Rome, proclaimed as follows:—"The apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and other observances and constitutions of the Church, do I firmly admit and confess. Also the sacred Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother the Church hath holden and doth hold, whose office it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Holy Scriptures, do I admit:

neither will I ever receive and expound it but according to the uniform consent of the fathers." So spake Pope Pius IV. So "he being dead, yet speaketh:" speaketh, I fear, to the ruin of countless thousands to whom, on this principle, while the traditions of men are heaped upon them, not merely the right of interpreting the Bible, but even the Bible itself, is denied. A Protestant Bishop the other day advised his clergy to walk in "the broad and plain paths marked out in the inspired Word of God." "I know of no broad and plain path marked out in God's inspired Word," was the reply of a Tractarian clergyman. Pope Pius, you see, in his creed, not only declared the Church and the fathers to be the only authorized expounders of the Bible, but put the traditions of the Church before the Bible, as to this day is done by every Roman priest. And in our Church the Tractarian tells you that the paths of God's Word are neither broad nor plain: that while they must be reserved from the many, it is only a few that are fit to tread in them, and they not by themselves, but only with the assistance of a priest, as he calls him. So speak the Pope and the Tractarian. But what "being dead, yet speaketh," the Protestant Martyr? He speaketh quite another speech. He says: The Bible is *the* Book, the first, the best, the Book of all books. He says: The Bible first—then, but at

an immeasurable distance, the traditions of men. He says: Read the Bible, you cannot read it too much. He says: Believe nothing, except what is written in the Bible. He says: Use no reserve: it is a broad way enough for all: the paths in it are so plain that none can mistake them. He says: Not only read the Bible, but live the Bible. *John* xii. 48, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." So, brethren, your fellow parishioner, George Marsh, the Protestant Martyr, though dead, speaketh to you this night. So by a most significant action he spake, as he walked towards the fire which, by consuming his body, set his immortal spirit free on its flight to heaven. For we read, "So he went all the way unto his death, with his *Book*," that book, I doubt not, his Bible, "in his hand, looking upon the same."

SERMON III.

GEORGE MARSH, THE MARTYR OF DEANE.

THE PROTEST.

"He being dead, yet speaketh."—*Hebrews* xi. 4.

WHEN we parted with our dear friend George Marsh, on Sunday last, it was "with his book in his hand, looking upon the same." Have your Bibles since then been much in your hands, more, perhaps, than they were wont to be? Have you looked more carefully, are you day by day intending, God being your helper, to look more carefully into the Book of books? If not, you are not worthy descendants or fellow-parishioners of George Marsh, the Martyr. George Marsh's Bible was not on the shelf, covered with a week's or a fortnight's dust. It was not hoarded up amongst the holiday clothes. It had not to be sought for when it was wanted. It was in his hand, and he looking upon it. And a glorious privilege it is, brethren—the most precious of all our Protestant

privileges—that we have the Bible now in our native tongue—no longer so scarce a volume as to be chained, as it was in George Marsh's time, to the desk of the parish church, but a Bible for every man; and every man, but by his own fault, able to look into it. The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, the touchstone of doctrine, the rule of life—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation" (Art. vi). So George Marsh, being dead, yet spake to us last Sunday night. It was for stoutly standing by this same speech three hundred years ago that he lost his life. To-night I intend him to tell us what were the chief things which were required of him as articles of faith and necessary to salvation—which, had he acknowledged, he might even at the last moment have received a free pardon—which he tried by the touchstone of Holy Scripture, and not finding them therein, died rather than cease to protest against them. "He being dead, yet speaketh."

I. The *first*, then, of the four questions which were proposed to him, and on his answers to which his life depended was, "Whether the mass, now used in the Church of England, was

according to Christ's institution, and with faith, reverence, and devotion, to be heard and seen?" His observation upon this first question is, "The first I denied." Here it must be explained that the mass in the Romish Church is the service for the celebration of that which we call the Lord's Supper; but they of that Church, as will appear presently from the consideration of the second question, the offering up of the body and blood of Christ. The mass is always sung or intoned in a low voice in the Latin language, and with such a prodigious number and variety of ceremonies, postures, genuflexions, crossings, ablutions, lifting up of hands and eyes, and other histrionic gestures, all accurately described and authoritatively ordered by the canon of the mass, as fill four whole pages in the large folio edition of Fox's "Book of Martyrs." For example, I will quote a few lines of these four folio pages of directions:—"Here let the priest lift up his hands and join them together, and afterwards wipe his fingers—here let him lift up his eyes—here let him bow down, and afterwards erect himself up a little—here let him touch the host—here let him bow himself—here let him lift up the chalice a little—here let him lift the chalice to his breast—here let him set down the chalice again and rub his fingers over the chalice. Then let him lift up his arms and cover the chalice. Then let him lift

up his arms crosswise, his fingers being joined together," &c. Now, of all this George Marsh speaks thus—"He asked what offended me in the mass? I answered, the whole mass offended me: first, because it was in a strange language, whereby the people were not edified, contrary to St. Paul's doctrine (1 Cor. xiv. 8). "'For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?' And because of the manifold and intolerable abuses and errors contained therein contrary to Christ's priesthood and sacrifice." So spake George Marsh on the mass—"I deny it," he said.

II. The second question which was proposed to George Marsh was, "Whether the Almighty, by the words pronounced by the priest, did change the bread and wine, after the words of the consecration, into the body and blood of Christ, whether it were received or reserved?" This question referred to the doctrine of transubstantiation, in which the Papists teach that, by the prayer of the priest, the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are changed into the actual body and blood of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and in which originate manifold other corruptions, such as the adoration of the host or victim as the elements are then called;

the esteeming the offering of it a repetition of Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin; the reserving it, carrying it in processions, and a variety of other less important superstitions. "The second —namely, the above question on transubstantiation, Marsh says—I answered as I did to my Lord before, and as is above written." The previous answer here referred to is as follows—"I answered, I believed that whosoever according to Christ's institution did receive the holy sacrament of Christ's body and blood, did eat and drink Christ's body and blood, with all the benefits of His death and resurrection, to their eternal salvation; for Christ, said I, is ever present with His sacrament. Then asked they me whether the bread and wine, by virtue of the words pronounced by the priest, were changed into the flesh and blood of Christ; and that the sacrament, whether it were received or reserved, was the very body of Christ? Whereunto I made answer, I knew no further than I had shown already; for my knowledge is imperfect, said I, desiring them not to ask me such hard and unprofitable questions." In another examination before the Popish Bishop of Chester, "he utterly denied transubstantiation, and allowed not the abuse of the mass." And in one of his letters he writes as follows—"They sin willingly who of a set malice and purpose do withhold the truth in unrighteousness and

lying, kicking against the manifest and open known truth which, although they do perfectly know that in all the world there is no other sacrifice for sin but only that all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ's death, yet notwithstanding they will not commit themselves wholly unto it; but rather despise it, allowing other sacrifices for sin invented by the imagination of man, as we see by daily experience; unto whom, if they abide still in their wickedness and sin, remaineth a most horrible and dreadful judgment." So spake George Marsh on the subject of transubstantiation. He spake pretty much as our Articles speak:—"Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner; and the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped" (Art. xxviii). And again: "The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for

sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits" (Art. xxxi).

III. The third question which was put to Marsh was, "Whether the lay people ought to receive but under the form of bread only, and that the one kind was sufficient for them?" To this he says, "I answered that the lay people by Christ's institution ought to receive under both kinds, and that it sufficeth not them to receive under the one kind only." In another place he said, "Christ's institution was plain that all men should drink of the cup." This great abuse, so manifestly opposed to Christ's own words (Matt. xxvi. 27), "Drink ye all of it," originated in the great fundamental error of transubstantiation. For the wine being once pronounced to be the actual blood of Christ it soon came to be thought better to deny it altogether to the laity, than run the least risk of spilling so holy and precious an element. On this head our Art. xxx. speaks as follows: "The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike."

IV. The fourth and last question put to the

Martyr was, "Whether confession to the priest, as now used in England, was godly and necessary?" To this he replied, "That, though confession auricular was a convenient means to instruct the rude people, yet it was not necessary nor commanded of God." The necessity of auricular and compulsory confession of sins to a priest in order to receive absolution, as a duty commanded by God and in nowise to be neglected, George Marsh altogether denied. Had he been as fully aware, as the world in general is now, of the horrible consequences of auricular confession as practised in the Roman Church; of the diabolical character of the examination proposed to the person confessing; of the awful sins often suggested by and even committed in consequence of such sort of examinations, it is probable that the Martyr would have spoken on this head in even stronger language than he did. He would have seen that the only safe, because the only scriptural, course in this matter, is that adopted in her Visitation Service by the Reformed Church of England where a voluntary confession of such sins as trouble the conscience is invited, but not prescribed as a necessary duty; and still less wrung out by a process of examination calculated to suggest many an evil thought never before entertained. "I acknowledge my sins unto thee," is the language of the Psalmist unto God:

Psalm xxxii. 5. "Confess your faults one to another," is the recommendation of *James* v. 16. But nowhere in Holy Scripture is the peremptory order of the Roman Church written, "Confess to the priest."

Such were the four questions, on his answers to which the life of George Marsh depended. Such were the bold and uncompromising answers which he gave, signing with his own hand his dreadful doom, rather than by one jot or one tittle add to or diminish from the written Word of God. In other parts of his life and writings we find censure incidentally passed in the same undaunted spirit upon other corruptions and mummeries of the Church of Rome. Thus he says in one place, "The bishop being at Lancaster, there set up and confirmed all blasphemous idolatry, as holy water casting, procession gadding, matins mumbling, mass hearing, idols setting-up, with such heathenish rites forbidden by God; but no Gospel preaching, which Christ, God's Son, so earnestly commanded." In another place he speaks of those "who, with all probability of words and philosophy, or worldly wisdom and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men and the beggarly ordinances of the world, but not after Christ, as it were all singing one song, went about to persuade him to submit himself to the Church of Rome and to acknowledge the Pope to be the head thereof,

and to interpret the Scriptures none otherwise than that Church did; with many such like arguments and persuasions of fleshly wisdom." In another place he says, "The glory of Christ's Church, I see it well, doth not stand in the harmonious sound of bells and organs; nor yet in the glistening of mitres and copes; neither in the shining of gilt images and lights, as the Papists do judge it; but in continual labours and daily afflictions for His name's sake." Such sentiments as these, though, as has been before observed, they form no part of the examination which led to the martyrdom of George Marsh, are nevertheless peculiarly valuable at this present season, when the imitation of such like Roman mummeries as are here condemned, in the very bosom and by the ministers of the Church of England itself, is fraught with danger infinitely greater and more certain than any which is likely to arise from Papal Rome. Against the mass, then—against transubstantiation—against denying the cup to the laity—against auricular confession—against mummeries and superstitions of all sorts, kinds, and descriptions, George Marsh, the Martyr, though dead, yet, with a voice almost as searching as the flame which separated his perishing body from his immortal soul, speaketh to us assembled here this night.

First, he speaketh to me—to me, after an interval of three hundred years, his successor as the pastor of the flock of Jesus Christ in this parish of Deane. Yea, he speaketh to me. From "under the altar," from amongst "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held," *Rev.* vi. 9, I seem even now to hear the blessed Martyr's voice. He sees me, as I this night stand where three hundred years ago he stood himself. He being dead, yet speaketh unto us. He says to me, "Come out from among them, and be thou separate and touch not the unclean thing," *Cor.* vi. 17. Draw not nigh to Rome, no not even in things indifferent. Thine own soul, the souls of thy people, depend upon whether thou art a faithful minister and witness or not. Perish rather thy body in the flames, as mine perished, than risk eternal burning for them! Keep at a distance from "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," *Rev.* xvii. 5, lest she beguile thee with her blandishments. Keep far even from the brink of the whirlpool, lest it suck thee in! Flee from every thing Romish! Canst thou in thy ministrations add to the simple ritual of the Church of England, for the celebration of the Supper of the Lord, Romish pomp and ceremony? Canst thou add credence tables, changes of posture, ablutions, lifting up of hands

and eyes, bowings and crossings, processions and such like? Canst thou do this without becoming thyself insensibly persuaded, and leading thy flock to become persuaded of much, perhaps in time, of all the deadly doctrine of the mass?—without looking almost unconsciously to the bread and wine as a Saviour rather than the means of access to the only one Saviour?—without regarding thyself, not as a minister, but a mediator?—and seating the bride, the Church, upon the throne of the heavenly Bridegroom? Dost thou dare to sing the very same song that Papists sing? Dost thou dare, little less than if like the Roman priest thou ministered in a strange tongue, to stand in the way of the edification of the people by intoning or muttering in a low voice those eloquent prayers, in which it was intended that all should join in approaching the Throne of Grace? Dost thou dare, by imitating almost heathen mummeries and superstitions, to lead men's minds away from the one thing needful? The vain traditions and ordinances of men, which, rather than acknowledge to be the Word of God, I perished at yonder stake—with these dost thou presume to tamper?—So, being dead, my martyred predecessor, brethren, even now speaketh to me. Marvel not at my earnestness, when I have such a testimony ringing in my ears. I hear it. I

exceedingly fear and quake. I pray God, that, like George Marsh, I may never know anything amongst you save Christ crucified.

He speaketh to me. Yet not to me alone. To you, brethren, this night, as on former nights, he likewise speaketh. He says, use diligently, while you have them, your Protestant privileges! The simple worship of this house of prayer, offered without pomp to the Throne of Grace, attend it! The beautiful Liturgy of the Church of England plainly prayed, with heart and soul and voice, join in it! The Supper of the Lord, simply and unpretendingly offered as a means of grace, receive it! "If (says George Marsh) we hunger and thirst after righteousness, let us resort unto His table, for He is a most liberal feast-maker. He biddeth, willeth, and calleth for guests who hunger and thirst. Come, saith He, all you that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you, cool, and ease you, and you shall find rest unto your souls." Vain it is for the minister to keep clear of Roman superstition unless the people, by a diligent use of them, show their value for Protestant privileges. I take God to witness, brethren, it is no vain boast, that, sooner than willingly lead one single soul amongst you astray from "the truth as it is in Jesus," I would perish at the stake at which my predecessor perished. O Lord Jesus, grant that the words which George Marsh, being dead, has spoken both to my flock and myself this night, may before thy second coming to judge the world, by the operation of thy Holy Spirit, assist in making me a "faithful messenger," and my hearers an "acceptable people."

SERMON IV.

GEORGE MARSH, THE MARTYR OF DEANE.

CONSTANCY.

"He being dead, yet speaketh."—*Hebrews* xi. 4.

"God at this present, here in England, hath His fan in His hand, and after His great harvest, whereinto these years past He hath sent His labourers, is now sifting the corn from the chaff, and purging His floor, and ready to gather the wheat into His garner, and to burn the chaff with unquenchable fire." So spake George Marsh three hundred years ago. So, being dead, he yet speaketh to us this night. So present times and circumstances speak, almost as loudly and as clearly as those three hundred years ago. We were told by the Martyr himself last Sunday what, under these trying circumstances, he did; and thence, I trust, learned what we ought to do. He took the Bible and proved the doctrine, and at once rejected all which was not found therein: the mass, and every thing connected with it or leading to it.

To-night the blessed Martyr shall himself unfold to us the secret workings of his own mind, the weakness of the flesh, the wish to avoid the bitter cup, the wavering purpose, the sources of strength and consolation, the gradually increasing firmness and determination, the bold assertion of truth, the disregard alike of the solicitations of friends and the threatenings of enemies, and at length, even at the eleventh hour, the refusal of life at the cost of apostacy. "He being dead, yet speaketh."

"They advised and counselled me," he speaks of his friends, "to depart and flee the country." Considering the awful character of the doom which he was pretty sure to draw down upon himself by remaining, it is no wonder that he adds, "To those counsels my weak flesh would gladly have consented, but my spirit did not agree;" and "I was thus, with their advice and counsel, and the cogitations and counsels of my own mind, drawn as it were divers ways." It was then that, as before related, he consulted with one of his friends on Deane Moor, "not, as he describes it, without hearty prayer, kneeling on our knees;" and, as if in answer to that earnest supplication, after a night of "ill-rest," early the next morning was permitted by God, who can raise up wise and faithful friends as well as the contrary, to derive from the same source, namely friendship, as much encourage-

ment as he had just before derived perplexity and discomfort. "So at my first awaking, he says, one came to me from a faithful friend of mine with letters, which I never read nor yet looked on, who said this: my friend's advice was, that I should in nowise flee, but abide and boldly confess the faith of Jesus Christ. At whose words I was so confirmed and established in my conscience, that from thenceforth I consulted no more, whether it were better to fly or to tarry, but was at a point with myself that I would not flee but go to Mr. Barton, who did seek for me, and there present myself and patiently bear such cross as it should please God to lay upon my shoulders. Whereupon my mind and conscience, which before were uneasy and troubled, were now cheerful and in a quiet state." Still, even now, he had not acquired the degree of boldness which was requisite for the emergency. After his first examination before the Earl of Derby, he speaks of his own state of mind thus—"And so after much other communication I departed, much more troubled in my spirit than before, because I had not with more boldness confessed Christ, but in such sort as my adversaries thereby thought they should prevail against me, whereat I was much grieved: for hitherto I went about, as much as in me lay, to rid myself out of their hands, if by any means, without open denying of Christ and

His Word, it could be done." So powerfully and perseveringly, even in this good and faithful man, did the flesh lust against the spirit.

It was on this occasion that, as before related, he says of himself—"This considered, I cried more earnestly unto God by prayer, desiring Him to strenghen me with His Holy Spirit, with boldness to confess Him; and to deliver me from their enticing words, and that I were not spoiled through their philosophy and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men and ordinances of the world, and not after Christ." It was then likewise, without doubt, that he derived strength and consolation from such topics and considerations as these following, which are quoted from the letters which he has left behind. In one place he writes—"But He has provided me, I perceive it, to taste of a far other cup; for by violence hath he yet once again driven me out of that glorious Babylon, that I should not taste too much of her wanton pleasures, but with His most dearly beloved disciples to have my inward rejoicing in the cross of His Son Jesus Christ." Again he writes, "It is verily, saith the Apostle, a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble us, and rest to us that be troubled. For after this life the godly, being delivered from their tribulations, shall have a most quiet and joyful rest; whereas the wicked

and ungodly contrariwise shall be tormented for ever more with intolerable and unspeakable pains, as Christ by the parable of the rich glutton and wretched Lazarus doth plainly declare and teach. These ought we to have before our eyes always, that in time of adversity and persecution, whereof all that will be the children of God shall be partakers, and wherewith it hath pleased God to put some of us in use already, we may stand stedfast in the Lord, and endure even unto the end, that we may be saved. For unless we, like good warriors of Jesus Christ, will endeavour ourselves to please Him who hath chosen us to be soldiers, and fight the good fight of faith even unto the end, we shall not obtain that crown of righteousness which the Lord, who is a righteous Judge, shall give to all them that love His coming." Again he writes to some of his friends, "And seeing, brethren, that it hath pleased God to set me and that most worthy minister of Christ, John Bradford, your countrymen, in the forefront of this battle, where for the time is most danger, I beseech you all in the bowels of Christ to help us, and all other our fellow-soldiers standing in like perilous place, with your prayers to God for us, that we may girt ourselves like men in the Lord, and give some example of boldness and constancy mingled with patience in the fear of God, that ye and others our brethren, through

our example, may be so encouraged and strengthened to follow us, that ye also may leave example to your weak brethren in the world to follow you. Amen." In another place he says, "As we have a notable example in the Apostle St. Paul, unto whom God sent Agabus, who prophecied unto him of the imprisonment and bonds that he should suffer at Jerusalem, in whom we have also a good example of constancy and stedfastness, who, regarding nothing the tears of his familiar friends, nor yet the peril of his own life, did through fire and water go on still to set forth the glory of God. And he being delivered from the hands of his ungodly and blood-thirsty enemies and so many times, is in conclusion fain to commit himself to the rough waters of the sea, where he was a long season in great peril and jeopardy of his own life. But God was always, to the great comfort of all that shall hear of it, most ready to help and succour him. For He did send him a most friendly and sweet company—I mean Aristarchus and Lucas—so ruling the heart of the under captain, Julius, that he courteously entreated him, and gave him liberty to go to his friends and to refresh himself; and he was beneficial to him at all times. In like manner was God with Joseph, and delivered him from all his adversities, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharoah, King of Egypt,

insomuch that he made him governor over all Egypt and over all his household. In like manner was he with Jeremiah and Daniel in their great troubles, and appointed men for them in their most troubles to relieve, succour, and help them, to their singular comfort." And again—"I rejoice greatly in the Lord when I do perceive how my sweet Saviour Christ doth stir up the minds, not only of my familiar friends in times past, but also of sundry and divers heretofore to me unknown and unacquainted, to bear part with me in this my painful and costly imprisonment, sending me things not only necessary for this present life, but also comfortable letters, encouraging and exhorting me to continue grounded and established in the faith, and not to be moved away from the hope of the Gospel, whereof, according to my small talent, I have been a minister; and daily I call and cry unto the Lord, in whom is all my trust, and without whom I can do nothing, that He, who hath begun a good work in me, would vouchsafe to go forth with it until the day of Jesus Christ, being surely certified in my conscience of this, that He will do so, forasmuch as He hath given me that not only I should believe on Him, but also suffer for His sake. The Lord strengthen me with His Holy Spirit that I may be one of the number of those blessed, who, enduring to the end, shall be saved."

Again—"Trouble and affliction doth prove, try, instruct, confirm, and strengthen the faith; provoke and stir up prayer; drive and force us to amendment of life, to the fear of God, to meekness, to patience, to constancy, to gentleness, soberness, temperance, and all manner of virtues; and are the occasion of exceeding much good, as well transitory as eternal, in this world as in the world to come."

Comforted and strengthened from such sources as these extracts from his own writings disclose, prayers both his own and those of his friends, godly considerations of the lives and examples of holy men, texts of Scripture and the encouraging words of godly men both acquaintances and strangers, and by these various means brought day by day more closely in union with, as he touchingly calls him, his "sweet Saviour Christ," George Marsh, as we shall presently see, increased day by day in constancy and boldness. We have already heard the decided and uncompromising answers which he gave to the four solemn questions, on his replies to which depended life or death. The solicitations of his friends were almost more difficult to resist. "They much exhorted me to leave my opinions, saying I was much deceived, understanding the Scriptures amiss, and much counselled me to follow the Catholic Church of Christ, and to do as others did. I answered, my faith in Christ,

conceived by His Holy Word, I neither could nor would deny, alter or change, for any living creature, whatsoever he were." Again—"I answered, that I believed and leaned only to the Scriptures, not judging things by prosperity or adversity; but they earnestly advised me to refuse my opinions, and not to let for any worldly shame. I answered that that which I did, I did it not for the avoiding of any worldly shame, saying, my soul and life were dearer to me than avoiding of any worldly shame; neither yet did I it for any vain praise of the world, but in the reverent fear of God." Mr. Sherburn said—"That it was a pity such a well-favoured young man, and one that might have been living and do good, would foolishly cast myself away, sticking so hard to foolish opinions. I answered, as I had done to my Lord before and to his Council, that my life, mother, children, brethren, sisters, and friends, with other delights of life, were as dear and sweet unto me as unto any other man; and that I would be as loath to lose them as any other would, if I might hold them with good conscience and without the ignominy of Christ; and, seeing I could not do that, my trust was, that God would strengthen me with His Holy Spirit to lose them all for His sake. For I take myself for a sheep appointed to be slain, patiently to suffer what cross soever it

shall please my merciful Father to lay upon me." Again: "Furthermore, while I was at Lancaster this session time, many came to me to talk with me, some of good-will towards me, but without knowledge, gave me such like counsel as Peter gave Christ as He went up to Jerusalem; when he took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Master, favour thyself; this thing shall not be unto thee.' But I answered with Christ's sharp answer unto Peter again, who turning about said unto Peter, 'Come behind me, Satan;' and, perceiving that they were an hindrance unto me, and that they favoured not the things which are of God but the things which are of men, I made them plain answer that I neither could nor would follow their counsel; but by God's grace I would both live and die with a clear conscience, and accordingly as I have hitherto believed and professed. For we ought in nowise to flatter and bear with them, though they love us ever so well, who go about to pluck us away from the obedience we owe unto God and to His word, but after Christ's example sharply to rebuke them for their counsel." In addition to these most enticing solicitations of friends, he had to contend at the same time against the wily arguments of enemies. "There came also many priests to me, he says, by two, three, four, five, or six at once." "There came to him divers times one

Massey a fatherly old man, one Wrench the schoolmaster, one Henshaw the bishop's chaplain, and the Archdeacon, with many more; who, with all probability of words and philosophy, or worldly wisdom and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men and the beggarly ordinances of the world, but not after Christ, as it were all singing one song, went about to persuade him to submit himself to the Church of Rome, and to acknowledge the Pope to be the head thereof, and to interpret the Scriptures none otherwise than that Church did—with many such like arguments and persuasions of godly wisdom. To whom the said George Marsh answered, that he did acknowledge and believe, though much evil be withal annexed, one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, without which there is no salvation; and that this Church is but one because it hath, doth, and shall, confess and believe one only God, and Him only worship, and one only Messiah, and in Him only trust for salvation: which Church also is ruled and led by one Spirit, one Word, and one Faith; and that this Church is Universal and Catholic, because it ever hath been since the world's beginning, is, and shall endure to the world's end; and comprehending within it all nations, kindreds, and languages, degrees, states, and conditions of men; and that this Church is builded only upon the foundation of

the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone, and not upon the Romish laws and decrees, the Bishop of Rome being the supreme head." "He was thrust at with all violence of craft and subtlety, but yet the Lord upheld Him and delivered Him. Everlasting thanks be to that merciful and faithful Lord who suffereth us not to be tempted above our might; but, in the midst of our troubles, strengthens us with His Holy Spirit of comfort and patience, giveth us a mouth and wisdom how and what to speak, where against all His adversaries were not able to resist." In the trying circumstances in which George Marsh was placed, there was no temptation, perhaps, greater than the solicitations of friends and the wily arguments of enemies, such as have now been enumerated. Even in ordinary circumstances they are, we are well aware, the fruitful source of leading multitudes away from the path of duty. What must have been their power when they offered, as the reward of compliance, escape from a most terrible death?

The Martyr had now fully made up his mind to the awful doom which awaited him, and, like his predecessor Stephen, Acts vii. 55, "was full of the Holy Ghost." "I commit my cause unto God, he said, who had numbered the hairs of my head, and appointed the days of my life." And again: "I made plain answers that, in

matters of faith, I would give place to no earthly creature." And again: "God so strengthened me with His Spirit of boldness, according to my humble request and prayer before. Everlasting thanks be given, therefore, that I was nothing afraid to speak to any that came to me—no, not even the judges themselves, before whom I was thrice arraigned at the bar among the thieves, with irons on my feet, and put up my hands as others did; but yet with boldness I spake unto them, so long as they would suffer me." The great trial of his constancy was now at hand. He was brought up for final examination at Chester. "Then the Chancellor read all his former answers that he had made in that place at his former examination, and at every one he asked him whether he would stick to the same or no? To which he answered again—Yea, yea." This was, indeed, a trying moment. "The bishop took a writing out of his bosom, and began to read the sentence of condemnation. But when the bishop had read almost half thereof, the Chancellor called to him and said, 'Good, my lord—stay, stay; for if ye proceed any further it will be too late to call it again;' and so the bishop stopped. Then his Popish priests and many other of the ignorant people called upon Marsh with many earnest words to recant, and amongst others one Pullein, a shoe-maker, said to him, 'For shame,

man, remember thyself and recant.' They bade him kneel down and pray, and they would pray for him. So they kneeled down, and he desired them to pray for him and he would pray for them." What a scene was this? Popish persecutors, ignorant time-servers, and a holy Martyr, all on their knees together: the many praying that the constancy of the man of God might fail, and the cause of the devil and the world prosper: the man of God asking for himself faith and boldness, and for those who were praying with him conversion and mercy. "The bishop then asked him again whether he would not have the Queen's mercy in time; and he answered he did gladly desire the same, and did love her Grace as faithfully as any of them; but yet he durst not deny his Saviour Christ, for losing His mercy everlasting and so merit everlasting death. Then the bishop read forward his sentence, about five or six lines, and there again the Chancellor, with a glavering and smiling countenance, called to the bishop and said, 'Yet good, my lord, once again stay; for if that word be spoken all is past—no relenting will then serve.' Then the bishop said, 'I would stay if it would be.' How sayest thou, quoth he, wilt thou recant?' Many of the priests and ignorant people bade him so do and call to God for grace, and pulled him by the sleeve, and bade him recant and save his life.

