

THE BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR.
GENESIS.

THE
BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR:

OR,

ANECDOTES, SIMILES, EMBLEMS, ILLUSTRATIONS, EXPOSITORY,
SCIENTIFIC, GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND HOMILETIC,
GATHERED FROM A WIDE RANGE OF HOME AND
FOREIGN LITERATURE, ON THE VERSES
OF THE BIBLE.

BY

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GENESIS.

VOL. I.

London :

JAMES NISBET & CO., 21, BERNERS STREET, W.

PREFACE.

FOUR years have elapsed since the publication of the **BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR** was commenced. At first it appeared only in the modest shape of monthly parts. But very soon it became evident that, at that slow rate of progress, at least half a century would be required for the issue of the work. It was therefore decided to proceed with the publication of complete volumes as rapidly as they could be made ready. The work can hardly, therefore, be regarded as a stranger to the literary world. Nor are its contents of so recondite a nature as to demand any lengthy description—they speak for themselves. Still it may not perhaps be amiss to prefix to this volume—which will naturally stand first in order upon the library shelf—a few prefatory remarks, so as to indicate the purposes which the **BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR** is intended to serve, and to remove some objections which have been urged against it.

I. First, as to the **CHARACTER AND SCOPE** of the undertaking. The **BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR** comprises a very extensive and varied assortment of material, suitable for use in the study of Holy Scripture, and adapted especially to the requirements of preachers and Sunday-school teachers.

(1) The work will promote thought. All Scripture is profitable for instruction, for correction, for consolation, and for the complete equipment of men in their several spheres of life. It should, therefore, be the constant aim of the student to cull from its pages more and more of the vast treasures with which they are stored. For teaching purposes it is a mine of inexhaustible wealth—a veritable Golconda. The remark made by Bishop Butler a century and a half ago is equally true to-day, and will remain true to the end of time, that “the whole scheme of Scripture is not yet understood,” but that it contains “many things as yet undiscovered.” “I am verily persuaded,” exclaimed the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, “that the Lord has more truth to break forth out of His Word!” Is it not indeed the case that fresh applications of the eternal truth to everyday life and conduct are continually offering themselves to the mind of every attentive reader, and to the same reader at different times and in varying moods and circumstances? This being so, it is surely but natural to anticipate that the prolonged application of many minds, variously constituted and gifted, throughout the course of many centuries, all concentrated upon the study of Holy Scripture, must have resulted in an immense accumulation of valuable thought, calculated to stimulate the intellect and to move the heart. One object of the **BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR**, then, is so to preserve and present this treasure of the ages, that the ordinary reader may be able to make himself the happy possessor of it.

(2) The work will promote economy in the purchase of books and in the expenditure of time. Students of the Bible do not, as a rule, care to devote a large section of their library to volumes of sermons. Standard works on criticism, doctrine, and philosophy are justly considered to have a prior claim upon a slender purse. Nevertheless, homiletic literature has its uses, and important uses too; and the

preacher would not be wise were he to neglect it altogether. There must often be occasions in the experience of almost every expounder of the Word, when he would be glad to know how men of recognized ability have treated the particular text or theme which is then engaging his own attention. A mere outline or analysis would be sufficient for his purpose—might be, indeed, all he could spare time to peruse; but where is he to find this outline—who will furnish him with this concentrated essence of the great sermonizer's genius? We reply that the *BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR* is designed to supply this want. Within the compass of its thirty-five volumes, the pith and marrow of the world's printed sermon material is to be found—at any rate, a large portion of it.

(3) The work will be useful as a history of and guide to literature of a homiletical and exegetical character. At the end of each extract the author's name is given, to enable the student, if so minded, to consult him in his own pages. On nearly every book of the Bible there exist valuable monographs in the form of Commentaries and Expositions; but in many cases these treatises are either so lengthy, or so costly, or so scarce, that they do not receive anything like the attention they deserve. Now, in the *BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR* no expense or trouble has been spared to make all such aids available, and to guide the student to the most reliable sources of information. Each book, moreover, is provided with an Introduction, carefully compiled from the best authorities, and sufficiently full to direct attention to the main points of criticism.

(4) The work will help to remove the reproach of "dulness," which is so often—and sometimes, alas! so justly—urged against the oratory of the pulpit. Did we provide only the skeletons of sermons, it might reasonably be complained that the "bones are very dry." But we aim at clothing them with sinews and flesh as well. Thousands of volumes, in nearly every department of literature, have been ransacked in search of illustrations and anecdotes bearing upon the sacred text. By the judicious employment of these accessories the gospel message may often be driven home more effectually than by a bare statement of abstract doctrine; for the latter, however true and necessary in itself, does not so readily arouse the interest of the drowsy or pre-occupied mind. He who "spake as never man spake," so far from despising this method of reaching the slumbering conscience, adopted it constantly in His public teaching; and it was an evil day for the Church when the imitation of the Master in this respect fell into disrepute. Fortunately for all concerned, a better day has now dawned, and preachers have begun to recognize the duty of trying to attract, rather than repel, men while they deliver their Divine message. It is hoped that the *BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR* may be of real service to those engaged in this holy work, and that the gospel archer may find in its pages many a pointed arrow for his quiver and his bow.

II. We address ourselves, next, to the task of noticing (and, so far as we can, answering) some OBJECTIONS AND CRITICISMS which the work has encountered.

(1) It has been said that the *BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR* renders too much aid to the preacher, and does for him that which, as a student, he ought to do for himself. Now, here we need to be on our guard, lest we sacrifice our judgment to a mode of reasoning rather plausible than true. There may be, and doubtless is, very considerable difference of opinion as to what quantity of help a preacher may legitimately derive from others; but surely no one will contend that mental independence, or a vain striving after originality, should lead him to ignore altogether the inheritance of the past. It is never asserted that the student of science or philosophy should so far rely upon his own powers as to reject any helps that may have been handed down from bygone ages. On the contrary, he would be considered very reprehensible indeed were he to waste his time and strength in

the attempt to work out for himself *ab initio* problems which have long ago been set at rest, and now form part of the common stock of ascertained knowledge. And in like manner we would claim for the preacher equal liberty within his own domain; and would assert that since he does not stand alone as an isolated unit in the Church, but forms a link in a noble succession, he has an inherent right to all the homiletic material that his predecessors have placed within his reach. It is a mere truism to say that he may abuse this possession: of course he may; what possession is there that may not be abused? But surely that is no sufficient reason for depriving him of his rights, any more than it would be for excluding an indolent spendthrift from the inheritance bequeathed him by his ancestors. In neither case does the fault consist in the fact of possessing and using the inheritance, but simply in the putting to a bad and unworthy use that which in itself is both lawful and excellent. Books of science, medicine, philosophy, and architecture set forth the approved methods and the ascertained results of their respective subjects in such a form as to be at the convenient disposal of their students. What these books do for the architect, the philosopher, the doctor, and the man of science, the BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR attempts to do for the preacher. It simply places before him, in handy shape, the inheritance which is rightfully his. So far from checking his industry or withholding him from diligent research, it should draw out his latent ability and open up new fields of thought for his mind to occupy and work in.

(2) Objection has also been taken to the "get-up" of the BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR, on the ground of its type being too small, or, at any rate, too close set, for comfort and convenience. Nor can it be denied that there is much reason in the complaint. But, while regretting that this cause for dissatisfaction exists, we would submit that there was no other course open to us, unless we were to have either abbreviated the contents to an injurious extent, or else added indefinitely to the number of volumes, and consequently to the price of the work. As the BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR is likely to be generally used rather for occasional reference than for continuous reading, the plan we have adopted may perhaps be regarded as the least of three necessary evils.

III. It only remains, in conclusion, to acknowledge with many thanks the valuable HELP RECEIVED from Rev. J. Henry Burn, B.D., Rector of Deer, Aberdeenshire; Rev. J. W. Burn, Manchester; Rev. R. Brewin, and others.

The final volume will contain a complete index to the entire work, both as regards topics and authors quoted.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY BIBLE.

THE NAME "BIBLE."—The Bible is in Greek *Ta Biblia*, "The Books," *par excellence*. Though a plural in Greek, the word came, on account of its termination, to be used in law Latin as a feminine singular; and from the Latin, it passed in this form into modern languages: *la Bible*, *die Bibel*, and the like. (*Prof. A. B. Davidson*.) Well may the Scriptures be called "THE BOOK." It is the Book of the race. It is the *old* family Bible, long entrusted to the keeping of the *first-born*, but where all may come, and find their natal record. Here is the historical genealogy of all nations. Here, too, is the spiritual genealogy of human souls,—the generation and the regeneration, the man of the earth and the Man from heaven, the *humanity* or the life in Adam, and the *Christianity* or the life in Christ. Here, moreover, is that which belongs to all men as men, the ideas that above all others are the property of the race. Here is the fall, the redemption, the brotherhood in ruin as the ground of all true human sympathy, the brotherhood in grace as the ground of all true human hope. (*Taylor Lewis, LL.D.*) The Bible, then, as the Book of books, is as the sun in the centre of all other religious records; the Kings of the Chinese, the Vedas of India, the Zendavesta of the Persians, the Eddas of the Germans, the Jewish Talmud, and the Mohammedan Koran; judging all that is hostile in them, reconciling and bringing into liberty whatever elements of truth they may contain. It stands also, with a like repelling and attracting force, in the centre of all literature, as well as of theology. In the same power and dignity it exercises its critical authority upon all historical traditions. As the ideal Cosmos of the revelation of salvation, it forms with the Cosmos of the general revelation of God an organic unity (*Psa. viii; xix; civ.*). It is the key of the World-Cosmos, while this again is the living illustration of the Cosmos of the Scripture. But as that is subordinate to the living God, as an organ of His manifestation, so is the Bible to the living Christ. It holds the same relation to Him as the copy to the original, and is co-ordinate with the eternal word of Christ in the total life of the Church—as a fully accordant testimony. But whoever will utter anything from that mystical writing in the heart of the Church, must derive his credentials from the written Word. (*J. P. Lange, D.D.*)

OTHER NAMES FOR THE BIBLE.—It is called by Irenæus (born 120 A.D.) *Divine Writings*, and by Clemens Alexandrinus (died 220 A.D.) *Scriptures*, the *God-inspired Scriptures*. Hence it has been designated the *Canon*, or the *Canonical Scriptures*, because, including all and only the writings given by the inspiration of God, it is the canon or rule of faith and practice for man. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy*.) The first title which was given to it in the West was *Bibliotheca Divina*, and it is indeed a Divine library, rich in every region of human interest, rich in every variety of human record. And this fulness, this catholicity of the Bible, is what we need to feel now. The fulness, the catholicity of the Bible answer to the fulness, the catholicity of the Faith. (*Bp. Westcott*.)

THE HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE.—I. The Bible is a collection of many writings, in many forms, by many hands, from many ages. What is there in these books which has led Christendom to assign to them so high an honour? 1. These books have the venerableness which belongs to ancient writings. The latest of them is probably seventeen hundred years old, and the earliest has been written twenty-seven hundred years; while in the more ancient of them lie bedded some of the oldest fragments of literature known to us. 2. These books form the literature of a noble race. (1) The Old Testament is a Library of Jewish Letters. The germ of the collection was planted by Nehemiah, when "he, founding

a library, gathered together the acts of the kings, and the prophets, and of David, and the epistles of the kings concerning the holy gifts" (2 Maccabees ii. 13). This germ grew gradually into its present shape. The Apocrypha belongs to it, and is rightly bound up in our Bibles, for reading in our churches. (2) The New Testament is the literature of the Christian Church in its creative epoch; the work still, in the main, of Jewish hands, as Judaism was blossoming into a universal religion. 3. This literature of the Jewish nation and of the Christian Church is intrinsically noble. Were it possible to read it in our manhood for the first time, how the blood would beat and the nerves thrill over some of its pages. We should then understand the sensations of a French *salon* upon a certain occasion. Our shrewd [U.S.A.] philosopher-minister, Franklin, had previously heard the *literati* wont to gather there ridiculing the Bible, and had guessed that they knew little of it. Upon this evening he observed that he would much like to have the judgment of the assembly on a certain Eastern tale he had lately come across, unknown probably to most of those there present, though long ago translated into their own tongue. Whereupon, drawing from his pocket a copy of the Bible, he had a Parisienne, let into the secret, read in her sweet tones the Book of Ruth. The company was thrown into raptures over the charming tale, which lasted until they found its name! No critic of our age has finer literary feeling, or more dispassionate judgment than Matthew Arnold; and he has edited the second section of Isaiah as a text-book for the culture of the imagination in English schools. In the introduction to this Primer he observes: "What a course of eloquence and poetry is the Bible in our schools." Goethe shared Arnold's love of the Bible, and was so constant a reader of it that his friends reproached him for wasting his time over it. Burke owned his indebtedness to the Bible for his unique eloquence. Webster confessed that he owed to its habitual reading much of his power. Ruskin looks back to the days when a pious aunt compelled him to learn by heart whole chapters of the Bible, for his schooling in the craft of speech, in which he stands unrivalled among living Englishmen. 4. This literature has been very influential in the development of progressive civilization. When the writings of Greece and Rome had been buried in the ruins of the Roman Empire, the literature of Israel was preserved by the pious care of the Christian Church. The light of Athens went out, and the light of Jerusalem alone illumined the dark ages. The only books known to the mass of men through long centuries were these writings of the Hebrews and the early Christians. Thought was kept alive by them, imagination was fed from them, conscience was educated and vitalized through them. For a thousand years there was practically but one book in Europe—the Bible. It has continued the best-read book of Western civilization; the only book much read, until of late, by the mass of men; the one foreign and ancient literature familiar alike to the plain people in Germany and France, in England and America; the common well-spring of inspiration to thought and imagination, to character and conduct. II. The Bible lays a yet deeper claim upon our reverence. These books constitute the literature of a people whose genius was religion, whose writings express the moods and tenses of that development; whose history is the organic growth which flowered in the life of Him who freed religion from every swathing-band, and gave the world its pure essential spirit; after whom all races are being drawn as one flock under one Shepherd. 1. Israel's specialty in history was religion. Patriotism was identified with piety. Her statesmen were reformers, idealists, whose orations were sermons dealing with politics in the light of eternal principles. The nation's ambitions were aspirations. Her heroes grew to be saints. The divine became to her, not the true or the beautiful, but the good. 2. Israel's literature became thus a religious literature. Her histories were written for edification. They present the past of the people in such light as to inculcate virtue and inspire piety. The Psalter is the hymnal of the temple choir at Jerusalem. The prophets are preachers of righteousness, personal, social, political. 3. Israel's literature presents us, in the various moods and tenses of her life, with the various phases of religion. 4. Israel's literature presents us with the record of a continuous growth of religion upward through its normal stages. 5. Israel's literature records the forcing forward of this growth of religion, as by some Power back of man, shaping its ends, rough-hew them as it might. 6. Israel's literature thus presents the picture of a nation's patient, insistent pressing forward, through long centuries, toward the fruition of its ideal, the realization of true religion. 7. The literature of Christian Israel records the realization of this long-sought ideal, the fruition of this organic growth. The

Gospels tell the story of the life of the Founder of Christianity, clearly enough in the main outlines, and embalm many of the words and deeds of the Son of Man. The other writings of the New Testament illustrate the working of the thought and spirit of the Christ in the Church, bodying around Him through the growth of a century. In them we see that the long cherished ideal of Israel, an ethical and universal religion, had at last incarnated itself in the Master whose plans laid the foundation of this new Order; into which men were coming from all quarters, and were sitting down in the kingdom of God. 8. Of the literature of the people through whom came this organic evolution of the keystone religion of earth, what can we say but that it records a real revelation, coming through genuine personal inspirations from on high! The revelation in the Bible is the Light of God which streams through it, making it "a lamp unto our feet." The inspiration in the Bible is the life of God breathing through it into man, "and he becomes a living soul." If any one asks me how he may know that there is a revelation in the Bible, I tell him to walk in its light, and see what it reveals. If any one asks me how I know that the Bible is inspired, I answer him in Mr. Moody's words: "I know that the Bible is inspired, because it 'inspires' me." (*R. Heber Newton, D.D.*) The Bible is a book of growth. It is a tree of knowledge. It grows from a seed to a full-sized plant. In this way alone is it suited to man. For as the individual advances from infancy to full-grown manhood, so the race of Adam had its infancy, its boyhood, its manhood, and will have its ripe and full age. Such a progress of the human race required a progressive book of lessons. Hence we are not to expect every truth to be fully revealed in the earliest books of Scripture, but only such germs of truth as will gradually develop themselves into a full body of revealed doctrine, and in such measure as man can receive and may require at each stage of his career. The Bible therefore grows not only in the continual accessions made to its matter, but also in the doctrines which it adds from time to time to the system of sacred truth, and in the more and more developed state in which all its doctrines are presented. The Old Testament is as clearly distinguished in point of matter from the New as in regard to time. The one was closed at least four hundred years before the other was commenced. The former contains an exposition of the dealings of God with man down to the times of Malaki, together with a remarkable series of predictions concerning the destiny of the human race, and especially concerning the coming of the Messiah to accomplish by His own obedience unto death the redemption of man from the curse of sin, and so eventually, by the quickening of His Spirit, raise the objects of His redeeming love to the light, life, and liberty of the children of God. The latter records the fulfilment of this prophecy by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, His standing in the stead of man, rendering a perfect obedience for him, undergoing the sentence of death for him, rising again, and entering upon eternal life, and making all-prevalent intercession on his behalf. It farther indicates the realization of another set of predictions in the calling and qualifying of His apostles and evangelists, and the reconstruction of His Church under these new circumstances in a new form, and with new life and power of expansion. It then opens up with greater clearness in a new series of prophetic announcements the future history of the Church, and especially the second coming of the Messiah to raise the dead, judge the quick and the dead, and so close the development of the present world. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE BIBLE.—The plan of the Bible is not logical, as of a treatise, but historical; and, therefore, must be viewed in relations of time. It must be looked at in its depths, and in its distances, in order to be understood and appreciated. It is not a string of propositions, but a series of pictures; and its pictures are not the abstract unreal delineations of geometry, but true pictures in perspective, delineated as they appeared in natural life. They are pictures from nature, and not from the imagination; which, by the way, is the true explanation of their exhaustless freshness and endless adaptation. The Bible is the least artificial, the most artless of books; but it is by no means the least artistic. It is truly artistic, because it is true to nature, because it is true to life. Now this feature of the Bible has been very much neglected in the study of it. There has been, so to speak, too little use made of the eyes in the study of the Bible. It has been dealt with as a book of propositions rather than of pictures. It has been used as a book of texts, subjects, stories, and biographies. These texts, these subjects, these stories, these biographies have, as a rule, been taken out of the general mass

and studied by themselves; which is very much the same thing as if you were to get your idea of some great landscape painting by having certain pieces of it cut out and brought to you: a leaf here and a leaf there; then perhaps a tree or a shrub or a human figure in the picture. The consequence would be that, while you would see whatever beauty there was in the particular objects examined, you would lose the effect of seeing each in its appropriate place. And, moreover, if the pictures were painted in true perspective, the different figures would often seem out of proportion when looked at out of their right place in the picture. And what is of more consequence, you would not have seen the landscape at all. You would still have the picture itself to see. When we think of all these things we shall see that the subject of Bible perspective is one that needs special attention. The lovely flowers of the Bible that are scattered here and there and everywhere on its pages, have been gathered and enjoyed ten thousand times. Its precious gems have been dug up, displayed, admired, and treasured; but its magnificent landscapes are scarcely ever seen. The study of the Bible in perspective will remove many difficulties. It will enhance the beauties we have already seen, and reveal new beauties we were not wont to see; and discover hidden treasures too. It will greatly aid us oftentimes in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and assist us frequently and materially in their devotional and practical use. It will show in a striking light the unity of the Scriptures, and so afford a proof of their Divine origin, altogether apart from questions as to their human authorship. It will prevent the dislocation of Scripture, rendering it as impossible, for example, to tear the Book of Deuteronomy from its place (as some modern critics have attempted to do), as it would be to shift a building or a figure from the foreground to the background of a picture without altering all its proportions. Take some of these large pictures and shift one of the figures in the foreground—a man, or a house, or a tree—and place it in the back part of the picture. Every rule of perspective would cry out against it. Similarly with Bible perspective. Some of the advantages we have just enumerated may appear as we attempt to set before you certain important effects in Bible reading, which are ordinarily lost, but which would be secured if the perspective of the Bible were carefully attended to. This is all we can undertake to do with so wide a subject. Let me call your attention to the importance of—