To whom he answered, I would as gladly live as you, if in so doing I should not deny my Master Christ; and again, He should deny me before His Father in heaven.' The lot was now irrevocably cast. The bishop read out his sentence unto the end."

All earthly comfort was from that moment denied to the man of God. He was immured "in the dungeon or dark prison. None that wished him good could speak with him, or at least dost venture so to do for fear of accusation." But Jesus did not leave or forsake His faithful witness. The darkness of the dungeon could not quench the ray of light which beamed from heaven. The dreariness of the prison could not put out in the bosom of the saint the lamp of joy which the love of Christ had lighted. He was alone, the man of God was, in that dismal cell. Yet not alone, for Christ was with him. In the dungeon at Philippi, it is written, Acts xvi. 25, "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them." And of George Marsh, we learn "that some of the citizens who loved him in God for the Gospel's sake, whereof there were but a few, although they were never acquainted with him, would sometimes in the evening, at a hole upon the wall of the city that went into the said dark prison, call to him and ask him how he did. And he would answer them most cheerfully that he did well, and thanked God most highly that he would vouchsafe of His mercy to appoint him to be a witness of His truth; and to suffer for the same, wherein he did most rejoice, beseeching Him that He would give him grace not to faint under the cross, but patiently bear the same to His glory, and comfort of His Church, with many other like godly sayings at sundry times, as one that most desired to be with Christ." Nor did the thick walls of the dungeon hinder that last earnest prayer for grace not to faint under the cross from reaching the ear of Him who heareth prayer. The last attempt which was made to induce him to swerve from his purpose and deny his Master, though made with every circumstance which could give it power and effect, was as unsuccessful as all before it. He stood, the man of God did, on the place of execution. The guards and the populace hemming him in, he stood, "as it were appointed to death"—"a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (1 Cor. iv. 9). The stake, the chain, the faggots, the firkin of pitch and tar, were all before him. The fire was at hand. It wanted but a word to kindle the flame and consume the victim. At that awful moment—a moment the terrible solemnity of which it is altogether out of our power to realise—"Vawdry, being then Deputy Chamberlain of Chester,

showed Marsh a writing under a great seal, saying that it was a pardon for him if he would recant." At that same moment Marsh answered "that he would gladly accept the same, and further said that he loved the Queen; but, forasmuch as it tended to pluck him from God, *he would not receive it upon that condition.* The man of God was stripped. The chain was riveted. The fire was kindled. The flesh was broiled and puffed up. "Father of Heaven, have mercy upon me!"—were the last words of the victim. The body was consumed. The spirit was yielded into the hands of the Lord. "Upon this many of the people said that he was a Martyr, and died marvellous patient and godly." But the bishop shortly after made "a sermon in the cathedral church, and therein affirmed that the said Marsh was an heretic, burnt like an heretic, and was a fire-brand in hell." From amidst Martyrs then in heaven or fire-brands in hell, our fellow-parishioner, my predecessor, and the pastor of your ancestors in the Lord, George Marsh, "being dead, yet speaketh."

Not as a fire-brand in hell—oh no! this cannot be, but as a blessed Martyr in heaven—yea, even from "under the altar," and from amidst "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held" Rev. vi. 9, George Marsh, dear brethren beloved, being dead, yet speaketh to us this night.

They are the Martyr's last words in this place. I pray of you take great heed of them. He says —I was young and prosperous. The world was all before me, and fortune smiled. I had kind friends, affectionate relatives, and everything which tends to render life happy. Could I have made up my mind to deny my Master Christ, I might have retained all these worldly comforts. I might have improved my position in life, risen perhaps to eminence, and been covered with honor. When the fearful struggle began between the world and Christ—when the searching question was put, Wilt thou serve Mammon or God—there were not wanting inducements to make me take up with the easier part. The weak flesh rebelled stoutly against the spirit. Near and dear relations and friends pleaded earnestly for liberty and life. An aged mother entreated. Brothers and sisters wept. Little children climbed my knees and wailed. The ignorant laughed. The priest argued. The judge threatened. But the Bible pointed out the path of duty; and He to whom the prayer of faith is never offered in vain replied, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and made my strength "perfect in weakness." In vain henceforth the solicitations of friends—in vain the threatenings of enemies. In vain on one side the stake, the faggot, the fire; and on the other, at the price of apostacy, liberty, and life. Par-

don was not to be received on that condition. I hugged the stake. I embraced the flames. I gloried in being permitted to suffer for the sake of Jesus who endured the cross for me. I died a cruel death. But, behold, I live a glorious life! And from that heaven into which, by the merits of my "sweet Saviour," I have been admitted, I being in body dead, but in spirit alive, with a voice as solemn as though the Judge had already come down, to each one of you here present this night speak and say—according as circumstances require—"Go and do thou likewise."

Popular tradition records that the blood-red foot-step of the Martyr, deeply imprinted on stone, still marks in the ancient house at Smithills, in this parish, the place where, having descended from his first night's imprisonment, on his road to Lathom, he boldly called heaven to witness the righteousness of his cause. It may or it may not be so. There is, at least, no reason why God should not, as He undoubtedly could, make the stone "cry out," Luke xix. 40, in honor of His faithful witness. Be this, however, as it may, that mysterious monument will not be without a salutary effect upon you, if, as often as you see or hear of it, it serves to recall to your minds how the Martyr suffered, why he suffered, and whence he derived strength, such as enabled him to

rejoice in suffering—if it lead you to take for your rule of life the Martyr's words, "Therefore, now whosoever is ashamed of the cross of Christ and grieved therewith, the same is ashamed to have Christ for his fellow and companion, and therefore shall the Lord Jesus Christ be ashamed of him again at the last day"—if it remind you that the only way to heaven is red with an Almighty Martyr's blood—if it be as the Martyr's grave-stone and this the epitaph—

"He climbed the steep ascent of haven,
Through peril, toil, and pain:
O God!—to us may grace be given,
To follow in his train!

HEBER.

SERMON V.

WHAT IS PUSEYISM?

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."—*Colos.* ii. 8.

I AM not particularly fond of preaching upon what may be called controversial subjects. My habit, as you are well aware, usually is, to drive away error by setting forth truth. The course of events, however, has of necessity led you to hear much of Puseyism, Tractarianism, Anglo-Catholicism, and such like. I think, therefore, it will be interesting—nay useful—indeed, since they are of a very beguiling character that it is even my duty, as a matter of warning, shortly and plainly to explain to you what is meant by these terms; for they all, in truth, mean the same thing. The name "Puseyism" is derived from Dr. Pusey, one of the learned professors at the University of Oxford. Tractarianism is an expression derived from a series of Tracts, in which the first principles of the system we are speaking of were developed; and Anglo-Catholicism is, as far as I understand it, a term by

which it is sought to imply that the new system is a revival of the practices of the branch of the Catholic Church anciently founded in England. But, as I said before, all these terms are in common made use of to describe the same system.

The history of the whole matter, then, is as follows. In the year 1833 the series of Tracts already alluded to was commenced at Oxford. The writers were almost all without exception very learned and very pious men. Their zeal was great. Their desire to do good was unbounded. They felt, and truly felt, that there was a vast amount of abuse which much needed a remedy, and they set about the work in good earnest. Would that they had been possessed of discretion equal to their zeal! Would that they had not taken for their guide the word of man, rather than the Word of God! The movement thus vigorously commenced soon gathered strength, and rapidly advanced. One strange doctrine after another was set forth in quick succession. As the foundation of them all—the very same foundation on which all the lies of Popery are built up—it was declared that great caution and reserve was to be observed in preaching the Gospel, the more mysterious truths of which were by no means to be proclaimed to the generality of persons; and that no layman had any right to presume to interpret any portion of Scripture for him-

self, but must give himself up wholly to the guidance of the Church and the Clergy; or, as it was then intimated they should be called, the Priesthood. The free use of God's Word being thus denied, "the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world," were very easily set up in its place. It was taught that Churches by the act of consecration were not merely, according to the usual understanding, formally set apart by the bishop from all profane uses, and dedicated to the service of God alone; but derived a sort of intrinsic holiness, such as demanded for them almost the same reverence and respect as belong to Almighty God Himself. The communion table, as it is pointedly called in the Prayer Book, was now spoken of as the altar, and was set forth as being of such an intrinsically holy character as that even to lean upon it was irreverent. Much ceremony was introduced in placing the bread and wine upon this altar, as though, according to the Papists' creed, they were the real body and blood of Christ Himself; to facilitate which an additional table, called the "credence table," unknown before in the ritual of the Reformed Church, but borrowed from that of Rome, was introduced. In order to pave the way for further innovation, it was now set forth in the most notorious of all the Tracts, No. 90, that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England might be signed by the

clergy with such mental reservation as would admit of their interpreting them in almost any sense they pleased. Architecture, music, painting, sculpture, pomp, and pageantry, were then all invited to their aid; and many were beguiled by their taste for such things to depart from the simplicity of the Reformed Church of England ritual. And in order, as far possible, to assimilate the manner of performing the service to that of Rome in a language not understood by the people, the system of intoning the prayers, as it is called, was introduced—a system which makes the beautiful prayers of our ritual, in which it is evident all were intended to join, little less unintelligible to uneducated people than if they were put up in the Latin language itself. The clergy, or the priests as they are called, themselves began now to affect superior sanctity and to hold themselves aloof from the laity. They called themselves the Church, and then exalted the Church into the place of Him who is Head over all things to the Church, even Jesus Christ our Lord. They revived many old practices: some of which, such for instance as preaching in the surplice instead of the gown, are matters of perfect indifference either way; but certainly not to be revived at the risk of giving offence to weaker brethren: others, such as bowing and crossing themselves, and turning at one portion of the service in one direction, at

another in the opposite, oftentimes studiously with their back to the congregation, downright superstitious and Popish. Thus for about eighteen years the movement has gone on, some joining it from one motive, some from another: many carried away by zeal without discretion—many by love of singularity and display—many by a taste for the fine arts—many by that restless desire for novelty so common to human nature: all these motives being concluded under the "vain deceit" of the text; and not a few through "philosophy," a too sedulous reading and too confident trust in the writings of men, the writings of the fathers and such like, to the neglect and disparagement of the Word of God. Step by step this movement has advanced, till at length in more than one church in London, as well as in others in several parts of the country, the whole fitting-up and furnishing of the building, as well as the manner of conducting the service, even to the carrying of the cross in procession and the lighting up of huge candles upon the altar in broad daylight, is so from beginning to end entirely Romish, that if you or I, who have not been gradually and step by step accustomed to these changes, were to enter them, we should be persuaded that we had entered by mistake a Popish chapel. Meanwhile the clergy who officiate in such churches carry out still further their Romanizing views, by calling upon their people to confess their sins to them, appointing them penance, granting them absolution, wearing as far as possible the dress of Popish priests, establishing convents and sisterhoods of mercy, and insisting upon that rigid discipline in the administration of the parishes committed to their care, which, though still owing to unrepealed canons and rubrics according to the letter of the law legal, have nevertheless by common consent long since fallen into disuse, and by their revival only tend to drive men away from, rather than lead them to, Christ. Such is a short account of Puseyism, Tractarianism, Anglo-Catholicism, call it which you please—a system which the more it is examined will, I think, all the more be found to be more strictly akin to that Judaizing system so strongly condemned by St. Paul in the text. The object of both is exactly the same—namely, to add to the simple truth as it is in Jesus the tradition of men and the rudiments of the world, and to exalt the Church into the place of Christ.

Now, the effect of all this has been very grievous. In some places, where there is no other church, those of the inhabitants who did not sympathise in such things have left the communion of the Church altogether and became Dissenters, or have got into habits not easy to be laid aside of idling away the Sabbath

without going to any place of religious worship at all. On the other hand, those who have been beguiled into the adoption and love of such opinions and practices have been, what in the language of the text is called "spoiled"—that is to say, turned away from Christ, and robbed of any real foundation for hope, comfort, and salvation. They have had their minds diverted from the only wholesome consideration for sinners, that, namely, of their own lost estate and their need of a Saviour's perfect righteousness to a dependence on the performance of certain rites and ceremonies, the saying a certain number of prayers, or keeping a certain number of fasts and festivals. Some have walked upon the very verge of rebellion by denying the Queen's supremacy; and not a few, clergy as well as laity, have actually apostatized from the Reformed Church of England and become members of the Roman Church. Meantime this adoption of Roman doctrine and imitation of Roman practices in the Church of England, and actual falling away of some to the Church of Rome, have no doubt in great measure been the cause of leading the Pope and his advisers into the egregious error of supposing that this country was ripe for conversion, and in consequence produced the late aggression on the Queen's supremacy by the appointment of a cardinal archbishop and bishops. That part of the

affair need be a subject of no alarm. It will be dealt with, as it deserves, by our rulers. It will tend to weaken, rather than strengthen, the cause of Romanism in this country; and in God's hands it may possibly prove an instrument of opening the eyes of those in our own communion, who, in the manner above described, have been almost but not quite spoiled "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ," who are standing on the threshold, but have not yet quite passed into Rome.

No wonder, then, that the apostle cries, "Beware!" No wonder that we, his successors, take up the warning voice! With so many around doing their very utmost to spoil you—with such dangerous weapons in their hand as philosophy and vain deceit—with such miserable substitutes for Christ as the tradition of men and the rudiments of the world—no wonder that in times like these we stand upon our watch-tower and loudly exclaim, "Beware lest any man spoil you!" Beware—there is much need of caution: for the enemy is very cunning and very persevering. The line which separates between truth and falsehood is almost invisible. Men pass it almost without knowing. So finely is the boundary drawn that you may hold Christ to-day—to-morrow nothing but the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world. So easy and

gradually are the steps on this beguiling way that you may be to-day Churchmen, to-morrow Tractarians, next day Papists. This shows the danger of drawing too near the line—the safety of keeping as far as possible from the edge of the precipice! Beware, then, lest any man spoil you. Beware, lest a taste for music, painting, sculpture, architecture, spoil you. Beware, lest a taste for show and pageantry spoil you. Beware, lest a love of learning and philosophy spoil you. I often tremble when I see my friends giving their minds so entirely to such things, unconscions that they are all the while being led away from Christ—Christ who lived for us—Christ who died for us—Christ who even now is in heaven pleading for us—Christ who is soon about to come once again to judge us—Christ, in comparison of whom the philosophy, the vain deceit, the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world, are absolutely as nothing—Christ, without whom there is no hope here nor happiness hereafter. Oh no—rather beware lest any man spoil you of Christ!

Deane, Nov. 24th, 1850.

SERMON VI.

HOLY PLACES.

"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."—*Isaiah* xlii. 8.

I HAVE usually set apart the six Sundays in Lent as a convenient opportunity for the consideration of some particular subject connected with the penitential character of the season. And since there are few things which more entirely interfere with the exercise of true penitence than the substitution of mere formalism for vital godliness, I have thought that a short but deliberate and particular survey of some of the principal features of that Romanism within the Church, which, under the various names of Puseyism, Tractarianism, and Anglo-Catholicism, is, as I have several times lately told you, a much more legitimate object of dread than Romanism from without, would not be unsuitable to the present occasion. God give you all, brethren, an abundance of grace, as He did to your forefathers in the blessed days of the Reformation: such as may enable you to sepa-

rate the chaff from the wheat—that which is mere human invention from that which is really written in His Holy Word! God give you in these perilous times courage to reject the one and cling to the other!

To-day, then, it is my intention to guard you against the very prevalent, but none the less entirely false, assumption, that there is in any particular place or places anything like intrinsic holiness; and that they, therefore, demand from us the same sort of homage and respect which, in my belief, is due to God alone. This idea is one of those which is quite at the very foundation of Puseyism—one of the first steps which leads to it—one of the features which never ceases to be more and more developed through its whole course; and one of the avenues which, in the end, leads with almost unerring certainty into the bosom of Rome itself. It well deserves, therefore, to be the first to be considered.

Here we are, for instance, met together in a church. Now, the class of persons to whom I am referring would tell you that this church itself is holy. They would further add that one part of it—namely, the eastern end or chancel—is holier than the rest; and of this that which in the Prayer Book is always described as the communion table, but by them invariably called the "altar," is the holiest of all. Nor

would they confine this idea to mere words. They do not by any means neglect to act upon it. We hear of prostrations upon entering the church, and bowings to the altar, which savour much more of reverence to the material building than to the Great Invisible Spirit to whom it is dedicated. We hear of none being permitted to sit in the chancel except the clergy; and of the altar being considered polluted by the intrusion of a layman within the rails, or the leaning upon it, or laying down of anything upon it by the clergyman, or as by such persons he would be called the "priest" himself.

Now, is it possible that there can really be in this building, or in any particular part of it, any intrinsic holiness such as that described above—anything which can demand the above-mentioned respect and homage? I have no hesitation in at once declaring that the whole thing is altogether out of the question. I have no hesitation in plainly saying that thus to esteem certain places holy, and thus to pay them homage and respect, is nothing more nor less than to give the glory of God to another—the very thing which, by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah in the text, the Lord declares he will not consent to—"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another." There is no element of God's glory so transcendent as His holiness: no single point

in which He is so altogether unapproachable and incomparable. *Isaiah* lvii. 15:—"For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." And again, *Exodus* xv. 11:—"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness?" And again, 1 *Samuel*, ii. 2:—"There is none holy as the Lord." Real inherent holiness, such as demands homage and respect, belongs to no creature, but to the Creator alone. It is an attribute exclusively divine; and cannot be, even in the slightest degree, transferred to any other object, without establishing a rivalry which God will not for a moment brook.

Nor is it likely that the first step in this direction will end where it begins. Those who are once accustomed to transfer to the material temple, or to any part of it, the honor and respect due only to God to whose service it is dedicated, will easily pass on from this first beginning of idolatry to the same principle developed in a much more open and objectionable form. The warning contained in the last words of the text is well worthy of notice—"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." The step from a superstitious regard for the church, the chancel, and the altar, to the introduction of a graven image, first as a means

of quickening a devotional feeling towards God, but soon as an object of direct adoration, is not by any means difficult to be taken. Once taken the Tractarian becomes a Papist: the member of the Reformed Church of England, an apostate to the idolatrous Church of Rome. The idolatrous principle even in the bud is subversive of real spiritual worship; and, were there no risk of it being further developed, must on that account be stoutly contended against. But in truth we cannot, especially in these strange and perilous times, shut our eyes to the many surrounding circumstances favourable for the development of such a bud as this. And having plainly before our eyes the full blown flower in the Church of Rome, shedding around its poisonous exhalations for the destruction of unwary souls, it is still more incumbent upon all whose office it is to lead souls to look for salvation, not to the creature, but to the Creator, to nip, while they may, the evil in the bud. For one, I enter my most solemn protest against even the first steps which lead to idolatry. I protest against any superstitious regard for churches, chancels, altars. I protest even against the very fine arts themselves—architecture, painting, sculpture, music—if they be found to lead, as they often without doubt insensibly have led, those whose taste for such things has not been tempered by sound scriptural discre-

tion, to the above-mentioned description of superstition and idolatry.

It must not, however, on this account be supposed that I consider all places equal and alike. This house, for instance, in which we are now assembled was built for one especial purpose—the service of Almighty God. For that object, and for that alone, it has been by a solemn service set apart, and ever since that time exclusively used. It has been, as it is usually expressed, consecrated—a word which has doubtless given no little colour to the idea of intrinsic holiness; but which in reality, as may be seen by a reference to the consecration service, merely implies that it has been set apart from all common and profane use; and devoted exclusively to the service, and honor, and glory of God. In this sense, no one more thoroughly rejoices than myself to consider either this or any other similar building holy—a place from which at all costs must be cast out all they that sell and buy—in which the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sell doves must be overthrown—a place which must not on any account be turned into a den of thieves—a place in which there is room for no worldly work, no worldly word, no worldly thought even, but only for prayer and praise, the reading of God's Word, and preaching of Christ's Gospel—a place which, considering the majesty of the Being to whose service it is dedicated, and the solemnity and importance of the services which are performed in it, may, or rather ought to be built with every possible cost and magnificence, maintained with jealous watchfulness and care, adorned and furnished with the best we possess, be deemed in truth every thing short of holy; and regarded with all kind of respect consistent with the acknowledgment that that wherein it differs from any other building is not that it is holier, but only that it is dedicated to the services of a Holy God. I have no fear, lest while I repudiate the superstitions and dangerous notion of inherent holiness, I shall lay myself open to the charge of accounting churches common and unclean. This church at this present time, compared with what it was twenty years ago, is a proof of my feeling in this respect too plain to need any further commentary.

Brethren, there never was but one house built intrinsically holy. This has no goodly stones to boast of for its adornment. It was even refused by the builders, though it has since become the Headstone of the corner. Founded in the first instance in the manger at Bethlehem, reared afterwards amongst the citizens of Nazareth, without form or comeliness, or any beauty that we should desire; despised, rejected, and at length ignominiously destroyed,

yet full of grace and truth, such is the only temple ever built intrinsically holy. That blessed temple we cannot honor too much or esteem too highly. We may bow the knee before it, and fall down in humble adoration and homage, and yet not sin against that which is written—"My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." The more we honor this blessed temple, the more we shall please and glorify Almighty God; and the more we honor with the same sort of homage any other temple, the more will our hearts be estranged from this. The giving God's glory to another, and His praise to graven images, makes men indifferent to Jesus, even while they remain nominally Protestants, and soon leads them quite to forget Him in the bosom of Rome.

The solemn language of the text, particularly the commencing portion of it, precludes the possibility of this being considered in any other light than that of a very important subject—"I am the Lord: that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Any thing which can, even in the most remote degree, tend to involve us in the commission of a sin by God Himself denounced as so offensive, cannot possibly be a subject of any other than paramount importance. Things which are trifling in the beginning, my dear friends, often lead in the end

to very grave and serious results. I am not therefore, to be deterred from giving you an earnest and affectionate caution, with respect to such matters as these, by being told that they are too trifling to be worthy of observation. Am I desirous, especially at this solemn season of Lent, of bringing you all on your knees to Christ? Am I desirous of leading you to devote to His service all you have and all you are? Am I desirous of weaning your affections from every thing worldly, and fixing them upon a pure and spiritual worship, upon God who is a spirit, and therefore demands to be worshipped in spirit and in truth? Am I desirous of leading you to put your trust, not in gold, or silver, or precious stones, but in the blood of Christ, shed once for all, for the sins of the whole world? Brethren, you cannot for a moment doubt my anxiety to do all this. In this spirit, then, it is my duty to caution you against, even in the least and most trivial things, risking the giving the glory of God to another, or His praise to graven images. Perish architecture! Perish painting! Perish music! Perish all that is pleasing either to eye or ear, Perish the beautiful temple itself in which we are now worshipping, and in future let the blue sky be our canopy, and the green grass our kneeling place—so that God in Christ, the only holy temple, retains all your affection, all your adoration.

Deane, First Sunday in Lent, 1851.

SERMON VII.

THE CANDLE BEFORE THE CANDLESTICK.

"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."—*Rev.* ii. 4-5.

THE candlestick is made entirely and exclusively for the service of the candle—to hold the candle, and to lift it up that it may give a better light, to afford facility for carrying it about—such are the uses of the candlestick. But without the candle, or in the place of the candle, the candlestick is simply useless. The employment, then, in the text of this, the use of which is so well understood, as a figure under which to represent the Church of Ephesus, serves to set before us in a very clear and intelligible light the exact relation between Christ and His Church or any branch of it. Christ is the candle John viii. 12—"I am the light of the world," he says of Himself. Christ is the candle, for whose service, and in order to show

whose glory to the world, the Church and its ordinances have been instituted. Let this candlestick presume to leave its "first love," to abandon the object for which it was made, and to step into the place of the candle, it will speedily be removed out of its place.

Now, just as last Sunday, it was my object to explain to you how that superstitious reverence for the material building of the Church, which is encouraged by the Tractarians, is in reality nothing more nor less than giving God's glory to another; so, to-day, it is my purpose to show you that the Church spiritual and its ordinances may likewise be subject to be so overrated as to be made to usurp the place of Christ—the candlestick to be accounted of as though it were the candle. This likewise is a part and parcel of the Tractarian system. It is a part of the system which even if it did not, as in truth it does, lead rapidly towards Rome, must at any rate, in as far as it is cherished, lead to self-righteousness, instead of a humble and unconditional dependence on Christ. The one is the rotten foundation on which is built the idolatrous Church of Rome: the other is the Rock on which rests the pure and apostolical Reformed Church of England. It is most important to detect and expose a system by which a mine is being secretly worked beneath that rock, such as, if sprung, will shake the goodly

building erected on it, even to the removal of it out of its place.

The views, then, of the party in question, concerning the efficacy of being members of the Church, are most extravagant. The outcry against those who do not belong to the Church are, of course, proportionably loud. Here, however, it must be carefully borne in mind that I am not now speaking of the Universal Church of Christ, of membership with which faith in Christ working by love is the only test ordained in holy Scripture, but of the Church of England—the Church of the Prayer Book, the Articles, and Canons. In the first sense it is clearly impossible to overrate the value of being a member of the Church; because those who are not so are clearly without the pale of salvation. Whereas, in the other sense, it is very possible to overrate Church-membership very much; because it is very possible to be in that sense members of the Church, and yet not at all in the way of salvation. Are you members of the Church? Do you act up to Church rules? Such are the questions which take the place of those much more concerning enquiries—are you in Christ? Are you new creatures? If we were to judge from many modern sermons, we should be inclined to suspect that the advent of the Church, rather than that of Christ, was the subject of those glad tidings of great joy

which the heavenly Host first proclaimed to the shepherds of Bethlehem, and the pastors of Christ's flock are commissioned to preach to every creature. I believe the Church of the Prayer Book, the Church of England, to be the most pure and apostolical branch of Christ's Church in existence. I therefore rejoice in the privilege of being a member and a minister of it. I cannot, however, look upon it as the only branch of Christ's Church in which salvation is to be found. I cannot believe that it is absolutely necessary to belong to it in order to be saved. I cannot even bring myself to think but that some who dissent from it may be endued with a larger measure of saving faith, and therefore more truly members of Christ's Universal Church, and nearer to salvation, than some who belong to it. Were I to think otherwise, I believe that I should be exalting the candlestick into the place of the candle; that which is designed to lead to Christ into the place of Christ Himself. The Church of England I look upon as a candlestick: not the only but a very precious candlestick—a candlestick of pure gold twice refined. As such I honor and highly prize it, not for its own sake, but because it lifts up the candle so high and brightly. But extinguish the candle and set the candlestick in its place, the darkness which inevitably follows convinces me at once that all is wrong. As a

road, the safest road towards Christ, I prize the Church; but, if it be held up as the end of the journey, I have nothing more to say to it.