1. Depth and distance. Just as a picture may represent great depths and distances of space, so the Bible represents great depths and distances of time. It is not a flat surface, as a scientific book would be. It stretches away from us into long distances. Now, it is of very great importance to recognize these distances—to see them. I verily believe that if any intelligent and candid person, however sceptical in his disposition, could fairly realize “the sundry times and divers manners” of revelation—the “sundry times,” extending over thousands of years, perhaps several thousands, if we take into consideration the pre-existing materials of which Moses probably availed himself when he prepared the Pentateuch, and the “divers manners,” embracing such wonderful diversity of circumstances in the different authors, and such totally different influences by which they were surrounded—if any one, I say, could only fairly realize “the sundry times and divers manners” on the one hand, and the unity and progress of thought on the other, he would need no other proof to convince him that the Bible must be of God. Had the human authorship been the whole account of the matter, it would have been a heterogeneous mass. It must have been so, coming at such “sundry times,” and in such “divers manners,” and under such diversity of influences. It must have been a heterogeneous patchwork, and not the consistent, harmonious, and progressive whole, which it is.
2. Light and shade: Relief. How many read the Bible as if it were as level as a prairie. They lose its edges, its corners, its hills and valleys, and they do not even recognize its lofty mountain peaks. They will be close up to Sinai before they have had the first glimpse of its vast and rugged mass, and they will be at the very foot of the Cross before they have seen its projection on the canvas or its shadow on the ground. The life of Abraham is a grand thing in itself. It is a matchless biography; but how very much of it is lost when it is taken by itself: away from the dark background of heathen Chaldaea, and without its relations to all that goes before, and all that follows. You may take Genesis xii.-xxv. and cut it out, print it by itself and read it as a biography, and you have a most admirable monograph: something very valuable and very useful. But while Abraham out of the Bible is an excellent monograph, there is no comparison with Abraham in the Bible, standing out there in grand relief in his own place in the

great panorama. So it is with Moses. So with David, and so, above all, with the Lord Jesus. How many are there able, after any fashion, to construct in imagination the life of Jesus as it appears on the canvas of the Bible, standing out there after all the preparations that have been leading up to it throughout the old Testament, and after the solemn and impressive pause between Malachi and Matthew. A good picture is distributed in masses, and a practised eye will see and dwell upon those parts of the picture, taking the remaining parts in relation to those masses. And so in the Bible we see a similar massing: as for example, around Egypt and the Exodus, around David and the Monarchy, around Babylon and the Restoration, around Christ and the Cross. Let any Bible student master as thoroughly as he may these four things, the Exodus, the Monarchy, the Restoration, and the Cross, and he is in a fair way for seeing the relation and bearing of the greater part of both the Old and New Testaments. 3. The point of sight. The point of sight in a picture is that point in the horizon toward which and on which the most important lines converge. This is not a strictly scientific definition, but it is close enough for our purpose. This brings us into the religion of perspective proper; and, as every artist knows, it is quite essential that the eye be directed to the point of sight, in order that due proportion throughout be maintained; and so far, at least, as the beholder is concerned, the point of sight in Bible perspective is of much greater importance than in the enjoyment of art. It is possible to see very much of the beauty of a picture even though you do not know what "point of sight" means. But it is impossible to understand and appreciate the Bible unless you know its point of sight. That was the trouble with the apostles in their reading of the Scriptures before the Lord called their attention to it. "Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke xxiv. 25). Observe, it is not: You have not understood that passage in the 53rd of Isaiah, or the 2nd Psalm. It is, "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." There is the point of sight. And still further (Luke xxiv. 44). All the great lines converge on Christ. He is the point of sight of the Bible as a whole; of the Old Testament and of the New; and of each of the series of pictures which make up the one and the other. It is only by keeping this in view, that we can make anything at all worthy of very much that is in the Old Testament Scriptures especially: the dry genealogies for example, the long descriptions of the tabernacle and its furniture, the otherwise wearisome details of the Levitical code, and many other things. The point of sight is the key to the whole. The Bible as a whole may be considered as a grand panorama, yet without the defects of a panorama; for immense as it is, it has but one point of sight from beginning to end, as a long panorama cannot have. Christ is the Alpha and Omega: the all and in all. We might take up other points, such as the importance of having the light fall rightly on the picture, especially the light from the Sun of Righteousness; but time forbids any further attempt at detail. Let us close with a few general thoughts. There are, as every artist knows, certain necessary elements for drawing a picture aright, and for appreciating a picture that is correctly drawn. There are similar necessities in Bible perspective. First is the base line on which the picture is constructed; then the line of the horizon (speaking of a landscape picture, though there is technically a horizon in any picture), where earth and sky meet, the most important point of which is the point of sight already referred to. What is the base line of the Bible? It is sin. And is it not one of the chief reasons why the Bible is made so little of that men do not realize what sin is—how dreadful and how fatal it is? What is the horizon line of the Bible? It is holiness. That is where earth and heaven meet. But on that horizon line there is only one point of sight. It is where God and man meet, in Christ, in whom alone holiness can be reached. Look at that landscape painting. At the top of the plane of the picture, you have the sky, which seems to approach nearer and nearer to the earth, as it falls away to the background, descending and descending until it touches it on the distant horizon. Again, beginning at the base line, the foreground seems to ascend and ascend until it reaches the horizon and meets the sky. From high heaven, God comes down to meet man upon the earth. From the base of sin man is borne upward to meet his God. The place of meeting is in Christ. There all the lines of faith and hope converge. "There is salvation in no other." (*J. M. Gibson, D.D.*)

INFINITE DIVERSITY, YET MARVELLOUS UNITY, IN THE BIBLE.—We possess in the Bible a collection of books separated from each other by hundreds of years, written by men in every variety of rank and position, and addressed to a nation under every circumstance of prosperity and adversity. Now a single Eastern emir is called out of an idolatrous world to preserve alive the knowledge of the One True God; now a lawgiver is selected to deliver in the wilderness to a perverse nation of slaves and fugitives a moral code of unequalled majesty; now prophets and kings speak to that nation, in its purity or its apostasy, in the zenith of its splendour or on the eve of its desolation; now priests or captives console its melancholy exile or inspirit its feeble resuscitation; now a little band of unlearned and ignorant men record the words and life of its Divine and rejected Messiah; now a converted Pharisee preaches that new gospel with an intense wisdom and fire; now a Galilean fisherman closes the Book of Revelation with words of perfect beauty and visions of unutterable love. In one small volume there is an epitome of all the best and highest and most sacred truths which God has revealed to man; and these truths are deep as the heart of man, and varied as his life. Yet all this infinite diversity is—like the diversity of nature—merged in a yet more marvellous unity. Kings, warriors, prophets, historians, poets, exiles, shepherds, gatherers of sycamore fruit, fishermen, tax-gatherers—"we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." Whether we read the passionate pleadings of an afflicted Chaldean noble, or the rhythmic utterances of a great Mesopotamian sorcerer—whether it be the cynical confessions of a sated worldling, or the pathetic cry of a guilty and repentant king—whether it be the exultant thanksgiving for some splendid deliverance, or the impassioned denunciation of some intolerable wrong—whether it be the stately music of some gorgeous vision, or the brief letter of an aged prisoner recommending the forgiveness of an unprofitable slave—we feel that there reigns, throughout, a Divine coherency, an unbroken unity; we feel that the long history is also a symbol and a prophecy; that each writer was but the instrument, often the wholly unconscious instrument, of purposes loftier than his own, and the utterer of language often deeper than he himself could understand; we feel that in the Old Testament the New is pre-figured, in the New the Old fulfilled. From beginning to end we recognize the truth that, though God is in all history, never had any nation a history so significant as that of this nation; none have ever known as these knew, or taught as these teach, the holiness of God and the majesty of man. (*Archdeacon Farrar*.) The Bible is essentially an unsystematic book; nothing like order or arrangement is attempted in it. The classification, adjustment, accommodation, systematization of its doctrines and precepts, the methodizing of them into creeds or codes of duty, is not even aimed at. The precept and the doctrine are thrown out just as the occasion for them offers. (*Dean Goulburn*.) There is between the construction of the Bible and that of nature a singular analogy. There is the same apparent want of order and adjustment, and the same deep harmony, running through the whole. The Bible contains a system of theology; but it contains it as the heavens contain the system of astronomy. Its truths lie there in no logical order. They appear at first like a map of the apparent motions of the planets, whose paths seem to cross each other in all directions; but you have only to find the true centre, and the orbs of truth take their places, and circle around it like the stars of heaven. And the efforts of thought, the struggles of intellect, that have been called forth for the adjustment of this system, have done more for the human mind than its efforts in any other science. Its questions have stirred, not the minds of philosophers alone, but every meditative human soul. So the Bible contains a system of ethics; but it is as the earth contains a system of geology; and long might the eye of the listless or unscientific reader rest upon its pages without discovering that the system was there—just as men trod the earth for near six thousand years without discovering that its surface was a regular structure, with its strata arranged in an assignable order. (*Mark Hopkins, D.D.*)

THE BIBLE HUMAN, AND YET DIVINE.—The mystery of the inspiration of the written Word is parallel to that of the incarnation of the Word in the person of Christ. In both there is the meeting of the Divine and the human; in both there is the shining out of the Divine through the human; in both there is such an outward display of the human, as that men may deny, if they will, the presence of the Divine. The Bible is God's Word. "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." As truly and as certainly as in Jesus Christ dwelt the

fulness of the Godhead bodily, so truly and so certainly, in the hearts of those who gave us this Book, dwelt the Divine Spirit of God. The Bible is, in a sense in which it is true of no other book, God's book and God's word; but equally true is it that the Bible is man's book and man's word. God the Holy Ghost, when He inspired holy men to give us these books, did not speak through their lips as the oracles of old were said to have spoken, through the lips of the subject of their inspiration, as through hollow-sounding masks, but spoke first in the souls of those whom He stirred to give us these inspired words. They are therefore their words as well as His. The hearts of men were first filled with the Spirit before their lips spoke out their utterances, and therefore those utterances were as truly theirs as they were God's. The human nature, the human individuality, the human peculiarities of the writers, remained untouched, because God was speaking through the lips of real men. And so it is that the utterances from their lips come to us steeped in the deepest emotions of the human heart. It was the tender heart, the glowing aspiration, the lofty hope, the trembling fear, the solemn awe, the stern indignation of men moved to the very depths of their nature by the power of God working in them, that shaped the words that live and burn in the pages of Scripture to this very day, and that stir our hearts because they first stirred the hearts of those who uttered them. This is as true of the humanity of God's Word written as it is true of the humanity of God's Word incarnate. There is in each a real, true, and visible humanity. Human souls moved by God's Spirit spoke as men, and under conditions and limitations of their day and their generation. Their thoughts were tinged with the philosophy, their knowledge was limited by the scientific knowledge of their own times; they spoke the history and the science as truly as they spoke the dialect and grammar of their day; to suppose anything else would be to suppose not a supernatural, but an unnatural inspiration. Revelation speaks, for instance, through the mind of Moses tintured with the learning of the Egyptians, as truly as it speaks from the heart of David the thoughts that filled his soul as he tended his flock beneath the starry skies of Palestine. The burning sarcasm of Isaiah; the tender, melancholy pathos of Jeremiah; the rough speech of "the herdsman's son and the gatherer of sycamore fruit"; the deep and mystic philosophy of John; the clear and sharp, and yet impassioned logic of Paul; the homely simplicity of James—all these were truly and really their own. As every pipe of the organ you have been listening to expresses the music that it was fashioned to give—so fashioned that it might give that note and not another—and yet all are filled by one and the same breath—so these souls, fashioned by the conditions of humanity and the circumstances of their lives, were made each to give out its own note, and yet were all filled by the breath of the Divine Spirit which has made those human and yet Divine utterances ring with a melody unquenched and unquenchable through the great aisles of the Church of the living Christ; or as the light, shining through the stained windows of our cathedral, casts on the floor below, in varied light and shade, human shapes and human forms, yet all of them filled and gleaming with the light that comes from heaven—so is the Bible which God has given us at once truly human and yet truly Divine—the Word of God veiling itself under and yet shining through the word of man. (*Ep. Magee.*)

THE USE OF THE BIBLE.—The Bible constitutes a perpetual commentary on God's providential government, and shows us, by innumerable examples, how to interpret those lessons which the varying events of life, its joys and sorrows, its temptations and trials, are calculated to teach us. There is hardly an event, hardly a character that has not its parallel in that immense picture gallery of historic and biographic sketches which the Scripture opens to us. The whole of life seems mirrored there; the examples range through all the ranks of social life, embrace all varieties of character, and illustrate by analogous cases almost every conceivable combination of circumstances in which man can be placed. It is hardly possible to imagine ourselves in any situation in which that immense repertory and storehouse of monitory or touching examples will not furnish a precedent either for our warning, consolation, or guidance. (*Prof. H. Rogers.*) It is no vain or goody counsel, that urges us to approach the study of the Bible with reverence and with faith. It is no spirit which seeks to evade difficulties by sealing up the understanding, or silencing the natural or reasonable expression of difficulties. These must always be felt: they need never be stifled. But what is ever of importance is, that we should not allow our criticism of the gateway or vestibule to keep us lingering in the porch or the corridors. There may be much left that needs explaining, but it is not necessary

that everything should be explained before we pass on to the winning of the moral and spiritual help which the Bible can undoubtedly afford. We need sincere hearts. Scripture resembles a sun-dial, which is in itself perfect and complete, graven with all the hours, and with a gnomon which casts an exact shadow. But the indispensable condition of the sun-dial's usefulness is light. "Ask, and ye shall receive." "Pray, before all things, that the gates of light be opened to you, for the truths for which you seek are not comprehensible by the eye or mind of man, unless God and His Christ give him understanding." (*Bp. Boyd Carpenter.*)

WANTS OF THE SPIRITUAL NATURE MET IN THE BIBLE ALONE.—If you can manage to show a person what he can find in the Bible, he is not likely (if he be a sensible person) to distress himself very much about what he cannot find. Suppose you do not find anything satisfactory in the Bible on the subject of astronomy, or of any physical science whatever, what will that matter, so long as you find what your conscience needs, what your heart needs, what your immortal spirit is craving for? I am one of those who believe there is nothing in the Bible, when it is properly understood, which contradicts astronomy, or geology, or any of the sciences; but it seems to me of far less importance to try to convince people of this, than to try to show what there is in the Bible on its own great theme of man's wants as a dying sinner, and the eternal life which has been provided for him in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. The Bible itself, with its wonderful stories of grace and truth, is the best answer to all the objections which have been made to its Divine origin; and while questions of authority and authenticity are of great importance, and our obligations should be always acknowledged to those scholars who have explored the recesses of these difficult subjects, it will always be the case that to the vast majority the Bible is its own best witness. Once let a man's eyes be opened to see what is really in it—bread for his soul-hunger, medicine for his soul-sickness, comfort for his sorrow, light in his darkness, hope in his death—and he will have proofs enough of its divinity, which are altogether independent of any questions as to its authorship or origin in history. (*J. M. Gibson, D.D.*) The Bible addresses itself to the most special circumstances of each single soul. It is all true, the picture that Burns has drawn of the holy influence of the Bible by the cottar's humble hearth; it is all true, what we often hear of its transforming power over the illiterate. No other book does this; but the Bible, wherever it goes, is ever followed by some examples of this strange effect. But much more than this is true. Men profoundly learned in the Scriptures, and in all that wide field of knowledge that relates to them, have not been prevented by their critical and philological investigations from feeling the same quickening spiritual energy of the Word. Bible scholars like Ussher, classical scholars like Erasmus, philosophers like Bacon, divines like Edwards, metaphysicians like Leibnitz and Hamilton, men of loftiest scientific as well as spiritual insight like Pascal, men of highest human culture, like Wilberforce and Guizot, have sought knowledge, not merely historical, or literary, or speculative, but soul-saving knowledge, from this fountain so full and running over for all. As the child sits down to learn his lesson from the lips of a beloved teacher, so have they betaken themselves to the study of the Scriptures, with the deep conviction, that in their human was to be found the superhuman and the Divine. Given by the Divine mind, these holy books must have in them a depth and a fullness of meaning that the human intellect can never exhaust. If they are holy books, then can there be thrown away upon them no amount of study, provided that study is ever chastened by a sanctified, truth-loving spirit that rejoices more in the simplest teaching, and in the simplest method of teaching from God, than in the most lauded discoveries of any mere human science. (*Taylor Lewis, LL.D.*) One day a mixed company of men of different creeds and opinions were met together: Romanists and protestants, philosophers and materialists, were there when this question was started—Supposing a man, doomed to imprisonment for life, were allowed to choose one book only as the companion of his solitude, what book should he choose? In reply, all agreed that his choice should be the Bible. The story is told by a French rationalist. It is a singular testimony to the charm of the Bible, and to the confidence which men feel in it as in a companion whose friendship would never weary. The truth is that the Bible does supply a great variety of mental and moral nutriment. In so small a compass, one can move through scenes which display all sides of life. It reaches our various moods: its maxims on the conduct of life, no less than its outbursts as from the

depths of the human spirit—its devotional, no less than its intellectual spirit, meet the wants of our nature. (*Bp. Boyd Carpenter.*)

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.—We believe, with an unfeigned heart fervently, that Holy Scripture was given by inspiration of God; that in it is contained all that is necessary for salvation; that it is the most priceless boon which God has accorded to us, because in it is the fullest and clearest revelation of His will and purpose towards us and towards our race—of the duties of our life here, and our hopes of the life hereafter. We believe that more clearly than in history, more loudly than in nature, more thrillingly than in conscience itself, we hear therein the voice of God, and that if its accents had not been vouchsafed to us, those other voices would have sunk, first into lamentable uncertainty, finally into absolute silence. And as regards the method of its deliverance, we believe that it was analogous to the deliverance of those truths vouchsafed to us from other sources: *i.e.*, that it was only supernatural as the deepest facts of our spiritual experience are supernatural, and only miraculous as any communication must be miraculous whereby the finite is enabled to comprehend the teaching and will of the Infinite. We believe that in reading it we are reading the will, the message, the dealings of God, as they were made manifest by the light of His Spirit to the minds of the messengers whom He selected: but that these messages were not, for the most part, revealed by openings of the heaven, and unearthly voices in the air—not by signs and wonders to startle and overwhelm—not by shocks of visible manifestations, sudden and violent—but by spiritual agencies analogous to, though far intenser than, those whereby, in all ages, God—who is the God, not of churches only, but of all mankind—has inspired and illuminated the hearts of men. (*Archdeacon Farrar.*) “Inspired of God.” That thought has, we know, been fruitful in many controversies. On the one hand, there have been theories of inspiration which have minimised or excluded the human element; which have made prophets, lawgivers, apostles, evangelists, only the machines through which the Divine Spirit uttered His own words; and have seen, accordingly, in every statement of fact as regards history or nature, an oracle of God not to be questioned or debated; in the title even of any book, that which was a bar to any inquiry into its authorship or date. On *à priori* grounds it has been argued that a revelation from God must, in the nature of the case, include all the subordinate accessories that cluster round it, that it was not worth giving at all unless it were infallible in everything. That mechanical theory of inspiration has, it is believed, but little to recommend it, except that it meets the craving of men for an infallible authority; and that craving, as we know, goes farther, and leads to a demand for an infallible interpreter of the infallible book. The *à priori* assumption goes beyond the limits of what is in itself reasonable and right. We are in no sort judges of the methods and forms, the measures and degrees, in which God would impart the knowledge of Himself to us. And the theory is, to say the least, at variance with the impression made on us by the books themselves. They bear, as strongly as the books of any other literature, the stamp of individual character. They indicate, in not a few cases, the labours of compilation and editing which brought them into their present form. They reflect the thoughts and feelings of the times in which they were severally written. They are from first to last intensely national in their character. What has been called, in contrast with this hypothesis, the theory of a dynamic inspiration, presents, it is believed, a more satisfactory solution of the problem, one more in harmony with reason, with analogy, with the facts of the case, with the teaching of the Bible itself. The term requires, it may be, a few words of explanation. What is meant is this, that the writers of the Old and New Testaments were not mere machines, but men of like passions with ourselves; each with his own thoughts, temperament, character; each under a training that developed the gifts which he thus possessed by nature, or acquired by education and experience; but that there was, mingling with and permeating all that was essentially his own, a Power above himself, quickening all that was true and good in him to a higher life, so guiding him that he did the work to which he was called faithfully and well, making known to men what he was commissioned to declare as to the mind of God and His dealings with mankind, in such form and in such measure as men were able to receive it. On this view of the case, criticism may enter on its work free and unfettered; may rightly study the “manifold,” the “very varied” wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 10) working through all diversities of human gifts and character may learn in the temper of a reverential courage, to distinguish between

the accidental and the essential, the letter and the spirit, the temporal and the eternal. (*Dean Plumptre.*) Holy Scripture is God's Word written. The things written are from God; all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God. The fresh and living water of heavenly truth issues from one source, and that source is Divine. But the water flows in various streams. The fountain is Divine, the element is heavenly, but the channels are earthly, and the channels do not change the essential quality of the water, but they modify its direction and its course, and tinge it, as it were, with the colour of the soil of the banks through which the water flows. The heavenly water acts upon the earthly margins of the streams: and the margins act upon the water; they act and react upon each other with a simultaneous and concurrent operation. Sometimes the Divine element of inspired truth rushes vehemently in torrents and in cataracts, in the impetuous fervour of St. Paul. Sometimes it diffuses itself, and sleeps in calm and deep lakes, in the love and gentleness of St. John. The element is one and the same, and Divine; the channels are different, and human; the power of one destroys not the liberty of the other; Divine grace does not annul the human intellect and will, though it is suggestive, preventive, suppletory, auxiliary to it; but the Divine Spirit, and the human intellect and will, concur and act together in loving harmony and joy. (*Bp. Chris. Wordsworth.*)

IS THE BIBLE GOD'S WORD?—1. I believe the Bible to be the Word of God because, at the first, my father and mother taught me that it is, and trained me in that belief. 2. Because, as I grew up, I found that whatever was good, true, and just in those about me was to be traced to that Book, and that the welfare of society appeared to proceed from it. 3. Because I found in it what answered to the best intuitions of my mind, met all my conceptions of what is morally right and spiritually holy, satisfying both my affections and my aspirations, and it does so still. 4. Because I have found at every step that in every temptation to evil, or conflict with it, the Bible was on the side of good; at the same time enlightening me as to what good and evil are. 5. Because the Bible, coming to man as a message from the Father to His child, expresses the mind, will, and character of a personal being, absolute and eternal, and unchangeable in all perfections. 6. Because the more I study the history of the world, the plainer it is made to me that what this Book declares of God and His providence explains and interprets that history, and that without it Christendom and its civilization could not have been, including its order, liberties, industries, and education. 7. Because the Bible and the visible kingdom of God, set up on earth by Jesus Christ, agree together, the Church witnessing to the Scriptures, and the Scriptures instructing and directing the Church in worship, doctrine, and practice. 8. Because, on all reasonable grounds of evidence, and by all the accepted methods and principles by which we get a knowledge of the past, the facts, recorded and affirmed as such in the Bible, are substantially and sufficiently authenticated and established. 9. Because the utmost strength and skill of learning, argument, and ingenuity, expended from the beginning to this day, in efforts to disprove the facts and discredit the record, have so failed that both the external and internal evidences are clearer and firmer at this time than ever before since the Apostolic age; the contents of four Epistles to St. Paul, which hostile modern criticism allows to be indisputably genuine, certifying to the narrative of the Evangelists with its superhuman element and Divine authority. 10. Because the marvellous history of the Scriptures themselves, in manuscript and print, and of their effects, places them above the plan and power of human compositions. 11. Because the Book as we have it, containing no literary or other error affecting in the least the spiritual life of man, shows itself to be an inspired and doubtless an everlasting gospel of his salvation, suited to all his spiritual needs, and the only assurance of his immortality. 12. Because the more I study the Bible, and seek to order my life by it, the stronger these convictions respecting it become. (*Bp. F. D. Huntington.*)

THE LITERARY ATTRACTIVEs OF THE BIBLE.—God made the present earth as the home of man; but had He meant it as a mere lodging, a world less beautiful would have served the purpose. There was no need for the carpet of verdure or the ceiling of blue; no need for the mountains, and cataracts, and forests; no need for the rainbow, no need for the flowers. In fashioning the home of man, the Creator had an eye to something more than convenience, and built not a barrack, but a palace—not a Union-workhouse, but an Alhambra; something which should

not only be very comfortable, but very splendid and very fair; something which should inspire the soul of its inhabitants, and even draw forth the "very good" of complacent Deity. God also made the Bible as the guide and oracle of man; but had He meant it as a mere lesson-book of duty, a volume less various and less attractive would have answered every end. A few plain paragraphs, announcing God's own character and His disposition towards us sinners here on earth, mentioning the provision which He has made for our future happiness, and indicating the different duties which He would have us perform—a few simple sentences would have sufficed to tell what God is, and what He would have us do. There was no need for the picturesque narrative and the majestic poem—no need for the proverb, the story, and the psalm. A chapter of theology, and another of morals; a short account of the Incarnation and the great Atonement, and a few pages of rules and directions for the Christian life, might have contained the practical essence of Scripture, and have supplied us with a Bible of simplest meaning and smallest size. And in that case the Bible would have been consulted only by those rare and wistful spirits to whom the great hereafter is a subject of anxiety, who are really anxious to know what God is, and how themselves may please Him. But in giving that Bible, its Divine Author had regard to the mind of man. He knew that man has more curiosity than piety, more taste than sanctity; and that more persons are anxious to hear some new, or read some beautiful thing, than to read or hear about God and the great salvation. He knew that few would ever ask, What must I do to be saved? till they came in contact with the Bible itself; and, therefore, He made the Bible not only an instructive book, but an attractive one—not only true, but enticing. He filled it with marvellous incident and engaging history; with sunny pictures from Old-World scenery, and affecting anecdotes from the patriarch times. He replenished it with stately argument and thrilling verse, and sprinkled it over with sententious wisdom and proverbial pungency. He made it a book of lofty thoughts and noble images—a book of heavenly doctrine, but without earthly adaptation. In preparing a guide to immortality, Infinite Wisdom gave not a dictionary nor a grammar, but a Bible—a book which, in trying to catch the heart of man, should captivate his taste; and which, in transforming his affections, should also expand his intellect. The pearl is of great price; but even the casket is of exquisite beauty. The sword is of ethereal temper, and nothing cuts so keen as its double edge; but there are jewels on the hilt, and fine tracery on the scabbard. The shekels are of the purest ore; but even the scrip which contains them is of a texture more curious than that the artists of earth could fashion it. The apples are gold; but even the basket is silver. In speaking of the literary excellence of the Holy Scriptures, I am aware of a twofold disadvantage. Some have never looked on the Bible as a readable book. They remember how they got long tasks from it at school, and spelled their arduous way through polysyllabic chapters and joyless genealogies. And in later life they have only heard it sounded forth monotonous from the drowsy desk, or freezing in the atmosphere of some sparse and wintry sanctuary. So irksome and insipid has every association made the book, that were they shut up in a parlour with an old directory, and an old almanac, and an old Bible, they would spend the first hour on the almanac, and the next on the directory, and would die of *ennui* before they opened the Bible. And then there are others in a happier case to whom that Bible is so sacred—who have found it so full of solemn import, and to whom its every sentence is so fraught with Divine significance, that they feel it wrong or revolting to read it with the critic's eye. They would rather peruse it on their bended knees, praying God to show them the wonders in His Word, than, with the scholar's pencil in their hand, ready to pounce on each happy phrase and exquisite figure. And with such persons we own a decided sympathy. But we trust that both will bear with us a little whilst we endeavour to show that if no book be so important as the Bible, so none is more interesting, and that the book which contains most of the beautiful is the one which must ever remain the standard of the good and the true. And here we would only add one remark which it is important to bear in memory. The rhetorical and poetical beauties of Scripture are merely incidental. Its authors wrote, not for glory nor display—not to astonish or amuse their brethren, but to instruct them and make them better. They wrote for God's glory, not their own; they wrote for the world's advantage, not to aggrandise themselves. Remembering then that the Bible contains no ornamental passages, nothing written for mere display, that its steadfast purpose is, "Glory to God in the highest," and the truest blessedness of man—I repeat that that Bible abounds in passages of the purest beauty and stateliest

grandeur, all the grander and all the more beautiful because they are casual and unsought. It has the gracefulness of a high utility; it has the majesty of intrinsic power; it has the charm of its own sanctity; it never labours, never strives, but instinct with great realities, and bent on blessed ends, has all the translucent beauty and unstudied power which you might expect from its lofty object and all-wise Author. There is no phenomenon in nature so awful as a thunder-storm; and almost every poet has described it. In the Bible, too, we have a thunder-storm (Psa. xxix.)—the description of a tempest, which, rising from the Mediterranean, and travelling by Lebanon and along the inland mountains, reaches Jerusalem, and sends the people into the temple-porticoes for refuge. And, besides those touches of terror in which the geographical progress of the tornado is described, it derives a sacred vitality and power from the presence of Jehovah in each successive peal. Amongst those who have expressly written on the Sublime, it is agreed that the most thrilling spectacle is one whose obscure outline or vague presence at once suggests the supernatural. Of this Sublime in terror Job iv. supplies an acknowledged instance. But perhaps the poetic beauty in which the Bible most excels all other books is description of the world around us. A better idea of the poetic susceptibility was never given than when John Foster called it *physiopathy*, “the faculty of pervading all nature with one’s own being, so as to have a perception, a life, an agency, in all things.” But perhaps the sublime, though the highest order of literary effort, is not, after all, the most popular. Were we putting it to the world at large, we should, probably, find that the books they like best are those which are less exalted above the every-day level, and whose simple incidents, and cheerful glimpses, and human pathos, bring them home to every man’s comprehension and feeling. In this sort of narrative that world’s book, the Bible, abounds. I could very willingly have extended these remarks to other species of composition, and would have liked to show particularly how many models of eloquent argument and engaging discourse are contained in the New Testament. But on the wide field of revelation, with its intellectual opulence, I forbear to enter. I can easily understand how the Bible was one of the four volumes which always lay on Byron’s table; and it would be easy to fill a lecture with the testimonies, witting or unwitting, which painters, sculptors, orators, and poets, have rendered to the most thought-suggesting book in all the universe. It never aims at fine writing. It never steps aside for a moment for the sake of a felicitous expression or a good idea. It has only one end—to tell the world about God’s great salvation; and yet the wonder is, that it has incidentally done more to supply the world with powerful and happy diction, and literature with noble thoughts and images, and the fine arts with memorable subjects, than perhaps all other books that have been written. The world’s Maker is the Bible’s Author, and the same profusion which furnished so lavishly the abode of man, has filled so richly and adorned so brilliantly the book of man. And just as that Bible is the great store-house and repository of intellectual wealth, so I must add that its vital truth is the grand source of intellectual power. When Sir Samuel Romilly visited Paris immediately after the first French Revolution, he remarked, “Everything I saw convinced me that, independently of our future happiness and our sublimest enjoyments in this life, religion is necessary to the comforts, the conveniences, and even the elegancies and lesser pleasures of life. Not only I never met with a writer truly eloquent who did not at least affect to believe in religion, but I never met with one in whom religion was not the richest source of his eloquence.” And I am persuaded that in things intellectual the rule will hold, that piety is power. I am persuaded that no productions of genius will survive to the end of all things in which there is not something of God; and I am further persuaded, that no book can exercise a lasting ascendancy over mankind on which His blessing has not been implored, and in which His Spirit does not speak. What is modern learning, and the march of intellect, and the reading million, but one great monument of the gospel’s quickening power? Three hundred years ago the classics were revived; but three hundred years ago the gospel was restored. Digging in the Pompeii of the Middle Ages, Lorenzo and Leo found the lamps in which the old classic fires had burned; but there was no oil in the lamps, and they had long since gone out. For models of candelabra and burners there could not be better than Livy, and Horace, and Plato, and Pindar; but the faith which once filled them—the old Pagan fervour—was long since extinct, and the lamps were only fit for the shelf of the antiquary. But it was then that, in the crypt of the convent, Luther, and Zuingli, and Melancthon, observed a line of supernatural light, and with lever and mattock lifted the

grave-stone, and found the gospel which the Papist had buried. There it had flamed, "a light shining in a dark place," through unsuspected ages—unquenchable in its own immortality—the long-lost lamp in the sepulchre. Jupiter was dead, and Minerva had melted into ether, and Apollo was grey with eld, and the most elegant idols of antiquity had gone to the moles and the bats. But there is One who cannot die and does not change—and the Fountain of Scriptural Learning is He who is also the Fountain of Life—the Alpha and Omega—Jesus, the Son of God. From His gospel it was that the old classic lamps, when filled with fresh oil, were kindled again; and at that gospel it was that Bacon, and Locke, and Milton, and Newton, and all the mighty spirits of modern Europe, caught the fire which made them blaze the meteors of our firmament, the marvels of our favoured time. Theology has not yet turned to sufficient account the Bible's marvellous diversity. You know how opposite are the turns, and how various the temperaments, of different people, and how unequal their capacities. One has a logician's intellect, and delights in dialectic subtlety. Another has a prompt intuition, and deprecates as so much bamboozlement every ingenious or protracted argument. Some have the ideal faculty so strong, that they never understand a proposition rightly till it sparkles as a sentiment; poet-wise, their eyes are in their apex; they cannot descry matters of fact and homely truths, which creep along the ground or travel on all-fours; but in order to arrest a vision so sublime as theirs, thoughts must spread the wings of metaphor and soar into the zenith: whilst others are so prosaic, that they are offended at all imagery, and grudge the time it takes to translate a trope or figure. Some minds are concrete, and cannot understand a general statement till they see a particular example. Others are so abstract, that an illustration is an interruption, and an example a waste of time. Most men love history, and nearly all men live much in the future. Some minds are pensive, some are cheerful; some are ardent, and some are singularly phlegmatic. And had an angel penned the Bible, even though he could have condescended to the capacity of the lowliest reader, he could not have foreseen the turn and fitted the taste of every child of Adam. And had a mortal penman been employed, however versatile his talent, however many-faced his mind, he could not have made himself all things to all his brethren, nor produced styles enow to mirror the mental features of all mankind. In His wisdom and goodness the Most High has judged far better for our world; and using the agency of forty authors—transfusing through the peculiar tastes and temperaments of so many individuals (and these "men of like passions with ourselves") the self-same truths, the Spirit of God has secured for the Bible universal adaptation. For the pensive, there is the dirge of Jeremiah and the cloud-shadowed drama of Job. For the sanguine and hopeful, there sounds the blithe voice and there beats the warm pulse of old Galilean Peter. And for the calm, the contemplative, the peacefully-loving, there spreads like a molten melody, or an abysmal joy, the page—sunny, ecstatic, boundless—of John the Divine. The most homely may find the matter of fact, the unvarnished wisdom and plain sense, which is the chosen aliment of their sturdy understandings, in James's blunt reasonings; and the most heroic can ask no higher standard, no loftier feats, no consecration more intense, no spirituality more ethereal, than they will find in the Pauline Epistles. Those who love the sparkling aphorism and the sagacious paradox are provided with food convenient in the Proverbs; and for those whose poetic fancy craves a banquet more sublime, there is the dew of Hermon and Bozrah's red wine—the tender freshness of pastoral hymns, and the purple tumult of triumphal psalms. But here, gentlemen, a thought comes over me compunctionously. It seems as if we had this evening come, a large party of us, to view a famous palace, and we have stood on the lawn in front, or looked up from the quadrangle, and told its towers and marked its bulwarks, and sketched some of its ornaments; but however commanding the elevation, however graceful the details and various styles, after all, the glory is within. Oh, my brethren, there is a loveliness even in its letter; but there is life for our souls in its Divine significance. Be you not only Bible-visitors but Bible-occupants. That Book which God has made the monument of the great redemption, and where He has put His own perpetual Shekinah, do you choose it as the gymnasium where you may nourish a youth truly sublime; the castle where, in a world of impiety and an age of peril, you may find entrenchment for your faith and protection for your principles; the sanctuary at whose oracle you may find answers to your doubts and light upon your path; the spirit's home, whither your affections shall every day return, and where your character shall progressively ennoble into a conformity with such a royal residence. (*James Hamilton, D.D.*)

TESTIMONY TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE.—This collection of books has taken such a hold on the world as no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book from a nation alike despised in ancient and modern times. It is read of a Sabbath in all the ten thousand pulpits of our land. In all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up, week by week. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colours the talk of the street. The barque of the merchant cannot sail the sea without it; no ship of war goes to the conflict but the Bible is there. It enters men's closets; mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. The affianced maiden prays God in Scripture for strength in her new duties; men are married by Scripture. The Bible attends them in their sickness, when the fever of the world is on them. The aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath. The mariner escaping from shipwreck clutches this first of his treasures, and keeps it sacred to God. It goes with the pedlar in his crowded pack; cheers him at eventide when he sits down dusty and fatigued; brightens the freshness of his morning face. It blesses us when we are born; gives names to half Christendom; rejoices with us; has sympathy for our mourning; tempers our grief to finer issues. It is the better part of our sermons. It lifts man above himself; our best of uttered prayers are in its storied speech, wherewith our fathers and the patriarchs prayed. The timid man, about awaking from this dream of life, looks through the glass of Scripture, and his eye grows bright; he does not fear to stand alone, to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death-angel by the hand and bid farewell to wife and babes and home. Men rest on this their dearest hopes. It tells them of God and of His blessed Son; of earthly duties and of heavenly rest. Foolish men find it the source of Plato's wisdom and the science of Newton and the art of Raphael. Men who believe nothing else that is spiritual believe the Bible all through; without this they would not confess, say they, even that there was a God. Now for such effects there must be an adequate cause. That nothing comes of nothing is true all the world over. It is no light thing to hold with an electric chain a thousand hearts, though but an hour, beating and bounding with such fiery speed. What is it, then, to hold the Christian world, and that for centuries? Are men fed with chaff and husks? The authors we reckon great, whose word is in the newspapers and the market-place, whose articulate breath now sways the nation's mind, will soon pass away, giving place to other great men of a season, who in their turn shall follow them to eminence and then oblivion. Some thousand famous writers came up in this century to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken, as time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by. Has the human race gone mad? Time sits as a refiner of metal; the dross is piled in forgotten heaps, but the pure gold is reserved for use, passes into the ages, and is current a thousand years hence as well as to-day. It is only real merit that can long pass for such. Tinsel will rust in the storms of life. False weights are soon detected here. It is only a heart that can speak deep and true to a heart; a mind to a mind; a soul to a soul; wisdom to the wise, and religion to the pious. There must then be in the Bible, mind, heart and soul, wisdom and religion. Were it otherwise, how could millions find it their lawgiver, friend, and prophet? Some of the greatest of human institutions seem built on the Bible. Such things will not stand on heaps of chaff, but mountains of rock. (*Theodore Parker.*)

TESTIMONY TO THE VALUE OF THE ENGLISH AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE.—Here is a most affectionate and touching expression of praise by one, who many years ago left the English Church for that of Rome. With a tone of sad regret for one thing, at least, which he had lost by the change, the late Cardinal Newman speaks thus: "The marvellous beauty of the Protestant Bible lives on the ear like a music which can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than mere words. It is a part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it, the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses, the power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words—it is the representative of his best moments, and all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible; it is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled. In the

length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him, whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible."

THE BIBLE AND OTHER BOOKS.—It is of the Bible we are about to speak. Not of the Bible as one among many books, but as superior to all other books. Nor does it differ from them merely as one book differs from another. It is not simply the favourite book of a sect, or an age, nor is it the best of its kind. It stands before the world unique, defying all comparison or competition. It owes nothing to any other, although every other is indebted to it. The Bible differs from every other book. 1. Every book must have an author, and an author whose moral and intellectual perceptions are equal to the task. Now we assert, and you must allow us for the present to take as granted, that the book we call the Bible infinitely transcends the moral and intellectual powers of any man, or any set of men of which history makes mention; and this is not less true even of the men whose names are associated with its production. Our assertion is that the Bible contains "the oracles of God"—that God is its author—that its origin can and must be traced to the Almighty mind. Nor do we merely trace it to it, as we are bound to trace every good thought, "every holy desire, and every wise counsel," but in a far more direct and positive manner. 2. Its history already is of itself a science, in which a lifetime would be too short to become perfect. Some portions of it are older than any known record besides. None of it belongs to one age alone—"It goes up to the beginning of all things, and gives some prophetic notices of the end of all things"—whilst every passing age affords some evidence that it is intimately connected with it. It brings us into company with the greatest men the world has ever seen; gives us faithful biographies of such men as Moses, and David, and Solomon, and Daniel, and Paul, and John, and Jesus. Nor does it stop here. Its subsequent history cannot be traced apart from the names of Wycliffe, and Tyndale, and Luther, and such men; "of whom the world was not worthy"—who have baptized it with their tears, embalmed it with their prayers, and in many instances sealed it with their blood. Its history runs parallel, too, with the history of the most learned, most mighty, and most polished nations of antiquity; and still holds on its way, and will, till "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ." Against it earth and hell have been leagued, and many times has every copy been hunted out to be burned, as though it were the enemy of God and man. Does it not differ, then, from every other book in its history? And shall a book with such a history have no charm for us? A book connected with the most blessed memories and holiest associations, and divinest providences, shall it not secure our warmest attachment, our devoutest study, and our unwavering confidence? If it deserve it not, there is no book on earth that does. 3. Every author has a style peculiarly his own, and oftentimes it is so strongly marked that many who know the author can easily detect his anonymous productions. So is it with the book of which God is the author. The first thing which strikes us perhaps on minutely examining the style of the Bible is its unity. This, then, is the one theme pervading the whole—the system of redeeming mercy—this is interwoven with the whole texture. Another thing which strikes us in its style is its sublime simplicity. The treasures of heaven, the secrets of God, the depths of eternity, are made clear to the mind of a little child. Here, too, we may note the perfect naturalness of its style. There is no apparent forcing—no trace of strong, continued effort—no elaboration or embellishments—no special pleading—no ransacking of deep and dark abysses for arguments and illustrations. Where, then, for style can you find its equal? To what other book can you compare it? Not more widely does the smallest and faintest star differ from the glorious orb of day than every other book differs in style from the book we call the Bible. 4. A book is worthless or valuable in proportion to the new truths it unfolds, to the light it throws on old truths, or to the purifying and elevating thought it presents. Now every page, almost every line, in the Bible, if thus estimated, becomes invaluable. But what are those revelations which make it differ from all other books? The most we can do here is to give a very imperfect and curtailed account of them. Among many others it reveals to us God in all His perfections. It reveals to us man as he was, is, and might be. The disclosures it makes on this subject are such as our consciousness approves. Oh, what would have been our condition without these revelations! and whence could they have come had not God in His merciful condescension vouchsafed them! 5. But what book has exerted a tithe of the influence that the Bible has over indi-

viduals, and families, and societies, and institutions, and governments, and nations? It has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law, and has been the precursor of all that could elevate the physical, intellectual, and moral condition of a people. It is the influence of the Bible which has made our nation emphatically a great nation. "The elegant mythologies of Greece and Rome made no proselytes among other nations, and fell hopelessly the moment they fell. The Koran of Mahomet has, it is true, been propagated by the sword, but it has been propagated by nothing else; and its dominion has been limited to those nations who could not reply to that logic." Happy is the man who experimentally understands its influence! 6. We have frequently seen of late books whose titles inform us that they are books "for the age." The Bible has ever been "a book for the age." Men have ever felt it speaking to their inner selves. Nor is its wonderful adaptation confined to one, or even the greatest of man's wants. It is not, like most other books, a book of one idea. It is adapted to man, individual and social, in his private or public capacity. It touches him at every point. His emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical natures are contemplated and provided for. Well has it been said, "Only in this way of love and of obedience shall we enter truly into any of the hidden riches which it contains, for that only which we love we know. No book, much less the highest, yields its secrets, reveals its wonders to any but the reverent, the loving, and the humble." (*J. Hallett.*)

INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH.

THE TITLE, PENTATEUCH.—The title, Pentateuch, is the Greek name given by the LXX. translators to the five books of Moses, the name by which they were known among the Jews being "The Law," *Torah*. In the Scriptures it is called "The Book of the Law" (2 Kings xxii. 8), "The Book of the Covenant" (2 Kings xxiii. 2, 21; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30), "The Book of the Law of the Lord" (2 Chron. xvii. 9; xxxiv. 14), "The Law of Moses," "The Book of Moses," or "The Book of the Law of Moses" (see 2 Chron. xxv. 4, xxxv. 12; Ezra vi. 18, vii. 6; Neh. viii. 1, xiii. 1). The division into five books is by many thought to be also due to the LXX. interpp. The Jews, however, retain the division, calling the whole *chamishah chomeshe torah*, "The five quinquernions of the Law," though they only distinguish the several books by names derived from a leading word in the first verse in each. Thus Genesis they call *Bereshith*, i.e., "in the Beginning," Exodus *Shemoth*, "the Names," &c. (*Speaker's Commentary*).