We have now come to the two sacraments. These, likewise, were ordained by Christ as means to an end. They were intended as part of the candlestick, and for the purpose of showing forth the candle. *Matt.* xxviii. 19—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." *Luke* xxii. 19—"This do in remembrance of me." 1 *Cor.* x. 16—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The sacraments were evidently both ordained in order to bring men to Christ: the one, the means of bringing them into covenant with Him; the other, of strengthening and refreshing their remembrance of and communion with Him. They are both means of grace, not grace itself. They are both ways leading to an end—namely, Christ; but neither of them the end itself. As long as they are used as ways and means, so long they answer the purpose for which they were instituted, and, with God's blessing, lead those who use them faithfully nearer and nearer to Him who alone

has saved their souls alive. On the other hand, once let them be used independently of the end towards which they were designed to lead, and they not only lose all their efficacy, but tend at once to that greatest of all stumbling-blocks in the way of true godliness—self-sufficiency and righteousness. If a man, for instance, once becomes even in the least degree possessed with the notion that because he is baptized he must, as a matter of course, be saved; or that the mere eating and drinking the sacramental bread and wine will serve to atone for the sins he has committed, is he not being led day by day further and further from an unconditional dependence on Christ, nearer and nearer to entire self-righteousness? Is he not mistaking the candlestick for the candle? And in the end, when he looks for light, will he not find himself in the dark? These views, it is well known, are fully developed in the Church of Rome. The mere partaking of a sacrament is, according to the doctrine of that Church, accounted invariably efficacious. In the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine, instead of mere elements and means of remembrance and communion, are exalted into the body and blood of Christ. The practice of the Tractarians all leads in the same direction and conducts to the same end. The esteeming the east end of the Church peculiarly holy, the calling the communion-table

the altar, the bringing the bread and wine up to the altar in procession and with frequent prostration, the consecration of the elements in a low tone and with the back turned to the people, the pomp and ceremony, prostrations and ablutions, with which the whole transaction is accompanied—what can all this lead to but to the looking upon the sacrament, not as a means of grace, but as grace itself? What is it but the putting the candlestick in the place of the candle? If I wanted to bring all my flock over to a belief in the whole Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, what better preparation could I use?

The fault found with the Church of Ephesus was that it had left its "first love," had "fallen," had ceased doing its "first works." It had once been sound in doctrine and faithful in Christ; but had since declined and transferred its affections elsewhere. The candlestick had held up the candle properly for a time, but had since stepped out of its place. Was it any justification that it had been much in works, labour, patience, and trial? *Verse* 2—"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not

fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Works the most laborious were not here accepted as any justification of the fall complained of. The threat was unconditional and decisive. There must be a complete reversal of the past. The candlestick must resume its lost character, or be removed out of its place.

Nor will it avail to say, as I have often heard it said, that those who hold these extreme and unscriptural views of the Church and the sacraments are most earnest, laborious, self-denying, men. Granted that they are so. But in whose service are they earnest, laborious, and self-denying? According to their own views, in the service of Christ; but, according to the Scriptures, clearly not. Would that their earnestness, laboriousness, and self-denial, were in the service of a better cause and a better master! Would that they restricted the candlestick to its own proper use, and looked for light, not to it, but to the candle! It cannot be. Nothing but such repentance as leads to a doing of the first works will avail to stand between the Church of England and the anger of a slighted God. Her foes are they of her own household. The dan-

ger which threatens her existence is cherished within herself. I enter my most solemn protest against any, either doctrine or practice, which in any, even the slightest, degree, inclines men to exalt either the Church or its ordinances into the place of Christ, to lead towards whom is the sole end of their institution. Not enemies from without, but they who from within are thus sapping the foundations of the Church of England, are most to be guarded against. They who will lift the candlestick into the place of the candle are the parties through whose instrumentality, it is most to be feared, will be brought about the judgment—"I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Deane, Second Sunday in Lent, 1851.

SERMON VIII.

INTONING.

"I will pray with the understanding."—1 *Cor.* xiv. 15.

In the first instance, Tractarianism was estatablished and promulgated through the pulpit and press. Sermons and tracts, then biography and popular stories, were the chief channels through which Romish corruptions flowed into the bosom of the Church of England. It is matter of history that there is no Church which so completely possesses the power of adapting itself to times and circumstances as the Roman Church. Faithful to the example which they have always before their eyes, the Tractarians likewise are very ready in changing the mode of proceeding, according as events seem to render it advisable. At the present time, for instance, when men's attention is particularly alive to anything new and startling in the way of doctrine, not so much the pulpit or the press, not sermons or tracts, but that which captivates the eye, which harmonizes with the increasing

luxuriousness of the age, which leads men on insensibly step by step to ends which, if set before them in the first instance in naked words, would at once alarm ; pomp, pageantry, and ceremonial are, for the most part, the roads on which the unwary are beguiled Romewards. I am not by any means at once and of necessity satisfied because I am assured that in certain churches, and by certain persons, nothing but the Gospel is preached. In those places and by those persons is the whole Gospel ever preached at all? It may be that nothing but the Gospel is preached ; but is it equally true that nothing but the Gospel is insensibly instilled in the novel form and ceremonial of the service ? Romish forms, ceremonies, and customs, grafted on the simple ritual of the Church of England, are as formidable instrumentalities for the propagation of error as even the pulpit or press themselves. They are in truth almost more formidable, because they are less startling, more concealed, more insinuating and winning. It is my intention, then, to-day to speak to you respecting the novelties introduced by the Tractarians into our Church services, and in the first place and especially respecting the intoning of the prayers.

"I will pray with the understanding," is the language of the apostle in the text. In these few words we have a striking description of

what a religious service ought to be. Not form, not ceremony, not splendour and pageant, not processions of candles and crucifixes, choristers and priests, not prostrations, and ablutions, and bowings, and turnings to every point of the compass in succession—not any of these things, but *prayer*. I do not mean to run counter to the apostolic injunction, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 40—"Let all things be done decently and in order." The same apostle who wrote the words of my text wrote these words likewise. The two precepts are strictly in unison with each other. In the service of God, just such an amount of form and ceremonial as is necessary to the performance of that service with decency and order is without doubt required. But whatever is more than this—whatever amounts to so much as makes it evident that not prayer but ceremonial is the essence, and the indispensable and most highly valued portion of the service—that is altogether contrary to the spirit and meaning of St. Paul. According to his view, prayer is unquestionably the essence of the service: all else is comparatively of small importance. Prayer is the essence of religious service—prayer made with the understanding—prayer into which intellect enters ; not a mere form of words—an effort of the lips: not a vain repetition of unintelligible sentences, but words such as the understanding employs to express the desires of the heart. It

is just such a service as this—the prayer of the understanding—put up decently and in order, that is furnished in the beautiful and simple liturgy of the Church of England.

Compare with the scriptural model of the text almost any part of the Roman service. What is it which first attracts the attention on entering a Roman place of worship? Anything but the prayers. The splendour of the altar, the vestments of the priests, the processions and prostrations, the music—in short, anything but the prayers. These evidently form the least essential part of the service. And what prayers there are, are they such as that it could be said of them, "I will pray with the understanding?" Always offered up in one and the same, and that no longer a living, language, in England, in Ireland, in France, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Austria, and Italy—amongst the miners of Mexico on the one side, and of Australia and New Zealand on the other—still the same unvarying Latin service prevails, understood by none except the more educated classes, and by few even of them except the officiating priests. The priests may possibly pray with the understanding—few of the rest of the congregation by any means can: to them at least the ceremonial is every thing. The ears, the eyes, but not the "understanding," are enlisted in the service of God. 1 *Cor.* xiv. 11:—"Therefore

if I know not the meaning of the voice I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian; and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me."

As nearly as, under the circumstances, is possible, after the Roman model, is the favourite service of the Tractarians. The object is to make the service as little as possible one of the understanding, and so exalt the office and importance of the priest. The Latin tongue, however much desired, is of course inadmissible. The old custom of cathedrals, therefore—well suited enough, perhaps, though even of this a doubt may be reasonably entertained, for a few large churches widely scattered, almost invariably in towns in which there is likewise a large number of parish churches—is for this purpose transferred to even the smallest village congregations. However much a refined and practised ear may enable the understanding to keep up with the service of our cathedral churches, as it is intoned by the most skilful musicians whom money can command, is it possible that the rude unlettered masses—is it likely that any except a very few of even the more educated classes—can really feel a prayer intoned to be a prayer of the understanding, especially intoned as, when the attempt is made by the inexperienced, it is with every circumstance calculated to render it harsh or even ridiculous? To a mixed congregation, what better is a ser-

vice intoned than a service in the Latin tongue? What must be the inevitable result of such a process? The understanding being unemployed, the heart will gradually lose its interest. Either entire indifference will succeed, or the disposition, so congenial with natural indolence, to put trust in the intercessions of others rather than in Christ's blessing on our own exertions. The priest will rapidly become all important in the estimation of the worshippers, who will easily accustom themselves to be prayed for rather than to pray. All this leads rapidly Romewards. But, even if it did not, it is at least the setting up in the bosom of the Church of England some of Rome's worst corruptions. It is the stifling the voice, the "understanding" of prayer. It is the changing a living into a dead service. It is making, in the most important of all things, reasonable men into mere machines. It is encouraging spiritual ndolence and misplaced reliance upon those who cannot help. It is acting in direct defiance, if not of the letter, at least, as has been shown already, of the spirit of God's Word, and of the spirit and common practice even of the Church of England itself, for whose rules the Tractarians affect such great respect.

To the intoning of the prayers there is added, by the same parties, a great deal of ceremonial, all tending to the same end—the exaltation of

the priest, and the mystification of the congregation. These are, indeed, the means by which the minister, who is in truth the servant of the flock, 2 *Cor.* iv. 5, comes most improperly to be regarded as a priest making intercession for, instead of with, the people. And so the office of the one only great High Priest is intruded into by those whose proper station is that of stewards of His mysteries. We hear in some churches of processions of clergymen and choristers. In others, these are preceded by the cross-bearer and the cross. At one part of the service the clergyman is seen praying with his back purposely turned upon the people. At others he is crossing himself and making prostrations to the east. Garlands of flowers adorn the altar, as it is called, on some occasions. On others, the crimson covering is changed for purple or black. Will it be credited that in some churches, even in the nineteenth century, candles are lighted upon the altar at mid-day, and the practice gravely justified by educated men? One must see in order to believe how amongst those who still call themselves members of the Church of England there are some who vie with each other in introducing the most puerile mummeries of Rome. The eternal city itself, in the midst of the holy week, can scarcely furnish a larger amount of childish nonsense than may be at this moment met with any day

in some of the Protestant churches of London. Pity that such innovations should ever have been permitted to reach their present height! Pity that the law, if at present too weak, should not be at once so strengthened as to vindicate the apostolical simplicity of the ritual of the Church of England!

I protest then, brethren, most earnestly and most entirely against the whole system, which has been exposed to you to-day. I protest against it as unscriptural—as opposed to the spirit and practice of the Church of England—as a means of introducing many Romish abuses, both of doctrine and practice, and as a road which leads directly towards Rome itself. I desire, brethren, to place you most thoroughly upon your guard against the danger which lurks beneath these most specious practices. You will hear them justified as a revival of that which is ancient and at the same time most gratifying both to the eye and the ear. You will hear them excused as impossible to occasion any harm. You will be asked what there is objectionable in a few ritual changes, so that no unsound doctrine is preached. You may yourselves even be almost disposed to feel that you are running no risk by resorting to such things. Do not be deceived. The influence of such a system, believe me, is in reality much greater than you are apt to imagine. Day by

day you will be insensibly led on, till you at length find yourselves unawares at a point at the most distant prospect of which you would, in the first instance, have shuddered. I speak not now of the number, large though it be, of those in whose case such innovations as these have been the gate which has opened upon Rome itself. I speak rather of those who still remain by profession members of the Church of England, though, through habituation to such practices, they have lost its spirit. I speak of those who, from having once experienced the privilege and blessing of praying with the understanding, have since been changed in o mere machines; who instead of, as in times past, themselves coming boldly to the throne of grace that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, *Hebrews* iv. 16, have been gradually led to acquiesce in the propriety of sitting still themselves, and leaving all the wrestling in prayer to be done for them, if done at all, by others. Depend upon it, the work of Tractarianism and of Rome, though perhaps more slowly, is nevertheless more surely and more effectually done by ritual than either by the pulpit or the press. Do I want to deprive a man of all faith in Jesus? Do I want to make him a self-righteous formalist? Do I want so to prepare him as that he may be ready to be delivered over, bound hand and foot,

to Rome? I do not care if he never hears a sermon. I do not care if he never reads a tract. Let me but have him as a regular attendant in a church in which the service is intoned, and accompanied by some such ceremonies as those noted above, I shall need nothing more. I shall have gained my end.

Deane, Third Sunday in Lent, 1851.

SERMON IX.

THE GREAT THEFT.

"Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words, every one from his neighbour." —*Jeremiah* xxiii. 3.

THE prophets in the Church of Rome make no secret of stealing God's words, every one from his neighbour. In the first place, they do not allow the authorized version as used amongst ourselves—a version made by the collective wisdom of the most pious and learned men of the age, and with greater labour and care than has ever since been bestowed upon any work whatever. But, in place of this, they substitute a translation of their own, which in many important parts will not bear the test of learning and scholarship; in which the original is evidently garbled for a special purpose; and the commonest rules of language violated in order to uphold peculiar views of doctrine. The authority of God's Word is further weakened by the Apocrypha, which is clearly destitute of

all marks of inspiration, and the traditions of the Church, of the authenticity of which there is not the slightest proof, being set on the same level with it, and appealed to with equal deference and respect. This theft of God's Word is made, however, entire and complete by the refusal of the Scriptures, garbled even as they thus are, to the laity. The extent to which this refusal is carried is, of course, modified by times and circumstances. Much more liberty, for instance, is given in this, as well as in many other respects, in England than in Ireland; and more again in Ireland than in Spain or Mexico, Austria or Italy, or any other ignorant and priest-ridden countries. The Roman Church is very clever in either tightening or relaxing its grasp as times and circumstances and different countries require. But the vigour with which the priests lock up the Scriptures where they have the power to do so, and the bitter hostility which the present Pope and his advisers have uniformly shown to the Bible Society and all persons who have attempted to circulate the Word of God, is a plain proof that, if there are some countries in which the prophets of Rome do not steal from their neighbours the Word of God as rigorously and as completely as in others, it is for want of power, but not by any means for want of will. The spirit of Rome is in this, as in all other respects, the same as it

ever was. If the Word of God be not everywhere stolen, it is only because, in some countries, popular opinion rules, that it shall have free course.

At the Reformation this theft in this country, as well as in all others to which the influence of that blessed change reached, was repaired. One of the first steps taken was the translation of God's Word. Indeed, it was the translation of God's Word, and the consequent familiarity with it, which led to the detection of the various abuses which had gained ground through ignorance of it. The Scriptures were translated into the mother tongue. The invention of printing contributed to the dissemination of them. The Word of God became public property. It was open to all who could read, and many who could not were induced, by their strong desire to search amongst these long-concealed treasures, to undergo the cost and labour of learning. Purged both from the Apocrypha and Tradition, the pure canonical Word of God was acknowledged as the sole rule of faith and practice. *Article* VI.—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scrip-

ture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." So the treasure which the prophets of Rome had stolen, the prophets of the Reformation restored. And they afterwards stood most gallantly to their prize. For, in the reign of Queen Mary, they defended their treasure with their blood. God grant that the glorious candle, which the Martyrs of the Reformation lighted up with their own bodies, may never again be put out!

If we are allowed, however, by the mercy of God, to retain possession of the inestimable treasure which our Reformers restored to us, it will not be for want of efforts to steal it away from us. And, sad to say, it is from prophets—from prophets, not of any foreign, but of our own Church—that the fraudulent act proceeds. The thieves are nursed in our own bosom. Nor is there any part of the Tractarian system which is more mischievous than that which is connected with the authority and use of God's Word. The attempt is all the more dangerous inasmuch as it is concealed and silently progressive. It is really quite surprising to trace the cunning with which the plan for robbing the English Protestant of his dearest treasure, by Protestant clergymen, is quietly carried on to a successful issue. First, it is proclaimed that it

is quite a mistake to suppose that the whole of the Gospel is intended to be preached to all alike. To do this, it is pretended, is to cast our pearls before swine. Christ's own command, *Mark* xvi. 15, to "preach the Gospel to every creature," is coolly set aside. St. Paul's injunction to Timothy, 2 *Timothy* iv. 2, "Preach the Word," is limited to a portion of the Word. A portion of the Gospel must be reserved. Not every ear is fit to hear it all. The prophets are to be the judges of what is fit to be preached to each individual, and it is to be solely at their discretion whether the soul is to be starved or fed.

Next, an objection is made to anything like a general reading of the Scriptures. None, it is argued, except those who have been trained to the ministry, are in a position to form any judgment as to the meaning of God's Word. For a layman to sit down by himself with the Bible in his hand, and to endeavour, even after earnest prayer for God's guidance, to ascertain for himself the meaning of any particular passage of Scripture, is denounced as the height of arrogance and presumption. He must consult his pastor. He must learn the decisions of the ancient fathers. He must blindly submit his own judgment to that of men in no way less fallible than himself. The Holy Spirit promised, though He is to all who seek for Him as one

who shall guide them into all truth, is no sure guide, it is said, in such matters as these. Thus, the pastors of Christ's flock, whose office it doubtless is to feed that flock, are the first to pull the food out of their mouths. Thus the prophets, who ought to supply all the Word of God without let or hindrance, steal it away. And the judgments of holy fathers and confessors which, used in a proper spirit and on the understanding that it is to be considered as nothing more than the word of pious and learned but yet fallible men, is without doubt an aid by no means to be slighted or cast aside, thus unduly exalted into a place which it was never designed to occupy, becomes a most dangerous weapon in the hands of those who are perpetrating the theft. The marked distinction which is to be made between the Word of God and the word of even the best and most learned men is set forth in striking words by St. Paul: 1 *Thess.* ii. 13—"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

The Prayer Book, strange to say, that which was founded by our reformers upon God's Word, and intended to guide to a more practical knowledge of it, is wrested by the same parties

into a means of stealing away the words of God. And the alteration made through this instrumentality is all the more dangerous in that it is entirely unexpected. I do not mean to say that there is any open attempt to place the Book of Common Prayer above, or even on a level with, the Bible. Such an attempt would be comparatively harmless, simply because of its being open. But there is a constant reference to the Prayer Book as to a book of paramount authority—a constant holding it up as an infallible guide—a sort of superstitious respect for every sentence and letter of it—a wish to make it appear that, wherever we so interpret Scripture as to be at variance with any assertion of the Prayer Book, it is impossible but that we must be wrong. In these ways, silently, gradually, imperceptibly, but none the less surely, the words of God are stolen away, and the words of man put in their place. How the Martyrs of olden time—they who in the cruel reign of Mary gave their bodies to be burned rather than surrender one jot or one tittle of the Word of God—how would they smite on their breasts and mourn, could they behold, as perhaps from their bright thrones of glory they are at this moment beholding, the truly scriptural but still fallible work of their own hands, not with the openness of the Papists, but artfully stolen into the place of that Word which was dearer to them than their lives! I value

the Prayer Book as the first, by far the first, of all human compositions; but yet at an immeasurable distance from the Word of God.

It cannot be too carefully borne in mind that almost all the corruptions of the Church of Rome are owing to the very practice which is condemned in the text, and has been the subject of our consideration this day. Had not the prophets of that Church stolen God's words every one from his neighbour—had they not mistranslated them—had they not locked them up as far as possible from the laity—had they not mixed them up almost beyond the possibility of being recognised with the Apocrypha and Tradition, it would have been impossible for them to have led men as far away from the truth as they have done, or to have palmed upon the world the egregious fables with which their whole system is mixed. There is no surer way of tainting or drying up a river than to poison or cut off the fountain. And we may rest assured that there is no more certain way of again corrupting the simplicity of the Church of England than either to diminish the authority, or interdict the use, of the Scriptures. Once, to any extent, allow to the false prophets of the Church of England the liberty of stealing away the Word of God, and there is much more reason to tremble for the result than if we had sitting in the very midst of us a conclave of cardinals or a synod of Roman bishops.

No wonder, then, that in the text it is written, "Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour." The sin is the same whether committed six hundred years before or eighteen hundred years after Christ. The theft is equally abhorred by God, whether perpetrated by the prophets of Judah, of Rome, or of England. The word of the King is law. The word of the King of kings is above all law. Who shall with impunity do it any dishonor? I tremble exceedingly for those amongst my fellow labourers in the Church of England who are at this moment pursuing a course by God so plainly and so sternly denounced. I pray earnestly that it may please Almighty God to turn them from a way so full of danger, not only to others, but to themselves. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour." Such is the reason which immediately before the text God Himself gives for His indignation at those who steal His word. The only fire which can melt, the only hammer which can break the natural heart of stone, can those, who ought to be the first to fan the one and lift the other, extinguish and put them out of sight, and yet not feel the hand of the Lord heavy against them? I pray God that

the prophets of our beloved Zion may have a better mind than this. Be this, however, as it may, to you, my friends, I plainly say, Suffer no man on any pretence whatever to steal from you the words of God. The Apochrypha, which I heartily wish were not ever bound up in the same volume as God's Word, or used for the daily lessons, regard as the writings of wise but uninspired men. The opinions of the fathers respect, as those of saints who lived nearer than any of ourselves to the source of truth; but still, nevertheless, fallible and not unfrequently in error. The Prayer Book use as the best, though still only a human, means for drawing the soul upwards to the throne of grace. But the Bible, as St. Paul says, receive, as it is in truth, as the Word of God. Sooner be yourselves locked up in the most dismal dungeon than allow your Bibles to be locked up from you! Sooner have restraint placed upon your limbs than upon your liberty of reading and judging of God's Word for yourselves! Sooner have all your food tainted with the most deadly poison than the pure and heavenly nourishment of the soul mixed up with anything human and uninspired! Let God's fire be brightly kindled and His hammer lifted up high amongst us, or He will be against us, and our hearts remain hard and unbroken.

Deane, Fourth Sunday in Lent, 1851.

SERMON X.

SERVANTS, NOT LORDS.

"Neither as being lords over God's heritage."—1 *Peter* v. 3.

THE Church is God's heritage. This fact cannot be too deeply impressed upon our minds. The Church is not a plaything for man to trifle with. It is not a sphere in which every one may do that which is right in his own eyes. It is not a possession over which man may claim arbitrary power and jurisdiction. "It is God's heritage." Purchased by the blood of God, sanctified by the Spirit of God, constituted and preserved by the glory of God alone, the Church is not the heritage of man, but wholly and exclusively "God's heritage."

This heritage, then, of God consists of two distinct sorts of members—those who minister and those who are ministered to—the clergy and the laity. It is very important to bear this carefully in mind; because it is the practice of modern times, and of that party in the Church of which we are at present speaking, to make

it appear that in greater or less degree the clergy are alone the Church. There is no instance that I am aware of, in any part of the New Testament, of the word "Church" being made use of to signify the "Clergy" alone. This is quite a modern use of the word. Is such a person about to enter the Church?—is a common form of expressing a wish to know whether a person is about to enter upon the ministry of the Church. Common and almost proverbial expressions not unfrequently become insensibly the foundation for a superstructure of grievous error. Such has been the case in the present instance. This random use of a word, in a sense very different from that which it was ever intended to bear, has afforded the Tractarians an opportunity of copying one of the worst features of the Roman system. For it has always been the endeavour of Papal Rome to make as wide as possible a separation between the clergy and the laity. The whole system tends to this. This, without doubt, is the object and the result of the celibacy of the priesthood. This is the object and result of the institution of the monastic orders. This is certainly the result, if not the object, of the miraculous power attributed to the priest of changing, by the use of a few words, the simple elements of bread and wine into the real flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; of absolving the sinner from his

guilt; and in the last mortal agonies giving the soul a passport to the kingdom of glory. The consequence of all this is that, in the Roman system, the priesthood is regarded as almost exclusively the Church. There is an impassable boundary line between the laity and them. And not only this, but they exercise a most tyrannical power over the consciences and conduct of those committed to their care. They are, in the fullest meaning of the expression, "lords over God's heritage." Witness the power of the priesthood, for instance, in the sister country of Ireland—one year to raise the standard of open rebellion through the length and breadth of the land: another year peremptorily to put their veto upon that march of intellect which none beside are strong enough to check. Witness their power even in this enlightened country: for the sake of her splendid dowry, to immure an inexperienced maiden in the prison of a convent, and scare a miser on his death-bed out of his hoarded treasures. Witness the marvellous manner in which, throughout the whole extent of the continent, they exercise a mysterious but almost omnipotent influence in the councils of sovereigns; and, though no longer openly, yet none the less surely, in secret sway the destinies of some of the most mighty empires of the earth.

Now, in holy Scripture the clergy are never

described in language which can afford the least foundation for such a system as this. Quite the reverse. Ministers or servants, stewards, pastors, or shepherds, ensamples—such are the expressions made use of to describe the office of the clergy. 1 *Cor.* iv.—"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." 2 *Cor.* iv. 5—"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus' sake." 1 *Tim.* iv. 12—"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 *Peter* v. 3—"Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Not exclusiveness of position, not arbitrary authority, but exemplary humility, zeal, and piety, as servants not only of their heavenly Master, but of their fellow-men, are here set forth as the marks by which the clerical is to be distinguished from the lay portion of the Church. The striking words of our blessed Lord Himself to His apostles are sufficient surely to check the exhibition of any other spirit than this. *Matt.* xx. 25—"We know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but, whosoever will be great among you, let him be

your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many." So far was St. Paul from a desire to stretch his power beyond its legitimate limits that there are many occasions recorded in the Scriptures in which he was very unwilling to use even that measure of power with which he was endued. Thus, we find him saying, in 2 *Thess.* iii. 8, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us." And again, *Philemon* 8—"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee." So entirely was the great apostle of the Gentiles of opinion that love was far before authority, and persuasion better than force, that I may use his own language, 1 *Cor.* ix. 19—"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." 2 *Cor.* i. 24—"Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

In direct opposition to all this, and as far as possible after the example of the Roman Church,

the Tractarians seek to be "lords over God's heritage." They encourage, by every means in their power, the dangerous but prevalent idea already noticed, concerning the clergy constituting the Church. The mystery almost as great as that surrounding the awful miracle of transubstantiation, with which they contrive to accompany the administration of the Lord's Supper; and, connected with this, the exclusion of the laity from the east, and as they consider privileged end, of the church, together with their studied disuse of the words "minister, steward, servant, or pastor," in speaking of their own order, and substitution of the ambiguous title of "priest," all assist in keeping up this delusion. It would be well, however, if the lording of the Tractarians over God's heritage ended in words alone. Words are, comparatively speaking, but an unimportant part of the tyranny which they seek to establish. The carrying out of rubrics and canons, which owing to the changed circumstances of the times have been long since by almost common consent allowed to fall into disuse; the revival at once, and with scarcely any previous preparation, of the rigid Church discipline of olden time, concerning much of which it may well be doubted whether it would under any circumstances be advisable to revive it, and concerning all of which it may be confidently asserted that its

restoration would require the laborious preparation of many previous years, as well as the gradual reparation of at least a century of carelessness and neglect; their claim of being the sole educators of the rising generation, to the entire exclusion of the lay members of the Church; in some cases an attempt to revive auricular confession and priestly absolution: these are some of the ways in which, at this moment, the Tractarians are to no inconsiderable extent seeking to be lords over God's heritage. Weigh well their claims and pretensions—mark their haughty and overbearing manner in making and carrying them out—observe the indifference with which they cast the firebrand and inflame a whole neighbourhood with strife and discord; keeping haughtily aloof from sinners whom they ought to seek, and driving to despair souls whom it is their business to bring to Christ; and then tell me, whether these men are in any way following the precepts or example of Christ or His apostles, as they have been already set before you; whether they, in the least degree, bear the marks of ministers, servants, stewards, or pastors; whether they are not, to the very utmost which times and circumstances admit of, "lords over God's heritage?" Priestcraft, wherever and under whatsoever circumstances it is exercised, whether amongst the Hindoos of the far East, the American Indians of the far

West, the subjects of Papal Rome throughout Central Europe, or in the bosom of the Church of England itself, always has been, and in the nature of things always must be, fatal to the interests of evangelical truth and real vital godliness. That there is at this moment a combined and vigorous attempt to set up priest-craft in the Church of England cannot admit of a doubt. It must be met with vigorous, combined, persevering, resistance. It must be carefully enquired whether "Church principles," so much vaunted in the present day, are the principles of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or only of haughty and intolerant priest-craft. And as we value all which the Martyrs of blessed memory so dearly won for us amidst the fires of the Reformation, through the length and breadth of the land, we must cause to be loudly heard the memorable words of Peter in olden time, *Acts* xv. 10—"Now, therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."