ISRAEL'S LAWGIVER: HIS NARRATIVE TRUE, AND HIS LAWS GENUINE.—I. The man Moses. That the Moses of the Bible is a Man and not an Idea, it is the leading object of these pages to prove. The genuine impulse of the believing heart and the first clear judgment of the unbiassed mind concur in rejecting with indignation, as plainly incompatible with the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, the unnatural and groundless fancy that the greater portion of the laws and the history of Moses is a fiction in which Moses, the brother of Aaron, had no personal part. Moses, the great Lawgiver of Israel, is in the new criticism no longer a real man, as the Church both Hebrew and Christian has in all ages believed him to be; but an Ideal Person made up of different men, of whom Moses, the leader of Israel out of Egypt, is the first; and a thousand years after his death Ezra, the leader of the second company of exiles out of Babylon, is the greatest and nearly the last. Between these two the critics interpolate, and after them they add, various unknown men in Jerusalem or in Babylon; all of whom together, known and unknown, make up the ideal lawgiver and historian whom they call Moses. Besides Moses, who is most unwarrantably credited with having left only a few laws in writing, with others given by him orally, and Ezra, who is quite arbitrarily accused of having written many laws in the name of Moses, there is a third great writer of whose name the critics make much use—the prophet Ezekiel. Him, indeed, they can by no means fashion into their ideal figure of Moses; but they maintain the unfounded supposition that his closing prophetic vision contains a sketch of new ceremonial laws for Israel after the Captivity. But, if so, Ezekiel is a standing witness against their scheme of Moses having been personated by subsequent priests or prophets when they had new laws to introduce; for he openly announces all he has to write, not in the name of Moses, but in his own name from the mouth of the Lord. The critics conceive three Codes of Laws in the Mosaic Books: the first in Exodus xxi.–xxiii., probably given in substance by Moses; the second in Deuteronomy, written about the time of Josiah; the third, the Levitical or Priestly Code, scattered through Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and held to have been written mainly during the Exile. II. The ideal Moses of the critics. In proceeding to examine the subject we note that this ideal Moses of the critics disowns his own ritual, that he denies their alleged fact of the degradation of the Levites in Babylon, and that his personation of Moses extending over a thousand years is an impossible unity. 1. Their ideal Moses in the Second Temple disowns half its ritual. (1) *The critics' ideal Moses ordains no vocal praise, which constituted half the ritual of the Second Temple.* This part of the Temple service is described by Kuenen in these

glowing terms: "In the period of the Sopherim (scribes) temple-song and temple-poetry were at their prime. The Psalms which we still possess have been rightly called 'the songs of the Second Temple.' Sacrifices were killed and part of them burnt upon the altar just as formerly. But their symbolic signification could very easily be lost sight of. On the contrary, there was no need for any one to guess at the meaning of the Temple songs. The service itself had thus assumed a more spiritual character, and had been made subservient, not merely to symbolic representation, but also to the clear expression of ethic and religious thoughts. What a pure and fervent love for the sanctuary pervades some of the Psalms! The Temple which could draw such tones from the heart must in truth have afforded pure spiritual enjoyment to the pilgrim." Yet no place for these songs is provided in the entire Levitical ritual, although they formed, not indeed the most essential part, yet the second half of the sacred service. The framework of the Levitical ritual, as we now have it, is accepted by the critics for their ideal Moses, and held by them to be complete; having received its crowning ordinance in the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement more than a thousand and fifty years after the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. For the perfect consummation of this ritual there was every possible facility; there was ample time to frame it in one century after another; there was no check of conscience in attributing new ordinances to Moses, and in surrounding them with fictitious incidents in his life; and when the ecclesiastical and civil authorities concurred in new laws or ceremonies they could either be added in a mass like Deuteronomy, or interpolated piece by piece as in the other Mosaic books. In the new theory this ritual was meagre and imperfect till the time of the Second Temple; new ordinances had been suggested and ordained by Ezekiel; these were modified and greatly extended by the priests in Babylon, most of all by Ezra; and after him they were still further supplemented in Jerusalem till they took the final form in which we now possess them. Now there can be no conclusion more certain than that, when the Levitical ritual under the name of Moses was completed, the songs of the Levites in the Temple formed no part of that ritual. If they had, they could on no account have been omitted; they were sung by ministers in the Temple divinely appointed to the office; at the great annual feasts they formed a leading and a most attractive part of the festival; and at the daily sacrifices in the Temple the Levites "stood every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even." If we believe the Holy Scriptures the Levitical ritual for the Tabernacle was absolutely completed by Moses himself; and this magnificent service of song was by Divine command added afterwards by David in preparation for the Temple. All this is set aside by the new critics, according to whom Ezra comes up from Babylon with more than half of the ordinances in Exodus, Numbers, and Leviticus added by himself and inserted under the name of Moses. But he adds no ordinance of song! He inserts in the law the minutest ceremonial observances; he thinks it needful to prescribe how many days the cleansed leper after entering the camp is to live outside of his own tent, although camp and tent had both been removed a thousand years before the ordinance was written; yet in his institutions he entirely omits one-half of the daily service in God's Temple! (2) *The critics' ideal Moses ordains music without song for the Sanctuary.* Whilst Ezra's ritual is absolutely silent on the worship of God in His temple with song or with harp, it is by no means silent on the sacred music with which, and with which alone, the Lord was to be praised in his Tabernacle. The acceptable praise of the Holy One in His holy place was not left to the will of man, or to observances casually arising, but was expressly and most definitely ordained. Not however by Moses himself, according to the critics, but either by Ezra, or by an unknown priestly scribe of the Exile, writing in the name of Moses, the sacrificial praise was ordained in these very definite terms (Numb. x. 1-10). It is inconceivable that Ezra should have written such an ordinance in Babylon and brought it up with him as the ritual to be followed in the Temple, for he brought up Levites and singers with him to Jerusalem, and in his day there was confessedly the full service of song in the Temple. But this severe and simple institution expressly limits the whole sacrificial service to the priests, it excludes the Levites from sounding the trumpets, and allows no voice of song or sound of harp over the sacrifices. If it be pleaded that although this ordinance was by no means appointed by the personal Moses, it may have been written by some unknown priest before Ezra's time, the difficulty is not lessened; for Ezra lets it remain as his own ritual, and as such he ordains it with authority in Israel. Nor is it any outlet to plead that Ezra and his successors made a shift for the omission by inserting in their

histories what, according to the new criticism, they knew to be false, and ascribing the service of praise to David; for Ezra's code comes with the superior authority of Moses five hundred years after David, and cancels all that differs from it. According to the new critics the sounding of the two silver trumpets by the priests is the entire service of praise that is allowed by the Levitical ordinances of the Second Temple! The ideal Moses of the critics therefore wants one-half of their own idea; their idea is the ritual of the Second Temple; and their ideal Moses severely disowns the magnificent half of the service which morning by morning and evening by evening filled that Temple with the lofty praises of the Lord of Hosts, whose mercy endureth for ever. 2. Their Moses in Babylon denies their Babylonian origin of the order of the Levites. The Babylonian origin of the Levitical office is one of the main pillars on which the Levitical structure of the critics rests. If the distinction between the priests and Levites in the Book of Numbers was made by Moses, their theory of the Priestly Code loses one of its chief supports, or rather falls into pieces. Ezra, who is fancifully made either to write the ritual laws of Moses, or to be responsible for them, writes for us really with his own pen, and clearly states that the distinction between the priests and Levites did not originate in Babylon. But before considering the positive testimony of Ezra on the subject, we shall briefly notice—(1) *The argument against the antiquity of the Levites.* The negative argument of the critics is that the distinction between Levites and priests made by the Levitical law in Numbers is not elsewhere recognized before the Exile. But the argument from subsequent silence regarding an institution that professes to have been clearly laid down and fully recognized in the nation, is extremely fallacious; and in this case it is maintained only by denying the historical truth of the Books of Chronicles, which is to set aside their inspiration, and by arbitrarily refusing the testimony to "the priests and the Levites" in 1 Kings viii. 4. Whilst, however, the complete silence of the few prophetic books after the Exile, when the distinction confessedly existed, is to be taken in so far over-against the previous silence, the evidence from the last book of the Old Testament is very remarkable. The prophet Malachi not only does not recognize the existence of the two orders, but appears even to set it aside, and to regard the whole tribe of Levi as sacrificing priests, at a time when, according to the critics, the distinction between priests and Levites had existed for more than ninety years, and had been recently laid down in the code of Ezra with the severest penalties for neglecting it. The evident explanation is that from the days of Moses the distinction had been so universally acknowledged that there could be no risk of mistake in designating the priests as Levites, which they were, although the mere Levites were not priests. (2) *Ezra's testimony to their antiquity.* The affirmative evidence of the pre-Exile distinction between the priests and the Levites is clear, and determines both this special question, and with it one chief part of the whole controversy. The affirmative proof adduced by the critics is in the last portion of Ezekiel, which is neither law nor history, but a prophetic vision of a character that cannot be taken in a literal sense, as shown by its accounts of the division of the land and by the living waters flowing east and west from the Temple. But if it were to be taken into account in this inquiry, all that it could be proved to indicate is that Ezekiel appears to use the term "Levites" for the "Priests" exactly as Malachi uses the corresponding term "sons of Levi." The most probable meaning of his language is that "the Levites [*i.e.*, the priests, the Levites] that are gone away far from Me shall not come near unto Me to do the office of a priest unto Me. But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of My sanctuary, shall come near to Me to minister unto Me" (Ezek. xlv. 10, 13, 15), both the erring and the faithful having been Levite priests. The supposition of the critics is that in this prophecy of Ezekiel the distinction of the two orders had its origin; that as the fruit of his vision all the sons of Levi, who were not sons of Zadok, were shut out from the priesthood and degraded to the lower rank of Levites; that this degradation may account for the small number of Levites who were willing to leave Babylon; that it was incorporated in the law of Moses by Ezra or some other priest in Babylon, not in its true form of degradation, but under the false pretence of honour to the Levites; and that it was first put into practical operation on the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. Every thoughtful reader of the Bible ought to shudder at this scheme, for it turns the Scriptural account of the Levites, in Numbers viii. 5-26, not merely into a fiction, but into a base falsehood, invented to transform their merited disgrace in Babylon into a high honour conferred on them by Moses a thousand years before; and it makes the history in the sixteenth chapter, of the awful destruction of Korah

and his two hundred and fifty men by the direct judgment of God, to be a mere scribe devised in Babylon to exalt the priesthood. Now Ezra in his own person states that the distinction between priests and Levites existed four hundred years before the captivity, not that it originated then, but was then in existence. In the narrative of the founding of the Temple in Ezra iii. 10, there is the clear testimony that "they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David, king of Israel." Quite apart from any theory of our own, we accept equally all the Scriptures, but because these words are not written in the first person many of the critics will not allow them to have been written by Ezra; and against all reason they deny the authority of the words that are against their own theories, while they magnify every word that can be turned in their favour. We therefore pass on to refer to chap. viii. 15-20, which some of them hold to be given to us in Ezra's own words. If the vision of Ezekiel in Babylon ordained for the first time the distinction of the Levites from the priests, Ezra the scribe could not but be well acquainted with that recorded ordinance; if the first practical operation of the new law was in the first exodus from Babylon, Ezra the priest must have known exiles in Babylon, both priests and Levites, who witnessed that exodus; and if the slowness of the Levites to go up to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and with Ezra was caused by their official degradation, the fact must have been very familiar to Ezra. Now in Ezra the Levites are named twenty times, and always in distinction from the priests; in the following narrative Ezra expressly distinguishes between the two orders; and he states plainly that David and his princes appointed the Nethinim as servants to the Levites. That under the name of Levites, Ezra does not include the priests, but designates those whom he had just called "sons of Levi" (ver. 15), is clear from the whole connection; in verses 29 and 30 he speaks again of "the priests and the Levites"; and in chap. vii. 3, 24, we read of "the priests and the Levites and the Nethinims." Ezra, who most of all represents the ideal Moses of the critics, thus plainly denies the degradation of the Levites in Babylon, which is the main prop of all the alleged Priestly Code.

3. Their ideal Moses of a thousand years is an impossible unity. Receiving the sacred books in their natural sense, we have from the second chapter of Exodus to the last chapter of Deuteronomy, including Leviticus and Numbers, the space of forty years with the history of Israel and the laws given by Moses during that period. It would not invalidate the argument to allow, as many hold, that certain brief parenthetic explanations may have been added, as by Ezra; but there is no need for such an allowance, and the simple position is the best, that every line in these books from Ex. ii. 11 to Deut. xxxiii. 29 is such as may have been written by Moses himself. In some parts another may have written what Moses spoke, but all may naturally have been written by him. Of Genesis also and the beginning of Exodus we fully believe him to be the author, but in them he does not write from personal acquaintance with the facts. On the other hand, the position taken by recent critics is that Moses was or may have been the writer of the greatest of these laws, as well as of institutions put into writing at a later period, that in the ages between Moses and Manasseh other laws may have had their origin, that about the time of Josiah Deuteronomy was written, that during the captivity in Babylon a new code filling a large part of Exodus and of Numbers, and nearly the whole of Leviticus, was written, chiefly by Ezra, and supplemented by other writers after his death. The critics who take this view hold at the same time that the scriptural writers constantly depict past events with a colouring of their own time, which would inevitably lead them into obvious and numerous mistakes both in time and place, in the fictitious productions of a thousand years. It is incredible and impossible that writers in the wilderness, in Jerusalem, in Babylon, and in Jerusalem again, should have pieced together a great body of laws and ordinances, each man inventing and interpolating according to his own mind; that they should all have agreed to sink their own names and to personate Moses in the wilderness where none of them but himself had ever been; and that none of them, prophet, priest, or scribe, after one or five, or seven or ten centuries, should have written what was incongruous to Moses, in time, or place, or language, or circumstance, or character. The unity of the acts and writings of a living man through a period of forty years confirms his identity; the unity of an ideal man through an alleged millennium of time, as if through a single life, proves that the allegation is untrue, because such a unity is impossible.

III. The author of the Mosaic books the same throughout. The historical Moses of the Bible, the author of the four specially Mosaic books, is thoroughly consistent in all

his writings; he is the same man in them all; in all his words, in all his recorded events, in all his ordinances, in all his laws, and in all his character. He employs no words which Moses, the brother of Aaron, could not have used, narrates no event he could not have known, frames no ordinance he could not have prescribed, writes no law he could not have issued, and assumes no character in which he could not have acted. 1. There are no words in these books that could not have been used by Moses. There are expressions in the books of Moses that are never used afterwards; of which one of the most remarkable is in the frequent description of the end of life, first applied to Abraham, that he was "gathered unto his people," and occurring in Genesis, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, but in no later books. There are also expressions common in the other books of the Bible, which never occur in the books of Moses; such as the title "The Lord of Hosts," which is so frequent afterwards, but is never used by Moses. While these books of Moses have thus their own peculiarities, there is no word or phrase found in them which Moses himself could not have used. A very sufficient proof of this statement is presented in the following passage, in which the phrases or words that are adduced must be regarded as the most decided instances that can be found of alleged terms which Moses could not have employed: "There has been a great controversy about Deuteronomy i. 1, and other similar passages, where the land east of the Jordan is said to be across Jordan, proving that the writer lived in Western Palestine. That this is the natural sense of the Hebrew word no one can doubt, but we have elaborate arguments that Hebrew was such an elastic language that the phrase can equally mean 'on this side Jordan' as the English version has it. The point is really of no consequence, for there are other phrases which prove quite unambiguously that the Pentateuch was written in Canaan. In Hebrew the common phrase for 'westward' is 'seaward,' and for 'southward' 'towards the Négeb.' The word Négeb, which primarily means 'parched land,' is in Hebrew the proper name of the dry steppe district in the south of Judah. These expressions for west and south could only be formed in Palestine. Yet they are used in the Pentateuch, not only in the narrative but in the Levitical description of the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exod. xxvii). But at Mount Sinai the sea did not lie to the west, and the Négeb was to the north. Moses could no more call the south side the Négeb side of the tabernacle than a Glasgow man could say that the sun set over Edinburgh. The answer attempted to this is that the Hebrews might have adopted these phrases in patriarchal times, and never given them up in the ensuing four hundred and thirty years; but that is nonsense. When a man says 'towards the sea,' he means it. The Egyptian Arabs say seaward for northward, and so the Israelites must have done when they were in Egypt. To an Arab in Western Arabia, on the contrary, seaward means towards the Red Sea."—(*The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, p. 323). The objection to the employment by Moses of the phrase in Deuteronomy i. 1, translated "this side of Jordan," is not here pressed: and for its use by him we must refer to our previous examination of the objection (*Our Old Bible: Moses on the plains of Moab*, p. 18). The literal translation "on the other side of Jordan" is certainly the best, if it is clearly understood that Moses means by these words the same eastern bank of the river on which he now stands. Of men before or since, "the man Moses" was the one to whom most of all that final stand on the plains of Moab was "the other side of Jordan," from the earnestly coveted land of rest for the "wandering foot" of the tribes of Israel. But the author leaves this point as of no consequence, and takes up the expressions used for the South and the West in Exodus xxvii. and elsewhere, not only in the narrative, but in the description of the Tabernacle, which he holds to prove beyond all question that the Pentateuch was written in Canaan. If these strong assertions were true, they would take a chief place in the whole argument of the book. Let us look first at the more general arguments on the two phrases, and then at the special arguments on each. 1. *The general argument on the South and the West.* "In Hebrew," Professor Smith says, "the common phrase for 'westward' is 'seaward,' and for 'southward' 'towards the Négeb,'" and because these designations, as he holds, could only have been formed in Palestine originally, he repudiates the idea that they could have been used by Moses for the description of the Tabernacle in the wilderness; thus disproving, as he believes, the historical authenticity of the account given to us in Exodus. That the common Hebrew word for the west originally meant the sea is allowed by all, though not that the term for the south was derived from the Desert of Judah; but words often lose their original meaning in all languages, and it seems probable that in the days of Abraham these terms were used for the west and the south in general without any definite reference.

In the promise of the land in Gen. xiii. 14, Abraham is asked first to look northward in a Hebrew term that is entirely and confessedly general; and when he is asked next to look southward, it is probable that this term is taken like the corresponding one in a merely general sense. Then he looks eastward, for which again the Hebrew term is absolutely general, rendering it in like manner probable that the corresponding westward is also general. As regards the alleged foolishness of supposing that Moses in the wilderness used the terms for the south and the west which the patriarchs had employed in Canaan, in must be remembered how distinct Israel must have been kept from the Egyptians although dwelling amongst them, how ardently they clung to the promised land and all its associations, and how Egypt was for them only a place of temporary exile. Canaan was to Israel the land alike of the past and of the future; there they had already buried their father Jacob, who had bound them by oath not to leave his body in Egypt; and they kept the bones of Joseph to carry up with them in their exodus. There is no reason to think that in coming out of Egypt, "where they heard a language that they understood not," they spoke a different Hebrew from that of their fathers in Canaan; and, as already noted, words once embodied in a language often retain their meaning without reference to their origin. For Moses himself Canaan was the promised land to which he was to lead his people Israel; the north, south, east, and west in the promise that constituted Israel's claim to the land were written on his memory and in his heart as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond; and when he was recording the history of Israel, wherever he stood, there could be nothing so natural to him as to retain those hallowed terms, alike on account of the past and of the future, unaffected by Israel's passing exile from the land of their fathers. (2) *The argument from the South.* As regards the South, before it can be said that "at Mount Sinai the Négeb was to the north," it must first be proved that the Négeb derived its name from the dry steppe of Judah, and next that it always retained this purely local meaning, and was not used to signify the south in general. Gesenius, taking parchedness for the origin of the word, makes first of all its general meaning to be the south, of which he gives several examples, as in Exodus xxvii. and Psalm cxxvi. Afterwards he gives two specific meanings, of which the first is the southern district of Palestine and the second is Egypt, both of which he takes merely as special applications of the more general term for the south. Fürst, in his Hebrew Concordance and in his Lexicon, agrees with Gesenius in giving the south as the meaning of the Négeb, in deriving it from parchedness, and in recognizing the Négeb of Judah as a name originating in the general term for the south. That critics should hold their different opinions on the origin of one of the Hebrew words for the south is of slight importance; but the argument takes a graver form when it is held out merely that the Négeb was originally the Desert of Judah, but that it retained this restricted meaning exclusively, and did not come to signify the south in general. The author's affirmation on this point is so decided as to call for a detailed proof of the error. In the nature of the case many or most instances of the occurrence of the term Négeb determine nothing on its more special use, as in the designation of the southern aspect of the temple (1 Kings vii. 25), which will be held to refer to the south of Judah, although the only natural reference is to the south in general. But a testing example occurs in Ezekiel xx. 46—xxi. 5, where the prophet living in Chaldea, north of Palestine, prophesies against "Jerusalem, the holy places, and the land of Israel," under the designation of the south in three different Hebrew terms. One of these terms, and the only repeated one, is the Négeb; but here it cannot possibly mean the Southern steppe, for this would lower a great and leading prophecy against Jerusalem and the whole land to a mere denunciation of the wilderness of Judah. In like manner in the Book of Daniel the Négeb is used twice in the eighth chapter for the south in general quite apart from Palestine (viii. 4, 9); and ten times in the eleventh chapter for the land of Egypt (chap. xi. 5-40). It is, then, most certain that the critic is in error; and that the Hebrew word used by Moses for the south side of the Tabernacle is a general designation of the south, and would be used at Mount Sinai as freely and as correctly as in Palestine. (3) *The argument from the West.* If Professor Robertson Smith's opinion on the origin of the term for the south were correct, there would be little occasion left for discussion concerning the west, for if the dry steppe of Southern Judah gave its Hebrew name to the south in general, still more readily might the name of the Mediterranean Sea become a general designation for the west. There is conclusive proof that when a Hebrew said, "towards the sea," he might simply mean the west and not the sea. Professor Smith writes that "the

Egyptian Arabs say seaward for northward, and so the Israelites must have done when they were in Egypt." But the author of the book of Exodus, writing either in Egypt or of it, and with an intimate knowledge of the country, speaks of a strong "sea-wind" (Exod. x. 19) carrying the locusts into the Red Sea. According to this view, it must have been a "north wind," as in the present speech of the Egyptian Arabs; but a north wind would not have carried the locusts into the Red Sea. The Vulgate, our English Bible, Gesenius, Fürst, Keil, and Delitzsch render it a west wind. There are good critics who hold that it may be taken more widely for a sea-wind, in the sense of a wind from the north-west; but we are not aware that any have rendered it a north wind. The evidence is not for, but against the supposition that Israel in Egypt called the north wind a sea-wind; for it seems probable that it is the west wind that is here spoken of under the old Hebrew term for the sea without any reference to the origin of the word. But there are other passages where the term has clearly no reference to the sea, that is, the Mediterranean or Great Sea, but simply means the West; and in that sense it might be equally used in Palestine or anywhere else. In Canaan it is so used in Joshua xv. 12, "and the west border was to the great sea, and the coast thereof." If Professor Smith's contention were right, these words would signify, "and the (great) sea border was to the great sea"; but, although he maintains that when a man says "towards the sea, he means it," it is evident, on the contrary, that the writer does not at all refer to the sea, but simply to the west. In like manner before entering Canaan, in Numbers xxxiv. 6, Moses is commanded to say to Israel, "As for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border; this shall be your west border." But according to the view before us the verse must bear this impossible meaning, "As for the (great) sea border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border; this shall be your (great) sea border." Ezekiel in the same way uses the term for the west as distinguished from the sea: "The west side also shall be the great sea" (chap. xlvii. 20). That the word is constantly used for the west is allowed by all, but Professor Smith maintains that it could be so used only as meaning the Mediterranean Sea. But in these three passages it is used not only with no reference to the Mediterranean, but with a most definite and express distinction of the term from that which is used for that sea. It is, therefore, exactly equivalent to our English term west; and there can be no reason why Moses should not have used it in describing the tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai. 2. These books narrate no facts which Moses could not have recorded. The most conspicuous example of a supposed error in date is presented by the old and oft repeated objection to the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy from the statements in Deuteronomy ii. 12, that "the children of Israel succeeded them (the Horims), when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them;" and again in chap. iv. 38, "to drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day." These statements, however, instead of being objections, serve as proofs of the Mosaic authorship of the book, because so skilful an imitator of Moses, as the Deuteronomist is allowed by our opponents to have been, would have avoided the use of expressions that might lead to searching questions. In Moses himself there was no occasion to avoid them, because his own previous narrative had amply explained them. The supposed reference in these passages to "the conquest of Canaan" is an entire mistake; there is in them no mention of the conquest of central Canaan, and there is no allusion to it. In the second and third chapters there is a full rehearsal by Moses of the conquest by Israel of the kingdoms of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and of Og, king of Bashan, "nations greater and mightier" than Israel; and the reference is to the "possession" and "inheritance" of their lands "as it is this day." There is no ground whatever for the plea of a later date which the critics have founded on these expressions, as if they referred to the central land of Canaan. Again, in Deut. iv. 38, "To drive out nations before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day," there is likewise no difficulty, for the verse describes exactly the historical situation of Israel in the closing days of Moses. 3. These books contain no religious ordinance that Moses could not have instituted. The work of Ezra in Jerusalem is held by the critics to constitute an epoch in the history of Israel, not in the true sense of moving his people to keep the original law of Moses, but of inducing them to accept a new ritual under the old authority of his name. But the whole proof of the new keeping of ritual

institutions at this great historical epoch consists in Israel erecting green booths for the Feast of Tabernacles on the roofs of their houses, and in their courts, and in the courts of the Temple, and in the streets of the water gate and of the gate of Ephraim; and this is expressly stated to have been only the revival of an old ordinance of the personal Moses, the predecessor of Joshua. This is all that can be proved to constitute the new epoch under Ezra. In the reading of the Law and the observance of its ordinances the marked noting of this solitary instance of neglect clearly warrants the inference, that the people were not aware of a similar neglect in the range of other ceremonial institutions, but that they knew them to have been kept by the nation, at least under their better kings. But against all reason the contrary conclusion is drawn, that this exceptional instance is given as an example of a universal neglect of the ceremonial law. In other respects, however, this particular record is of primary importance; but before examining it we shall look at the notices of other ordinances in the post-Exile Scriptures. (1) In the Book of Malachi there is no reference to any institution that did not confessedly exist before the Exile. If Ezra had recently brought up the Levitical institutions from Babylon, they would certainly, on the principle of the new critics, have been referred to by this contemporary prophet. (2) In Ezra and Nehemiah a large part of the history turns on institutions that were confessedly ordained before the Exile. Besides the booths at the Feast of Tabernacles, the only Levitical institutions that are spoken of as observed, if we have not mistaken, are the trespass-offering and the sin-offering, and the Levites' offering of a tenth of their tithe. In the previous history of Israel there is no recorded example of an offender presenting a sin-offering or a trespass-offering, whence the critics infer that these had not then been ordained. But in the entire Scriptures, Old and New, there is no record of the punishment of a thief; it is only in the New Testament that we have the record of the forty stripes save one; and in the case of sin-offerings and trespass-offerings there is no force in the plea that the previous historical silence proves the newness of these ordinances. There is no reason why Moses should not have ordained them. (3) By far the most important notice of any Levitical institution in the post-Exile books is that which regards the Feast of Tabernacles; both because it furnishes the only example of a confessedly long-neglected ceremony, and because the restored observance of the omitted rite occupies so large a place in Nehemiah's narrative. Professor Smith does not maintain that the Feast had not been observed, but that it had never been observed "according to the Law"; and the narrative clearly proves that the specially forgotten rite did not originate in Babylon, but was instituted by Moses himself. The revived observance in Nehemiah viii. 13-18, does not relate to the Feast of Tabernacles itself, but only to the people sitting under booths of green boughs during the feast, for since the days of Joshua had they not "done so" (ver. 17). The freshness of this part of the ordinance contributed to the exuberance of their joy; ninety years had elapsed since the first returned exiles had kept the feast round the altar without a temple; and year by year thereafter it had doubtless been kept by Israel. But the oldest of them had never kept it with branches of the myrtle, the pine and the palm; they so kept it now in the belief that so "had the Lord commanded by Moses" (Neh. viii. 14); and if Ezra had invented the festive emblems in Babylon, he would have been guilty of a cruel deception on his people, and been unworthy of all credit. But the inspired account states that the festival had been so kept in the days of Joshua, though never since; and when it expressly ascribes the institution to Moses (ver. 14), it must of necessity mean the personal Moses, whose ordinance his successor Joshua, with that faithful generation of Israel, observed in all its fulness. As the ordinance of the leafy booths belongs neither to the critics' Mosaic Code in Exodus nor to their Deuteronomic Code under Josiah, but to their Priestly Code written in Babylon, this testimony in Nehemiah assigns this latest code to Moses himself. (4) These books contain no civil law that could not have been enacted by Moses. Till our critics shall have shown how King Josiah could have sanctioned and issued the Deuteronomic commands for the destruction of the Canaanites, who were his own recognized subjects, all other questions on the civil laws of Moses are of a very secondary character. But whilst only the personal Moses could have issued these commands, strong statements have been made that the Mosaic books contain certain laws that are incompatible with each other, because they are fitted for quite different states of society. The best known and apparently the most important instance of a civil law which it is alleged that Moses could not have enacted is the statute that limits the judicial beating of an offender to forty stripes (Deut. xxv. 1-3); for the statute does not directly ordain

the punishment of beating, but refers to it as if already in use, and ordains that the stripes shall not exceed forty, lest "thy brother should seem vile unto thee." In *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* it is maintained that this was a new law of a date long subsequent to Moses; that it implies a higher state of civilization than existed in Israel in his day, that he could not have enacted it because it could not co-exist with the old law of retaliation, that the law of retaliation was obsolete at the date of its enactment, and that the priests afterwards re-introduced it into Leviticus. The law of retaliation is found in the laws of Exodus xxi., xxiii., which were spoken by God to Moses, and were written down by Moses himself (Exod. xxiv. 23). This law (Exod. xxi. 22-25) starts from the infliction of bodily injury through strife supposed to originate in a particular case; but its statement of retribution is fuller than anywhere else, and seems certainly designed to apply to all wilful injuries. In Leviticus xxiv. 19, 20, the law is repeated in less detail and in quite general terms, including all such cases: "If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, as he hath done, so shall it be done to him," &c. In Deuteronomy xix. 16-21, this is made the basis of further legislation, and is extended from the case of the man who wounds his neighbour with his hand, to the false witness who strikes only with his tongue, but whose undetected perjury would have inflicted the wound by the award of the judge. In this statute the detailed retaliation, "life for life, eye for eye," has an evident reference to the still fuller detail in Exodus; the command "Ye shall do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother," plainly refers to the Levitical words, "as he hath done, so shall it be done unto him"; and the sanction to the judge, "thine eye shall not pity," is evidently added as a warning against leniency on account of the injury having only been intended and not inflicted. Now in this Deuteronomic code the witness, who has falsely sworn against a man to the loss of his eye or his tooth, if his false oath had been accredited, is to forfeit his own eye or his own tooth for the perjury, "ye shall do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother." But when the falsely accused man, if found guilty, would have lost his eye or his tooth, for what imputed crime would he have suffered this penalty? According to the law of Moses, or according to any supposed traditional law of which there is any trace in the Scriptures, he could not have been sentenced to this punishment for theft or for any other crime whatever save the one of putting out his brother's eye or his brother's tooth. Therefore the law of retaliation is of necessity recognized in the Deuteronomic Code as in full force, and is made the express basis of extending the same penalties to the crime of perjury. If the law had become obsolete or been limited to the case of false witness, the enactment as against perjury was a dead letter; for the perjured man would not have forfeited his own eye or his own tooth, if the man whom he accused was not liable to forfeit his for the imputed crime of putting out his neighbour's eye or his neighbour's tooth. (5) These books contain no circumstances or character in which Moses could not have acted. The oldest are likewise the newest objections that have been taken to the manner of writing in these books; it has been and is alleged to be unnatural that an author should write his own history in the third person. That the writer of a nation's history, with which his own is inseparably bound up, should speak of himself in the third person need not seem artificial to us; and the usage was well enough known in ancient times, although it may seldom occur, for the obvious reason that historians for the most part narrate the acts of others and not their own. The familiar and very important example of Cæsar's "Commentaries" is acknowledged as an instance of a narrative in which the narrator so speaks of himself; but exception may be taken to the lateness of the date, and to the circumstance that the writer is not a Hebrew. This is not, however, the earliest date of such a mode of writing, and it was used by the Greek and by the Jew, as well as by the Roman. Three hundred and fifty years before Cæsar, Xenophon in his "Expedition of Cyrus" constantly speaks of himself as Xenophon, just as Moses speaks of himself; and also, like Moses, he narrates his own words in the first person. Proof, however, is asked, "that any Hebrew ever wrote of himself in the third person." Our blessed Lord so speaks of Himself in John iii. 13-18, and elsewhere; so does the disciple whom Jesus loved: and so also Ezra (Ezra ix. 1, 5; x. 1, 5, 10, and in vii. 6, 11, 27, 28; viii. 1). In later times, Josephus in his history of the Jewish war constantly writes of himself in the third person, and gives his own words in the first, using this form of writing quite as much as Moses did. The following is a single instance out of many, and in it this author, so familiarly known, furnishes a very definite reply to the demand for a Hebrew writing in this manner: "Upon this, Josephus declared

to them what Cæsar had given him in charge, and this in the Hebrew language. But the tyrant cast reproaches upon Josephus. In answer to which Josephus said—“Take notice that I, who make this exhortation to thee; I who am a Jew, do make this promise to thee” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book vi. Chap. 2). The old objection against Moses writing of himself as “very meek above all the men that were upon the face of the earth” (*Numb.* xii. 3), which Thomas Paine says is to “render him truly ridiculous and absurd,” rests on not taking into account the circumstances of the case together with the peculiarly high calling of Moses, who faithfully narrates for all generations the Lord’s dealings with himself and with Israel, and records his own faults and theirs. When a man’s character and motives are assailed, as with Job, David, and Paul, he is justified in vindicating himself; and Moses speaks of himself as the meekest of men, in reference to the accusation by Aaron and Miriam that he had usurped authority which belonged equally to them. This meekness was contrary to his own natural character; was acquired through Divine training in a retirement of forty years; and had so thoroughly imbued him, that he insisted with the Lord to choose any man except himself for Israel’s deliverance out of Egypt, on which his heart was so intently set. The record of this meekness serves the threefold end of explaining the unjustifiableness of the attack against him, his own singular silence under it, and the Lord’s remarkable interposition on his behalf; whilst the accompanying record of the words of the great God as distinguishing Moses from all other prophets by speaking to him “mouth to mouth,” is in reality much more exalting to him than the testimony of his being the humblest among sinful men.

IV. THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES ACCEPTED ONLY THROUGH ATONING SACRIFICE. If the Levitical ritual were accepted as instituted by Moses at Mount Sinai, there would be no question of the Divine appointment of sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin under that dispensation; but the refusal of the ceremonial law to Moses is accompanied by the denial of pardon through sacrifice, either under Moses or in the previous history of the Church from the beginning of the world. “The law was given by Ezra” is the new interpretation or rather contradiction of the old Divine words, “the law was given by Moses.” Let us, therefore, look first at the earlier history before the prophets, and then at the position taken by the prophets.

1. The character of sacrifice before the time of the prophets. (1) The sacrifice on Araunah’s threshing-floor. Now if it be true that at this period of Israel’s history, God’s dealing with them is simply according to “the analogy of anger and forgiveness in human life,” and that “Jehovah asks only a penitent heart and desires no sacrifice,” one or two things would have followed this most sincere and heart-broken repentance; either an extension of the trial to work a deeper penitence, or an immediate pardon without the intervention of any sacrificial atonement. And, further, if it were true that sacrifice was not by Divine command, it would have been left to David’s own choice to offer it or not as he thought best. God wills to grant a prompt forgiveness to the penitent; but He will not grant it to mere repentance, nor does He leave it to David himself to have recourse to the only true refuge from the Divine anger. In the whole Levitical ritual there is no sacrifice more certainly by Divine command than these burnt-offerings on Araunah’s threshing-floor; and there is none more expressly offered for the expiation of sin. Further, this special spot on earth where atoning sacrifice for sin was offered by Divine command, and visibly accepted by fire from heaven, was the chosen site for the Temple of the Lord. The altar of expiation, where sin was forgiven and judgment arrested, attracted the dwelling-place of the Lord to itself; and Solomon’s supplication for forgiveness to Israel was that it might be granted in answer to prayer offered towards that place, intimating that all prayer was to be accepted through the sacrifices on that altar. In this leading example it is clear that both before and during the first Temple sin was to be forgiven only through sacrifice; and that expiation was not confined to the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, but was inherent as the chief element in the character of the burnt-offering, however homage and self-dedication might often be combined with it along with gratitude and joy for the Divine acceptance. (2) Cain’s rejected meat-offering. In the whole Word of God there is no example of the acceptance of a meat-offering by itself apart from the shedding of blood; for the Levitical meat-offerings were consecrated by the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and a memorial of them was consumed on the altar of burnt-offering. In all the ages one meat-offering, alone, of Cain’s fruits of the ground, is presented to God without any atoning blood to cleanse the offerer from his sins; and it is openly rejected by some evident token, as of fire, visible to both the brothers, and marking the Divine acceptance of the

offering by the younger brother, and the refusal of the elder brother's offering. Notwithstanding the expression of homage, of dependence, and of gratitude that was made by Cain's offering, the unremoved sin of the offerer still "lay at his door"; and ever since no other worshipper with a holier life or heart has ever been accepted with a similar offering, or has dared to present it. "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," offering not merely with a better faith, but offering a better sacrifice as the fruit of his faith. (3) Noah's sacrifices, and the Paschal Lamb. After the destruction of the old world for its abounding iniquity, the first act of Noah on descending from the ark is to rear an altar and offer burnt-offerings of "every clean beast and of every clean fowl;" the smoke of these slain sacrifices ascends as "a sweet savour" to heaven; the Lord blesses the earth, and there is no Cain standing by to present a proud meat-offering for himself, and then to shed the blood of the accepted offerer of atoning sacrifices. Many ages after, in "the sacrifice of the Lord's passover," the ransom through atoning blood is fully brought out in all the first-born of Israel saved from death by the sprinkled blood of the Paschal lamb; but this sprinkling the new critics ascribe to their Babylonian Code. (4) Abraham's arrested sacrifice. Between Noah and Moses there is a notable sacrificial transaction in the life of the great father of the faithful, who is most solemnly commanded by God to offer his only son for a burnt-offering. In such a sacrifice there was no element of thanksgiving; nor was there any lawful homage or self-surrender except on the ground that man's life was forfeited by sin, and that he could have acceptance with God only by the sacrifice of another life instead of his own. There was indeed in Abraham the greatest possible self-surrender, for which he is highly commended by the Lord; but his act was not the mere surrender of his only son, but giving him for a burnt-offering to God. Abraham knew the rejection of Cain's meat-offering, and the acceptance of Noah's sacrifices and his own; in which life was given for life, and the worshipper confessed his own desert of death for sin. But he knew how unequal the substitution was; he knew the majesty of the Holy God, and both the guilt and the greatness of man beside all else on the earth; and while he laid the wood in order on his altars and offered his sacrifices from the herd and from the flock, the thought must have often occurred to him that "Lebanon was not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof, for a burnt-offering." And now God tried him whether he would offer a nobler sacrifice, and commanded him to lay his only son on the altar. He who pleaded so tenderly and so boldly for the merciful averting of the righteous doom of Sodom, now presents no prayer for himself or for his son, but submissively obeys the sovereign command of his God. But Abraham was the only man on earth to whom such a command could have been given, and by whom it could have been intelligently obeyed. The Divine promise was express to Isaac, and through him for all the nations of the earth; but the promised Seed through whom the nations were to be blessed was Himself to be given up by His heavenly Father to death that so He might become the life of the world. 2. The teaching of the prophets regarding sacrifice. (1) The prophets reprove Israel for offering many sacrifices and neglecting moral duties. The whole teaching of the prophets is the same as our Lord's when He commands the offerer to leave his gift before the altar till he has repented of his offence against his brother; and the same as the constant teaching that in naming the name of Christ we must depart from iniquity, while it is only the ransom of His blood that redeems us from our sins. (2) The Bible must be accepted in its own order. The Bible puts the Law of Moses many hundreds of years before the prophets, and represents the prophets as speaking to a nation who had for many centuries been living under that law. The new critics by placing the prophets several hundred years before the law violently pervert, corrupt, and destroy their whole teaching. In the Levitical books the critics allow that the whole law and ritual are given as in the time and by the authority of Moses at Mount Sinai. That is the testimony of these books; the critics try to prove that the form must be fictitious and the testimony consequently false or useless; but they allow that this is its unvarying form. It is therefore the whole testimony that these books give of themselves; and as far as testimony is concerned, any evidence against their Mosaic origin must come from other sources. As regards the internal evidence we trust we have clearly shown that it proves them to be genuine. Next in importance to the testimony of the Levitical books themselves is the testimony of their alleged authors; of the men who are supposed by the critics to have written these books, amongst whom the chief and the only known writer is Ezra. The returned exiles being gathered together as one man in the

street before the water gate, "spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel" (Neh. viii. 1). Nothing can be more evident than that the book read by Ezra was represented to the people as the Law of Moses, that it was the Law for the neglect of which their fathers had been cast out of their land, and that it was the broken law of Moses which they now covenant to keep. In their very full prayer there is not a word of thanksgiving for a new law, and a new way of the forgiveness of sins through commanded sacrifice; but the entire prayer proceeds upon the old lines of thankfulness for the statutes given to Moses, and grief for their fathers having cast his Law behind their backs. To suppose that the Law of Moses read to Israel by Ezra was a Levitical Code drawn up by the priests in Babylon, is to degrade his noble work and words into an organized scheme of the basest hypocrisy; or rather it is to transform the whole narrative of Ezra and Nehemiah into a mere fiction, and so to leave the new critics without a straw wherewith to form their bricks. If we accept the Bible in its own order of the Levitical law, with its numerous sacrifices, having preceded the prophets by many centuries, the whole language of the prophets is most natural; and the passages objected to simply prove that the prophets spoke to the men of their own times, and against the sins that prevailed in those times without enjoining ordinances that were already kept with even an excessive observance. (3) The prophets after the Exile agree with those before it. Haggai exhorts the restored exiles to rebuild the Temple; and at its dedication they offer sin-offerings as well as other sacrifices, for the first temple had been destroyed for the sins of the nation. According to the critical theory his attitude towards sacrifices ought to be exactly the reverse of that of the former prophets, who so often seem to speak against them; and under this new dispensation he must plead earnestly and entirely in their favour. But in the whole Bible there cannot be found a prophet who says less on their behalf, for he has not even a single word to commend them; and there is no prophet who more severely condemns them as then offered by Israel, because while they brought their sacrifices to the holy altar they built their own houses and neglected to build the house of the Lord (Hag. ii. 13, 14). It is alleged that before the Captivity God dealt with Israel simply as a father with his children without reference to sacrifice, and that He manifested His approbation by outward blessings, and His displeasure by chastisements. Now this is exactly what the Lord does by the prophet Haggai, after through Ezekiel, according to the critics, there had been given an express command for multiplied sacrifices, and for the sacrificial atonement for sin. Jeremiah denounces severely the impenitent offerers of sacrifice (Jer. vi. 20; vii. 3, 4). Speaking to the men of his own time, it would have been quite out of place in Jeremiah to take the words of Haggai, and exhort them to attend to the Temple of the Lord, for their excessive trust in the Temple was one of their chief sins; and so Jeremiah commands them to amend their doings, and thus they should dwell in the land. He does not, however, limit the promised blessing to the possession of the land; and is so very far from making light of sacrifices, that he expressly promises their abundance if they would keep God's holy Law (Jer. xvii. 24-26). The prophet Haggai, on the contrary, while condemning the inconsistent offerers of sacrifice as severely as Jeremiah, and exhorting the people to consider their ways, introduces no promises of accepted sacrifice over-against the sacrifices which he had condemned; but promises the blessing of the Lord on "the vine and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate and the olive-tree." There could not be a clearer refutation of the crude theory of this new criticism. The prophet before, and the prophet after the Captivity, alike condemn the sacrificial offerings of disobedient worshippers; but before the Exile there is promised to obedience the express blessing of accepted sacrifice; and after it the promise that is expressed is only the gracious removal of chastisement; exactly reversing the alleged attitude of the worshipper under the first and second Temple, while both were in reality accepted equally through sacrificial expiation. Zechariah was, like the prophet Haggai, acquainted with the Divine injunction of sacrifice, and with the sacrificial expiation of sin, if these ordinances were first given to Israel through Ezekiel in Babylon; and if there were any truth in this allegation, we should most certainly find him urging on the restored exiles the new Divine command, and commanding to them this new and most precious privilege for the forgiveness of sins. But in the whole fourteen chapters of Zechariah there is no enforcing of such a command, and no reference whatever to such a privilege. The six last chapters are not allowed by the new critics to belong to Zechariah at all, and these chapters, which they date before the Captivity, are the only part of the book in which there is the remotest

allusion to sacrifice of any kind or for any purpose. Malachi, however, is cited by Professor Smith as a great support of the new ritual system; and it is said that "the first proof of Israel's sin is to him neglect of the sacrificial ritual." But, on the contrary, Malachi makes no reference to any rite or law that was not confessedly instituted before the Exile, and he even seems quite to ignore the distinction alleged to have been so new between the priests and the Levites. He predicts the glorious coming of "the Lord to His Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant"; but he makes no reference whatever to the forgiveness of sins through sacrifice. This was the constant design of all slain offerings, and did not need to be expressed, because "almost all things were by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood was no remission." But so far is Malachi from expressing this abiding thought which required no utterance, that more than in any of the pre-Exile prophecies his words might be mistaken to countenance the view of the critics that sacrifices were not for expiation, but were gifts and expressions of homage such as were presented by subjects to their rulers. The Levitical law can have no such sense, and its sacrifices are acknowledged by them to be expressly ordained for the expiation of sins; but just after their imaginary introduction of the new Levitical ritual in Jerusalem, Malachi is so far from helping them, that it is he most of all the prophets who might be mistaken to countenance the view that sacrifices had no connection with the pardon of sins, but were mere expressions of homage to the Lord as their King. Isaiah, amongst the earlier prophets, takes a leading place in the condemnation of hypocritical sacrifices (Isa. i. 11, 15). But why should Malachi not reprove Israel for insulting the Lord by offering to Him the lame and the blind in sacrifice? or why should Isaiah reprove them for bringing the torn and the sick, when they were offering without stint the choicest of their rams and the best of their fatted calves on the altar of the Lord? Is the uncompromising faithfulness of each to the men of his own generation a contradiction in the prophets? does it prove a difference of dispensation before and after the Exile? does it not simply prove the fidelity of both to their God? But if Isaiah is to be held as condemning sacrifice, he must equally be held as forbidding prayer; for they are both rejected in the same sentence and for the same reason, because the hands of the offerers and the hands of the suppliant were stained with blood (Isa. i. 13, 15). Does Solomon condemn sacrifice when he says that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord"? Does he condemn prayer when he says that "he that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be an abomination"? Does he condemn the plough when he says that "the ploughing of the wicked is sin"? No more does Isaiah condemn sacrifice when he says, "Bring no more vain oblations; your hands are full of blood." Amos writes in the bold and abrupt style generally characteristic of the prophets; and if his words are to be interpreted by the narrow and literalistic method now introduced they become unintelligible. Amos (chap. v. 25) is said "expressly" to deny that Israel offered any sacrifice to God in the wilderness, a statement which we should have hoped that we had misinterpreted, except for its repetition: "Sacrifice is not necessary to acceptable religion. Amos proves God's indifference to ritual by reminding the people that they offered no sacrifice and offerings to Him during those forty years of wandering which he elsewhere cites as a special proof of Jehovah's covenant grace" (*The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, pp. 287, 238). Exactly the same form of speech which Amos employs is used by the prophet Zechariah, when the elders of Judah inquire if they shall continue to fast in the fifth month. Most certainly they both had so fasted, and their fast in its outward form had been unto the Lord. But the Lord's answer by the prophet is, "When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto Me, even to Me?" (Zech. vii. 5). In the self-same form of speech as about those seventy years in Babylon, does Amos ask about the forty years in the desert: "Have ye offered unto Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" The meaning of the Lord's words by Zechariah is added, "And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" and the meaning of the words of Amos is that they did assuredly offer sacrifices to God during these forty years, but that in most of the people it was not with a true and single and earnest heart towards Himself alone. Again, the critic states truly that Amos cites the forty years' wandering in the wilderness "as a special proof of Jehovah's covenant grace." But in this new mode of interpreting the prophets there is no testimony whatever to covenant grace in the words. "I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the

wilderness to possess the land of the Amorite" (Amos ii. 10); because in this way of viewing it the same prophet expressly denies that there was any grace at all in this providential guidance, and affirms that in it God had done no more for Israel than He had done for the heathen nations around them. "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto Me? saith the Lord. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" (chap. ix. 7). In the whole Bible there is no stronger apparent denial of the fact, the necessity, or the acceptableness of sacrifice, than there is in these words the apparent denial of all covenant grace in the exodus of Israel from Egypt. It is the same high tone that breathes in the burning words of Isaiah: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah." But our lot has fallen in a critical age, and we seem to be losing the power of sympathy with the bolder and freer thoughts of former men. Ezekiel stands between the prophets before and the prophets after the Exile; and, apart from his closing typical vision, His position as regards sacrifice is exactly the same as theirs, thus filling up the whole line of prophetic teaching. In that final vision the trespass-offering and the sin-offering bear no aspect of new institutions, but are introduced as if they were recognized ordinances just as the burnt-offering confessedly was (Ezekiel xl. 39). In the great body of Ezekiel's prophecies, not expressed in the language of vision, his reference to sacrificial rites is the same as in the other prophets.