Brethren, a more than twenty years' experience amongst you has convinced me of the soundness of the opinions which I have now advanced, of the danger of seeking to be lords over God's heritage, of the happy result of striving to feed and be ensamples to the flock. In whatever direction I cast my eyes, and see

the lording system attempted to be carried out, there almost always I behold strife and discord; the sheep biting both the shepherd and each other; religion and morality at a stand still; truth preached, if at all, in the meeting-house; the labouring classes, in many instances, growing up uneducated; the pure and apostolical Church of England becoming an object of distrust, if not of detestation; and her members fast falling away to recruit the ranks either of Popery or Dissent. Here, on the other hand, where the opposite system has been for a long course of years steadily carried out, where the clergy have ever sought—God grant they may ever continue to seek!—to be, not the lords, but the servants of God's heritage, I speak reluctantly, not to praise my many invaluable coadjutors, still less myself, but simply to show the happy result of the strictly *ministerial* system—here there is unbroken peace, sheep and shepherd dearly loving each other; religion and morality steadily on the increase; the Gospel preached in a full church; a sound religious and superior secular education afforded and generally embraced under the joint direction of the clergy and laity; few Papists or Dissenters in the district; and, except the venerable and spacious parish church, not a single place of worship. Such is the result here of our being, not lords, but servants. Such, I believe, is

everywhere the result of the same system. God's blessing marks the scriptural character of the "servant;" the absence of it no less surely attests the unscriptural character of the "lord." Would that the warning-voice of experience could reach the hearts of many of my younger brethren in the ministry, already neutralizing much of their usefulness by seeking to be lords over God's heritage! Would that they would bear constantly in mind that the heritage is not theirs, but God's! Would that the honor and glory of God in Christ rather than their own, the seeking and saving of lost souls rather than the vaunting the authority and wielding the power of office, were their single aim! Would that not only strife, division, and discord, but "peace on earth and good-will towards men," were the burden of their song! Would that they strove to realize the beautiful description of his own ministry given by St. Paul, 1 *Thess.* ii. 7, 8—"But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls." Would that even at the humblest distance they endeavoured to realize the words of the prophet and of Him in whom they were fulfilled! *Isaiah* xv. 12—"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs

with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." *John* x. 14—"I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." It is when we thus follow the pattern which both He and His apostles have set us, of not being "lords over God's heritage," but ensamples to the flock, that we may have just ground for expecting a fulfilment in our own persons of the gracious promise by which the text is followed up, 1 *Peter* v. 4—"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away."

Deane, Fifth Sunday in Lent, 1851.

SERMON XI.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SIMPLICITY.

"The simplicity that is in Christ."—2 *Cor.* xi. 3.

There is nothing in the whole Gospel more remarkable than the simplicity here mentioned. Every thing connected with our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is simple. Whether we look at His own character as contrasted either with the teachers under the law, with Mahomet or heathen law-givers—whether we look at the system which He introduced or the ritual by which it is accompanied—all is simplicity. Here is nothing unnecessary, nothing cumbrous, nothing to withdraw the attention from the one thing needful. I really think that it may be with safety asserted that one of the first things which strikes us in the whole Gospel scheme, and every thing connected with it, is its simplicity.

It needs no argument to prove that every part and portion of the Church ought to reflect the simplicity of its heavenly Master; and this, without doubt, was in the beginning the case of

the Church of England. Its foundation rested upon the rock of ages. Its columns were reared by apostles. Its arches were framed by those who had learned wisdom from the Saviour's own lips. Its tracery was dyed in the blood of saints who had given their lives for a Master whom, with their own eyes, they had seen give up His life for them. The venerable temple of the Church of England reflected throughout the simplicity of the divine original. In it might throughout be recognised "the simplicity that is in Christ." This beautiful and simple structure of antiquity, however, was not long allowed to retain its original integrity. Goths there were, who by degress presumed to daub it over with untempered mortar. Nor was it till the manifold corruptions of the Church of Rome were cleared away at the Reformation that any vestige of its original simplicity could be found. The reformers were the workmen whose hands, guided and strengthened by the unerring and never-failing spirit of God removed with unexampled care the accumulated rubbish; chiselled out with unceasing assiduity the foreign matter with which each bold outline was obscured, each deeply indented cavity filled up; and, whilst they religiously avoided the addition of any thing new, laboriously restored every thing old, as it had been at the beginning; restored the Church of England, corrupted as it

was by Roman guile, "to the simplicity that is in Christ."

The doctrine of the Church of England, it may be first observed, was restored to "the simplicity that is in Christ." The written Word of Christ, without any admixture either of Apocrypha or Tradition, was adopted as the only test of doctrine. Whatsoever was not found therein, or could be proved thereby, was summarily rejected. This was at once fatal to all the cumbrous additions with which the superstition of Rome had loaded it. Transubstantiation, human merit, the intercession of the Virgin Mary, angels and saints, the seven sacraments, and a host of other fabrications, the mere doctrines of men—so entirely, however, received as the doctrines of Christ that the opening eyes of the first reformers were quite astonished to find no vestige even of a foundation for them in the Word of Christ—speedily passed away. Human nature universally corrupt and wholly unable to help itself—Christ the only redeemer, mediator, and intercessor—His sacrifice once offered "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world"—faith working by love, the only condition required for rendering this sacrifice personally efficacious—the Holy Spirit, the only source of satisfaction, and His influence to be sought for generally in the only two sacraments,

Baptism and the Supper of our Lord, as well as in prayer and all other appointed means of grace—such was the simplicity to which the doctrine of the Church of England was restored. It was "the simplicity that was in Christ." For of all the cumbrous and heterogeneous mass of doctrine, with which the Church of England had been gradually overloaded from Rome, there was none which endured the test of Christ's Word but these.

Next, it may be observed that the ritual of the Church of England was restored to "the simplicity that is in Christ." Roman superstition had loaded it with almost worse than heathen mummery. Let a stranger even now pay a visit to the Pantheon at Rome between the hours of ten and twelve. He will still behold the walls of that once most majestic of all heathen temples so adorned with statues, its area so covered with altars, its avenues so thronged with pompous trains of sacrificing priests in gorgeous attire and with censers in their hands, their prayers still poured forth in the very same language as were those of old in the same place to Jupiter and Juno and all the other countless divinities of ancient pagan Rome, that he will not without reason be inclined to doubt the truth of the temple having passed from the hands of heathens to those of professedly Christian masters. Such was the

ritual with which the Church of England was disfigured. But our reformers of blessed memory restored this likewise to "the simplicity that is in Christ." A simple service of prayer, simply prayed and in the native tongue—a portion of God's Word audibly read and familiarly explained—the praises of God simply sung —two sacraments administered with no greater ceremonial than is necessary for the administering of them decently and in order: such is the sum and substance of the ritual of the Reformed Church of England as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer—a book which none who read it carefully and use it constantly can fail of finding wholly conceived in "the simplicity that is in Christ."

Thirdly, it may be observed that the ministry of the Church of England was restored to the same simplicity. The office of all heathen ministries is to offer sacrifices for the people. The office of the Jewish high priest was by God's appointment the same. "The simplicity that is in Christ" demanded that there should be but one priest—namely, Himself; and that the office of the ministry which He appointed should consist, not as amongst the Heathen and the Jews in offering sacrifices, but in preaching His Word, and guiding lost sinners to Him. This simple ministry in the Church of England had, by Roman agency, been changed into a

sacrificing priesthood, of a most exclusive and intolerant character. At the Reformation it was restored to "the simplicity that is in Christ." The only pity is that the word *priest* was ever adopted in the Book of Common Prayer. For though used by our reformers as an abbreviation of the word *presbyter*, or *elder*, and exactly in the same sense, and not at all in the Heathen or Jewish signification of a sacrificer, the confusion of terms has, without doubt, led to a great confusion of ideas, and laid the foundation for a superstructure much to be deplored. Let the ministers of the Reformed Church of England only divest themselves of all idea of priesthood, in the ordinary sense of the term, as was clearly intended in the Book of Common Prayer. Let them go forth as presbyters, or elders, amongst their brethren, specially set apart by God's Holy Spirit from secular callings, and ordained to a spiritual ministry, such as is committed to them by the terms of the ordination service; and they will as entirely as it is possible for flesh and blood to do, represent "the simplicity that is in Christ."

Such was the work of our reformers. But I will not conceal that at this present time, with reference to the Church of England, I can use no other language than that used by St. Paul, immediately before the text—"I am jealous over you with god ealousy: for I have espoused

you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The simplicity of the Church of England, of her doctrine, her ritual, her ministry, the simplicity restored at the Reformation, is again in danger. The serpent, who beguiled Eve through his subtilty, has even now instruments hard at work, endeavouring to corrupt your minds. I have already shown the various ways in which Tractarianism is busy in undermining the simplicity of the doctrine, ritual, and ministry of the Church. There is no occasion for me again to enumerate these ways. But one warning, even at the risk of wearying you outright, I will again and again repeat. It is, that as subtilty was the weapon so successfully wielded by the tempter of olden time, so now likewise subtilty is the weapon with which the simplicity of the Church of England is assailed. The danger from an open enemy and an open attack can be estimated with some precision, and prepared for accordingly. But the lurking assailant, and the blow aimed from behind one's back by a pretended friend, against this, even if ever so much on our guard, we can scarcely feel safe.

Depend upon it, my friends, "even our enemies themselves being judges," the Church of

England is not only in England itself, but throughout the world, the strongest existing human bulwark in defence of the truth. It is a light to which conflicting sects, though they are not always, perhaps, ready to acknowledge the obligation, owe nevertheless their not having long since foundered in the treacherous waters on which they float. Once let this bulwark be undermined—once let this light be dimmed—and the existence of truth will be in the utmost peril, if not altogether desperate. Against the corruptions of Popery in particular there is no bulwark so strong as this. Acts of Parliament are as nothing to it. Let the Church of England in her doctrine, in her ritual, in her ministry, retain "the simplicity that is in Christ," and we may dare the Church of Rome to do her worst. It is impossible, therefore, to be too jealous over this. It is impossible to watch too narrowly, or resist too perseveringly, every attack, or even encroachment. As long as this simplicity is upheld within I have little, if any, fear of the result of attacks from without. But once let the Christian simplicity of Church of England doctrine be from time to time more and more tainted with Romish fables—that of her ritual gilded with Romish pageantry and show—that of her ministry changed into Romish assumption of priestly power, and Rome will hardly be able

to open her arms wide enough to embrace the multitudes of victims who, thus gradually prepared, will without the least show of resistance sink into her bosom. No less than five clergymen and twelve laymen connected with a single church,* in which this sort of subtile assault upon Church of England simplicity has been for some time past carried on, have, during the last week, openly seceded to the Church of Rome. This is but the first fruits. God only knows how large will be the harvest which must in the end be gathered in, if he who beguiled Eve through his subtilty be permitted, which God forbid, to sow the same sort of seed generally amongst us!

In all His personal intercourse with His people, simple as a child though invested with all the omnipotence of Jehovah, our blessed Lord, as on Friday next, went forth to Calvary to seal with His blood the simplicity of His testimony. With the same guileless simplicity may His Church in this country ever continue to follow in the blessed footsteps of her heavenly Master! Doctrine and ritual, so thoroughly reflecting the simplicity that is in Christ as those restored at the Reformation of the Church of England, form a sure road by which contrite sinners may find rest in the bosom of Jesus Christ.

* St. Saviour's, Leeds.

Deane, Sunday next before Easter, 1851.

SERMON XII.

THE ENGINE WITHOUT A DRIVER: OR SECULAR EDUCATION.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."—*Proverbs* i. 7.

THIS is very true. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise, for it is the Word of God. But, as in the case of many other proverbs, this has become to many persons such a matter of rote that they have well-nigh lost sight of its meaning. The various interpretations consequently put upon this proverb are, for the most part, as false as the proverb itself is true. Thus, when people tell me, as they sometimes do, that no sort of knowledge except religious knowledge is sanctioned in the Bible, and for a proof of it appeal to the words of the text; when referring to this well-known proverb they declare that by "the fear of the Lord" is meant religious knowledge; and that by this being said to be "the beginning of knowledge," is signified that it is knowledge to the exclusion of every other kind of knowledge, my habit is

simply to say, I do not believe it. Such, as a matter of fact, is the manner of speaking of those who, especially in the case of the labouring classes, deprecate almost every other kind of knowledge, except that which is strictly religious. Geography, history, grammar, the use of the globes, say they—what have labouringmen to do with these? Let them learn to read their Bibles—that is quite enough. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Now, by "the fear of the Lord," I understand such a practical reverence for the Lord as leads to obedience to His commandments. As in *Gen.* xxii. 12, the angel said to Abraham, "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me;" and in *Proverbs* viii. 13, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil;" and xvi. 6, "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil;" and *Jeremiah* xxxii. 40, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." This practical fear of the Lord, then, is not mere religious knowledge, but fear such as generates obedience; is in the text said to be "the beginning of knowledge," or, as it is in the margin, "the principal part of knowledge"—that is to say, it does not exclude all other knowledge, but it is the foundation on which all other knowledge must rest, and the object to which it must tend; as in

Eccles. vii. 12, it is called, "the excellency of knowledge;" or, as the same sentiment is still more fully expressed, *Eccles.* xii. 13, "Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

It follows from this, then, that secular instruction, unaccompanied by religious training, is an evil much to be dreaded. To strengthen and improve the intellectual faculty, but communicate no religious bias, is a most dangerous experiment. To unroll in our schools the records of history, to spread open the map, to unfold the mysteries of nature, the wonders of mechanism, the triumphs of art, but to keep the Bible close: to communicate—that is to say, every other variety of knowledge, save that which is the beginning of all knowledge, "the fear of the Lord"—to no such system will I ever be a party. I would as soon put a razor in the hands of an infant, or invite a savage to handle a hair-trigger rifle. I would as soon set an engine without a driver upon the railway by which I approached your town.* If I wanted to train up a discontented, profligate, and factious population, who would neither leave others in peace nor enjoy it themselves, I should say, Give me a system of schools in which the Bible is the only book which is not used. Putting

* Preached at Habergham, March 2nd, 1851, at the opening of a new Daily Girls' School.

wholly out of the question that better country, in preparation for which we are for a season pilgrims here, and with a view solely to being useful members of society in this world, the blood of religious and moral training must circulate freely through every vain of secular knowledge. Do I wish Englishmen to honour the Queen? I must habituate them to "fear God." *Jeremiah* viii. 9, "The wise men are ashamed; they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of God, and what wisdom is in them?" On the other hand, men will fear God none the less, but rather much the more: they will take not less, but a great deal more, interest in reading their Bibles: their practice of what they read in the Word of God will be not less but much more consistent and of a much higher order in proportion as their intellectual powers have been cultivated, and the energies of their minds called forth by an introduction to knowledge in all its branches. I have already said that I would not be a party to setting an engine upon a railway without a driver. Neither, though under the guidance of a most skilful driver, will I, if I can avoid it, trust my fortunes to an engine, the mechanism of whose construction is so clumsy as that it may be almost said to be no mechanism at all. I want to get to my journey's end with safety, with speed, and with pleasure. Give me, then,

a locomotive of the best and newest design—one on the invention and construction of all whose machinery, on the putting together and polishing of all whose levers, pistons, valves, axles, and wheels, the most scientific head and the most skilful hands have been employed. A sorry figure I should cut, forsooth, even though I had secured the services of the most skilful driver on the line, were I to discover, after I had taken my seat, that I had got a very beautiful shell of an engine, but nothing more—a fire, a boiler, a large and handsome exterior, but within no pistons, cylinders, or valves. I am derogating nothing from the Holy Spirit of God—the only power which can set man in motion Christward and heavenward—I am derogating nothing from the Word of God, the only Driver, to whose guidance the course of man can be safely trusted. All that I am contending for is, if possible, an adequate machinery in conjunction with these. The steam and the driver are indispensable. Machinery of a very rude construction will do. *Psalm* viii. 2, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." But a more carefully elaborated machinery will, nevertheless under ordinary circumstances, do much better. No one will ever persuade me but that the cultivation of the intellect which God has given, equally with the heart and the spirit with which

it is influenced, and the direction of the mind to the examination of works which for convenience sake are called the works of nature, but which in reality, like man himself, are the works of God, will upon the long run predispose to a much readier and more extensive religious influence. I have, I will suppose, in my Sunday-school, a class of twenty, almost young men. Of these, ten have been carefully educated in a well-taught daily school—the remainder have not had the same advantage. Have you any doubt which of these two divisions are the most apt Bible scholars—which take the most interest in the Word of God—which most justly appreciate the force of the Scripture narratives—and which think of all such things most deeply when they return home at night and strive to put them into practice? An answer in one particular detail will suffice for all the rest. The boy who can put his finger upon Jerusalem in the map of the world will take a much more lively interest in all which happened there, than he whose geographical ideas are so vague that he is not sure whether the holy city is not in the adjoining county. And he who has once tasted the real pleasure of intellectual pursuits will be the least likely to return to that sensual life, which in all classes, but especially the labouring classes, stands between so many and the fear of the Lord. Moses, the great law-

giver of Israel, *Acts* vii. 22, "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Solomon, from whose mouth went forth the Word of God in the text, 1 *Kings* iv. 33, "spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." Daniel, had he not made great proficiency in various branches of secular knowledge, could never have discharged the duties of the very high and responsible office to which he was raised by Darius. The Magi, who were among the first to find and worship the infant Jesus, were likewise the most learned men of the East: their favourite study astronomy being the chief instrument in attracting their attention to the wonderful star which went before them and at length stood over where the young child was. Of St. Paul's secular attainments—of his knowledge, for instance, of rhetoric, of history, and even poetry—none who read his epistles can possibly doubt. Can we say, then, that the Bible forbids the attainment of secular knowledge? Can we deny that, in the case of some of the most illustrious of his servants, God has made use of such sort of knowledge as an instrument to carry out His mysterious designs? Can we shut our eyes to the great results which have flowed from the mechanism of secular attain-

ments, with the Word of God for a guide, and the Spirit of God for a moving power?

I know of no more striking proof of the power of secular knowledge as an auxiliary to the right understanding of the Word of God than is exhibited in the Church of Rome. A good deal of the doctrine of the Church of Rome is directly contrary to the written Word of God. A good deal which its members are called upon to believe is downright fabulous and absurd. It is the business of the priests to make the people believe that all these things are true and scriptural. How do they accomplish this? By keeping them, as far as they can, in ignorance. Witness very lately the decree of the Council of Thurles, and the denunciations of the first institutions almost ever set on foot in an enlightened spirit, to bring up the Romanist population of Ireland to the same standard of general information as their Protestant brethren. What is the practical result of all this? That in Roman Catholic countries the whole population, and in Protestant countries the Roman Catholic population, are the worst educated in the world. But then, in proportion as their faculties have been less developed for the searching and attainment of God's truth, their minds are more open for the reception of the Pope's lies. Is it possible that the story of the coat at Treves, or of a Winking Madonna, could find anything like general acceptance with a highly intellectually trained population with the Word of God in their hands?

Ye, then, of the labouring classes, suffer a word of exhortation from one, who, though personally almost a stranger to you, has, nevertheless, for more than twenty years, in the Day as well as in the Sabbath-school, worked amongst and taught the children of the class to which yourselves belong. Believe me, then, the sort of education for which I have been pleading, whether you regard this world or the world to come, is the most valuable inheritance which you can purchase for your children. I do not undervalue Sunday-schools. Several hours every Sunday, for the last twenty, years have been spent by me in a Sunday-school. And I thank God that He has not denied His blessing to the work. But I have, nevertheless, no hesitation in saying that I consider Sunday-schools only supplementary; and, if they be put in the place of that regular and well-organized intellectual cultivation and religious and moral training which the Daily-school can alone supply—if, for instance, your wealthier neighbours*

* The reverse of this is the case at Habergham. A simple but extremely beautiful church, with lofty tower and spire, and close by handsome and spacious Daily Boys, Girls, and Infant School-rooms, with teachers' houses, have been built, and are supported chiefly at the expense of Sir James Kay

are induced to think that they have done quite enough when they have provided you a room and funds for Sabbath teaching—that by sending them there you have done all that is required of you in behalf of your children—the Sunday-school, instead of a supplementary good, becomes, I have no hesitation in saying it, a positive evil. The deep-rooted corruption of the natural heart, in a great majority of instances, needs much more than the desultory labour of a few hours a-week for its eradication. Nor, if the souls of the young are to be won in any numbers to Christ, must their early years, as now, be devoted almost exclusively to the sweat of the brow. I plead earnestly for the daily school. Do you wish to see your children acquire habits which will fit them for

Shuttleworth, Bart., and Mr. Dugdale—the one the principal landed proprietor, the other the employer of the largest number of hands in the district. On Saturday, March 1st, 1851, the day before this sermon was preached, the completion of the new Girls' School-room was celebrated by a meeting of the parents and friends of the children, when suitable addresses on the subject of education were delivered, and anthems and choruses sung by the school choir with true Lancashire taste and spirit. The interest taken by all present in these proceedings, and the cordiality with which Sir James and Lady Kay Shuttleworth and Mr. Dugdale and his family were received, were a most gratifying proof of the value set upon good daily education, as well as of the happy result of a free and kindly interchange of feeling and intercourse between the higher and lower classes.

happiness both here and hereafter? Do not be content with merely sending them to the Sunday-schools, which, as far at least as you are yourselves concerned, is a sort of sacrificing to God of that which costs you nothing. But put yourselves to some inconvenience, submit to some loss, put up with the deprivation of their earnings, eat a meal less—or, in many cases it might well be spared, drink a cup less—in order to allow your children the inestimable advantage denied, perhaps, in early life to you, but now, by the blessing of God, offered to them—the advantage of good secular instruction combined with sound religious education; the fuller development of those intellectual powers which God has bestowed upon man in order that he may gain a further insight into His will and learn to fear Him more; a knowledge of the heavens, for instance, in order that the heavens may more fully declare the glory of God and the firmament show His handywork; in order that, when he considers God's heavens, the work of His fingers, the moon and the stars which He has ordained, in a true spirit of humility and of leaning upon one mightier than himself, he may be ready to exclaim, *Psalm* viii. 4, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" It is a comfort for you to know that there are none so unlearned but that, by the grace of

God, they may attain to a saving faith in Christ. In the first beginning of the Gospel, God chose, 1 *Cor.* i. 21, "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise;" and so He often does now. That is no reason, however, for our neglecting to improve the talent which He has bestowed upon us; nor any just ground for expecting that, if we refuse to use the ordinary means of grace and improvement, an extraordinary opening will be made for us.

I have a word for the higher classes—amongst the rest for the clergy, not excluding myself. We, brethren, must not only deny ourselves luxuries and comforts; but, what is more important still at the present crisis—for herein assuredly the great drawback to the extension of sound religious education really consists—we must wave prejudices; not insist too sternly upon rights; assume the character of pastors of the flock rather than of "lords over God's heritage;" must walk hand in hand, clergy and laity, together; and even, as far as is possible, without an abandonment of the great truth that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"—Churchmen with Dissenters, we must do all this—we must do nothing less than this—in order to secure to the labouring classes the advantage above described. Thus to do is at once our duty both to God and ourselves. Each soul which perishes for lack of knowledge by

reason of either our covetousness, prejudice, or neglect, will undoubtedly cry out against us at the day of judgment. And, if we wish to get rid of Popery without or Puseyism within the Church—if we wish to set up an impregnable barrier against the encroachments of the tide of infidelity which is flowing with greater strength than many suppose, and desire that those who in the sweat of their brow eat bread should grow up a religious, sober, honest, industrious, and thriving population, good Churchmen, good subjects, and useful citizens—not Acts of Parliament, not prisons, not penal settlements, not workhouses, but a sound daily religious and moral education, open to all sects and denominations, combined with the fullest possible development of the intellectual faculties by instruction in every branch of secular knowledge, all based upon the eternal principle that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"—a proverb in itself as true as many of man's interpretations of it are false—this is the remedy which we must at once, and strenuously, and perseveringly, and with never-ceasing prayer for God's blessing, apply.

Habergham, All Saints', March 2, 1851.

SERMON XIII.

ST. PAUL'S GOSPEL.

"But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—*Gal.* i. 8.

IT is impossible to conceive anything more stringent than this declaration of St. Paul to the Galatians. As though, however, it were not forcible enough, it is reiterated with a little variety of expression in the succeeding verse—"As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed." So jealous was the great apostle of the Gentiles of any, even the slightest, change in that doctrine, which had been revealed to him from heaven! So fearful was he of falsehood being in any way mixed up with the truth! So painfully alive was he to the fact, that the salvation of men's souls depended on their proving all things, and holding fast that which is good! These words of St. Paul are conceived in the same spirit as the awful caution with which the

volume of God's written Word is finally sealed, *Rev.* xxii. 18, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Let us review then shortly the principal features of the Gospel which St. Paul preached. We shall thus learn what it was which he was so very earnest in upholding.

First, then, one of the principal features of the Gospel, as preached by St. Paul, is the universality of sin. *Rom.* iii. 23—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." *Rom.* xi. 32—"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all." *Gal.* iii. 22—"But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." 2 *Cor.* v. 14—"If one died for all, then were all dead." *Eph.* ii. 3—"And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." On this subject, then, there can be no doubt what was the doctrine of the Gospel which St. Paul preached. He plainly taught the universal corruption of human nature: that

all men are born in sin and the children of wrath; and that they not only inherit from their first father, Adam, the curse which God pronounced upon the original transgression, but that to the day of their death sin is more or less mixed up with even the best and most faithful of their actions. *Rom.* vii. 23—"I see," says St. Paul, speaking in all likelihood concerning himself personally, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Secondly. Another great feature in the Gospel which St. Paul preached is that Christ died for all mankind. *Rom.* v. 18—"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." 1 *Tim.* i. 15—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 *Tim.* ii. 3—"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus Christ; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Thus, in the Gospel which he preached, St. Paul plainly testified, that, just as the curse pronounced upon Adam, together with his sinful nature, was entailed on all his posterity, so the blood of Christ was shed for all without exception, and that all, who by faith are washed in it, will be saved.

Thirdly. St. Paul preached that nothing but the blood of Christ and His perfect righteousness, imputed to us through faith, can save us. *Rom.* iii. 20—"Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." 27, 28—"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." *Rom.* xi. 8—"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.' 1 *Cor.* i. 29—"That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." *Eph.* ii. 8—"For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should

boast." *Titus* iii. 5—"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Thus plainly, in detail and in various parts of his writings, does St. Paul confirm and explain the general but bold and plain declaration, 1 *Cor.* iii. 11—"For other foundation can no men lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Fourthly. Another feature in the Gospel, preached by St. Paul, is the necessity of good works, as the evidence of faith." *Gal.* v. 6—"Faith which worketh by love," is St. Paul's favourite description of that grace; and by love is meant all practical holiness. *Rom.* vi. 22—"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life." 2 *Cor.* vii. 1—"Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 1 *Thess.* iv. 7—"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." *Hebrews* xii. 14—"Follow

peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Holiness, therefore, in the entire life and conversation, is in the Gospel which St. Paul preached set forth an indispensable evidence of that faith by which the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the saving of the soul. Without such holiness there can be no real or living faith. As St. Paul most pointedly sums up the whole doctrine, *Titus* ii. 11—"For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ: who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Fifthly. St. Paul set forth this change from sin to holiness as the work of the Holy Spirit alone. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto Him: neither can He know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 2 *Thess.* ii. 13—Salvation is said to be "through sanctification of the Spirit." *Gal.* v. 22—"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." *Rom.* vii. 13—"For

if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. But if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Universal corruption then—Christ the Saviour of all who believe—no other mode of salvation revealed—good works the evidences of saving faith and the fruits of the Holy Spirit—such, together with a last solemn day of account before the judgment seat of Christ—heaven for those that are saved, hell for them that perish—such are the principal features of that Gospel which St. Paul preached, and concerning which he speaks in the earnest urgent language of the text. That language was addressed to the Galatians. And from a perusal of that epistle we learn that the other Gospel to which he alludes—or rather the corruption of the one only true Gospel, for as St. Paul himself, *Gal.* i. 7, truly declares it is not "another Gospel"—was their disposition to build their hopes of salvation not upon the one only foundation laid—namely, Christ crucified—but upon circumcision and other ceremonies of the Jewish law. Self-righteousness, such as this, sapped the very foundation of the Gospel, and was pregnant with the most imminent peril to the souls of those who, having once pledged themselves to Christ, so fell away from Him. Hence the fervent language of the text, applicable to all of every age, fully as much as to those to whom it

was originally addressed. Hence the, if possible, even still more urgent declaration, *Gal.* v. 4, "Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace." The apostle felt that the souls of his people were at stake. No wonder he spoke boldly, plainly, decidedly. To peril one's own soul is bad enough. But for a pastor to lead his people into damning heresy, most assuredly deserves God's heaviest curse.