1. Like Jeremiah he bids Israel in the Lord's name to cease from offering sacrifices to Him if they will not cease from sacrificing to idols (chap. xxxiii. 39, xx. 39).
2. Like Jeremiah he proclaims the great acceptableness to the Lord of sacrificial offerings from an obedient and single-hearted people (chap. xx. 40).
3. Like the other prophets he does not definitely express the connection of pardon with sacrifice, although the pardon of sin is at the very foundation of the promised acceptance of their sacrifices. But, on the one hand, pardon is promised to the penitent sinner (chap. xxxiii. 14, 16); and on the other hand the cleansing and the forgiveness of sin are represented as coming not by the blood of slain beasts, but through an atonement provided directly by God Himself and reaching the inmost conscience (chap. xxxvii. 25-26).
4. This promise of inward cleansing by sprinkling with clean water clearly proves that the Levitical law was not introduced by Ezra, but was well known both to Ezekiel and to the exiles for whom he wrote, to whom otherwise the expression would have been unintelligible. It plainly refers either to the command given to Moses for the Levites in Numbers viii. 7. The spiritual promise of the prospect as clearly refers to a ritual ordinance taken in its spiritual sense as David's prayer, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean," which the critics so unwarrantably deny to David, who in their account could not have known a law that was introduced by Ezra. In Ezekiel the sprinkling with the cleansing water of the old Levitical rite is taken in a spiritual sense, and plainly overturns the theory of the new critics. If it be said that Ezekiel's promise might have reference to Ezra's future ritual, this is plainly to reverse the Divine order and to put the spirit first and the letter afterwards. But even so the argument fails, because according to the critics Ezekiel sketched his own new code of ritual laws in considerable detail, and if the "sprinkling with clean water" had not referred to the ancient rites of Moses but to his own future code he could not have failed to introduce it in his alleged ritual. But in his great vision there are abundant spiritual waters flowing from the threshold of the sanctuary to give life and beauty, but no ceremonial sprinkling of water on the unclean. The certain inference is that the prophet, who was himself a priest, refers to the Levitical ordinances given by Moses at Mount Sinai; and that this reference quite sets aside the most un-critical conjecture of these ordinances having originated in Babylon.
4. By the prophets, as by the Psalms, it is always to be borne in mind that the Lord was preparing Israel for the Great Sacrifice by which all the Levitical sacrifices were to be abolished, and of which they were all only types and shadows. This great element in the prophetic writings serves to explain any more difficult expressions, taken in connection with the bold abruptness of the prophetic style. In answer to inquiring Israel, Micah says concisely, "The Lord 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?" The prophet does not say that no more than these is required, but that no more is required "of thee," because the Lord Himself had "shown man what was good." Now what is "the good" which the Lord had shown to Israel? not doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly, which the Lord requires of men; but the good which God Himself provides and

reveals, and which had been so brought out to Israel by Micah's older contemporary, the great national prophet, Isaiah (Isa. lv. 1, 2, 3). This good is in the sure mercies of David, given as "a witness and leader to the people," the same as "the Servant whom the Lord upheld," whom "it pleased the Lord to bruise," on whom "the Lord laid the iniquity of us all," whose soul He "made an offering for sin," and through whose coming sacrifice the prophet proclaimed, "Comfort ye my people, cry unto Jerusalem that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." If this suggested connection between the words of Micah and of Isaiah seem too remote, there is no doubt of the meaning of Isaiah's own words. While he declares that "Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt-offering," he proclaims a free pardon to Israel, because on His Righteous Servant "the Lord hath laid the iniquities of us all, and made His soul an offering for sin." (*A. Moody Stuart, D.D.*)

HISTORY OF THE PENTATEUCHAL COMPOSITION CONTROVERSY.—Philo and Josephus both held that Moses actually penned the last eight verses of the Pentateuch. The former was of opinion that Moses, as prophet, could narrate his final earthly fate; the latter judged that Moses told of his death and burial out of humility, in order to prevent his own apotheosis. If the Mosaic origin of a part of the Pentateuch could be defended only by such artificial assumptions, can we wonder that, after the time of Philo and Josephus, the number of those constantly increased who doubted more and more the Mosaic origin of the entire Pentateuch? Of course, the part of the Pentateuch which was at first denied to Moses was small. So among the Jews the editors of the Babylonian Gemara (*Baba Bathra*, fol. 14, 15) ascribed only eight verses of the book of the law to Joshua (Deut. xxxiv. 5-12). "For they ask," says the Talmud at this place, "if Moses while alive could have written, 'And Moses died there'? Did not Moses write only as far as this verse, and Joshua add the following eight verses?" Outside of Jewry also it was the account of Moses' death which gave occasion in the first instance for doubting the Mosaic composition of the entire Pentateuch. According to a passage contained in the third of the Clementine Homilies, written about 160 A.D., Moses intended to hand down the primal religion by word of mouth only, and entrusted the law to seventy wise men; but after his death, contrary to his own intention, the law was committed to writing. From the account of Moses' death (Deut. xxxiv. 5), however, it is clear that this transcription of the law, the Pentateuch, did not come from him. Later, moreover, the Pentateuch was repeatedly destroyed, and then enlarged by additions which were made to it, again written down. Celsus also, as is reported by Origen (4, 42) in the eight books which he wrote against him, held that the Pentateuch did "not come from Moses, but from several uncertain persons." There lurks something also of criticism of the absolute Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch in the words with which the learned Jerome addressed Helvidius: "Whether thou callest Moses the author of the Pentateuch, or Ezra the restorer of this work, I do not object." These words contain an echo of the notice (Ezra vii. 11, 14) that Ezra came in order to teach in Israel statutes and judgments according to the law of God which was in his hand. At a later date, in the mediæval centuries, as in regard to many other things, so also in regard to the origin of the Pentateuch, the sparks of historical discernment, which had blazed up earlier, were almost entirely extinguished. But as it was generally the chief purpose and achievement of the reformers to dig through the strata of ecclesiastical tradition to the primary sources of Christianity, so the friends of the Reformation waked to a new and vigorous life the knowledge which had existed in earlier centuries regarding the origin of the Pentateuch. In 1520, Andreas Bodenstein of Carlstadt, at whose hands Luther had received the oath in 1512 when he became doctor of the Holy Scriptures, declared, in his "Treatise on the Canonical Scriptures": "It is certain that Moses gave the people the God-delivered law; but to whom the wording of the five books and the thread of the representation belong,—as to that there may be doubt" (§ 81). And farther: "The proposition can be defended that Moses was not the composer of the five books, because after his death we still find the self-same thread of representation" (§ 85). Perhaps, however, some one may forget that the evangelical Church owes its origin to the striving after historical truth, and affirm that Carlstadt was a radical spirit. But Luther also, in his lectures on Genesis (delivered 1536-1545; *Opera Latina*, Erlangen edition, vol. ix., p. 29 *et seq.*), commenting upon Genesis xxxvi. 31, says: "The question arises whether these kings lived before or after Moses. If they lived after Moses, then he himself could not have written this, but

an addition has been made by another; such as is also the last section of Deuteronomy. For he did not say of himself: 'There hath not arisen another since Moses with whom God spake face to face.' The same is true again of what is there narrated concerning the grave of Moses, &c., unless one should say that he foresaw and prophesied this with the help of the prophetic spirit." There is another fact also from which it can be perceived that doubts regarding the absolute Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch were called forth by the plain finger-marks which existed; namely, that in the sixteenth century several scholars of the Roman Catholic Church, although in general friends of that which had been handed down, shook violently the tradition regarding the origin of the Pentateuch. For example, Andreas Masius wrote, in the preface to his commentary on the book of Joshua, which was printed in Antwerp in 1574 (p. 2): "Easily refuted, yes, even invented, is the opinion of the ancient Jews, which they have left behind in their Talmud, regarding the authors of their holy books. I at least am of the opinion that Ezra, either alone or together with contemporaries who possessed distinguished piety and scholarship, illuminated (*afflatum*) by the heavenly Spirit, compiled (*compilasse*) not only this book of Joshua, but also that of the Judges, that of the Kings, and other books of the Holy Bible, from various records which had been preserved by the congregation of God. Good arguments can even be adduced to show that the work of Moses, which is called Pentateuch, was pieced and elucidated long after Moses' time at least by the interpolation of words and sentences. To mention, for example, only one argument, Cariath-arbe [*Kiriath-arba*] is there often named Hebron, and yet weighty authorities have reported that this name was given to that city by Hebron, the son of Caleb." The heaping up of proofs tending to show that Moses was not the real author of the Pentateuch, has had, in general, the following course:—1. As far as the argument from matter is concerned, the so-called post-Mosaic were at first presented in a more and more complete form; that is, all those statements of the Pentateuch which, according to a natural interpretation, could not have been made until after the time of Moses: "And the Canaanites were then in the land" (Gen. xii. 6); Bethel (Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3; comp. Josh. xviii. 13; Judg. i. 23); Hebron (Gen. xiii. 18; comp. Josh. xiv. 15; xv. 13; Judg. i. 10); Dan (Gen. xiv. 14; Deut. xxxiv. 1; comp. Josh. xix. 47; Judg. xviii. 29); mention of the kingdom (Gen. xxxvi. 31); land of the Hebrews (Gen. xl. 15; for a difference, see Exod. xvi. 35; Lev. xviii. 25, 28; Num. xv. 32); the villages of Jair (Deut. iii. 14; Josh. xiii. 30; Judg. x. 3 *et seq.*); the law for the king (Deut. xvii. 14–20), &c. Then, after the appearance of the first edition of Eichhorn's "Introduction to the Old Testament" (1780–1783), the material differences between the three middle books of the Pentateuch on the one side and Deuteronomy on the other, were more and more clearly recognized (by Vater, De Wette, Riehm, and Kleinert). In distinction from Exodus xx. 24–26, Deuteronomy demands most strongly unity in the place of worship (chap. xii.), and over against Leviticus x. 3; Numbers xviii. 4, 7, Deuteronomy accords to all members of the tribe of Levi the same right to exercise the priestly office (xviii. 1–7). In spite of this, the five scholars named, as well as many others, decided that all the books of the Pentateuch agree, at least in their religious and ethical principles, and therefore they concluded that the kernel of the Pentateuch can be, and actually is, the work of Moses. But finally a new succession of scholars believed themselves to have made the discovery that even the religious and ethical principles of the Pentateuch differ from those which, according to their view, actually prevailed in the earliest ages of Israel. These latter principles they have constructed out of those circumstances which, according to the judgment of the Old Testament writers, and especially of the prophets, were rather violations of the legitimate religion of Israel. This construction was supported also by the assumption that Israel's religion is only one phase of the general evolution of all religions. 2. The stylistic peculiarities of the individual parts of the Pentateuch were found in the following manner. To begin with, even in the earliest times it had been observed that the words for "God" (*Eloheem*) and "the Lord" (*Jahve*) alternate in a remarkable manner in the opening chapters of Genesis (*Tertullian adv. Hermogenem*, Cap. iii., and Augustine, *De Genesi ad literam* viii. 11). But, inasmuch as this interchange can also be regarded as a material difference, it is not amazing that Spinoza referred to no predecessor when he remarked (1670) that the words of different parts of the Pentateuch are different, that the order of arrangement is careless, and that tautologies exist. Eight years later, Richard Simon pointed out that, from the divergent writing of many proper names, from repetitions, from the fragmentary order, and from the varieties of style, it must be concluded

that the Pentateuch did not receive its present form from Moses. It was, however, Eichhorn who later gave (1780) to a chapter of his introduction the title "The Proof from Style" (*Der Beweis aus der Sprache*). Ilgen, who was the first (1798) to apply the names "Elohist" and "Jehovist," was also the first to find that, of these two writers, one alone always uses certain expressions. But it was Vater (1805) who, with the greatest acumen, investigated the literary construction of the whole Pentateuch, and especially of Deuteronomy. Following him, Stähelin (1831), Knobel (1861, in the concluding part of his commentary on the Pentateuch), and Kleinert (1872, in *Das Deuteronomium und der Deuteronomiker*), have rendered especially valuable service in the detection of the stylistic differences in the Pentateuch. These have been the kinds of critical observations, and this the way in which their volume has been constantly increased. Thus it is that exegetes and historians, in the course of the last two centuries, have been led to propose the following views as to the sources of the Pentateuch, and the origin of that work. 1. On account of the post-Mosaica discovered in the Pentateuch, it was supposed that the original work of Moses had been added to in individual passages. 2. Since the events narrated in the first book occurred in part several centuries before Moses, and in part at a still earlier period, to the former supposition was added this—that the contents of Genesis were drawn by Moses from the writings of the patriarchs, which are distinguishable by characteristics both of matter and manner. 3. The path once entered upon was pursued ever further. All five books of the Pentateuch were divided into sections, according to their peculiar characteristics of matter or manner. Vater was the first who, in his commentary on the Pentateuch (vol. iii., pp. 395, 423 note), put forth the opinion that the Pentateuch had resulted from the conjunction of several compositions, which from the outset had stood in no relation to one another—the fragmentary hypothesis. Several scholars give their assent to this theory. 4. But it was soon recognized that a very large number of sources of the Pentateuch had been assumed without sufficiently cogent reasons. Therefore, various scholars put forth and supported the proposition that only two documents can be distinguished in Genesis and the first part of Exodus, a basal document (the Elohist), and a supplemental document (the Jehovist),—the supplementary hypothesis. 5. But, much as this view was recommended by its simplicity, it could not maintain the supremacy for ever. It suffered from the fault of being altogether too simple; for it gave no satisfactory answer to the question why the supposed supplementer had brought in so many repetitions, for example, in the story of the flood; why, for example, he had inserted before Genesis vi. 9-22 the verses 1-8. Further, a document could not properly be regarded as supplementary to which—for example, in the twelfth chapter—by far the greater part belongs. Finally, that which Ilgen had already recognized could not be forgotten, namely, that those parts belonging to the supposed supplementer do not form a consistent whole; for example, chapter xxii., because there the names Eloheem and Jahve alternate, and because the notice of the second appearance of the angel (ver. 15) begins without any words of preparation, while the promise pronounced by the angel (vers. 16-18) constitutes a causeless repetition of xii. 3, 4. On similar grounds Knobel and Delitzsch, in their commentaries on Genesis, both of which made their first appearance in 1852, decided that the Jahvist has borrowed his materials mainly from two ancient books, which are mentioned as "Book of the Wars of Jahve" (Numb. xxi. 14), and as "Book of the Righteous" (Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18). Next Hupfeld, in "The Sources of Genesis" (*Die Quellen der Genesis*, 1853, pp. 103, 125, 152), put forth these three propositions. The Book of the Jahvist (Gen. ii. 4 b, &c.) was once a connected and independently existent narrative of the oldest recollections of Israel. Further, a second Elohist must be distinguished from the first. Finally, parts of all these three independent documents were worked together by one editor to form our present Pentateuch. This is the renewed documentary hypothesis. Since Hupfeld, almost all of those scholars who are at all friendly to Pentateuchal criticism have adhered, and still adhere, to this theory. 6. Quite recently a new advance seems to have been begun; for some think that they have discovered reasons for separating the work of the Jahvist into a first, second, and third stratum. Such, in particular, has been Wellhausen's position, expressed in his articles on the composition of the Hexateuch, under which name he embraces the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua. But the grounds on which this splitting up of the Pentateuch, this dissolution of the tradition of Israel, is demanded, are untenable: and equally incorrect is the opinion of a second group of critics who hold that no part of the Pentateuch, not even the Decalogue, was derived from

Moses. This is the latest position maintained by Wellhausen in his "Prolegomena to the history of Israel." Now, since Israel possessed an especial and lively sense for the cultivation of its history (comp. Exod. xiii. 8-10; 1 Sam. vii. 12, xxx. 25; 2 Sam. i. 18, xviii. 18, &c.); since it actually kept the patriarchal and the Mosaic stages separate; since furthermore, a progress of a varied character has been reported; since also the faults of individual heroes and of the people have not been concealed; and since, finally, the degrees of the aberrations from virtue are distinguished—for all these reasons it is to be maintained that essentially correct traditions of Israel's history, not excluding even the times of the patriarchs, have reached us. Further, since all the historical recollections of Israel contain innumerable echoes of Moses' activity; since also the very earliest prophets knew a legitimate national religion, which they derived from Moses (for example, Hos. xii. 10-14); since, furthermore, all the prophets make mention of a sum of laws as the basis of the common jurisprudence (Amos ii. 4; Hos. iv. 6, viii. 12); since, finally, individual parts of the Pentateuch correspond in fact to that stage of the religious, moral, and ritual history of Israel which is described in the oldest sources of the Books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings—therefore the Mosaic origin of these parts of the Pentateuch at least cannot be denied. These are, in the first place—(1) Historical memoranda, like Exodus xvii. 14, xxiv. 4; Numbers xxxiii. 1 ff. (2) Codes of laws, like the Decalogue (Exod. xx. 1-17) and the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xix., xx. 18-xxiv. 11; as also Lev. xi., xiii., xiv., &c.). (3) Poetical passages, like the song of victory (Exod. xv. 1-19), with a few omissions; the blessing of Aaron and his sons (Numb. vi. 24-26); the signal words (Numb. x. 35, 36); the song of the well (Numb. xxi. 17, 18); the song of triumph over the confagration of Heshbon (Numb. xxi. 27-30). How many other parts of the Pentateuch will approve themselves as genuine Mosaic metal in the fire of criticism must be left to the further labours of the science to determine. The future history of the Pentateuchal controversy will relate this. (*Prof. Eduard König.*)