God forbid, brethren, that either I or any of those who, from time to time, address you from this place, should incur this awful condemnation! God forbid that we should preach to you any other Gospel than that which Paul preached, and the leading doctrines of which I have shortly set before you this day! It is an age, however, in which men are wont to call "evil good, and good evil:" "to put darkness for light, and light for darkness:" "bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." It is an age in which men are fond of being "wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight." And, even amongst God's prophets, it is to be feared there are not a few who seduce his people, saying, Peace, and there is no peace; and one builds up a wall, and another daubs it with untempered mortar. God save them from that fearful curse which is written in the text! But for yourselves, though we or an angel from heaven

preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which holy Paul and the other blessed apostles preached unto you, for God's sake, and as you value your souls being saved alive, do not ye receive it! No matter whether it be that we invite you, as some do, to presume upon God's mercy, and continue in sin that grace may abound, as though God would be merciful at the expense of His justice, and not fulfil the threat which He has denounced. Or that as others, we bid you to trust in your own righteousness—in the punctual observance of forms and ceremonies—in outward profession, without the inward renewal of the heart and holiness of life and conversation. Or, that under pretence of reviving that which is ancient, we remove one by one the great land-marks which our Protestant forefathers set up; assimilate our ritual as nearly as possible to Popery; lead men up, step by step, to the untenable, because unscriptural, precipice of Anglo-Catholicism; and then wonder that they turn giddy and fall down by hundreds into the bosom of Rome. No matter, I say, what be the sort of corruption of the Gospel which we advocate, or the authority or eloquence or crafty wiliness with which we seek to seduce you from the truth as it is in Jesus; as you value heaven, and dread hell, suffer not yourselves to be deceived! No: not though we be angels in eloquence, and in

holiness saints. Receive St. Paul's Gospel with all your heart and soul and strength. Cling to it without flinching and without fear, and you are safe. Any other Gospel must be a curse, as well to them that receive as to them that preach it.

Poulton-in-Flyde, Oct. 13th, 1850.

SERMON XIV.

WHICH WAY IS THE WIND BLOWING?
OR, THE WAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT KNOWN ONLY BY ITS EFFECTS.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—*John* iii. 8.

SUCH are the words in which our blessed Lord set forth to Nicodemus the operation of the Holy Spirit in Baptism. "The wind," He says, 'bloweth where it listeth"—that is to say, where it wills, without any management or controul on our part. Thou "canst not tell," He continues, "whence it cometh or whither it goeth." It blows, that is to say, without our being acquainted either with the source from which it rises, or the place towards which its course is destined. Thou "hearest the sound thereof," He adds. This, in truth, is all that we do know with any certainty about the wind. We judge of it by its effects. For the sound of it is here put for the effects of the wind in general. Nothing, then, can be more completely and circumstantially correct than the account which is here given concerning the wind. Of all the elements it is, in the mode of its operation as well as in its own nature, the most mysterious: so that, if we wanted a good figure by which to illustrate a mystery, we could scarcely find a better one than the wind. For, after all the investigations of modern times and discoveries of modern science, we really know almost nothing at all about the wind. We can give no certain account of its origin. We can say little about what becomes of it after it has passed over our own heads. We can exercise scarcely any controul at all over it. We cannot even see it, so as to decide as to the direction in which it is blowing; but, if we are desirous of ascertaining this, or even the degree of violence with which it is blowing, we are obliged to have recourse to its effects. We must look which way the weather-cock points—in which direction the smoke or dust or leaves are carried—whether they are carried violently or otherwise—whether the sound as it passes by us is loud or gentle—whether ourselves and the other bodies around us are rudely beaten by the blast of the tempest, or gently breathed upon by the summer breeze. Is not the wind then a mystery to us? Can we pretend to know anything of its nature or operation? Can we judge of it at all except by its effects? Are not these, however, very

manifest? Do they not afford a most sure rule by which to judge? And though we cannot at all controul the wind, yet may we not by good management make it very useful?

"So is every one," our Lord continues, "that is born of the Spirit." The wind, that is to say, is a perfect emblem of the operation of the Spirit in Baptism. For it is clear our Lord is here speaking of the operation of the Spirit in Baptism only. For, in *verse* 5, He pointedly couples the being born of the Spirit with the being born of water, which can be no other than the water of Baptism—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Thus our Church, throughout her services, makes use of the expressions *born again*, *regenerate*, and so forth, with reference to no other operation of the Spirit than that which takes place at Baptism: rightly, I think, after the example of our Lord; though, of course, it matters little in reality by what name we call a thing, so that we do not call more than one thing by the same name. From which ambiguous use of the word *regeneration*, by some applied to the operation of the Spirit on other and various occasions, has, as I think, arisen a good deal of that confusion and disagreement which has occasioned, and is still occasioning, so much anger and ill-will in the Church. For I verily believe that there would be much less difference amongst us if we

did but agree on the meaning of the terms we use. Be this as it may, however, our Lord illustrates the operation of the Spirit in Baptism by the wind, as He described it in the previous part of the verse. Of the wind, we found, we see, nothing. We do not even know anything about it except by its effects. We neither are acquainted with its origin or can control its power. So, the operation of the Spirit in Baptism we cannot see. We cannot tell how, why, or at what precise moment the operation takes place, or whether it be the same in infants and those of mature age. In short, if the operation of the Spirit in Baptism be, as stated, after the manner of the wind, it is clear we can know nothing certainly about it, except from its effects. By these, as in the case of the wind, we can form a very sure judgment concerning the Spirit. When we see a man leading a holy life, we may as surely pronounce him under the operation of the Spirit; as, when we see the smoke carried from the north, we pronounce the wind to be blowing from that quarter, and the reverse. And, by a reference to the degree of holiness by which a man's life is adorned, we may as confidently pronounce concerning the measure of spiritual influence under which he is, as we do concerning the violence of the wind by a reference to the speed with which bodies are carried before it or struck by

it. And just as, though we cannot at all controul the wind, we may, by proper observation of its laws, make it very serviceable for all practical purposes; though the operation of the Spirit is wholly beyond our power to change or direct, it will, if we observe the rules which God has laid down concerning it, tend undoubtedly, as God has promised, to the salvation of the soul alive.

The operation, then, of the Spirit in Baptism is a mystery. Such the words of my text clearly prove it to be. Such in the primitive Church it was always accounted. For both Baptism and the Lord's Supper were as often called mysteries as sacraments. It is a mystery quite as much as the mode of the existence of three Persons in one Godhead, or that of the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding, therefore, the many attempts which have been made to explain it, and the bitter spirit in which controversy on this subject is frequently carried on, the words of my text place it, I think, beyond all possibility of doubt, that a full and perfect comprehension of this sacrament of Baptism, in all its nature and operation, is as far above the power of the human mind as that of either of the other mysteries above mentioned. *Prov.* xvii. 3—"The fining-pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord trieth the hearts." Men see the

meaning of these words clearly as regards pain and sickness, loss of relations, friends, and fortune, as well as the various other sources with which life is chequered. They fail, however, to see it in the mysteries of religion, which ought to be viewed in exactly the same light. For there cannot be the least doubt that these are intended in exactly the same manner as trials—and to some minds of a peculiar mould and constitution they are trials of a very severe and fatal character. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 11—"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but, when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." The being children in understanding, and seeing only through a glass darkly, is as much a trial of our faith as the furnace of bodily or mental affliction; and this, as I have said before, the words of the text, as I believe, show to be the utmost extent of knowledge to which we can arrive here respecting the operation of the Spirit in Baptism. It is, in short, a mystery purposely ordained for the trial of our faith. And, as in the case of all similar trials, it remains to be seen who amongst us, without pretending to understand the mystery of Baptism, will have faith to act up to its requirements.

Deut. xxix. 29—"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." There are, therefore, as we have seen in Baptism, certain secrets which it pleases God to reserve to Himself. On the other hand, there are certain duties connected with it plainly revealed, which belong unto us to do. No words can be plainer than those of our blessed Lord are concerning the general necessity of Baptism —the necessity of it, I mean, in all cases in which it is possible to obtain it. *Matt.* xxviii. 19—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And, again, *John* iii. 5—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Let no one, therefore, think that he will escape with impunity who neglects to bring his children to be baptized. Whatever may be the case of unbaptized children themselves, it is clear that those who, by trangressing such plainly revealed commands as these, rob those children of such precious promises and privileges, cannot but commit grievous sin and incur terrible punishment. As you value, therefore, not only your children's but your own salvation, brethren, neglect not to bring your children to be baptized.

Another plainly revealed duty connected with Baptism is, that those who have been baptized should diligently strive to act up to the vows made for them or by them at their Baptism, so as not to quench but rather to obtain increase of the grace given therein. *Eccles.* v. 5—"Better is it that thou shouldest not vow than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." And again, *John* iii. 36—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Nothing, then, can be more clearly revealed than the sinfulness of breaking a solemn promise, such as that made in Baptism, or the absolute impossibility of being saved without that living faith which is stipulated in Baptism, and shows itself forth in renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil, and keeping God's commandments.

Content then to leave the manner of the operation of the Spirit in Baptism as a mystery—a secret thing belonging unto the Lord our God —a wind which bloweth where it listeth and we cannot tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth—we plainly announce to you these are the practical duties connected with this mystery: these are the things which belong unto us and our children to do: this is the sound of the wind which we may distinctly hear, and so judge concerning its presence and force. Breth-

ren, another year has almost passed away. The sun of the fifty-second Sabbath has already set. Strange changes have taken place amongst us since the first of these Sabbaths dawned. Many who were amongst us then are now absent from the flesh, and waiting the sound of the resurrection trumpet—their race run—their course ended—their probation over—their doom, either for weal or woe, beyond their power to change it, eternally fixed. Are there not some amongst you who are at this moment saying within yourselves—Here, at the beginning of last year, close by me, sat one instinct with life, and health, and strength, and consciousness; but where is he now? Changes, I say, great changes, have taken place. The then living are now dead. The grave is now the only dwelling place of those whom then this house contained. Each one of us, moreover, still spared, is a year older than he was. Do you not feel it so? Have not the careless spirits of boyhood and girlhood in some instances during this interval just merged into the reality, and earnestness, and anxiety of mature life? In others, does not a stray grey hair, here and there, detected unexpectedly and not without a start, or some vital organ less useful than heretofore—a failing eye, or ear, or stomach—a hand not so steady, or feet not so swift, proclaim that manhood is on the verge of age?—while some I see before me,

whom I scarcely expected to watch the close of another year, and whose hoary head forbids the hope of many like meetings. Great changes, then, have taken place. Has a corresponding change taken place in your hearts? Have you during the last twelve months, by the grace of God, more steadily than heretofore renounced the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh? Are you more stedfast in your belief of all the articles of the Christian faith? Have you more strictly kept God's holy will and commandments, and walked in the same more steadily than you did in time past? These are the solemn questions with which I will close another year's ministrations amongst you. The Spirit in Baptism may well blow where it listeth, and we be content neither to tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so that we can but distinctly hear in our own daily lives and conversation this clear and convincing sound of good works, the fruits of faith. *Mark* xvi. 16—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Deane, Dec. 30, 1849.

SERMON XV.

THE NEW MAN.

"The new man."—*Eph.* iv. 25.

"THE new man." There must be an old man therefore; and what is this? In *verse* 22, the "old man" is called "corrupt." In *Rom.* vi. 6, we are told that "our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed." In *Rom.* v. 12, we are further informed that "by one man sin entered into the world." And in 1 *Cor.* xv. 22, it is added, "in Adam all die." Now from these, and such like texts as these, compared one with another, we gather that by "the old man" is meant that corrupt sinful nature which we bring with us into the world as an inheritance from our first father Adam, and which has made every man born into the world subject to death both temporary and eternal. The story is familiar and may be told in a few words. Adam was made in the image of God—that is to say, innocent and immortal. But he disobeyed; eat of the fruit of which

God had said, "Thou shalt not eat of it;" lost his likeness to his Almighty Creator; fell from His favour, became corrupt, subject to death here and everlasting damnation hereafter—a curse which he entailed upon all his descendants, in every one of whom is likewise propagated the corrupt nature of their first father. So that, as our Saviour says, *John* iii. 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." As is explained in *Art.* ix., "Original sin is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man: that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit." The old man, then, is the natural man, the man in his natural state, just as he is born into the world, with all the corrupt and sinful propensities and inclinations which he inherits from his fallen father Adam.

Furthermore, it is impossible to mistake the old man. His marks, as laid down in holy Scripture, are very plain and intelligible. Thus in *Eph.* iv. 17, St. Paul exhorts, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who,

being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." In the same strain, *Col.* iii. 5, "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked some time when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." Thus also, *Gal.* v. 19, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these —adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Thus plainly are the marks of the old man described. It is quite impossible to mistake him. Wherever the corrupt desires, habits, and practices here enumerated exist, there the old man is. He is as readily discovered as a tree by its fruits.

The character of "the old man" having been thus ascertained, there will be no great difficulty in finding out what "the new man is." The new man will, without doubt, be the exact

opposite of the old one. Thus, as in *Eph.* iv. 22, we learn that "the old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" so in that verse of the same chapter from which the text is taken we read that "the new man" is "after God created in righteousness and true holiness." And just as "the old man" is the result of a natural, so "the new man" is the result of a spiritual birth. For in the same Scripture, *John* iii. 6, in which we read that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," we read likewise that "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And in *Tit.* iii. 4, the production of the new man is called "the renewing of the Holy Ghost." From a comparison, then, of such Scriptures as these, it is clear that by "the new man" is meant that new and holy nature and state of heart and affections, the very opposite to the corrupt nature which we bring with us into the world, which is the work and operation of the Holy Ghost, shed upon us through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour. "The new man" is a new nature, a spiritual nature, a holy nature.

Furthermore, the marks of "the new man" are as distinctly laid down in holy Scripture as those of the old man. Thus, in the verses immediately after my text, St. Paul thus explains in full what he means by putting on the new man—"Wherefore, he says, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neigh-

bour, for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." In the same manner, *Gal.* v. 22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Such are the certain signs of the new man. Wherever these are, there the new man is. But where these are absent, the new man cannot be present.

But yet a step further. The necessity of the new man is likewise plainly set forth in holy Scripture; and not only set forth, but explained. In *John* iii. 3, it is written, "Jesus answered and said unto him—Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and again, *verse* 5,

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and again, *verse* 7, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." From all which we learn, on no less authority than that of Jesus Christ Himself, that, unless we are born again —that is to say, unless, as I have already shown, "the old man," which has been before described, be by the only influence which can accomplish such a work—namely, the Holy Spirit changed into "the new man of my text"—we cannot enter into the kingdom of God—cannot, that is to say, be brought within the range of the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ, by which the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers. It is exactly to the same effect that St. Paul, 2 *Cor.* v. 17, declares, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." *Rom.* viii. 9, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." *Gal.* vi. 15, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," which, in *Gal.* v. 6, is described as being "faith which worketh by love." Here, therefore, we not only have the necessity of the new man plainly laid down, but the reason of that necessity added. We can have, we know, no interest in Christ

without faith. Now, we cannot have faith without love—without, that is to say, holy practice; and holy practice is the mark of "the new man." And thus we see that the having "the new man" is an indispensable accompaniment of being in Christ, and therefore of being in a state of salvation. In truth, how could it be otherwise? For what interest could the old man possibly take in that final consummation above to which the kingdom of Christ here is destined to lead—I mean His everlasting kingdom of glory? What pleasure could the old man find in the spiritual things of heaven, in the holy employments of redeemed saints, in the never ceasing hallelujahs of angels and archangels around the throne in the presence of the spotless Lamb Himself? "What fellowship, 2 *Cor.* vi. 14, hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" No wonder that all the other plain declarations of holy Scripture on this subject are sealed at the end of the Bible by the solemn declaration, *Rev.* xxi. 27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

The new man, then, is absolutely indispensable. And so that we have him, it little matters through what channel he comes to us. One thing, as I have already shown from holy Scripture, is quite plain—namely, that whatever be the channel or instrumentality through which the blessed change is wrought in us, the Holy Ghost Himself is the Source and Author of it. The important point for us to settle is, not whether "the new man" was given to us at the time of our baptism—whether our corrupt nature was then first changed and God's Holy Spirit then first given; but rather, whether we are at this moment bearing about with us the indubitable marks of the new man, the unquestionable signs of a changed heart, the evident fruits of the Holy Spirit. Because, having once received the new man, we may, perhaps, have gone back again to the old man—having had our hearts changed once by the Holy Spirit, and having been once in the habit of bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, we may, perhaps, since then have grieved the Holy Spirit, and gone back again to the world. So that the question about which so many people waste most fruitlessly a great deal of time—namely, through what instrumentality it is, whether baptism or some other, that the new man is produced, is of little importance, compared with the really indispensable enquiry as to whether we are at the present time bearing about with

us unquestionable proofs that we have put off "the old man" and put on "the new man." We ought to use diligently every means of grace which God has provided. We may be sure that, if we do so, God will vouchsafe His blessing. And so that we have but clear and scriptural proof that we are possessed of that blessing, we may safely leave it to God to bless each means of grace in the way and to the extent that He pleases. For my own part, after a careful study of God's Word upon this subject, and earnest prayer to Him for His guidance and direction, my belief, which I state with all diffidence and humility, is that every person who is born of water according to God's holy ordinance of baptism is also born of His Holy Spirit, which, however, by subsequent violation of his baptismal engagements, may in each person be grieved and quenched; and in each again afterwards renewed. But, after all, practically speaking, I care little when it was that I put off "the old man," and put on "the new man," if I have only a sure and scriptural ground for believing that it is not the old but the new man that I am at this present time bearing about with me.

Trust not, then, my brethren, to the mere circumstance of having been baptised. Think not that you are on that account safe. Though you may have had, as I think you must, if you

have been baptised, once have had at least the germ of the new man within you, yet you may long since, perhaps, have put away this new nature and resumed the old one. Those of you who are at this moment living wicked worldly lives have most undoubtedly done so. However much you may lay claim to the new man, your works, the works of the flesh, are a plain proof that the old man is still remaining in you. Are you bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit? Are your tastes, pursuits, habits, pleasures, holy, heavenly, and spiritual? Living below, is your conversation nevertheless in heaven? These are the marks, the sure marks, of the new man. For my own part, I would as soon believe that the angels, who stand around the throne of God in heaven, find their principal pleasure in thwarting His will and disobeying His commands—I would as soon believe that the hallelujahs with which the saints in the world to come will salute the Lamb who sitteth on the throne will be the songs of the licentious and profane—nay, I would as soon believe that the spotless Lamb Himself is stained with sin and polluted with worldliness, as that those who are this moment finding their pleasure in wicked and worldly things have in them one jot or one tittle of "the new man."

Deane, June 2nd, 1850.

SERMON XVI.

THE ACT OF GOD FOR THE RESTRICTION OF LABOUR.

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work, which God created and made."—*Gen.* ii. 3.

THINK what a scene of incessant and unmitigated toil this world would be, if there were no day of rest at all! Now, even, it is no uncommon thing for men to complain very bitterly if the rest, to which they lay claim on the Sabbath, is in any measure broken in upon by their masters and employers. Thus, I have myself heard the clerks in our post and other public offices, the the various servants employed in our railways, the labourers at our collieries and mills, if only a small portion of the Sabbath be taken from them by their employers, complain exceedingly that Sunday is to them like any other day. And very proper, indeed, it is to be jealous of even the least infringement of the Sabbath. But, if to have the day of rest even in the least degree broken into be worthy of being deemed a hard-

ship, think, as I said before, what a hardship it would be to have no day of rest at all! If our collieries, for instance, were wrought without intermission every day throughout the whole live long year—if the machinery in our factories never for a single moment ceased to revolve—if the activity, which now for six days only out of every seven prevails in our public offices, were never allowed to be slackened—if our mechanics and labourers, engine-drivers, guards, and porters, had to ply during the whole three hundred and sixty-five days the same unceasing round of toil and danger—if our warehouses and shops were never closed, and buyers and sellers were to be found on the Sunday in as large numbers as on any other day in the week—if such were the round of incessant toil and labour to which we were doomed, who amongst us is there so strong as would be able to endure thus, infinitely more than now even, in the sweat of his brow to eat bread? Who is there whose spirit would not sink within him? Who is there whose daily desire it would not be to be allowed as speedily as possible to return to the ground from which he was taken? And, if man would be thus incapable of sustaining the burden, what would be the condition of the poor dumb beasts? Thus, even to thousands who disown and abuse it, the return of God's own day in reality brings a blessing.

For, had it not been that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, that which I have above described, there can be no doubt, would have been the case. If the covetousness of man breaks through, as we have seen it often does, the sanction even of divine command, what limit would there have been to it, had no command at all existed on the subject? If man, in order to increase his own gain, or minister to his own convenience, even now to a certain extent constrains his fellow-man in the sweat of his face to eat bread on the day which God has blessed and sanctified, what portion of leisure can we think he would have spared him had no particular day whatever been set apart for rest? Hence, then, it was that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. It was not that the Almighty Creator was tired with His six days' work and needed rest. *Isaiah* xl. 28 —"Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" It was not from indulgence to Himself, but from compassion to us, that the Almightly Creator rested. He rested on the seventh day in order to mark out one day in seven as a day of rest for us. He well knew that nothing short of a special blessing and sanctification attached to the weekly recurrence of some particular day, and an example of rest

upon that day set by Himself, would avail to secure for His creatures a proper measure of bodily relaxation—a becoming proportion of leisure for the concerns of the soul. "The Sabbath," as our Lord most pointedly declared, *Mark* ii. 27, "was made for man." Oh, that men would but view it in this its only true and proper light! Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

Yet, though God has thus mercifully set apart the Sabbath as a day of rest for man, how few, comparatively speaking, there are to whom it is really so. Some by constraint, and others of their own free will, are accustomed on that day to follow the very same occupations to which the six preceding days have been devoted. Some reserve for that day occupations for which the active engagements of the remainder of the week leave no time—look over their farms, pore over their accounts, write their letters. Some devote it to light and frivolous amusements, the reading of novels, pamphlets, and newspapers; the taking of excursions of pleasure, long walks or rides or drives, to visit friends or frequent places of public resort. Some devote it to acts of positive sin; so that on no day, especially amongst the labouring classes, whose time during the preceding six is fully occupied, do we find more of gambling, drinking, swearing, noisy

assemblages, and profane conduct and conversation. Others, again, devote this day to positive inaction. Body and mind seem both asleep. They sit in the chimney corner, and can scarcely be induced to stir hand or foot. Thus it is that multitudes abuse the day which God has blessed and sanctified, and set apart as a day of universal rest. And do those of you who thus spend the Sabbath, if there be such here, do you really find that it is to you what t was intended to be—a day of rest? Is it not any thing rather than a day of rest? Are you not on that day more tired than on any other? So far from calling it "a delight," is it not to you the most irksome, fatiguing, unpleasant day of the whole week? Does it not hang heavy on your hands? Is not your feeling concerning it—*Mal.* i. 18—"Behold what a weariness is it!" *Amos* iii. 5—"When will it be gone?"

The Sabbath, my friends, can never be a day of rest to any except to those who employ it as He who blessed and sanctified it directed. The very fact that God blessed that particular day, more than any other, points it out as the day on which, more than on any other, His blessing is to be sought. The very fact that God sanctified that day—that is to say, set it apart as holy, separate, and distinct from all other days—is a proof that He intended it to be devoted to

none of the pursuits and occupations of the remainder of the week, much less to deeds of sin and wickedness. And on that day, moreover, God rested. Think what it was for God to rest! What idea can you form of this? What meaning can you attach to the expression? His rest was not a bodily but a spiritual rest, for God is a Spirit. And so He hallowed the seventh day for the bodily rest of man—not as an end, but only as a mean, for promoting the rest of his spirit or soul. We can conceive of the Almighty Creator as on that day taking, as it were, a complacency in Himself; calmly surveying all which on the six preceding days He had made, and pronouncing it very good. Hence, from God's own example, we learn on that day to take a complacency in Him, and give Him the glory of His works. And such has been the constant practice of the Church from the beginning. Our blessed Lord Himself, as well as His apostles, by His constant attendance on the Sabbath service of the synagogue under the old dispensation, has given a plain sanction to public worship, as forming an integral portion of Sabbath rest. And in thus doing, He has also set His seal, as it were, upon every sort of spiritual exercise as that for which the Sabbath was made, and in which alone true rest can be found. I know no words

which better illustrate the character of Sabbath rest than those of His which are recorded in *Matt.* xi. 28—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As though He had said—In all my ordinances, in prayer, in reading and hearing the Word, in eating of my body, and drinking of my blood, in all these my ordinances, and through all these means of grace, come to me; and, in place of labouring and being heavy laden, as the worldly-minded always, more or less, must be, ye shall find rest for your souls. Who is there amongst you, who has been in the habit of thus using the Sabbath, who has not found such rest to his soul? And who is there that has found rest for his soul, who has not also by experience proved that rest for the soul is rest for the body as well—perfect rest, entire rest, complete rest—such as the world cannot give—such as can be given by Christ alone. Never was there a prediction more completely verified than that of *Isaiah* lviii. 13, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride

upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The seventh day was the one which God blessed and sanctified, because that on it He had rested from all His work, which God created and made; but, in these latter times, God has rested from a more glorious and important work than even that of creation. On the first day of the week, God in Christ, by rising from the dead, completed and rested from the great work, to accomplish which He came down from heaven and took human nature upon Him, even the work of our redemption. Maintaining, therefore, the same principle of keeping holy one day out of every seven, and acting up to the spirit, though not up to the letter, of the original commandment, Christ's disciples are accustomed to keep holy, not the seventh, but the first day of the week; because that on it Christ rested from all His work, to do which He came down from heaven. Can you refuse to keep holy a day on which so great a mercy as this was wrought for your sakes? Or, if you do, are you worthy of being called Christ's disciples? Or, do you keep it holy by constraint? And is the keeping of it holy irksome to you? The rest of the Sabbath, as I have described it to-night, is it wearisome to you? Spiritual exercises, such as prayer and reading the Scrip-

tures, attending on God's house and partaking of His ordinances, are these things unpalatable? And all the while that you appear to be engaged in them, are your minds hankering after the occupations and amusements of the world? Is Sunday a sort of blank day in your calendar? And do you wish that it were over, or at least that you could, without risk of punishment, spend it in a way which would to your minds be more lively and entertaining. If such be your feelings, brethren, concerning the rest of the Sabbath, are you, I would ask, at all fit to enjoy that eternal rest of which the Sabbath is only a passing type? *Hebrews* iv. 9—"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from His." Thus the final reward of the faithful is described as a rest—as Sabbath rest—as rest such as that with which God rested from all His work which God created and made; and if ye are incapable of enjoying rest on earth, will ye, think ye, at once become capable of enjoying rest in heaven? The spiritual exercises, which here are so unpalatable, will these, simply because you have passed from time to eternity, become at once sources of pleasure and delight? If, here, a single Sabbath even appears so long and wearisome, how will you be able to rejoice in a Sabbath of Sabbaths, never to cease? Oh, yes, it is true that there remaineth a rest—a keeping of a Sabbath for the people of God—for those who having been long predisposed are habituated to take pleasure in such rest—for those who on earth have so believed in and loved their Lord, as to find no pleasure greater than that of holding communion with Him, in praise, and prayer, and thanksgiving—for those, in short, who in His own ordinances have come to Christ on earth and found their rest in Him: for such as these there remaineth a rest. But for you, whom I before described, none. For, whatever you may profess yourselves to be, you are not, you cannot be, the people of God. The state of your feelings, the character of your conduct, is a plain proof that you are not, you cannot have been, justified by faith in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit. You cannot, therefore, be the people of God. And it is for the people of God, and for them alone, that rest remaineth. *Isaiah* lvii. 19—"I create the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Deane, January 19th, 1845.