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH, AND THE TRUTH OF THE HISTORY, BOTH OF COMMON AND MIRACULOUS EVENTS, CONTAINED IN THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF IT.—I. That the Jews have acknowledged the authenticity of the Pentateuch, from the present time back to the era of their return from the Babylonish Captivity, a period of more than two thousand three hundred years, admits not a possibility of doubt. But how far have we reason to believe that the Pentateuch was not first compiled after the Babylonish Captivity, from the indistinct traditions of the history of the Jewish nation, which, in an absence of seventy years from their country, may perhaps have lost all clear records of former events? In answer to this suspicion I observe, that it is not supported by any semblance of probability, because the period of seventy years was not long enough to lose all clear public records of former events: nineteen years of the Captivity of the Jewish nation had elapsed before the burning of the Temple, and the carrying away the last of the people; it is therefore perfectly credible that many individuals then alive may have survived the close of the Captivity, and witnessed the rebuilding of the second Temple; and of this really having taken place we have direct testimony (Ezra iii. 12; Nehem. vii. 64). Still further. Not only the individuals who remained could compare the circumstances which had existed before the Captivity, and thus could not be deceived by so gross an imposition as any attempt to fabricate, as the public code of the national religion and government, a new compilation never before heard of; but we know that writings of far less importance were preserved. For example: no priests were admitted to resume their offices who could not trace back their genealogy to Aaron and the heads of the Levites contemporary with Moses. In the book of Ezra, who presided over the Jews after their restoration from the Babylonish Captivity, the particular families are specified, "who sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood" (Ezra ii. 62). Nor was this exactness in tracing genealogies confined to the priests; we are told of others, who "could not show their father's house and their seed, whether they were of Israel" (Ezra ii. 59, 60). And the reason of this exactness is plain from this: that such of the Jews as believed their prophets, expected a return into their native land after a period of seventy years, and preserved their genealogies, as the titles on which they might resume their properties, with the same care which they had always employed from the very first commencement of the state. Now is it possible that the whole nation should lose all public records

of their public law, when they preserved public records of the descent of private families? Is it possible that the genealogies of the priests and their distinct offices should be preserved, while the Law that describes these offices, and assigned them to different families, was forgotten? Is it probable the identical vessels (Ezra vi. 5), and furniture of the Temple which had been carried away at the beginning of the Captivity, should be restored as they are recorded to have been, and that no one copy of whatever code existed to regulate the laws and religion of the whole nation, as well as the Temple worship, should be preserved? The only thing which gives the least plausibility to this suspicion is, that we are told that the Jews had during the Captivity (as these objectors say) lost their language; hence it is rashly inferred that they also lost all records in the language. Now the real fact is this: that the original language of the Jews had indeed degenerated among the great mass of the people, by the corruption of foreign dialects; but the learned part of the nation still perfectly understood it, and were able to interpret it with ease; and the records contained in it (Ezra ii. 2; vi. 18) lost nothing of their clearness or their use. Further, this very circumstance supplies no weak presumptive argument, that as the Pentateuch which now exists is written in pure Hebrew, it was composed before the Captivity. This probable conclusion acquires almost resistless force, when we consider the direct testimony, first of the Jews, and next of the Samaritans. The tenor of their history after the Captivity represents the Jews, not as regulating their religion and policy by any new Law, but as reviving the observance of the old Law given by Moses, interpreting it with humble veneration, and submitting to it with the most prompt obedience. Ezra is distinguished as the scribe, because he was a ready scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; and very many others also are mentioned, "who caused the people to understand the Law." Undoubtedly it is probable that Ezra prepared for use new copies of the Mosaic Law, that a sufficient number might be ready to supply the demands of the people. In doing this he may have inserted some notes, to explain or complete passages obscure or defective. But what symptoms are there in this history of a new compilation, a code of doubtful authority, a collection of uncertain traditions? How idle is it to talk of these things, when the fact is so plainly the reverse. We have yet a stronger proof that the Law thus offered to the people was not a selection and revival of such former Laws alone as suited their present temper and situation; such laws as were agreeable to the general wishes of the people, and therefore might be supposed to obtain general submission without any minute inquiry into their authority. No, the case was otherwise; the code thus received enjoined in some instances sacrifices the most severe and distressing to individuals, sacrifices which no politic governor would have ventured to propose, and which no people would have submitted to, if any doubt could have been raised as to the authority of the Law requiring them. For, as the Scribes read the book of Moses "in the audience of the people, therein was found written (Nehem. xiii. 1, 3) that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of the Lord for ever; now it came to pass, that when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude." Even this must have created great discontent, and excited much opposition, if the authority of the law requiring it had not been clear and unquestioned. But there was yet a more trying proof of obedience required. The Mosaic code commanded that Jews should not intermarry with any of the neighbouring idolatrous nations. On the dissolution of the state and the dispersion of the people at the Captivity, this law was violated in numerous instances; on the re-assembling of the people, the violation was too glaring to escape the notice of the zealous supporters of the Divine code. The history of Ezra describes in the strongest colours the feelings of grief and alarm which this discovery excited, the vast numbers who were involved in this guilt, and the high rank and authority of many of the offenders (Ezra ix., x.). The greatness of the sacrifice may be estimated by the severity of the penalty under which it was enjoined: "Whosoever would not come within three days, to comply with this law, all his substance was to be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation." And the offenders assembled in great numbers, and certain of the elders and judges were appointed to examine the matter, and so many did the inquiry extend to, that it held for three entire months; and among the offenders we find many of the Priests and Levites; it was not therefore a contrivance of theirs to strengthen their influence. In a word, I rely on this fact as a full proof, that the code the Jews received after the Captivity was in all respects the very same they had been subject to before it; not then newly compiled, not then artfully modified; but brought forward exactly as they found it, in the known records

of the nation, and submitted to with scrupulous reverence, as of undoubted and Divine authority. Strong as this proof is, we have another, which may perhaps be deemed even stronger; the Samaritans (2 Kings xvii. 24 to the end; Ezra iv; Nehem. iv. and vi.), we know, from the period of the Captivity became the most bitter enemies of the Jews; this animosity was greatly enflamed at the close of the Captivity, because the Jews would not permit them to join in building the Temple. These Samaritans must then have derived their knowledge of the Mosaic institutions from a code which existed at the commencement of the Captivity. They would never have received as the rule of their religion a new compilation, formed by their enemies at the very moment when they rejected their alliance, and would not acknowledge them as partakers of their religion, or admit them to worship at their Temple. And what is the code which the Samaritans acknowledged? The Pentateuch, and nothing but the Pentateuch. This they preserved, written indeed in a different character from that which the Jews use; they have in some few places altered it, to support the claim of their Temple to a precedence and a sacredness above the Temple at Jerusalem; but in all other respects it is precisely the same with the Pentateuch which is preserved by the Jews with the same scrupulous reverence, as of unquestioned Divine authority. Does it then admit a doubt that the code thus received by these two hostile nations had been acknowledged by both as of Divine authority before that hostility took place? I conclude that the Pentateuch was the known sacred Law of the Jews before the Babylonish Captivity commenced, about 580 years before our Saviour's death. Further: An argument of a similar nature brings us through a period of 377 years, and establishes the authority of the Pentateuch, from the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by the Babylonish Captivity, back to its separation from the kingdom of Israel under the son and immediate successor of Solomon. From the revolt of the ten tribes, it became the decided political interest of their monarchs, to alienate them as far as possible from the religion and the Temple of the monarch of Jerusalem. The very first king of Israel discerned this interest, and prosecuted it to the utmost of his power, without the least scruple as to the religious or moral consequences of the means which he determined to adopt (1 Kings xii. 26). Now, to the full and secure completion of this design, the Pentateuch interposed the great obstacle. It allows no such separation of the tribes; it supposes them all united in one confederate body, governed by the same common counsel, recognizing one High Priest, by whom they were to consult the oracle; and commands all the males of the twelve tribes to repair three times a-year to their common Temple, to join in a common form of worship, in adoration of their common God. This system was therefore entirely unfavourable to the views of the kings of Israel. If, then, its authority had not been acknowledged before the separation of the two kingdoms, would these monarchs, so watchful and so politic in guarding their separate sway, have permitted it be introduced and received, to be fabricated and imposed upon the whole Jewish race, and published before the face of that part of it which they governed, as the system which both nations, when united, had acknowledged as of Divine authority? Assuredly not, except that code had been previously and universally admitted as of Divine origin, which they knew their subjects had been long habituated to reverence and obey. I conclude from hence, that the authority of the Pentateuch was acknowledged antecedent to the separation of the kingdom of Israel and Judah, above 970 years before the birth of Christ. But perhaps it may be asserted, that the support which the Pentateuch gives to the claims of the kings of Judah, renders it probable that it may have been compiled for the purpose of favouring their views; and that perhaps its authority was rejected by the kings of Israel and their subjects, though the history of their opposition is now lost—the kingdom of Judah having long survived that of Israel, and reunited all the Hebrews under one common government; and having perhaps taken care to obliterate all records that could justify the past or lead to a future separation. To this I answer, that the Samaritans, who, though hostile to the Jews, acknowledged the Pentateuch, succeeded to the ten tribes in the possession of their country; that they were intermingled with their posterity; and that it is not possible such a circumstance could have taken place, as that the original Samaritans should have rejected the Law which the Jews received, and for a series of 230 years should have combated its authority: and that immediately after their successors should have received this Law, and this only, as of Divine origin, without preserving the least trace of its ever having been disputed; though an hostility as strong subsisted between them and the restored Jews as had before the Captivity divided the separate kingdoms. Two particular examples, deserving

peculiar attention, occur in the Jewish history, of the public and solemn homage paid to the sacredness of the Mosaic Law, as promulgated in the Pentateuch, and by consequence affording the fullest testimony to the authenticity of the Pentateuch itself; the one in the reign of Hezekiah, while the separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel still subsisted; and the other in the reign of his great-grandson Josiah, subsequent to the Captivity of Israel. In the former we see the pious monarch of Judah assembling the Priests and Levites, and the rulers of the people, to deplore with him the trespasses of their fathers against the Divine Law, to acknowledge the justice of those chastisements which, according to the prophetic warnings of that Law, had been inflicted upon them, to open the house of God which his father had impiously shut, and restore the true worship therein according to the Mosaic ritual (with the minutest particulars of which he complied, in the sin-offerings and the peace-offerings which, in conjunction with his people, he offered; for the kingdom and the sanctuary and the people, to make atonement to God for them, and for all Israel); and thus restoring the service of God as it had been performed in the purest times. Not less remarkable was the solemn recognition of the Divine authority of the Pentateuch by King Josiah and the whole people of the Jews, whose pious monarch while he was "yet young began to seek after the God of David his father," destroying idols and banishing idolatry throughout the entire extent of his dominions, and proceeding to repair the House of the Lord, that he might restore His worship with due solemnity. On this occasion, says the narrative, when they brought out the money that had been brought into the House of the Lord (to receive which they had probably opened the most secret and secure place for a deposit in the Temple) "the priests found a book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses" (more accurately by the hand of Moses, possibly the sacred autograph of Moses himself originally deposited in the Ark); "and Hilkiah said to Shapham the Scribe, 'I have found the book of the Law in the House of the Lord, and he delivered the book to Shapham, who read it before the king.'" The passage read seems to have been that part of Deuteronomy which contains the prophetic declarations of the Lawgiver against the future apostasies of his people, which were so awful and severe as to excite the utmost terror in the young and pious monarch (2 Chron. xxxiv. 19-21). And Huldah the prophetess, who was consulted, declared that God would certainly fulfil the denunciations of that Book; but yet that, in consequence of the humiliation and repentance of the king, "he should be gathered to the grave in peace, neither should his eyes see all the evil which God would bring upon Jerusalem." The sacred history proceeds to detail the particular circumstances of the Levites being employed in their due courses (2 Chron. xxxv. 18), and the solemn celebration of the Passover, "as it is written in the book of the covenant"; and there was no such Passover, says the history, kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet; probably because the recent captivity of the ten tribes awakened the fears and secured the universal concurrence of all Judah and Israel, who were present, as well as of all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who now concurred with the king (2 Kings xxiii. 24), "to perform the words of the Law, which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the House of the Lord." Which could not possibly have been any other than the Pentateuch of Moses; probably the very copy written by himself. These facts and arguments seem sufficiently decisive. They may be confirmed by another argument from the internal structure of the Pentateuch, which I do not recollect to have seen noticed; and which not only meets this objection, but goes further, and seems to prove it highly improbable that the Pentateuch should have been compiled and received, if of a late date or doubtful authority, during any period of the regal government in Judah. The argument is this: that the civil form of government which the Pentateuch exhibits is not regal. The Jewish government was, what no other ever was, a theocracy; in which the last appeal was to Jehovah himself expressing His will by the oracle; and in which there was no power either to make or repeal new laws, the laws of the nation being the laws of Jehovah. We must also observe, that the judge was rather an occasional than a constant magistrate, nominated, or at least approved by the oracle; never invested with authority for more than his own life, and without the least idea of a hereditary right. Further, the Mosaic code does not merely appoint a constitution, of which kingly government was no part; but it notices this government as an innovation which the people would introduce, after the example of the surrounding nations; and it lays the kings under restraints which were equally irksome to their sensuality and their ambition (Deut. xvii. 16, &c.). When the Jews first solicited from Samuel a king, after they had lived near four hundred years under their

original form of government, he was displeased, and represented this demand as in some degree a rejection of God as their king; and he stated in strongest terms the oppressions and the mischiefs they should suffer under the kingly government. Now it is remarkable, that the restraints imposed by the Mosaic Law were grossly and fatally violated by Solomon, the most renowned and powerful of the Jewish kings. On this fact then I argue: that if the Mosaic Law had not been universally known and revered as of Divine authority long before the time of Samuel, it could never have been compiled and received during the kingly government. He would not have ventured to oppose the wishes of the people in appointing a king, on the pretext of its being a rejection of God for their king; nor would he have attempted to impose such restraints on the monarchs of the Jews, if unsupported by a previously admitted authority. Such a fabrication would never have escaped detection and exposure, either by Saul, who for the last years of his life was in constant enmity with Samuel; or by Solomon, who amidst his power and prosperity must have felt his fame wounded, and his passions rebuked by the stern condemnation of the Mosaic Law. The preceding argument shows the extreme improbability of a supposition which has been sometimes resorted to: that Samuel was the compiler of the Pentateuch. We have now ascended to within less than four hundred years from the promulgation of the Mosaic Law; a period during which the Jews had lived in the uninterrupted possession of the land in which they were settled by Moses and his immediate successor; and without any fundamental alteration in the form of that government under which they were originally placed. And if we have reason to believe that the Pentateuch was admitted as the true system of the Mosaic Law at the close of that period, no possible era during its continuance can be pointed out, at which the fabrication of such a code may be supposed probable or so much as credible; no motive or circumstance can be assigned as the origin of such a fabrication, or to account for the ready and universal credit which it must have obtained; no body of men, even no individual, can be discovered whose interest it was to form such a fabrication, or who could have had an influence sufficiently powerful and permanent to give currency. The history of the Jews proves, indeed, that they were very far from adhering strictly to the Mosaic Law during that period. We find that they frequently violated it in the grossest manner, and fell into great disorders and idolatries, and in consequence suffered great calamities. But what was the general effect of these calamities? That they repented of their disobedience, and again submitted to the Law of Moses as the Law of God. Now would this have been natural if they entertained any doubts of the authenticity of the code containing that Law? We are not, however, driven to rest the universal reception of the Pentateuch on presumptive arguments or probable conjecture alone. We have the most decisive and uninterrupted, the most positive and direct external testimony. We have a number of different tracts, acknowledged by the Jews as not only genuine, but Divine. These works are, the latest of them, written during or shortly after the Babylonish Captivity, as their very language indicates. They take up the history of the Jews from that period, and carry it regularly back to their first settlement in their country by Joshua, the successor of Moses, and thus bring us into contact with the legislator himself. They are to a certainty written by a great variety of persons and for very different purposes; some of them plain histories, and almost chronological annals; other of them prophetic and mysterious; others poetical and popular; hymns in praise of God, His providence, and laws, or celebrating great national events or deploring national calamities. And all these multiplied and various compositions unite in presupposing the existence and the truth of the Pentateuch; and uniformly refer to and quote it as the only true and genuine account of the ancient history and known laws of the Jews. They recite its facts, they refer to its laws, they celebrate its author; they appeal to the people, to the kings, to the priests; they rebuke and threaten them for neglecting the Mosaic Law, as it is contained in the Pentateuch; and what is most decisive, they never once give the least hint of any rival law, of any new compilation, of any doubt as to its authenticity. II. We may also remark, that the nature of several laws concerning property was such, that if they had not been enacted before its distribution among the people, and established as the tenure and condition on which it was held, their introduction at any subsequent period would have excited a great ferment and great opposition. Such was the Law of release from all debts and all personal servitude every seventh year (Deut. xv.; Lev. xxv.); and that Law which ordered that if the property of any family had been alienated by sale, it should be restored to the family every fiftieth year, or year of jubilee. All who know the commotions

which attempts to discharge debts, and change the distribution of property, have always excited, and who recollect the examples of Sparta, Athens, and Rome, in this matter, will be sensible that a code containing such regulations as these could not have been established as the regular Law of the Jewish state, without opposition, except before the distribution of property, and as the condition on which it was held; and therefore before the settlement of the Jews in the land of their inheritance. Another regulation as to property occurs in Leviticus xix. 23-25, of a singular kind. Now, would such a regulation as this have been observed, if it had not been established on clear authority, before the Jews took possession of the Promised Land? And if it never had been established and observed, what motive could have induced a fictitious writer to load his account with so improbable and so apparently useless a circumstance? I now proceed to confirm the conclusion thus derived from the testimony of the Jewish nation, still farther, by considering the internal structure of the history itself. If the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses, it is a forgery imposed upon the nation in his name. It is totally impossible this should have been done during the life of the legislator, or immediately after his death, during the lives of his contemporaries. If then the Pentateuch was not the original record of Moses himself, it was the work of some compiler in a period long subsequent, who assumed the character, and wrote in the name of the Jewish Lawgiver, to answer some design different from genuine truth. And if so, we can hardly fail of discerning, in the texture of the work itself, marks of a compilation long subsequent to the facts it relates. We cannot but perceive some traces of the particular purpose for which it was composed. On the most cursory perusal of the four last books of the Pentateuch, it seems most evident that the main facts (considering at present only such as were not supernatural) were so public, so singular, and so important, affecting in their consequences the most valuable rights and interests of every order of society, nay, almost of every individual; that we cannot suppose any man could have ventured to fabricate a false account of them, and have been successful in gaining for such a fabrication that universal credit and permanent authority which it has been proved the Pentateuch certainly obtained amongst the Jews from the very commencement of their state. The rapid increase of the Jews in Egypt, the severe oppression they sustained there, the treasure cities, and other public works raised by their labours, above all, the cruel edict to destroy all their male children, in order, gradually and totally, to exterminate the nation; all these were facts which must have been engraven on the hearts, and handed down in the traditions of every Hebrew family. Nor were the circumstances which led to their departure from the Land of Bondage, less public and notorious. Let it be remembered that this history does not recount the origin and growth of an infant colony, or the emigration of a savage horde, but the march of a numerous nation; for they "journeyed about six hundred thousand men, besides women and children; and a mixed multitude went up also with them, and flocks and herds, and very much cattle"; while the magnificent structure of their Tabernacle, the distribution of property, the tribe of the Levites set apart for ministers of Divine worship and for public instructors, and the code of their religious and civil institutions, prove that a great degree of civilization prevailed amongst the Jews at the very time when these facts were said to have taken place. Now can we believe a nation so great and so civilized were universally and palpably deceived as to a whole series of facts, so public and important as this history details? If, then, the leading events of the Pentateuch were so public, so momentous, and so recent, that the history detailing them could have found no credit had it not been true; if the laws and institutions it contains were so important, and of such a singular nature, that had they not been derived from unquestioned authority they could never have been adopted; it remains to enquire how far the relation carries with it marks of truth, even in its minutest detail. Now in this view, the first character of the Pentateuch which strikes us is the perfect artlessness and simplicity of its style and structure. Nothing is more evident in the entire structure of the Pentateuch, than its being written without the least effort to form an elaborate and engaging history, an impressive and beautiful composition. A writer who had such a design would have separated the history from the laws; the former he would have related with such a selection of circumstances as would most interest and affect his reader; the latter he would have delivered in some regular system, and avoided minute detail and frequent repetitions. On the contrary, the author of the Pentateuch proceeds in such an order as was indeed most natural to a writer relating the different occurrences which took place, exactly as they took place; but which renders his work exceedingly irregular, and even tedious as a composition. Additional

proofs that the writer of the Pentateuch was careless of ornament, and attentive to objects which no mere inventor of a fiction would have thought of, and no compiler even of a true history, who designed to interest and amuse his readers, would have dwelt on, may be derived from the manner (see Deut. the first twenty-three chapters) in which the rules about sacrifices, the distinctions of meats, clean and unclean, the different modes of contracting pollution, and the rules about purification, and, in particular, about the symptoms and the cure of leprosy, are detailed. We must not forget that these rules continued to be observed amongst the Jews; that they are so minute, they could scarcely have been remembered distinctly for any length of time, if they had not been written; that this account of them must therefore have been published very soon after they were first observed; that many of them are so tedious and burdensome that they would not have been submitted to, if the authority inculcating them had been at all doubtful; in short, if they had not been inculcated by the same authority which regulated the rest of that religious and civil system of which they form a part. It follows, that they were observed from the time when the Jewish Lawgiver established his code, and that they were published either by him, or immediately after him. The frequent genealogies (see Numb. i. ii. iii. and especially xxvi. and xxxiv.) which occur in the Pentateuch, form another strong presumptive proof that it was composed by a writer of a very early date, and from original materials. The genealogies of the Jewish tribes were not mere arbitrary lists of names, in which the writer might insert as many fictitious ones as he pleased, retaining only some few more conspicuous names of existing families, to preserve an appearance of their being founded in reality. But they were a complete enumeration of all the original stocks, from some one of which every family in the Jewish nation derived its origin, and in which no name was to be inserted whose descendants or heirs did not exist in possession of the property which the original family had possessed at the first division of the Promised Land. The distribution of property by tribes and families proves some such catalogue of families as we find in the Pentateuch must have existed at the very first division of the country. These must have been carefully preserved, because the property of every family was unalienable, since, if sold, it was to return to the original family at each year of jubilee. The genealogies of the Pentateuch, if they differed from this known and authentic register, would have been immediately rejected, and with them the whole work. They therefore impart to the entire history all the authenticity of such a public register. Again, we may make a similar observation on the geographical enumerations of places in the Pentateuch (see Exod. xiv. 2; xv. 27; xvii. 7; comp. Numbers xx. xxi. and xxxiii. xxxiv. xxv; also Deut. i. ii. iii.); the accounts constantly given of their deriving their names from particular events and particular persons; and on the details of marches and encampments which occur, first in the progress of the direct narrative, when only some few stations distinguished by remarkable facts are noticed, and afterwards at its close, where a regular list is given of all the stations of the Jewish camp. All this looks like reality. Whenever the Pentateuch was published, it would have been immediately rejected, except the account it gives of the origin of these names, and of the series of these marches, had been known to be true by the Jews in general. An inventor of fiction would not venture upon this, as it would facilitate the detection of his falsehood; a compiler long subsequent would not trouble himself with it, except in some remarkable cases. The very natural and artless manner in which all circumstances of this nature are introduced in the Pentateuch increases the probability of its being the work of an eye-witness, who could introduce them with ease; while to anybody else it would be extremely difficult and therefore unnatural; since it would render his work much more laborious, without making it more instructive. All these things bespeak a writer present at the transactions, deeply interested in them, recording each object as it was suggested to his mind by facts, conscious he had such authority with the persons to whom he wrote, as to besecure of their attention, and utterly indifferent as to style or ornament, and those various arts which are employed to fix attention and engage regard; which an artful forger would probably have employed, and a compiler of even a true history would not have judged beneath his attention. Now, though it does not at all follow that where these arts are used, falsehood must exist; yet their absence greatly increases our confidence that we shall meet nothing but truth. But the most decisive character of truth in any history is its impartiality. And here the author of the Pentateuch is distinguished perhaps above any historian in the world; whether we consider the manner in which he speaks of the Hebrew patriarchs, the Jewish nation in general, or of its legislator