SERMON XVII.

SEPULCHRES UNCOVERED.

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."—*Matt.* xxiii. 27.

WHITED sepulchres! Tombs, such as we see in yonder yard, of polished stone, carefully selected, and skilfully carved and engraved; or, as we behold them in the cathedral or metropolitan churches of our own or foreign lands, the sepulchres of crowned heads, or mitred prelates, or wealthy and powerful nobles, constructed of the most costly marbles, adorned with gold and silver and precious gems, dazzling the eye with their magnificence, and, as regards their external appearance, constituting some of the most elaborately beautiful architectural structures in the world. "Whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Yes, beneath yonder gravestones which look so beautiful—aye, beneath even the sculptured and richly adorned sepulchres of

kings and nobles, there are dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. There is that beneath your feet, as you walk towards this house of prayer, which, if you could see it, would make you shudder. Scenes there are, passing beneath even the marble sepulchres of the great, such as would harrow up your soul to look upon. The skeletons of the dead, those unsightly monuments of human nothingness—the worm and corruption at their terrible work—horrors such as your eyes never beheld—such as you can scarcely imagine! Oh, who could think that uncleanness like this lies concealed beneath outward magnificence, such as attracts the admiration of every beholder?

Do not be shocked, my brethren, but it may be that there are some such things as these amongst ourselves at this moment. It may be that there are some at this moment amongst us in this house of prayer who appear "beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." See yonder man how, to all outward appearance, he is very religious, very moral, very godly! Not a single flaw can by human eye be discovered in his character. See, how regularly he keeps the Sabbath, attends the house of prayer, reads the Scriptures, kneels at the Lord's table, has family prayer in his household—is, in short, in all external respects, such as meet the eyes of his fellow-men,

most scrupulously exact—a paragon of perfection—a very pattern of all excellence. But what is there within?—that is the question. Is that body a temple, hallowed within by the presence of a faithful and holy spirit; or merely a whited sepulchre, concealing beneath a splendid outside a heart so defiled with the uncleanness of sin that even dead men's bones would be less shocking and offensive? I have seen men who, in the midst of their fellows, made the greatest possible show of godliness, in the retirement of their own homes, and when they thought there was no witness near, drink to its very dregs the cup of drunkenness. I have known such men revel in deeds of darkness and sensuality, and traced them to the haunts of the fornicator and adulterer. I nave seen them swelling with almost every worldly lust and passion—ambition, covetousness, anger, envy, hatred, malice. I have known them as entirely devoid of every real Christian grace and feeling within, as from their appearance without I should have judged them abundant and overflowing with them. These, then, are in truth "whited sepulchres." These appear "beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." My brethren, I will not tamper with you for a moment. I will not speak unto you smooth things, nor prophecy deceits. I will neither add to the written Word of God nor

diminish therefrom. I will conceal nothing, and extenuate nothing. The written Word of God has in my text described the hypocrite in strong and startling language. No squeamish feeling of delicacy shall prevail with me to weaken the description. Ye hypocrites, then, if there be such here, whited and beautiful as ye are in my eyes—in the eyes of even perhaps those nearest and dearest to you—yet in the sight of God, to whom all hearts are open and from whom no secrets are hid, ye are but sepulchres: sepulchres, which within are full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. Terrible, indeed, are the scenes which the opened grave reveals. Foul, very foul, is that which yonder tombstones cover. Infinitely more terrible, however, and in the sight of God infinitely more foul, are the dead bones of the natural and unsanctified heart—that uncleanness of life and conversation of every sort and description which lurk beneath an exterior of sanctity and faith.

Hypocrites then are those, who, to serve some worldly end or purpose, make a great profession of godliness, but are really very sensual, wicked, and worldly in their lives. They are characters very common—almost as common as the sepulchres to which they are likened in the text. Now, it is because they were hypocrites that the woe in the text was denounced upon

the Scribes and Pharisees. There is, in truth, no description of person on whom woe is so frequently and severely denounced in Holy Scripture as on this. Thus, *Job* viii. 13—"So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." Again, xx. 5—"The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." And again, xxvii. 8—"For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?" Isaiah xxxiii. 14—"Fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites." The denunciations of our blessed Lord to the same effect, and almost in the same words as the text, are too many and too well known for it to be necessary for me to quote them. Here, therefore, we see, not only the certainty, but the kind of woe, to which the hypocrite is destined. Bitter and entire reverse and disappointment are marked out for his lot. He wins a little temporary applause from his fellow men. He passes for a pattern of faith and holiness. But, even in the midst of all this, he is not without his portion of woe. A guilty conscience will at times make him suspicious and uneasy, lest some untoward and unforeseen circumstances

should detect the imposition, and expose his real character in all its hideousness to the reprobation of those who have hitherto only admired and applauded. The hypocrite never, even for the present time, feels himself safe and at ease. And, as for the future, it cannot but be that in seasons of loneliness and retirement, when the busy world is not present to interpose its deceitful veil, and the man is resolved into himself, a faithful picture of his own heart and condition will be presented to his view. The dead men's bones and all uncleanness, which the whited sepulchre conceals, will, spite of himself, be sometimes revealed to him in all their terrible hideousness. And visions, fearful visions, will flit before his eyes, of exposure in the presence of God, and angels, and men—of condemnation, of judgment, and of woe. With such short-lived success attendant on their deceit—with such terrible pangs of a guilty conscience haunting them even here—with such shame and exposure and everlasting burnings awaiting them hereafter, is not the woe of the text most faithfully, fearfully, and fatally accomplished? "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Oh, save yourselves, brethren, ere it be too late, from woe

such as this! Awake, ye hypocrites, before your doom is sealed for ever! Think what will be your shame when, in the presence of God and angels and men, the whited sepulchre is opened—when the dead men's bones are brought to light—when their uncleanness is all discerned—when a shudder of surprise shall pass along the ranks of the friends on whom you have imposed—when even angels shall turn away their eyes—when the Son of God shall refuse to plead—when God Himself shall pronounce guilty and condemn! What will all the care which you have lavished on the outside profit you then? What will you gain by having imposed upon all the world? *Mark* viii. 36, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Brethren, we must not be "whited sepulchres." We were not made redeemed, and sanctified, to be a hiding place for "dead men's bones, and all uncleanness." No such unholy destiny as this has been purchased for us by the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. Our high and holy calling is, to be, not sepulchres, but temples—temples for the indwelling of a most holy inhabitant—temples of the Holy Ghost, adorned for the reception of our heavenly guest, not with the transitory tinsel of mere outward adornment—a shadow

without a substance—a casket without a jewel; but with those inward and deep-rooted graces and holy affections which will, of necessity, invest every part and portion of our outward conduct with that real and lasting loveliness and grandeur which nothing else can produce. Temples we are of the Holy Ghost—imperfect, doubtless, as long as we remain here—but destined hereafter to be perfected by Him—*Phil.* iii. 21, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Ambleside, Sept. 30th, 1850.

SERMON XVIII.

NOT ONLY FORBIDDEN, BUT IMPOSSIBLE.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."—*Matthew* vi. 24.

BUT we can, is the ready answer of hundreds and thousands. We can serve God and Mammon. We have done so. We are doing so. We will do so. It is the easiest thing possible, and the cleverest and most agreeable of all ways of life. We please ourselves here, and at the same time make our peace for hereafter. Thus it is that men foolishly flatter themselves into believing possible that which they wish to be so. They surely forget that it is written, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Mammon is a Syriac word, signifying worldly gain, which is here personified and placed in opposition to God, as a sort of rival in that affection and service which are due to Him from His rational creatures. By Mammon, or gain, it is not, as some people suppose, great wealth alone which is signified. Gain of any sort and any magnitude, much or little, easily acquired

or laboriously earned, all is comprehended under the description Mammon. And they who, not content with that which is sufficient to maintain them respectably in that station of life, whether high or low, in which it has pleased God to place them, set their whole mind upon acquiring more, either as some do for the mere sake of possessing it—or, like others, in order to gratify a taste for inconsistent, needless, expence, ornament, and luxury—may be said to "serve Mammon." Now, in my text Christ says, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." He does not say, Ye must not do so; or, ye shall not do so; or, if ye do so, ye will do so at your peril. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt do no murder." "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Thou shalt not covet." These are all acts of sin, which, inasmuch as they are forbidden, are clearly within our power. Not so, however, in the present case. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. The thing is out of your power. Ye cannot do it. However persevering ye may may be in your endeavours, it is impossible. However confident ye may be of success, the attempt is hopeless.

Our Saviour explains the reason of this in the former part of the verse—"No man, He says, can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he

will hold to the one and despise the other." Immediately afterwards He adds, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Nothing can be more clear than our Saviour's explanation. How could we possibly serve two masters? Would not the will of one be for ever clashing with that of the other? Would not almost every thought, word, and action, in which we should endeavour to show forth our love for the one, be so many proofs of our hatred for the other? Would not almost every step which we should take to promote the interest of the one be in all likelihood positively detrimental to that of the other? And the very means which we should adopt to secure the favour of the one, would not these in all probability lead to a forfeiture of that of the other? Now all this holds good in a much greater degree as regards God and Mammon. In the case of earthly masters, there may be some points imaginable in which their will might not clash—in which even their service might to a certain extent be reconciled. But there is not one single point of agreement between God and Mammon—not one jot nor one tittle in which their service can be reconciled—not an inch which is not disputed ground. They never will the same thing. They never commend the same thing. In short, that which is service to the one is positive rebellion to the other. God, for instance, says,

Give me thy heart. Mammon says, Give it to me. God says, Be content with what you have. Mammon says, Never rest as long as it is in your power to get anything more. God says, Defraud not, never lie, be honest and just in all your dealings. Mammon says, Defraud even thine own father, if thou canst gain by doing so. God says, Be charitable, and give abundantly. Mammon says, Keep what thou hast got: hold it fast: this giving is a most ruinous proceeding. God says, Keep the Sabbath. Mammon says, Never mind breaking it, if you can make something by doing so. God says, Come to my house of prayer. Mammon says, Stay away, if your worldly concerns demand your presence at home. God says to parents, Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Mammon says, Never mind if they work all the six days, and sleep the seventh, so that they do but earn something. God says, Ye, who employ others, be careful that ye never allow your own convenience or advantage to interfere with their spiritual improvement or growth in holiness. Mammon replies, Regard the welfare of those employed by you, if it happens to square in with the schemes which you have made for your own gain and advantage; but look to these first. God says to those who are employed by others, Fulfil your engagements with your employers at

any inconvenience to yourselves. Mammon answers, Evade them, if you can gain by doing so. I might multiply instances almost infinitely: for, as I said before, there is not a single point of agreement between the two. What wonder that *St. James* iv. 4, declares, "That the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" What wonder that 1 *St. John* ii. 15, asserts, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him?" What wonder that in the language of Jesus Christ, in my text, it is written, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon?"

Yet silly man thinks he can do this—tries to do so, and even deceives himself into fancying that he has succeeded—succeeded in doing that which the Word of God declares to be impossible. Behold yonder self-sufficient dupe of this one of the most artful stratagems which Satan employs to ensnare souls! See how his whole heart is set upon increasing his worldly store; augmenting the number of his luxuries; adopting a more expensive style of living; indulging in a larger number of amusements; mixing more in the world; raising himself, as he is pleased to call it, in the scale of society; or even heaping up gold—this is the most extraordinary infatuation of all, merely to gaze at and almost worship it. For some such end as this he rises up early, late takes rest, and eats the

bread of carefulness; devotes all his time, all his talents, all his energies, to this one pursuit: for this neglects much of his duty to God and man: on this bestows all his affections, all his love, all his desire. But yet he is not quite at ease. Conscience sometimes gives him a prick. He cannot make himself quite comfortable. He cannot bring himself to think that he is doing right. The thoughts of God, his soul, judgment, heaven, and hell—these will sometimes intrude. What will become of him hereafter? This at certain seasons will, spite of himself, flash across his mind. I have determined what to do, he thinks within himself—I love Mammon—I serve Mammon—I must serve him—I will serve him—I cannot bring myself to forsake his service. It is quite essential to my happiness here; and yet, if I do not serve God, how can I hope to be happy hereafter? So he at once sets himself to serve God, as he imagines, at the same time. He professes to be God's servant, though his heart is all Mammon's. He complies with such portions of God's will as interfere least with his devotion to his real master. He is moral in most respects. He complies with many of the externals of religion. He makes prayer, even if his mind is meanwhile reckoning his gains, or planning how he shall spend them on himself. He reads his Bible, even if he acts immediately after in a

way directly opposite to what he has read. These things he does, because the doing of them does not really interfere much with his main pursuit. And, meanwhile, they serve to set conscience at ease. Oh thou miserable dupe of Satan! Oh thou drunken, but not with wine! Short will be the sleep into which thou hast lulled thy conscience. Soon, very soon, will pass away for ever the infatuating dream in which thy senses are beguiled. Losses, sickness, death, judgment, the Judge Himself not thine advocate, but thy condemner—all these singly or combined, here or hereafter, will attest the truth of that which is written, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

In the language, then, of Joshua of old, I say to you, my friends—*Joshua* xviii. 15—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Or in that of Elijah, 1 *Kings* xviii. 21. "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but, if Baal, then follow him." Yes: choose this very day, brethren, for life is so uncertain that the matter admits of no delay—choose this very day whom ye will serve, God or Mammon. To attempt to serve both is hopeless. Both will be offended. Mammon will not prosper you, or allow your mind to be at rest, because you will not quite forsake the service of God. And God will not accept you, because you divide your attention between Him

and Mammon. Better at once give yourselves wholly and exclusively to one or the other of these two rival masters, and so secure all which they have to give, than, by attempting to serve both, secure the goodwill of neither. Better at once determine upon giving yourselves wholly up to the service of Mammon, thus securing to yourselves the undisturbed enjoyment of such pleasure as Mammon has it in his power to confer: or else go over altogether to God, and at any sacrifice make Him your friend. Choose, then, this day whom ye will serve—God, who gives you all you have, even the very gain which rivals Him in your affections—who has even given you His only-begotten and well-beloved Son—who, by the death of His Son, has sealed to you the promise of His Holy Spirit here, ministering unto you holiness and all its attendant real happiness and comfort—hereafter the blessed inheritance of everlasting joy. Choose, I say, whether you will serve God, who does all this for you; or Mammon, who can confer on you, it is true, a little present appearance of pleasure in this world—not, however, unmixed with anxiety and care; very fleeting, uncertain, and transitory; but hereafter has nothing which he can do for you—will leave you altogether alone, for you cannot carry your gain with you to the grave or beyond it—leave you alone, banished from the presence of God,

and without the pale of His protection—the miserable dupes of prospects and promises which Mammon never intended—never, indeed, had the power—to realize or fulfil; the prey of the worm which dieth not—of the fire which is not quenched. Choose, I say, my friends, this day, whom you will serve, God or Mammon.

Did I say choose? No, indeed, the choice no longer remains with you. You cannot choose. The option is no longer left with you. In baptism you foreswore Mammon, and enlisted into God's service. You promised in the baptismal service to "renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same." You took the oath of allegiance to God. You vowed to "obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your life." You were received into the congregation of His Church militant on earth. You were signed with the sign of the cross, "in token that hereafter you should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto your life's end."

Ye, then, who are baptized are solemnly pledged to the service of God. Ye are not your own. Ye are bought with a price. Ye have taken a solemn oath of allegiance to God.

Christ's Church is the army in which ye are bound to serve. Christ Himself is your captain. The cross is your banner. The Bible is your code of discipline. Heaven is the prize which you have in view. Mammon is the very foe with whom you are sworn to contend. You cannot go over to his service without incurring, I will not merely say, certain defeat, but all the accumulated disgrace and punishment of renegades and deserters—renegades and deserters from the cause of One who, in your behalf, laid down His life.

Alderley, November 10th, 1844.

SERMON XIX.

HOW HAVE YE LIVED?

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost and died."—*Gen.* xxv. 8.

AMONG the popular fallacies of modern times there are few which appear to me to be more dangerous in their consequences than the habit of attaching the degree of importance which is often attached to the feelings, sayings, and doings of those who are at the point of death. As though it were a matter of almost no importance at all how men have lived, all our anxiety seems to be concentrated in enquiry as to the manner in which they have died. Were his last moments peaceful and happy? Did he betray no fear? Did he express an undoubted confidence that his sins were forgiven and his pardon sealed? He did not desire to live longer. He went off very quietly. He seemed as comfortable as though he were dropping asleep. Such are the enquiries, such the observations, to which the decease of any of our neighbours is almost sure to give

rise. And if the last enemy has been met, not merely with composure, but, as frequently happens, with exultation and triumph, there is no limit scarcely to the joy and satisfaction of the survivors: no measure to the congratulations of friends on the blessed assurance which such a glorious death affords of a glorious resurrection. The very press itself teems with long and circumstantial accounts of what, in popular language, are called "happy deaths." We can scarcely take up a catalogue of sermons or tracts, or read over the contents of a missionary report on record, without having our attention at once fixed upon this widely-spread and popular fallacy.

Now, it is remarkable that in the Word of God we meet nowhere with any encouragement to this kind of feeling. On the contrary, there seems to be a check throughout almost purposely given. With the exception of Jacob, Joseph, and David, there is scarcely an example in which any particulars of a death-bed are recorded. The last scene in the lives of the greater part of the most eminent servants of God is very briefly narrated by the inspired historians. There are more than twenty instances, in each of which the solemn event is despatched in the simple words "he died." Thus, in the case to which my text refers, the account of the life of the Father of the Faithful

occupies no less than thirteen whole chapters—that is to say, more than a quarter of the Book of Genesis. Every event by which the faith of the patriarch could be evidenced, his piety attested, his obedience illustrated, his intimate communion with God shown forth, is related with circumstantial accuracy of detail. The departure of Abraham from his own country to Canaan at the call of God—his adoption at an advanced age of the painful and dangerous rite of circumcision—his readiness to offer up his beloved son Isaac—the pains and care which he afterwards took that that son should be married to a good and godly woman—the many interviews which he had with Jehovah, especially that most confidential one respecting the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—the many promises which he received, extending in their consequences even to the end of time; and, lastly, lest anything should seem to be omitted, even his own personal faults and those of his household—such as his own twice repeated dissimulation about his wife, first with Pharaoh, and afterwards with Abimelech; and the incredulous laugh of Sarah at the promise of a son in her old age—not one of these things have escaped the notice of the sacred historian. On the accurate detail of each he has bestowed great care and attention, assigning, in short, to the record of the life of this most eminent

servant of God no less than a quarter of a book in which is contained the history of more than seventeen hundred years. Yet, concerning the death of one in the history of whose life he had been so circumstantial, the inspired penman enters into no particulars at all. He has left us no exciting record of triumphant anticipation and impatient joy; a curtain being as it were purposely in this, as in most other instances, drawn over the closing scene of a life so full of interest and instruction. And instead of a long and circumstantial and highly exciting account of that which no one, however, will be inclined to doubt was in reality a happy death, all the record which is handed down to us by Moses, of the last moments of the departing patriarch, is contained in the few and simple words of the text, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people."

Concerning the relative importance, then, of the conduct of our lives and the circumstances of our deaths, Scripture seems to be wholly at variance with some of the popular notions of the day. While the last and oftentimes short scene of the death-bed seems to be that which often engrosses the largest share of our attention, it is on the whole tenor of life, amidst the various and protracted trials by which it is en-

compassed, that the sacred historians are wont to dwell at greatest length. Nor must this very peculiar feature in sacred history be considered a mere matter of no consequence, or devoid of a special purpose. It is, without question, intended to read us a salutary lesson on the comparative value, as a test of faith, of the long years of life and the few short hours taken up in passing out of it. Nor can we fail to learn, from a prayerful consideration of this lesson, that, while the conduct of our lives is an unerring test of the real state of our hearts towards God, the circumstances of our departure may, in many instances and in many ways, be the means of deceiving both ourselves and others.

Nor is there much difficulty in seeing how this is so. In the first place, there is a great difference in the physical constitutions of different men. Some persons have naturally much greater strength of nerve than others. Now death, it cannot be denied, is in itself terrible to nature. *Job* xviii. 14, calls it "the king of terrors," and even our Saviour Himself prayed to His heavenly Father, *John* xii. 27, "Save me from this hour!" Indeed, there is a something in the very circumstances of dying: the pain and anguish by which it is often accompanied—the idea of returning to the dust from which we were taken—of being consigned to the cold and narrow tomb— of saying, *Job*

xvii. 14, "To corruption thou art my father, to the worm thou are my mother and my sister"—there is in these things that which, notwithstanding the heart may have long since been weaned from worldly vanities and set upon heavenly glories, is nevertheless sufficient, especially if the nervous system, perhaps originally very strong, has been still further weakened by protracted illness, to disturb the last moments of even a departing saint. It is very possible, therefore, for a man to fear death, even though he has the fullest assurance which a whole life spent in the faith and fear of Christ can give—that in his case, as regards the life to come, death is swallowed up in victory. Thus, for instance, Hezekiah, who is in 2 *Kings* xviii. 3, described as doing "that which was right in the sight of the Lord;" nevertheless, 2 *Kings* xx. 3, "wept sore," when the message, "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live," was brought to him from God by the prophet Isaiah. Thus also Archbishop Cranmer, of the sincerity of whose piety no one who is acquainted with the history of his life can doubt, was so alarmed at the prospect of death as to deny for a season the faith for which he afterwards so nobly endured a most cruel martyrdom. On the other hand, it is equally conceivable that men who are naturally of such strong nerve as not at all to dread the act of

dying, may, without having the slightest reason for doing so, exhibit by comparison much more happiness in their death. Disbelieving, perhaps, altogether a resurrection and judgment to come, or ignorant or careless about these important truths, or presuming on certain imaginary feelings and enthusiastic sensations which speak peace to their souls when in reality there is no peace, and lead them in dependence upon unsound teachers to build their hopes of salvation upon foundations which the Scriptures never laid: such men, after having spent years in unholiness and sin, may meet, nevertheless, the closing scene of life with a degree of composure or even triumph to which the greatest saints are strangers. Thus it is that multitudes deceive both themselves and others. Could the eternal doom of many of our friends and neighbours who, during the last twelve months, have died what the by-standers called a happy death, be at this moment revealed to us, there would be, as I verily believe, in such an awful and unexpected revelation, abundantly sufficient to show the deceitfulness of a death-bed as a test of faith and evidence of salvation. In the miseries of multitudes who, having died in peace or even triumph, are nevertheless destined to awake to torment, we should be constrained to see what, though it is plainly written in the Bible, we are often too careless to read, that to

die can only be really "gain" to those who, like the apostle, have proved that, *Philip.* i. 12, "to live is Christ."

How have ye lived? Such is the question which the Scriptures propose to us. It is a question particularly suitable for our use in the course of that self-examination which should precede the Lord's Supper. How have ye lived? By Baptism ye were regenerated with God's Holy Spirit, made members of Christ, children of God, inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; were placed, "in short, in a state of salvation." Have ye lived up to these glorious privileges, and not, by a wilful continuance in sin and wickedness, driven the Holy Spirit from your hearts? Ye promised, through your sponsors that ye would renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; that ye would believe all the Articles of the Christian faith, and keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your lives. Have ye, as far as God has given you grace, endeavoured to do all this? Have ye been men of prayer, of Scripture reading, of constant communion with God, in the closet, in the family, on the Sabbath in His church, and at His table? Have ye had a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ—a thankful remembrance of His death? Has

your Saviour been all in all to you—His glory your object—His law your rule—His grace your guide? Of such sins as Satan has tempted you to commit have you truly repented, stedfastly purposing to lead for the future a better life? And have you lived in charity with all men? How have you lived? Such is the meaning of this important question. It is one which the Scriptures evidently press upon our attention a thousand times more earnestly than that which the world often puts—how have you died? It is one which, however unimportant ye may think it now, will assuredly, even in defiance of all the false peace which may be spoken to your souls, and to the real disturbance of a death-bed which to the by-standers wears an appearance of comfort, not unfrequently, to your unspeakable misery, force itself upon your attention as you are passing from life to death. It is a question, which, at the day of judgment, will be put to you by a voice to which you cannot turn a deaf ear, and by a Judge to whom you cannot deny an answer. Would to God, my friends, that now, ere it be too late, ye would lay this question seriously to heart, and suffer it to influence your conduct and conversation!

A death-bed, then, free from anxiety and alarm—happy, peaceful, tranquil, if it be the result of a life of faith and holiness—of a heart simply depending on the merits of Christ and

devoted to His service, is undoubtedly a blessing both to ourselves and surviving friends, such as the most eminent saints have no reason to despise. It is a blessing, however, which, as we have already seen, it sometimes pleases God, for reasons known only to Himself, to deny even to the most faithful amongst His servants. Such a happy sort of death-bed must not, therefore, by any means be considered as the unfailing accompaniment and consummation of a godly life. Nor from its absence are we at liberty necessarily to infer a want of faith and piety in those to whom it is denied. Still less must we consider such a death-bed an unfailing test of faith and piety. There is often, in the very midst of stormy weather, a deceitful calm: a sun-set beautiful in the estimation of the inexperienced observer, which, by those who have more carefully watched the signs of the skies, is well known and dreaded as the sure precursor of a still more violent tempest. And so we have seen that there is also a false and treacherous and deceitful kind of calm, which often hovers around a death-bed, as surely the precursor of a miserable eternity as it has itself been preceded by a careless and wicked life. I would have you, then, brethren, strive by God's grace to imitate the lives of holy men—to be, comparatively speaking, indifferent about their deaths. Instead of being carried away, as too many are,

to the peril of their souls, by the popular enthusiasm about happy deaths, I would have you rather accustom yourselves to look with suspicion upon these, unless you know them to be the termination of holy lives. Never, for God's sake, allow an appearance of triumph on a death-bed to induce you for one moment to relax in your endeavours to realize continually that holiness of life by which alone a death-bed can be made truly triumphant. While the exciting descriptions of happy death-beds are too often like the false and treacherous meteor which leads the wayfaring man astray, and then suddenly vanishes and leaves him to his fate, the sober record of a really Christian life, the fruit of faith in Christ, is as the bright and shining and steady light which guides the tempest-tost mariner safely home. "Let your light," my friends, "so shine before men." As regards these around you, if it so shine, it cannot but shine for good. And as regards yourselves, though even after a life devoted to Christ, *Psalm* cxvi. 3, "the snares of death," such is human weakness, may possibly "compass you round about," and "the pains of hell get hold upon you," yet, the Lord being with you, you need, *Psalm* xxiii. 4, "fear no evil." Your sun, bright through life, may possibly, if God so wills it, set in cloud. Yet, doubtless, it shall rise again radiant with glory. Others, my friends,

may covet the specious distinction of a long and circumstantial description of their conduct on the bed of death. I, for one, cannot sympathize with their feelings. Give me only to have lived by grace a life so full of faith and love, as, like Abraham's, to occupy an ample space in the volume of God's Book, and I care not how short be the record of my death. Let it be summed up, I should be quite content, in the few and simple words of the text—"He gave up the ghost and died."

Ambleside, September 24, 1843.

SERMON XX.

THE DANGEROUS PROVERB.

"The eleventh hour."—*Matthew* xx. 6.

THIS expression has become almost proverbial. So that, when we wish to denote the last possible opportunity at which any thing can be done, there are no words so ready or forcible as these. In this passage of Holy Scripture, however, in which these words are first found, they bear a more important and comprehensive meaning, and relate to a more grave and serious subject than when ordinarily used. They have not been unfrequently most grievously misunderstood; and, since to misunderstand them may, or rather must, be attended with very fatal consequences, I shall endeavour to set before you their real scriptural meaning. Words so frequently in our mouths as these are, may, if rightly understood, exercise much influence for good. As they occur, then, in the parable of which they form a part in the text,

the words, "the eleventh hour," evidently relate to the call of the Gentiles. The prejudice of the Jews against the admission of the Gentiles to any of the privileges of the Christian Church was inveterate. Least of all, could God's chosen people bear to think that those to whom the offers of the Gospel were, in point of time, made much later, should share equally with themselves its privileges and benefits. A penny a-day for all—the same for the Gentile as for the Jew—not one whit more for those who had been first called and borne the burden and heat of the day than for others who had scarcely been an hour chosen and employed—this was intolerable. The parable, then, in question, it is evident, was admirably calculated to check all such proud, presumptuous, and exclusive feelings as these, and to assert God's right to call whom He pleased, and when He pleased, and to do what He willed with His own. Only it must be carefully borne in mind, that those who, though called late, received as much as others who had been labouring a much longer time, had never been called before. The moment they received the call they obeyed it. They went into the vineyard and worked as hard as the rest till it was time for all to give over. That ten hours of the day had passed over without bringing them any employment was clearly not their fault. It was not by their own wish that

they had stood nearly all the day idle. They were quite ready for work, as was proved by their obeying the call the moment it was made. But the call was not made till "the eleventh hour:" up to that time "no man had hired them."

Hence, my dear friends, we may to a certainty assure ourselves that the eleventh hour is an expression which, in its strict and literal sense, cannot in any way be applicable to any of us. Thousands, it is true, and tens of thousands there are who are standing all the day idle. But which amongst the number can, with any regard to truth, excuse himself by saying, No man hath hired us? Oh yes: you are neglecting—some of you are—every jot and every tittle of that work, for the express purpose of doing which you were born into the world. You are discharging your duty neither to God nor man. You are not promoting the honor and glory of the one, nor keeping His commandments, nor walking in His ordinances. You are not advancing either the temporal or spiritual weal of the other. You are living for yourselves—yet not truly for yourselves. The better part of yourselves—your only real selves—your immortal souls namely, you neglect as thoroughly as you do both God and your neighbour. You are selfish, but only for your bodies. The great work, to do which every man is born

into the world—namely, the making this life a scene of preparation for another, better, and more enduring—this is completely laid aside. Thus it is that thousands and tens of thousands are standing idle. While a few more provident, like the ant, prepare their meat in the summer, others, like the short-sighted butterfly, devote the sunshine of life to pleasure alone. And then you are foolish enough to make a truce with the fears, by which you cannot fail of being sometimes disturbed, by saying to yourselves something about "the eleventh hour." As if such as you could ever by any means be shown to be in the same circumstances as those to whom these words are in the parable applied! As if you could ever excuse your idleness by saying, "No man hath hired us!" As if you had never had an opportunity of hearing God's Word, or learning His will. What mean, then, all those loud and pressing calls, which, in a professedly Christian land, are positively every day ringing in your ears? What mean the Sabbath bell, the house of God, His table spread, His book opened, the voice of His ministers loudly proclaiming the guilt and the danger of spiritual idleness, urging each and all to go into the vineyard, plainly setting forth the danger of refusing, and, through Christ, the blessedness of obeying, the merciful call? None of you, in this parish at least surely, brethren,

can say, "No man hath hired us." Why encourage ye, then, yourselves in your idleness, by imagining yourselves in circumstances in which you can never be? Why deceive yourselves by putting forth a title to God's regard which can never really be found amongst you?

But even supposing your circumstances were, or any how could be, the same as those concerning whom the parable speaks in connexion with "the eleventh hour"—supposing your spiritual idleness were not wholly your own fault and that no one had ever called or hired you—yet how know you that you will ever be spared to so late an hour as the eleventh? It is positively marvellous with what complacency and coolness men calculate almost with certainty upon the prolongation of life; and this in the face of the most awful proofs occurring almost daily of life's uncertainty. Scarcely a week passes but we hear of some sudden and unexpected death. Scarcely a newspaper is published without one or more paragraphs headed with those very words. Even in our own comparatively narrow and circumscribed circle, does it not often happen that a neighbour, in full health and strength and activity only a few minutes before, suddenly, and without a moment's warning, has been numbered with the dead? Or ye of the working-classes, can ye tell of no one who went forth to his labour in the morning,

but, before noon, was brought back a bruised and mangled frame, with barely a hope, or perhaps none at all, for life? The daily record even of our churchyards, apart and over and above all such awful warnings as these, is quite enough, surely, to lead us to beware of reckoning upon an eleventh hour being allowed us. Of those who are brought, whom yourselves bring week after week to their last resting place, for one by whom the eleventh hour has been reached, are there not hundreds cut off long before that remote period of life has been attained? Men and women in the prime of life, youths and maidens, boys and girls, yea, even infants—there are hundreds and thousands of all these various ages for one whose eye is dim and head hoary with the declining years of a long life. And yet men talk about the eleventh hour—reckon upon it almost with certainty—delay going into the vineyard till they have reached it—put off work till, even if they be spared, they will be almost past work. Never was there so fatal an error as thus to abuse "the eleventh hour" as an encouragement to spiritual idleness and delay.

And yet, though it must not by any means be abused as an inducement for the idle to delay entering into the vineyard, the eleventh hour does, nevertheless, hold out great encouragement to the ministers and stewards of God's

mysteries to, 2 *Tim.* iv. 13, "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine" even at the eleventh hour those who, having been mercifully spared to that late period of life, have, nevertheless, not yet entered into the vineyard. In the case of individuals equally as with classes of persons, it is lawful for God to do what He wills with His own. Our eye must not be evil because God is good. The mercy of God in Christ Jesus is inexhaustible, and shall we dare to set limits to it? He who at the eleventh hour could give to them who were not His people the same privilege and favour as to His people of old, has doubtless the power of conferring spiritual light and life and glory, even at the last gasp of life, and when the taper is well nigh extinguished. "Come unto me," is an invitation no more limited to age than to sex, or country, or station in life. As long as we know that the eyes of the thief, even after he was extended upon the cross, were opened to the truth as it is in Jesus, and that, though he rose in the morning an unbeliever he departed at night with his crucified Lord to paradise, so long we need not despair. While there is life there is hope—little perhaps, distant, doubtful, such as cannot be depended upon, but still hope. And where God has left hope we must not on any account turn away as though there were

none. The impenitent sinner, then, who lies writhing in agony and gasping for breath on his death-bed, even with him and for him will I pray. I will deliver God's message to him. I will hold up to him Christ crucified. I will urge him to repentance. Even as he is breathing the last gasp, I will invite him into the vineyard. I will speak to him of mercy, though I may not promise it. I will point him the way to heaven, though he may not have strength to find it. And ye who are even now at the eleventh hour of life, who have been often called, but as yet always refused to go into the vineyard, let me, ere you leave this house of God to-day, if there be such here, exhort you, and through you any of your friends and neighbours not now present but in like circumstances with yourselves—let me exhort you no longer to neglect the call! The door of mercy is yet open to you. The invitation is still prolonged. It is very late in the day, but still the clock has not struck for the last time. Eleven periods out of twelve you have already passed through. You have been spared to the very last extremity. Trifle not any longer, then, with such unheard-of mercy and long suffering! Risk not a moment more the inestimable joys of everlasting life. To-day it is within your reach to become citizens of heaven. To-morrow the clock may have

struck for the last time, and you have become irretrievably devils of hell. We hear of none entering into the vineyard at the twelfth hour. And so, though to the very last moment of life there is a possibility of salvation; yet when the last fatal twelve has sounded there will be no place for repentance—no room for hope. There are eleven hours for mercy. The twelfth is all despair.

"The eleventh hour!" Let the proverb then, as often as you use it or hear it cited, suggest the following course of thought to you. These words most strikingly attest the vastness of God's mercy—the danger of abusing it. They point to the last declining years, or days, or even the expiring gasp of existence. They speak of offers of mercy made and accepted, when eleven parts of life are already spent, and a twelfth only remains. They warn against the danger of delaying to so late a time the listening to God's call, if it has been made before. They leave it certain that there is a period beyond which the season of mercy will not extend—that at the twelfth hour no further call whatever will be vouchsafed. At the same time they contain a comfortable assurance that as long as there is life there is hope. This, though it must not on any account be abused by me as an inducement to delay, cannot but be

felt as a great encouragement to awake, arise, repent, believe, and pray. I have already idled away eleven hours, more or less. But the twelfth has yet to strike. Let me, then, at at once bestir myself before it strikes and consigns me to irretrievable destruction.

Worsley, November 14, 1847.

SERMON XXI.

ALL WELCOME BUT ONE.

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."—*Matthew* xxvi. 29.

In a large upper room, in the midst of the holy city, there was a table spread. Around it there was sitting a company such as never before had graced, and never again will grace, any earthly board. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in the midst of His chosen apostles, was engaged in celebrating the most solemn of all the Jewish festivals—Himself the real Paschal Lamb, typified by every victim which had been slain since the awful hour when the destroying angel made his midnight visit to the dwellings of the Egyptians, so that there was not an house in which there was not one dead. He was eating in the company of those whose office it would soon be to proclaim the glorious Antitype—the last Paschal supper—for the shadow was on the point of melting away into the substance. And most

suitably to such an occasion, now that His own most precious blood was about to be sprinkled on the door-posts of His people, He instituted that sacramental supper which was ordained to keep in perpetual remembrance that Christ our Passover is slain for us. *Verse* 26—"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Can we imagine a more interesting scene?—Can we conceive a more illustrious company? If ever heaven came down to earth, it was when the greatest mercy vouchsafed to God's ancient people was thus for the last time commemorated, on the eve of being eclipsed by one, in comparison of which it was absolutely nothing; when the Great Antitype of all the types revealed Himself as the true Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, and, by the bread and wine, the hallowed outward symbols of His body and blood, admitted first the apostles, and afterwards, through their instrumentality, all His faithful people to the end of time, to communion with Him. A perpetual memorial that the mark of His blood, once set upon their hearts, these were for ever secured against the intrusion of the great destroyer of souls—very

memorable, indeed, was the scene enacted in that upper chamber.

One drawback there was to the happiness of this scene—one dreadful blot upon its otherwise unblemished holiness. It was the presence of one who had no business there. *Verse* 21—"As they did eat, He said, Verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord, is it I? And He answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." Oh! how could one so unholy abide to sit in such holy company! Oh! how could the base cowardly traitor endure the gaze of that Lamb whom he was about to bring to the slaughter! Brethren, let not the happiness of our Paschal feast this morning be marred by the presence of such a traitor as this! Let not him who is bent on betraying his Master dip his hand with Him in the dish at yonder table! I bid thither all beside. I bid thither the humble, trembling, broken-hearted, disciple, who, though his sin has been great, is now with Peter shedding the bitter tears of sincere repentance. I bid many a one amongst you who is too timid and faint-hearted to accept the invitation. Would God ye would accept it! I bid you all. One only I warn—I sternly warn away. It is the cowardly hypocrite, who, to serve some worldly end,

seeks to dip his hand in the dish, while he is watching his opportunity to betray his Master. To those of you who draw near in sincerity faith, and love, the feast to which you are bidden to-day is scarcely less a heaven upon earth than was that at which the words of the text were spoken. Jesus Himself is no less really present now than then—not in flesh and blood as then, but still no less truly by His Spirit He is present at yonder table. No less thoroughly than was done by the apostles of old, may you, by breaking bread and drinking wine, commemorate the great blood-shedding by which the destroying angel is driven for ever from your dwellings. No less closely than they, may you, by partaking of those holy symbols, realize to yourselves communion with your Saviour's body and blood. The same strength and refreshment of soul, which they experienced in this holy ordinance, is offered to you. They were made one with Christ, and Christ with them; and, as regards yourselves, there is nothing to hinder the same happy result. Come, then, while the table is yet spread, the invitation yet given, before the guest-chamber is filled and the door for ever closed!

Happy as were such re-unions of holy men, as that at which the Lord spoke the words of the text, in those words He, nevertheless, bid adieu to them—"I say unto you, I will not

drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." He will never again meet His apostles at a table on earth. There is a time, brethren, when we likewise shall be called upon to relinquish these, the happiest re-unions by which the toilsome sojourn of the Christian on earth is brightened. Seldom do we meet together at this holy feast but our eyes wander, perforce, to a vacant place, once filled by a saint now drinking new wine in the Father's kingdom. Such changes are so many solemn warnings to us to make ready. They speak to us thus. The table is spread. The feast is ready. Do not delay. Do not be satisfied with partaking once, when you have the opportunity of doing so twice. Draw near while you may: to-day is yours: to-morrow none can answer for. To-day you miss the presence of some fellow-traveller towards Zion, who was wont in your company to seek strength and refreshment at his Lord's table. To-morrow, it may be, your own place at that table may be empty. Others will, sooner or later, miss you in the place in which they were wont to see you. God grant that you may be gone to drink the fruit of the vine elsewhere!

For it is very comfortable, that, when our blessed Lord speaks of never again drinking of this fruit of the vine on earth, He at the same

time dwells on the glorious prospect of hereafter drinking it new with His disciples in His Father's kingdom. Brethren, there is a happy meeting yet in store for us. There is a new feast—new enjoyments—pleasures, which as yet eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. These things are in store for us in our Father's kingdom. A happy meeting with Christ and with each other there is in store for us above, when this troublesome world is past. In that meeting, however, none can expect to take a part who refuse to be present at His table here. Blessed, indeed, are they to whom hereafter shall be addressed those comfortable words of our Lord, written in *Luke* xxii. 28—"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Deane, April 1, 1849.

SERMON XXII.

FRIENDS WHOM WE HAVE DEEPLY INJURED; OR, NEW YEAR'S DAY.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."—*Eccles.* ix. 10.

We have been watching since we met together in this place, brethren, the last moments of an old friend. His parting warnings are still ringing in our ears. But he himself is gone. We have stood by his grave and buried him. If we have thought at all about the matter, to have done this must have cost us many a tear. For he has been a very kind friend to us. He has been rich towards us in mercies, opportunities, privileges, means of grace, and warnings; while towards him many of us, I fear, have acted very neglectfully—have abused a great deal which he has bestowed on us, and lived as though the day of reckoning with him would never come. I confess, I cannot think of his departure without the deepest regret. The wrongs which I myself am conscious of having done him crowd

on my mind in most harrassing array; and I am well nigh overwhelmed with shame and consternation by the remembrance of them. The friend, dear brethren, of whom I have been speaking, is the old year. And since I fear that there must be many of you who have shared in the guilt of the neglect with which the old year has been so generally treated, I hope that there are many who participate in the feeling of deep regret which, as a minister of Christ, both on your account and my own, I cannot but feel that it has not been more profitably used.

Happily for us, however, by the mercy of God, a new friend has been raised up for us. The angel has not yet lifted up his hand to heaven and swore that there shall be time no longer. We have been spared to commence another year. Those amongst you, brethren, who really regret the not having made a better use of the year just closed, have an opportunity of showing the sincerity of your sorrow, by resolving at once and without delay, to make a better use of that which has succeeded it. I, for my part, am most desirous of rendering you every assistance in my power, both to form and carry into practice such sort of resolutions. For this very purpose, indeed, I have selected the words of the text—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there

is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do." The first thing, then, which these words seem to suggest is, that there is something which we ought to do. We must not be content with merely saying. Doing is that which is required of us. There is nothing so common as large profession. There is nothing so easy to be made. There is nothing so ruinous. I should not wonder if a very large portion of the injury and neglect which we showed to the last year was owing to talking rather than doing. How many, at the commencement of the year which has just closed, said a great deal about the different sort of life which they intended to lead! How many promised confidently that they would serve the world less, God more! How many amongst the higher classes made large profession that they would give more of their thoughts and time to serious subjects; deny themselves more for the sake of the poor; strive to keep a tighter rein upon unruly passions, tempers, and desires; and in all things conform more to the holy example which Jesus has set them! How many amongst the lower classes positively engaged to abjure the public-house, to read God's Word, to have family prayer, to become regular attendants at Church, and in all ways to live, no longer for time, but

for eternity! If all, in the way of good resolutions, which during the last twelve months has been said to us, God's ministers, had been really done, this parish would have been a pattern of religion and morality. Saying, however, is not doing. Profession is not practice. Promise is not performance. Good resolution is not good conduct. Thus, our Saviour said, *Matt.* vii. 21—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven." *John* xiii. 17—"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." And, again, *Matt.* vii. 24—"Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Doing then, dear brethren, not talking, is the great business of life. For your salvation, Christ did not talk of suffering, but suffered. And so, if you would lay hold of the salvation, to purchase which He did and suffered so much, you must this year, many of you, talk less and do more, than during the last. Else haply, while you are talking, and before this year on which we have now entered has closed, you may be consigned to the grave; and remember "there is no work, nor device,

nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest."

There is, moreover, a great deal in not neglecting to lay hold of and improve the first opportunity of doing which offers—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it." In the transaction of worldly business this is a maxim which is well understood and most assiduously acted upon. What merchant is there who does not instantly avail himself of the opening of any new market for the sale of his wares? What manufacturer does not anxiously watch the moment most favourable for the introduction of a new colour, design, or texture? What coal-master does not eagerly seize upon the first opportunity which offers of making an advantageous contract? What labourer or artizan does not carefully observe the signs of the times, and direct his talents and industry into the most profitable channels which day by day present themselves? In worldly business opportunity is everything. To do, whatsoever one's hand findeth to do, this is the very turning point of success. And so, my friends, it is in the great business of the soul. And, humanly speaking, many a soul is lost for want of laying hold of the opportunity of salvation when it is offered. Such was the case of the young man in the Gospel who went away from Christ sorrowful, because he had great possessions.

Such also was the case of Felix, who waited for a more convenient season; and of Agrippa, who, though "almost," just missed becoming quite a Christian. On the other hand Zaccheus, making the most of opportunity, had the unexpected honor of receiving the Lord as his guest, and hearing Him say unto him, *Luke* xix. 9, "This day is salvation come to this house:" the Ethiopian eunuch was baptised, and went on his way rejoicing; and the jailer at Philippi discovered what he must do to be saved. In the matter of the soul then, my friends, as well as in the concerns of the body, whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it. Never neglect any opportunity which offers, whether it be that you have more time at your disposal than usual—greater freedom from worldly care and anxiety—stronger health and more prosperous times—or that some awakening book has fallen into your hands, or some stirring sermon found its way to your heart, or some portion of God's Word been seen in a new and more striking light—or that the loss of a near relative or dear friend, or the experience in your own persons of a long and painful illness, or the hair-breath escape from some sudden danger, or recovering from some well-nigh fatal disease, has opened the way for serious impression—let not, I pray of you, such opportunities as these pass by unimproved. Perhaps if, when the opportunity offers,

thou do it not, ere thy hand again findeth so ready a way of doing the great business of life life may be exchanged for death; and, remember, "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

It is important also that we act with energy and zeal. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." It is wonderful what zeal and earnestness men bestow upon the most trifling worldly business. They seem to throw their whole heart into it. They do it with their might. It is a common remark that, as one walks through the streets of a large manufacturing town, every one appears to be in such haste, and his own attention so occupied, as almost to run over one. Every energy seems concentrated on one object—that object being not unfrequently a bale of cotton or a ton of coal. Or go into the gayest quarters of the metropolis, or into the streets and squares of a fashionable watering place, still men are doing with their might. Though pleasure is their sole object, still all is life and bustle and activity. I have seen the mere scheming of some party of pleasure, or the purchase and arrangement of some article of ornament and dress, absorb, till they were almost worn out with weariness, every energy and faculty both of body and mind. Compared with this, when

the soul is concerned, how lukewarm, and tardy, and indifferent we are! How few pray with all their might—read the Scriptures with all their might—with all their might make use of all the means and ordinances of grace, and make preparation for that world which is to endure for ever! Yet, *Luke* ix. 62—"Jesus said, No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." And again, *Luke* xvi. 16—"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man *presseth* into it." And again, *Matth.* xi. 12—"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." And again, *Rev.* iii. 15—"I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." As in the concerns of the body, then, brethren, so likewise in those of the soul: if we wish to be successful, we must be hearty, diligent, earnest, zealous. Whatsoever our hand finds to do, we must do it with our might. The prize has been purchased by the blood of Jesus. If we would win it, we must run—run with our might. 1 *Cor.* ix. 24—"Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain."

"Whatsoever the hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. For," adds the wise man, assigning the reason for the advice which he so urgently gives, "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Life once over, all opportunity of doing with our might is over also. The time of probation is over—the season of trial is past. The things which we have left undone, we shall then, doubtless, be very anxious to do, but there will be given us no opportunity of doing them. *Eccles.* xi. 3—"In the place where the tree falleth there it shall be." So says the wise man. Thus also our Saviour, *Luke* xiii. 25—"When once the master of the house is risen up and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." And again, *John* ix. 4—"The night cometh in which no man can work"—and, xii. 35—"Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." The grave is the limit beyond which there is no scope for activity—no room for repentance—no answer

even to the most earnest entreaties; so that, however loudly men shall thence call upon God, He will not answer: however diligently they seek Him, they will not find Him. Not, brethren, that the grave is the end of our existence. A day will come when many, doubtless, will wish it were so: will call, not only on the mountains to fall on them and the hills to cover them, but on the grave also to bury them in an everlasting sleep. But it cannot be. The dead must rise. The judgment seat must be attended. The judge must be met. And in His presence many a terrible sight will come upon us. There is one, than which I can think of none more appalling. I fancy I almost catch a glimpse of it at this moment. I seem to watch them as, at the bidding of the Accuser, they come up in long and grisly array, the ghosts of the many years which, during a long life, we have been permitted to see one by one expire. Each one carries on his shoulder a burden of sin, and negligence, and worldliness, which he casts upon us, his victims, till we are well nigh overwhelmed. Each one in a voice, a terrible voice, but one with which we are well acquainted, charges us with some particular wrong which we have done to him. Oh! who amongst us could bear to think of such accumulated burden and accusation, did we not know that, if we will faithfully commit our cause to His keeping

there is one who is able and willing at that awful hour to undertake for us. This new year, then, let your first business be to make Him your friend. This business at least thy hand may find to do this very day. Do it, therefore, with thy might; "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."

Deane, January 7, 1849.

SERMON XXIII.

THE LAMB WORTHY, BECAUSE HE WAS SLAIN.

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."—*Rev.* v. 11, 12.

WHAT a wonderful contrast is the scene here described with that which we are met to commemorate to-day! About fifty or sixty years after the crucifixion of his Lord, the magnificent vision above related was vouchsafed to St. John in the Isle of Patmos. The courts of heaven were opened to the astonished gaze of the privileged apostle. In the midst was the throne. Around it the voices of a countless host of angels were resounding. Most conspicuous of all was "the Lamb that was slain." For to Him it was that the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, were with loud and united voice ascribing that which God alone is worthy

to receive—"power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing;" while the glorious strain was taken to the remotest ends of the universe. *Verse* 13—"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever."

Such is the glorious scene in heaven. Meanwhile, what was going on as on this day on earth? The Lamb was being slain. We have just been listening to the account of this, penned by the disciple whom Jesus especially loved—the very same who beheld the magnificent vision described in the text. It is impossible to conceive the same eyes resting upon two scenes more widely different, or beholding the same Person in circumstances so completely unlike to each other. In the one case there is an excess of glory—in the other an excess of humiliation. Treated with greater contumely than the worst of criminals: mocked, buffeted, spit upon—denied by one apostle—betrayed by another—forsaken by all—a furious populace eager to release a robber in preference to Him, and

fiercely crying over Him, "Crucify him, crucify him"—a timid judge, despite of the warnings of conscience, basely delivering Him over to their power—the cross with all its untold tortures and deep disgrace—who would think that the object of hatred and violence such as this, the despised and bleeding victim of to-day, is the same as is now in heaven, receiving from the "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing?" Yet so it is. *Psalm* cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner."

The particular name by which Jesus is designated in the text is of very peculiar import and demands a particular consideration—"The Lamb that was slain." The heathen, who were in the constant habit of offering up victims on the altars of their gods, in order to avert their wrath and propitiate their favour, would have no difficulty in understanding this description. The Jews would be still more alive to its meaning. These would at once revert to the daily sacrifices ordained by the law, and especially to the great festival of the Passover. And, in "the Lamb that was slain," there would be no difficulty in recognizing the antitype of all the various victims offered up under the Levitical dispensation; and specially of that lamb, the

sprinkling of whose blood upon the lintels and door-posts of the Israelitish houses secured them against the intrusion of the destroying angel. It was by this very same title, as we learn from *John* i. 29, that John the Baptist proclaimed the Saviour—"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Such being, then, the title by which Jesus was spoken of to those who, from their constant participation in propitiatory sacrifices, were fully prepared to understand it in this one sense alone, there can be no doubt that it was adopted with the especial object of setting forth that the death of Christ, as on this day, was propitiatory. We admire, indeed, and at a humble distance strive to imitate, the beautiful example of meekness in suffering which is presented to us in the details of this day's proceedings. The lamb brought to the slaughter without opening his mouth—the sheep before her shearers dumb—the Omnipotent obediently drinking the cup presented to Him—the Crucified affectionately praying for those who nailed Him to the cross—we do, indeed, thank God that He has graciously vouchsafed us such a model as this. But still more earnestly do we thank God, that in the Lamb, as this day slain, He has most graciously provided us with an atonement for sin. 1 *Peter* ii. 21—"Christ also suffered for

us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously; who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

It is specially in his character of "the Lamb slain" that the adoration of the text is offered up to the second Person in the ever blessed Trinity. The adoration itself is that of which God alone is worthy. It is strictly divine. The fact, however, of the second Person in the Trinity having become a "Lamb slain" is that which specially prompted the offering. It was not so much the omnipotence with which He was endued, or the glory with which He was surrounded, but rather His having vouchsafed to veil that omnipotence in the weakness of humanity, and stoop from that glory to the humiliations of earth—having condescended to become a lamb or sin-offering for a guilty world, and as such to be slain by a most cruel death—this it was which called forth the glorious song of "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands." Wonderful, indeed, it was that He, *Phil.* ii. 6, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;

but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." No wonder, therefore, *verse* 9, that "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Angels in heaven, we learn from the text, are at this moment yielding a ready obedience to this decree. Shall the heavenly host set no limits to their praise and adoration, and man remain silent? Yet, *Heb.* ii. 16, "Verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." For angels, He did not humble Himself or die. Yet ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of them are pouring forth His praise. For man He hath humbled Himself, and, as on this very day, suffered a most cruel and disgraceful death; yet those for whom He died too often remain mute and ungrateful. Verily, brethren, if we thus continue to hold our peace, *Luke* xix. 40, "the stones" will "immediately cry out."

Our great duty, then, as connected with the memorable events of this day, is to have a living faith in Jesus, as the Lamb slain for us. Examine yourselves then, brethren, whether ye be in this faith! And let no man beguile you of it! Suffer not yourselves to be led away by the specious argument of those who would fain persuade you that the death upon the cross to-day was merely an example and nothing more; that sin requires no atonement, and has received none. Neither give heed to others who point to the merits of angels and saints as a needful addition to those of the Lamb as on this day slain! The sacrifice of to-day was a sacrifice for sin, and in every respect perfect. And those who either wholly deny its propitiatory character, or, by requiring something in addition, diminish from its efficacy, are not uniting their voices with "the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands" who are in heaven ascribing to "the Lamb that was slain" "power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." The voice of our own Church, in her beautiful communion service, seems rather to breathe forth the spirit of the angelic hymn, when in the prayer of consecration she speaks of Jesus Christ suffering "death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and suffi-

cient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; or when she afterwards put forth a strain of praise and adoration, scarcely less glorious than that of the heavenly host themselves. "O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ—O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy—thou only art the Lord—thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father."

Such is the spirit of true faith in "the Lamb that was slain." It must be a living faith, however. In vain to pour forth our praise and adoration, unless our lives are in accordance with our song. True faith is sure to work by love. There can be no such thing as living faith without good works, *James* ii. 26—"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Once be convinced that He who was on this day slain was a Lamb on whom the sin of the whole world was laid, and that He was slain for you, and your whole desire will be, not merely to praise Him with your lips, but to devote your lives to

His service. Not only will you be the foremost to unite your songs with those of the many angels round about the throne—not only with a loud voice will you be the most ready to exclaim, "Worthy is the Lord that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing;" but you will daily offer up to Him that, *Rom.* xii. 1, "living sacrifice holy and acceptable" in His sight—lives, namely, ascribed with that motto of the apostle, *Gal.* ii. 20, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Deane, Good Friday, 1849.

SERMON XXIV.

PERSONAL IDENTITY.

"It is I myself."—*Luke* xxiv. 39.

THAT the spirit of man, after it had once disappeared from earth, still remained as instinct with life and energy as when it animated the frail and perishable clay from which it had by death been separated—even this, if known at all before the coming of Christ, was only partially received as a very questionable truth, obscurely set forth in the fables of poets, the speculations of philosophers, and the dark and mysterious sayings of the Old Testament prophets. That the body should be again raised and restored, as far as regards the Gentiles, of any rank or station whatever, was never even thought of; and, even by God's chosen people, could have been believed only to a very limited extent—by such alone, that is to say, as were conversant with the miracles of Elijah and Elisha, and understood the mysterious sayings

of those who in olden time spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. But that each separate body that ever lived, *Article* 4, "with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature"—that very flesh, those very bones, which have mouldered for centuries in the grave, rotted in the deep waters, or been consumed in the fire, should re-appear, identically the same as they were before death—each one, moreover, re-animated with the same soul by which it was before animated—this, so far from being known to those of olden time, is a truth scarcely yet, as I verily believe, thoroughly grasped and completely comprehended by many of us, who, living in these latter times, profess to believe, and fancy that we understand, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet, assuredly, to no less extent than this is it, that "2 *Timothy* i. 10—"Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Such, assuredly, is the resurrection as set forth throughout the writings of the apostles. Such is the resurrection, as made manifest in the marvellous scene enacted at Jerusalem the third day after the death upon the cross. And, just as personal identity is the peculiar and characteristic feature of the resurrection revealed in the Gospel, so is it a truth which, inasmuch as it cannot fail of exercising a very powerful influence on the conduct, can-

not be too frequently brought forward or deeply impressed.

"It is I myself." Such was the plain declaration of the risen Saviour Himself as He suddenly appeared in the midst of His disciples. They, in this same passage we read, "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." It was no spirit, however; no flimsy unsubstantial shadow or vanishing ghost which said unto them, "Peace be unto you;" and then asked them, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, He said, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a boiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them." It was impossible that our blessed Lord could afford His disciples stronger proof that it was not a spirit, but flesh and blood which was standing in the midst of them—a body, not only composed of flesh and blood and furnished with the power of speech and with hands and feet, but capable even of swallowing the ordinary food of man. It was impossible that He could furnish them with

more convincing evidence of His identity. Even Thomas, who, *John* xx. 25, had declared, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe;" when, by the gracious permission of the risen Lord, he had actually beheld and even touched His hands, and thrust his hand into His side, convinced beyond all power of further doubt that they were the very same hands which had been affixed by nails to the accursed tree, and the very same side which had been pierced by the soldier's spear—was constrained at once in humble adoration to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." Such pains did our Saviour take to establish, beyond all question, not merely the corporeal character, but the identity of His resurrection. Such pains did He take to put it beyond all doubt that He not only did "truly rise again from death, and took again a body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature," but that it was His own body which He had taken; the very same into which He had entered in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and in which afterwards He had gone about for three whole years doing good and suffering evil, had endured the torture of the cross, and encountered the loneliness of the

grave. So completely did He establish the truth of His own words, "It is I myself."

Nor was the remarkable earnestness which our blessed Lord showed in this particular matter without its object. That object clearly was, to assure all mankind of the identity of their own resurrection. 1 *Cor.* iv. 20—"But now," says the apostle Paul, "is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." The first-fruits were an offering prescribed by God to His chosen people of the first ripe sample of their harvest. The remainder, therefore, of the harvest "of them that slept" cannot but bear an exact resemblance to the first ripe sheaf which was raised. If Christ arose from the grave identically the same as He went down into it, such, also, will be the case of all who die. Thus St. Paul: *Rom.* viii. 11—"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Again: 2 *Cor.* v. 10—"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Such passages as these—and they are only a sample of a large class of the same kind—abundantly prove that the general resurrection will be a

resurrection of the flesh and also of personal identity. For it would be otherwise impossible for every one to receive exact retribution for the things done in the body. There are on record, both in the Old and New Testament, many instances of resurrection both fleshly and identical. The sons of the widow of Zarephath and of the Shunammite; and the man who was raised by the bones of Elisha; in the time of our Lord, the widow's only son at Nain, the daughter of Jairus, Lazarus, and those who went into Jerusalem when the graves were opened at the time of the crucifixion, are all instances of the resurrection of the body; and concerning most of them, if not all, it is quite clear that they must have been identically the same bodies as those which had died, otherwise they would not have been recognized by their friends; neither would their resurrection have been any source of joy or comfort to them. Such instances, however strong proofs they may be—since, after all, they are only isolated instances—are not to be compared for weight with the general declarations already quoted from the writings of St. Paul, and still less with the truth already established from Holy Writ, that the general resurrection, the universal harvest of them that sleep, will in all respects be exactly like the first-fruits already offered. "It is I myself." Such was the character of the

resurrection of the first-fruits. And so each one amongst us may with complete certainty use concerning himself the beautiful, though then mysterious, but now plain and easily understood language of *Job* xix. 26—"Though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another." And when, at the awakening sound of the last trump, each of us shall arise from the grave in which we have slept; as we spring upon our feet, and make trial of our strength, and prove ourselves, and scan with an enquiring eye our newly-raised features and forms, the first feeling which will flash across our minds, will be best expressed in the language of our blessed Lord in the text—"It is I myself."

"*It is I myself.*" What a transcendantly awful and alarming recognition to some; how humbling to all, even the most faithful and the best! *It is I myself*, the drunkard will exclaim. Here are the very lips which quaffed the intoxicating draught. Here are the trembling hands which lifted the poisonous and fatal cup. Here are the tottering legs which used to proclaim to every passer-by my besetting sin. Here is the very disease, the fruit of my intemperance, which hurried me to a wretched and untimely grave. With all these, the witnesses of my guilt, I myself must stand before the Judge! *It is I myself*, the swearer will be

forced to acknowledge. Here is the very tongue, made for the purpose of blessing God, but by me perverted to the cursing of Him. I, the very same person who have many a time damned my own soul and those of my companions, must now go and feel what damnation is. I, who have seldom used God's name except in vain, and have set no limits to the disrespect with which I have always spoken of Him, must now be ushered into His awful presence and abide the gaze of His piercing eye. *It is I myself*, the Sabbath-breaker will to his astonishment find. I never imagined that the very same body with which I have so often broken the rest of the Lord's holy day; that the very same limbs which, strong and healthy as they were, I obstinately refused to use for the purpose of treading the Lord's courts; that the very same indolent form in which I was extended many a whole Sabbath day in the chimney corner; the very same feet which carried me many a time on that day of rest to the unclean and profane haunts of revelry and mirth; I little thought that these would have pursued me hither, or I would have made a very different preparation to meet my God. *It is I myself*, the selfish indulger of his own pleasure will proclaim. Here is the very flesh which I used to pamper; and here the hands with which I churlishly refused to deal bread to the hungry or give the thirsty drink; to clothe the naked;

raise the fallen; succour the weak. I bear about me at this moment the unquestionable marks of having lived for myself alone; of having neglected the duties and responsibilities of the station of life in which it pleased God to place me—of having found all my pleasure in the pomps and vanities, the sins and follies, of the wicked world—of having been alike callous to the salvation of the souls of my brethren and of my own. How can I venture, with all these indubitable marks about me, to face the judgment-seat! And yet I cannot avoid it. *It is I myself*, the hypocrite, with unfeigned astonishment, exclaims. And yet I scarcely recognize myself. How unlike what I used to take great pains to make myself appear to my fellow-men, at the same time how exactly the same as I knew myself to be! The mask of piety with which I used to disguise features in reality distorted with every wicked lust—the cloak of formal discharge of external duties, making long prayers, coming occasionally to Church, reading the Scriptures when any one was present, making loud professions and large promises—this mask and this cloak with which I used to conceal a body full of all iniquity and worldliness—I will endeavour to assume the one, and wrap the other still more closely than ever round me. But, no, I cannot do it. The piercing eye of the Omniscient Judge has in a moment dispelled the illusion with which I was wont to deceive my fellow-men. Here I am,

with the very self-same body, without a mask however, and without a cloak. It is I myself—wicked, worldly, deceitful, such as I knew myself to be; though I cunningly succeeded in making others think differently of me. It is I myself, that must appear in the presence of Him to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid.

Brethren, I confess that when I reflect that "it is I myself" who shall have to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give account, not only of my doings as regards myself, but of the faithfulness also with which, as a shepherd, I have discharged my duty towards you, the sheep committed to my care, it is not without great fear and trembling that I look to the result. Never, I imagine, from the very foundation of the world, has there lived a man so faithful and so obedient but that the sense of his personal identity on the awful morning of the resurrection must overwhelm him with confusion. Endeavour, then, I pray of you all, to realize this truth more completely than you do. When you are tempted to neglect a duty or commit a sin—when you are on the point of some neglect or wickedness—strive, if by God's grace you may, to call to mind that in the very same flesh in which you commit the breach of God's commandment, in the very same you must rise to give an account of that breach. The extremely slight way in which so many

professing Christians regard the responsibilities of the situations in which they have been severally placed by Almighty God; and the habits of worldliness and wickedness which are its necessary result, are in no little degree referrible, as I verily believe, to a sort of general and indistinct notion respecting the resurrection being substituted for a definite and distinct comprehension and realization of the awful truth of our complete and entire personal identity when the trumpet shall sound and the graves be opened. Many a drunkard would, I believe, dash from his lips the fatal cup—many a swearer would pause with the half-uttered oath yet quivering on his lips—many a Sabbath breaker would become a Sabbath keeper—many a selfish man would forget self—many a hypocrite would of his own accord throw off his mask in disgust: in short, men would live and act quite differently from what they do; if, like those terrible characters of old, so wonderfully traced by the mysterious hand, that—*Daniel* v. 6—"the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another"—there were always written over against us those memorable words of our Lord, which, I pray God, may be deeply imprinted upon all your hearts—*It is I myself.*

Deane, Easter-day, 1846.

SERMON XXV.

THE BIRTH DAY.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—*Luke* ii. 2.

This, then, is a birth-day. Now, birth-days are commonly acknowledged as days of festivity. They are seldom forgotten. The degree of ceremony with which they are kept varies with the rank of the person whose birth is celebrated. There is scarcely any rank of life, however, so lowly but that the birth-days of the various members of the family meet with some degree of observance, or at least remembrance Amongst all who are in easy circumstances a great deal of store is set upon the recurrence of such days as these. Which amongst my young hearers, at least, in such classes of society, would consider such a day properly noticed without a holiday, a present, a feast, an additional game, and a more than usual amount of merriment? But is it the birth-day of some philosopher, who has made unusual discoveries in art or science: some statesman, who has

guided his country safely through perils and difficulties which threatened its destruction: some renowned general, who has fought his country's battles victoriously, and covered himself with hard-earned and imperishable laurels: there is scarcely any measure to the joy and publicity with which it is observed. Or, lastly, is it the birthday of the sovereign of a great, and free, and enlightened nation, which has again returned? Then the public enthusiasm is at the highest; and throughout the length and breadth of the land every branch of the public service, as well as countless multitudes of private communities and individuals, hail the happy event with universal festivity and joy.

Whose birth-day is it then, my friends, that we are commemorating to-day? It is not, as you are well aware, that of the sovereign who wields the destinies of this mighty empire; nor that of the hero of an hundred battles, whose name is emblazoned in the most gorgeous pages of his country's history; nor that of any one of the many statesmen who for centuries past have so skilfully piloted the precious ship of the state through the countless perils of the political ocean: or of the many philosophers, who, by their marvellous discoveries, have enriched the stores of national wisdom, descried a new planet, sought out a new medicine, or produced mechanism almost, as it were, instinct with life

itself. Neither it it, as might at first sight have been supposed, the birth-day of a poor mechanic of Nazareth, whose parents were too lowly to find room in the crowded inns of Bethlehem, and whose mother was content to pass her hour of trial in a stable, and when she had brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, was fain to lay Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. The birth-day of one whose parentage was so lowly might well have been passed over in silence. It is not, however, the birth-day of such an one that we commemorate to-day. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Oh never, my dear friends, allow the circumstances of outward lowliness, by which that mysterious birth was attended, to deceive you into shutting your eyes to the glorious reality. Suffer not the plaintive wailings of feeble infancy, mingled so strangely with the lowing of the astonished cattle in yonder humble shed, to drown the thrilling strain—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward man:" nor the lowly forms of Joseph the carpenter and his betrothed wife, as they gaze in rapture on the new-born infant, to eclipse the glories of the attendant heavenly host. The child cradled in the manger at Bethlehem is none other than "Christ the Lord." A philo-

sopher who has enriched us with the wisdom of the Gospel, which is able to make us wise unto salvation; has defined to us the new planet of heaven with such accuracy that none can mistake it; has made us acquainted with a medicine such as will cure every disease, a fountain opened for all uncleanness; and furnished us with mechanism such as makes the dead heart instinct with life, even the all-powerful springs of His Holy Spirit—a statesman who has not for one single nation alone, but for all the nations of the earth, provided such a code of laws, as, if observed, must prosper them both now and for ever—an invincible hero, who never lost a single battle, but leads all who enlist under Him to certain victory—a sovereign not merely of one small island, nor yet even of that little globeal one of which man is the inhabitant, but of the whole universe by which space is filled; who is at this very moment seated on a throne before which things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth are bowing; "King of kings and Lord of lords:"—such is the Mighty Being whose birth-day we this day commemorate. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

And this leads me to dwell yet more in detail upon the particular benefits which we derived from the birth which took place as on this day.

Had that birth not taken place Christ would have been none the less the Lord than He was in the beginning. That birth added nothing to Him. *John* i. 1—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Had the birth at Bethlehem never taken place, Christ would have been, so to speak, the same bright sun shining in the firmament above our heads. Only His rays, resplendent in themselves, would not have reached us to communicate life, and warmth, and vision. But when in the manger at Bethlehem "the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us;" when in the womb of the blessed Virgin He took our nature upon Him, became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; then Christ the Lord became a "Saviour" to us. His light no longer shone for His own glory alone, but for the comfort and restoration of His creatures. *Hebrews* ii. 17—"In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaing to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted He is able to succour them that are tempted." The advantage of the birth-day, then, is all on one side. We are the party benefited. The inestimable benefit which we have received is salvation. By submitting to be born, as on this day, at Bethlehem, Christ be-

came the Saviour of all who believe in Him; lived amongst us that by His teaching and example He might show us our need of salvation and the way of obtaining it; and then died upon the cross for us, that He Himself might give us an undisputed title to salvation for ever.

Shall we not, then, keep such a birth-day as this? Surely, *Psalm* cxviii. 24, "This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." We must keep this birth-day, then. But how must we keep it? We must have a feast. We will exhibit every sign of such joy and thankfulness as are suitable for the commemoration of such a signal mercy. We will mark the day as the brightest in the year. We will rise from our beds as on a Sabbath morning. We will keep the day holy from all secular employment. We will come and worship and fall down before the Lord in His own house; confess our sins, seek His assistance, sing His praises, pour forth our thanks. And during the remainder of the day we will rejoice with reverence; not with the common rejoicings with which we should commemorate the birth of one of our fellow-men; but with rejoicing so tempered, chastened, subdued, solemn, as not to be inconsistent with the holiness of the Great Being whose birth-day it is. We will exhibit, I say, every sign of rejoicing such as this. But still we must do something more

to mark this happy, this very happy, day. We must have a feast. You have seen in the public assemblies of men how, while the health of living heroes is drank amidst deafening shouts of acclamation, the memory of those who are departed is received in solemn silence. Such shall be our feast to-day. In solemn silence, in humble adoration, with fervent thanksgiving, with hearty prayer, we will, by eating of that bread and drinking of that wine by which His body and blood are signified, celebrate the birth-day of the great Captain of our salvation, who freely gave up His life for our's.

We must not, however, come empty handed. A birthday must not be allowed to pass without a birthday present. But, *Micah* vi. 6, "wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." It was no easy matter, indeed, to find a present worthy the acceptance of Him who has declared, *Ps.* l. 10, "All the beasts of the forest are mine, and

so are the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls upon the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are in my sight. If I be hungry I will not tell thee; for the whole world is mine, and all that is therein." Yet He mercifully condescends to accept, as an evidence of our faith, the best services which it is in our power to render. *Rom.* xii. 1—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Such are St. Paul's words, from which, taken in connexion with those of the prophet Micah already quoted, we learn that the best and most acceptable present which we can at any time make to Christ consists of such a faithful discharge of our duty to God and man as proves that we have ourselves been "born again," and that we truly value what He has done for us, and are anxious to become possessed of the glories which He has purchased. Such is the best present we can at any time make to Christ. Let us not, then, defer to do it on this His birthday! To-day let us make good resolutions for the future! To-day let us resolve to adhere to these! To-day let us earnestly beg for grace to assist us in keeping these resolutions!

There is one part of our duty to our fellowmen which the circumstances of this birthday

seem particularly calculated to call to our remembrance. For it is the birthday of Him, one of the leading features in whose ministry it is that, *Matt.* xi. 5, "the poor have the Gospel preached to them." 2 *Cor.* viii. 9, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor," as on this very day, "that ye through His poverty might be rich." Poor Himself, it was from amongst the poor that He chose His apostles, and to the poor that He chiefly ministered. And lest we should at all mistake or undervalue His feelings towards the poor, He declares concerning them, *Matt.* xxiv. 40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." If we cannot find Christ anywhere else, then, we can at any rate find Him in every poor brother and sister. And Christ's birthday, methinks, is no unfit season for making a present to the poor, His representatives. Zacchæus, the publican, before he ever knew Christ at all, was accustomed to give away tithes—that is to say, a tenth part of all he possessed. Surely we, who have known Christ so long, can scarcely do less. Are we, then, in the habit of devoting a tenth part of what we possess to charitable purposes? Are we in the habit of devoting to such purposes any fixed sum at all? Do we consider almsgiving a regular part of our

yearly household expenses? Do we make a kind judicious distribution of alms a part of our daily business? Are we not merely content with giving, when we can do so without inconvenience, but prepared to deny ourselves some luxury, comfort, or even necessary of life, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked? Are our doors, our purses, our hearts, always open, when Christ, in the persons of His poor brethren, is in want? Brethren, I speak, of course, to those of you whom it has pleased God to place in easy circumstances, if you would carefully examine a year's accounts, you would, I am persuaded, some of you be yourselves astonished at the very small sum which you have given to Christ. And, therefore, I commend to your notice the above enquiries, in connection with an examination of your last year's accounts, as a good and edifying exercise for the remainder of Christ's birthday and the closing year.

Deane, Christmas Day, 1849.

SERMON XXVI.

INFIDELITY.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?"—*Acts* xxvi. 8.

THIS question, as appears plainly from the previous verses, refers not to the doctrine of an universal resurrection, but to the particular resurrection of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Agrippa, to whom St. Paul was principally addressing himself, was a Jew. Now, with the exception of the Sadducees, who were, comparatively speaking, in point of number a very small minority, the Jews believed in the doctrine of a general resurrection. But in the resurrection of Jesus they did not believe. This was "the hope of the promise made by God unto" the fathers, to which the apostle referred, *verse* 5, and with reference to which he declares that He was at that time "judged" and "accused" of the Jews. This promise of a triumphant Messiah they considered still future. They hoped then, and still "hope to come" to it. St. Paul, on the other hand, like ourselves,

believed that this promise was already fulfilled. He no longer hoped to come to it, but had already come to it. He believed that the promised Messiah had come, suffered, and risen again from the dead. And, addressing himself to his Jewish brethren in general, and in particular to King Agrippa, whom he describes in *verse* 3 as "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews," in the language of the text he enquires—"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" As though He had said—You find no difficulty in assenting to the general proposition that God who gives life has power to restore it. You do not discredit the accounts given in your own Scriptures of dead men restored to life by Elijah and Elisha. You are not even indisposed to believe, as far as it has been revealed to you, the doctrine of an universal resurrection at the last day. Why, then, is it that this one particular resurrection is a thing so entirely incredible with you? Why is it that you cannot bring yourselves to share in the joyful assurance that Christ is risen? Why is it that you will still obstinately persist in hoping for the fulfilment of "the promise made of God unto our fathers," instead of rejoicing in its fulfilment? Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?

It was certainly not for want of the most convincing evidence. There is no fact in the whole range of history, sacred or profane, more completely and circumstantially attested than this which we commemorate to-day. The proofs of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the reasons which made a fraud or imposition impossible, are so familiar as scarcely to need recapitulation. His death, even if it had not taken place before, was secured by the spear of the soldier being plunged into His heart. The crowded state of Jerusalem at the time of the passover, and the strong light of the full moon in the clear atmosphere of Syria made it difficult—the severe discipline of the Roman guard set to watch the sealed sepulchre made it impossible—for a few poor fishermen, even had they wished it, to steal the body away. The number to whom He afterwards showed Himself sufficiently attested His re-appearance—His talking and eating with His disciples proved His re-appearance with a body—the marks of the nails in His hands and feet, and of the spear in His side, proved that He re-appeared in the very same flesh with which He went down into the grave. With such incontrovertible proofs, then, of the exercise in this particular instance of a power which in general they were quite willing to concede to God, why was it that with the Jews in St. Paul's time it was thought "a

thing incredible that God should raise the dead?" Why is it that this singular people, scattered though in judgment on their unbelief they still are over the face of the whole earth, even to this day, persist in their incredulity? What is the vail, 2 *Cor.* iii. 15, which in the days of St. Paul, and none the less even now, rests upon their heart, as they read the Scriptures?

What this was, and that it continues the same as it was originally, there can be, I imagine, no doubt. Idolatry was no longer, as heretofore, the peculiar sin of God's people. From this they had been weaned by the terrible chastisement which they had undergone for seventy years at Babylon. Since that time the Pharisees had sat in Moses' seat, and Pharisaism was prevalent amongst the greater portion of the chosen people. Of Pharisaism the chief features were, *Luke* xi. 52, the taking away "the key of knowledge," and hindering "them that were entering in." *Mark* vii. 13, "the making the Word of God of none effect through tradition." *Matt.* xxiii. 23, "the paying tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin," and omitting "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith;" *verse* 25, the making "clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within" being "full of extortion and excess"—*John* viii. 39, and the pluming themselves upon external privileges,

such, for instance, as being by descent "Abraham's children," which in their lives they denied. Such were the chief features of Pharisaism. Such, for the most part, was the character of the Jews in the time of our blessed Lord. No wonder, then, that it was a thing incredible with them that God should raise the dead. No wonder that the event, which we this day commemorate, should have been a stumbling-block to them, and that they should be still in vain looking out for the fulfilment of a promise long since fulfilled. Little acquainted with the Scriptures which they professed to reverence, and such small knowledge as they possessed of the Word of God being well-nigh overwhelmed by the mass of human tradition under which it was buried, with their minds almost entirely absorbed in the unimportant minutiæ of ritual to the neglect of almost every real duty, and with overweening vanity and self-esteem, it is no wonder that they pursued and are still pursuing the shadow to the neglect of the substance, and in their superstitious veneration for the types lost sight of, and cannot even now recognise, the great and glorious antitype. As is written, *Rom.* ix. 30—"What shall we say, then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness,

hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone. As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." And again, *Rom.* x. 3—"For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Again, *Rom.* xi. 7—"What, then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Such, 2 *Cor.* iii. 15—"Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart." Superstition, as it always does, blinded the eye of faith, and a childish regard for the shadow led to incredulity respecting the substance. Pharisaism was the parent of Infidelity.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" We are either many of us not sufficiently aware, or at least do not sufficiently bear in mind, to how many thousands in this professedly Christian land the above question may be addressed with equal truth as to Agrippa of old. I am not now speaking of Jews scattered amongst us. Would God they were the only persons in this

land to whom the resurrection of Christ is a thing incredible! I am speaking of a very different class from this. I am speaking of those descended from Christian parents and bearing Christian names: of the thousands and tens of thousands of labouring men in the metropolis and large manufacturing towns; of the multitudes of a higher class employed in shops and counting-houses; to take a still higher flight, of the numbers amongst professional men; and, worse than all, of the youth at our universities, the seats of learning, the schools of faith. It is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact that Infidelity is rapidly spreading in all these directions. We almost shrink from an acknowledgment that such is the case. Yet duty forbids us doing so. Whence, then, this alarming spread of Infidelity? Whence this growing tendency to think it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? Whence this increasing disposition to question, cavil, doubt, and finally settle down into absolute unbelief? Whence, but from the very same source which, in the case of Agrippa and the Jews in the time of St. Paul, led, and in the case of modern Jews still continues to lead, to exactly the same disposition? As then, so now, Pharisaism is the parent of Infidelity. It is the deliberate assertion of one,* who for many years held

* "Evidence against Catholicism," by the Rev. Joseph Blanco White, M.A., pp. 8, 10, 226, &c.

high office in the Roman Church in Spain, and who during much of the time had no belief whatever and was always afterwards of unsettled mind, that a large proportion even of the ecclesiastics connected with the Roman Church in that country were in his time, like himself, downright infidels. He asserts in general—"Wherever the religion of Rome reigns absolute, there is but one step between it and complete Infidelity." He afterwards explains at length how, in the case of those who have been long taught to believe that the Roman Church is in every the most minute respect infallible, the first discovery of the fallacy of this claim leads almost surely to an unsettled state of mind—to doubt as to the existence of truth at all, and so speedily to downright Infidelity. There can be little doubt that not only in Spain, but wherever the Roman Church is dominant, the gross superstition and Pharisaism with which it abounds is the fruitful cause of much rationalism and speculative infidelity amongst men of educated and enquiring minds; and amongst the lower classes of such gross ignorance as puts wholly out of the question any assent either of the understanding or the heart to the truths which they profess to believe; and so, as far as any fruits of faith are concerned, leaves them practically infidel. Popery, in the diluted but almost more mischievous form of Tractarianism, is in England stealthily

doing the same deadly work, which, it has been already shown, open Popery has long since been doing in countries in which it has been more dominant. If in our universities, of which it is feared there can be no doubt, loose views on the subject of religious truth, doubtings, and cavillings—rationalism imported from our continental neighbours whom the dominance of Popery has hurried on faster than ourselves, and downright infidelity, are, especially amongst the young, fearfully on the increase—this is unquestionably in great measure to be attributed to a contempt for every thing true and holy being gradually engendered in their minds by seeing so many of those set in authority over them, though still retaining the offices and emoluments of the Church of England, giving their minds to the most contemptible frivolities of the Church of Rome. While no less certainly the progress of infidelity amongst the labouring classes is fearfully accelerated by the repeated checks which the assumption of priestly power in the matter of education by the Tractarian clergy, has given to the free and extended course which the education of the poor would otherwise have taken. Why, I enquire from the students at our universities on the one hand, and from the labouring classes in our great manufacturing towns on the other, is it thought "a thing incredible with you that God should

raise the dead?" The only answer which can be returned to this enquiry is the same which Agrippa and his fellow Jews might have returned to the apostle Paul—Pharisaism is the parent of Infidelity.

With you, brethren, it is not, thank God, "a thing incredible that God should raise the dead." "Christ is risen!" are the joyful words with which, after the manner of Christians in the East, you acknowledge to-day the full accomplishment of the whole counsel of God for the salvation of sinners. Anti-Christ, however, is in the midst of us. Popery, Tractarianism, Infidelity, a triple crown, are leagued together against the truth. They are playing briskly into each other's hands. And the great enemy of mankind, animating these as well as every other form of evil, is making, as it would seem, the last convulsive struggle for supremacy. The seed of the serpent is still bruising the heel of the seed of the woman. But be of good cheer! The seed of the woman shall yet bruise the serpent's head. There is no way in which you can more truly show yourselves the faithful disciples of the risen Lord than by manfully fighting always, but especially at such a crisis as this, under His banner against His great adversary the devil. God grant that the Church of England collectively, and yourselves as individual members of it, being by His grace preserved from all the wicked delusions of Satan, by faithfully proclaiming everywhere, both in life and doctrine, that whole counsel of God for the salvation of sinners, of which the resurrection of this day is the seal, may be honored instruments in the final victory, and happy and glorified sharers in the final triumph of the "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Deane, Easter Day, 1851.

W. E. Painter, 342, Strand, London, Printer.

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