and his nearest relations. Of the patriarchs, he speaks in such a way as not only did not gratify the vanity of his countrymen, but such as must have most severely wounded their national pride. He ranks some of their ancestors very high indeed, as worshippers of the true God, and observers of His will, in the midst of a world rapidly degenerating into idolatry; yet there is not one of them (Joseph perhaps excepted) of whom he does not recount many weaknesses, which a zealous partisan would have been careful to suppress; and to many he imputes great crimes, which he never attempts to palliate or disguise. Of the Jewish nation in general, the author of the Pentateuch speaks, it may be said, not only impartially, but even severely. He does not conceal the weakness and obscurity of their first origin, that "a Syrian ready to perish, was their father"; nor their long and degrading slavery in Egypt; their frequent murmurings and criminal distrust of God, notwithstanding his many interpositions in their favour; their criminal apostasy, rebellion, and resolution to return to Egypt; first, when they erected the golden calf at Mount Sinai; and next on the return of the spies from the land of Canaan, when they were so afraid of the inhabitants that they durst not attack them: he repeatedly reproaches the people with these crimes, and loads them with the epithets of stiff-necked, rebellious, and idolatrous. He inculcates upon them most emphatically, that it was not for their own righteousness that God gave them possession of the promised land. He declares to them his conviction that in their prosperity they would again relapse into their rebellions and idolatries, and imitate the foul vices of those nations, whom God had driven out from before them for these very crimes. The impartiality of the author of the Pentateuch is not less remarkable in the mode in which he spoke of the nearest relations and connections of the Jewish lawgiver. His brother Aaron is related to have been engaged in the great crime of setting up the golden calf, to have joined with his sister Miriam in an unjustifiable attack on the authority of Moses, and to have offended God so much that he was excluded from the promised land; and the two eldest sons of Aaron are related to have been miraculously put to death by God Himself, in consequence of their violating the ritual Law. The tribe and kindred of the Lawgiver are not represented as exempt from the criminal rebellion of the Jews on the return of the twelve spies. Caleb and Joshua, who alone had opposed it, were of different tribes, one of Judah, and the other of Ephraim. In a word, nothing in the narrative of the Pentateuch exalts the characters of any of the near relatives of Moses and Aaron, except only in the instance of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron; who, for his zeal in restraining and punishing the licentiousness and idolatry into which the Midianitish women had seduced his countrymen, was rewarded by the high priesthood's being made hereditary in his family. The most decisive proof of impartiality is, however, found in the manner in which the Pentateuch speaks of Moses himself. The entire account which the book of Exodus delivers of the private life of Moses, for the eighty years which preceded his Divine mission to deliver the Israelites, is comprised in twenty-two verses. All is plain and artless, full of the simplicity of patriarchal life, and unmixt with a single circumstance tending to exalt the personal character of the Lawgiver, or mark him out as peculiarly fitted for so high a destiny. Compare with this short and modest narrative, the embellishments which national vanity added in subsequent traditions, and which Josephus collected and adorned. Now, what I contend for is this, that if the Pentateuch had been compiled by any historian guided by the mere uncontrolled feelings and partialities of the human mind, we should discover them in his describing the character of the man who is represented as the legislator and head of the nation who were the chosen people of God. I could show by a minute induction, that nothing of this kind occurs in the Pentateuch, and that multiplied instances of it are found in Josephus, who is yet admitted to be an historian of general veracity and integrity. I have but one further remark to make, and that is, that we find, although the subject-matter of Josephus is essentially the same with that of the Pentateuch, yet, in the selection and order of their circumstances they differ, exactly as we should expect the works of a compiler anxious to interest and keep up his reader's attention, would, whenever composed, differ from the original narrative of an eye-witness, detailing (as Moses did) every circumstance as it occurred, and totally careless of everything but minute precision and strict fidelity. All these differences, I contend, strongly illustrate and confirm the originality and the truth of the Pentateuch; and tend to prove it was the work of an eye-witness, and even of an eye-witness whose business and anxious care it was to superintend and direct every circumstance of what he described; such an eye-witness was Moses, and Moses alone. If then he was the author, can we doubt

the truth of the narrative? Were not the leading facts too recent, too important, to admit of the least falsification? Is not the detail formed with such artlessness and simplicity, such particularity and minuteness, such candour and impartiality, that we cannot doubt of its truth, even in the most minute particulars? III. The exordium to the book of Deuteronomy (chap. i. 1-3) is exceedingly remarkable. It states that it is not, like the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, a direct narration or journal of the various events which occurred to the Jewish legislator and nation, from the commencement of their deliverance from Egypt; but that it was a recapitulation of everything which Moses thought it necessary to notice, in addressing the people shortly before his death, at the close of the forty years, during which he had acted as their Lawgiver and judge. I direct attention to this peculiar character of the last book of the Pentateuch, because it seems to me to supply the ground-work of an argument for the genuineness and truth of the entire, somewhat different from those which I have seen generally and distinctly noticed. I have endeavoured to collect the topics in proof of the authenticity and truth of the works ascribed to Moses; from their general reception among the Jews; from the important and public nature of the facts they relate; from the simplicity of their style and structure; from the particularity of their narrative, natural to an eye-witness, and to an eye-witness alone; and especially from the admirable impartiality they everywhere display. But if the distinct nature and purpose ascribed to the book of Deuteronomy really belongs to it, a comparison of this, with the preceding books of the Pentateuch, ought to afford a distinct proof of the truth and authenticity of all, from the undesigned coincidences between them. The direct narrative was written at the time of the transactions as they were passing; the recapitulation was delivered at a period long subsequent to many. The former was intended to record all the particulars of the events most necessary to be known. In the latter it was intended to notice only such particulars as the immediate object of the speaker, in addressing the people, rendered it expedient to impress upon their minds. In each the laws are intermixed with the facts, and both laws and facts are referred to for different purposes and on different occasions. This gives room for comparing these statements and allusions, and judging whether they agree in such a manner as appears to result, not from the artifice which forgery or falsehood might adopt, but from the consistency of nature and truth. We may thus weigh the different testimonies of the same witness, delivered at different times and on different occasions, and judge, as it were, by a cross-examination of their truth. And we may remark that if a coincidence appears in minute and unimportant circumstances, it is therefore the more improbable it should have been designed; also the more indirect and circuitous it is, the less obvious it would have been to a forger or compiler. If the situations in which the writer is placed, and the views with which at different times he alludes to the same facts are different, and the terms which he employs are adapted to this difference, in an artless and natural manner, this is a strong presumption of truth. Finally, if the direct narrative, and the subsequent references and allusions, appear in any instance to approach to a contradiction, and yet, on closer inspection, are found to agree, this very strongly confirms the absence of art, and the influence of truth and reality. Having thus expounded the general meaning of my argument, I proceed to exemplify it by some instances, which seem sufficient for establishing the conclusion contended for. Some presumption that the four last books of the Pentateuch were really composed by an eye-witness, at the time of the transactions, arises from their describing the nation and the lawgiver in circumstances totally different from any which ever existed before or after that peculiar period; from their adapting every incident, however important, every turn of expression, however minute, to these peculiar circumstances. The Jews are supposed to have left the land of Egypt, and not yet possessed themselves of the land of Canaan. In this interval the nation was all collected together, never before or after; it then dwelt in tents, never before or after; no one possessed any landed property or houses; no local distinctions, no local tribunal could then exist; these and a variety of other circumstances of the same nature necessarily attended this peculiar situation. Now such is the nature of the human mind, that though it may be easy to imagine a peculiar situation of fictitious characters, and describe their conduct in this situation with sufficient consistency, as in a poem or a fiction entirely unconnected with reality, yet, when characters that have really existed are described in circumstances entirely or even partly fictitious; when it is necessary to combine a considerable degree of truth with a certain portion of fiction; when it is necessary to describe this unprecedented and

fictitious situation, not merely in general terms, but in a very minute detail of facts and regulations; to connect it with particular times and places and persons, to combine it with subsequent events which were real, and with the laws and customs which the writer himself lives under, and which prevail through an extensive nation; then, indeed, it requires no ordinary ingenuity, and no common caution, to preserve a perfect consistency; never once to suffer the constant and familiar associations which perpetually obtrude themselves upon the mind from present experience to creep into our language or sentiments, when we wish to describe or relate facts suitable only to past experience. Nay, admit that all this may possibly be done, it certainly can be done only by great care and art; and it is, I should conceive, next to impossible but that this care and art should somewhere or other betray itself in the turn of the narrative or the expression. Now, an attentive perusal of the Pentateuch will, I doubt not, prove that it is written without any the least appearance of art or caution; and it is certain, beyond all doubt, that its facts, sentiments, and language are adapted to the peculiarities of the situation which have been noticed. The present tense is constantly used in speaking of the facts in the wilderness: "I am the Lord, who bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt"; the future, in speaking of anything to be done in the land of Canaan (Exod. xxxiv. 11-13, 23, 24). Thus, also, it is perpetually supposed in every direction, as to public matters, that the whole congregation can be collected together at the shortest warning. We are told (see Levit. nine first chaps.; also x. 5) of dead bodies carried out of the camp"; of victims on particular occasions being burned without the camp (Levit. iv. 21; viii. 17; Numb. xix. 9). This peculiarity of situation mixes itself with every circumstance of the narrative, directly and indirectly, in express terms, and by incidental allusions, and always without any appearance of art or design. But to proceed to compare the direct narrative with the recapitulation. We may observe, that a variety of circumstances which it was natural and necessary to notice on the entrance of the Jews into the land of their inheritance, occur for the first time in the last address which Moses delivered to the people on the borders of Canaan. Then, and not before, does the legislator speak of the "place which the Lord should choose to put His name therein" (Deut. xii. 5). Then, and not before, does he add to the precepts concerning the observance of the three great feasts, that they were to be celebrated at that holy place. Then, and not before, does he enjoin the Jews to bring their offerings, their sacrifices, their tithes, and the firstlings of their flocks and of their herds, to the same holy place, and not to eat them in the gates of their own cities; and if that House of the Lord should be too far for them (Deut. xiv. 23) to turn their offerings into money, and employ that for the celebration of the religious festivals, at the place which the Lord should choose. Now also does the legislator add to the rules relating to the Levites, that which gave them a right of (Deut. xviii. 6) migrating from any other city, and joining with those who were employed in the service of God at the place which He should choose. Thus, also, in recapitulating the regulations of the civil law, the legislator now, for the first time, introduces the (Deut. xvi. 13; xix. 11; xxi. 18) appointment of judges and officers in the different cities which they should inhabit; and fixes the right of appealing in difficult cases from these judges to the high priest and his assessors at the place which the Lord should choose; and determines what the elders of each city may finally decide on, and the manner in which they should examine the cause, as in the instances of an uncertain murder (Deut. xxi.) of the rebellious son, and in the ceremony of taking or refusing the widow of a brother who had died childless. The city, the gate of the city, the elders of the city, are now perpetually introduced, never before. We may also observe that in this last address, when the people were going to attack the great body of their enemies, and as they conquered them, were to inhabit their land, different circumstances are mentioned, suited to this new situation. The causes which were to excuse men going to war are now first stated: "Having built a new house, planted a new vineyard," or "betrothed himself to a wife" (Deut. xx. 5, &c.); all of which supposed a separation of the people from the common camp of the whole congregation, in consequence of possessing the promised land. Now also the rules about (Deut. xx. 19) besieging cities, about not destroying such trees round them as were good for food, are specified much more minutely than before, because now sieges would be frequent. Now, also, Moses enlarges more frequently and more fully than he ever did before on the fertility and the excellence of the promised land. This was natural; such a topic at an earlier period would have increased the murmurings and the impatience of the people at being detained in the wilderness; whereas now

it encouraged them to encounter with more cheerfulness the opposition they must meet with from the inhabitants of Canaan. These general and obvious features of difference, which distinguish the last book of Moses from the preceding ones, when compared with the evident artlessness and simplicity of the narrative, seem to result from truth and reality alone. Such differences were natural, nay, unavoidable, if these books were really composed by Moses who was the witness of the facts, and the author of the Laws which these books contain. They would be much less likely to occur, if any other man were the author, even if he were an eye-witness; and they are totally unlike the general detail of a remote compiler, or the laboured artifice of fiction and forgery. IV. I shall now state a few instances where the undesigned coincidence, the exact suitableness, which we have been noticing in the recital of the natural events of the history, are also observable in the relation of the miraculous facts and allusions to them. We may remark, then, that in the direct narrative, the miracles are related minutely and circumstantially. The time, the place, the occasion of each being wrought, are exactly specified; and such circumstances are introduced, as, when considered, prove the miraculous nature of the fact, though no argument of that kind is instituted. The miracles also are related in the exact order of time when they happened, and the common and supernatural events are exhibited in one continued, and, indeed, inseparable series. Now, had the recapitulation of events been formed for the purpose of gaining credit to a doubtful narrative of supernatural facts, we should, I presume, perceive a constant effort to dwell upon and magnify the miracles, to obviate any objections to their reality; we should find their writer accusing his countrymen of obstinate incredulity, asserting his own veracity, and appealing in proof of the facts to that veracity. But it is most evident that nothing of this appears in the book of Deuteronomy. The people are never once reproached with having doubted or disbelieved the miracles, but constantly appealed to having seen and acknowledged them; though, notwithstanding this, they did not preserve that confidence and that obedience to God which such wonderful interpositions ought to have secured. The speaker never produces arguments to prove the miracles, but always considers them as notoriously true and unquestioned, and adduces them as decisive motives to enforce obedience to His laws. This is the only purpose for which they are introduced; and such circumstances in the history as, though not miraculous, would show the necessity of obedience, are dwelt on as particularly as the miracles themselves. Thus the object of the three first chapters of Deuteronomy is to assure the people of the Divine assistance in the conquest of Canaan, and to convince them of the guilt of not confiding in that assistance. For this purpose the speaker alludes to the former disobedience of the people, when forty years before they had arrived at the borders of Canaan; and mentions the miracles they had previously to that time witnessed, in general terms, merely as aggravations of their guilt. Is not this whole exhortation natural? Is not the brief incidental introduction of the miracles, and their being blended with other facts not miraculous, but tending to impress the same conclusion, natural? Does not the whole appear totally unlike the timidity and artifice of fiction or imposture? It might be proved by a minute induction of every instance in which the miracles are referred to in Deuteronomy, that the allusion is naturally suggested by the nature of the topic which the legislator wishes to enforce; and that it is addressed to the people in that manner, which would be clear and forcible if they had been spectators of the miracle alluded to, and on no other supposition. Thus the whole miracle is never related, but that leading circumstance selected which suited the present subject. I add some few instances of incidental allusions to miracles, to show how naturally they are introduced, and how exactly the manner in which they are spoken of, suits the situation of Moses himself, addressing the eye-witnesses of the fact. The Ten Commandments had been the only precepts of the Law, which God had distinctly proclaimed from Mount Horeb to the assembled nation of the Jews; the rest of it had been promulgated by Moses himself as the Divine command. Now, how does he argue with the people, in order to induce them to receive what he announced as the Divine will, equally with that which God Himself had directly proclaimed? He might have urged that the miracles which God had wrought by him established his Divine authority; that the Ten Commandments being of pre-eminent importance, God had Himself proclaimed them to impress them the more deeply, and chosen to employ him as the medium of conveying the rest of the Law. He might have urged the severe punishments which God had inflicted on those who had contested against His Divine mission (as he does in another passage), and rested the point on these arguments; but he chooses a quite

different ground. He states that the people had declined hearing the rest of the Law directly from God Himself, and had entreated that it should be conveyed to them through him. Now, if this argument had never been used by the legislator, if the fact had never occurred, if the Pentateuch had been the invention of fancy, or even the compilation of some historian long subsequent to the events, what could lead him to clog his narrative with such a circumstance as this? In short, what but truth and reality could suggest such an argument, or gain it the slightest credit from the people to whom it was addressed? V. I have endeavoured to deduce presumptive proofs of the authenticity and truth of the Jewish history from the structure of the narrative in which it is presented to us—and to show that these proofs apply with equal clearness to the miraculous as to the common facts; both being interwoven in one detail, and related with the same characters of impartiality, artlessness, and truth. This conclusion will receive great confirmation should it be found that the common events of the history, if we attempt to separate them from the miraculous, become unnatural, improbable, and even incredible, unconnected, and unaccountable; while, if combined with the miracles which attend them, the entire series is connected, natural, and consistent. For this purpose, let us consider the objects to which this narrative naturally directs our attention: the character of the Jewish legislator, the resistance he encountered from the Egyptian government, the disposition and circumstances of the Hebrew people, and impediments which presented themselves to their settlement in the land to which they emigrated. Let us review the narrative of these events, separating the leading facts not miraculous, which form the basis of the history, from the miraculous; and consider whether it be rational to receive the former and reject the latter. Let us first contemplate the character and conduct of the legislator. Born at that period when his nation groaned under the most oppressive and malignant despotism which ever crushed a people; rescued by a singular providence from that death to which he was destined by the cruel edict of Pharaoh; adopted by the daughter, and educated in the court of that monarch, there is reason to believe, with the inspired martyr St. Stephen, that he was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” and that he may have been “mighty both in words and deeds” (Acts vii. 22): that is, conversant in learning, skilled in writing, and judicious in conduct; for his own positive declaration prevents us from believing him eloquent. If we exclude the idea of a Divine interposition, we must believe that at the end of forty years, without any outward change of circumstances, merely from a rash and sudden impulse, this exile, so long appearing to have forgotten his people, and to have been by them forgot, resumes, at the age of fourscore, the project which, in the full vigour of manhood, and the yet unabated ardour of youthful confidence, he had been compelled to abandon as desperate. He forsakes his family and his property, revisits his nation, determined again to offer himself for their leader, and to attempt their deliverance. Yet he appears not to have cultivated in the interval a single talent, and not to have formed a single preparation to facilitate his enterprise. Of eloquence he confesses himself destitute; of military skill or prowess, he never made any display; he appears to have formed no party among the Jews, no alliance with any foreign power; he had certainly prepared no force. But it will be said he employed an engine more powerful than eloquence or arms with an unenlightened people, who looked upon themselves as the favourites of heaven, and who long had hoped for their deliverance by a Divine interposition. He claimed the character of an ambassador commissioned by the God of their fathers, to free them from the bondage under which they groaned; he supported his claim by some artful deceptions and mysterious juggling, which his former acquaintance with Egyptian magic enabled him to practise; and this was sufficient to gain the faith and command the obedience of a superstitious race, always credulous, and now eager to be convinced of what they wished to be true. Thus we may account for his success. This might appear plausible, if the only thing wanting was to prevail on his countrymen to quit the land of bondage; but let it be remembered that the great difficulty lay in the necessity of prevailing on the Egyptians to permit their departure. Supposing the Hebrew slaves were willing to encounter the difficulties of emigration, and the dangers of invading a warlike nation (a point by no means certain); yet who shall prevail on their proud and mercenary lords to suffer them to be deprived of their service? Every circumstance which would enable a chief to establish his party with the one, would rouse suspicion, resentment, and opposition, in the other. A very short period elapses, and what is the event? No human force is exercised, not a single Israelite lifts the sword or bends the bow; but the Egyptian monarch is humbled, his people

terrified, they urge the Israelites to hasten their departure. They are now honoured as the masters of their late oppressors; they demand of the Egyptians (in obedience to the express injunction of Jehovah) "silver, and gold, and jewels," as the remuneration due to their past unrequited labours, conceded by Divine justice, and obtained by Divine power; as the homage due to their present acknowledged superiority, and the purchase of their immediate departure. The Egyptians grant everything; the Israelites begin their emigration: "Six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children; and a mixed multitude went with them, as well as flocks and herds, and much cattle" (Exod. xii. 37, 38). But, notwithstanding his unparalleled success in his main project, the leader of this great body acknowledges himself to have acted in a mode utterly destitute of the slightest human foresight or prudence; for this multitude are so little prepared for their emigration, that they had not time so much as to leaven the bread which they brought out of Egypt. And as if in the first step to display his total neglect of every precaution which a wise leader would adopt, he takes no care to guide them in such a course as would enable them to escape from pursuit, or contend to advantage with their pursuers. He leads them into a defile, with mountains on either side, and the sea in front. At this moment the Egyptians recover from the panic, under the influence of which they had consented to their departure; and they pursued after them, and soon overtook them. Perhaps at this crisis, despair inspired them with courage. No, all is dismay and lamentation. Here now is a second crisis, in which no human hope or help appears to sustain their leader: on one side a regular disciplined army, assured of triumph—on the other, a rabble of women and children and men as spiritless as they, expecting nothing but certain death, lamenting they had left their servitude, and ready to implore their masters to permit them again to be their slaves. But if their leader had betrayed unparalleled imprudence in exposing his host to such a danger, the high strain of confidence he now speaks in is equally unparalleled. What would this be in any mere human leader, but the ravings of frenzy? Yet, wonderful to relate, the event accords with it. The Israelites escape "by the way of the sea" (Exod. xiv. 11, 12); the Egyptians perish in the same sea, we know not how or why, except we admit the miraculous interposition which divided the Red Sea, "the waters being a wall on the right and left hand" (Exod. xiv. 13, 14), to let His people pass free; and when the infatuated Egyptians pursued, overwhelmed with its waves their proud and impious host. Let us now pass by the intermediate events of a few months, and observe this people on the confines of that land, to establish themselves in which they had emigrated from Egypt. Their leader, with his usual confidence of success, thus addresses them: "Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee; go up, and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged" (Deut. i. 20, 21). But the people propose to adopt some precautions which human prudence would naturally dictate. "We will send men before us (say they) to mark out the land, and bring us word again, by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come." They are sent. They report: "The land is a good land, and fruitful; but the people be strong," &c. At this discouraging report this timid and unwarlike race were filled with the deepest terrors. In vain did Moses and Aaron fall on their faces before all the congregation; in vain did two of the chief men, who had searched out the land, and who adhered to them, represent its fertility, and endeavour to inspire the host with a pious confidence in the Divine protection. So incurable was their despair, and so violent their rebellion, that they resented, as the grossest crime, the advice of these honest and spirited men; for "all the congregation bade stone them with stones till they die." They even determine to abandon altogether the enterprise; to depose their leader in contempt of the Divine authority which he claimed; to elect another captain, and return to Egypt. At this crisis, what conduct would human prudence have dictated? No other, surely, than to soothe the multitude till this extreme panic might have time to subside; then gradually to revive their confidence, by recalling to their view the miseries of that servitude from which they had escaped, the extraordinary success which had hitherto attended their efforts, and the consequent probability of their overcoming the difficulties by which they were now dispirited; then gradually to lead them from one assault, where circumstances were most likely to ensure victory, to another, till their courage was reanimated, and the great object of their enterprise might be again attempted with probability of success. But how strange and unparalleled is the conduct of the Jewish leader! He denounces against this whole rebellious multitude the

extreme wrath of God; instead of animating them to resume their enterprise, he commands them never to resume it; instead of encouraging them to hope for success, he assures them they never shall succeed; he suffers them not to return to Egypt, yet he will not permit them to invade Canaan. He denounces to them that they shall continue under his command; that he would march and countermarch them for forty years in the wilderness, until every one of the rebellious multitude then able to bear arms should perish there; and that then, and not till then, should their children resume the invasion of Canaan, and infallibly succeed in it. Now let me ask in seriousness and simplicity of mind, can we believe that such a denunciation as this could have been uttered by any human being, not distracted with the wildest frenzy, if it had not been dictated by the clearest Divine authority; or if uttered, whether it could have been received by an entire nation with any other sensation than that of scorn and contempt, if the manifestation of the Divine power from which it proceeded, and by which alone it could be executed, had not been most certain and conspicuous? But can we be sure, it is said, that it was ever uttered? I answer, yes; because it was assuredly fulfilled. And its accomplishment forms the last particular I shall notice in the history of this unparalleled expedition, as exhibiting a fact partly natural (for the existence of a whole nation in a particular country for a certain length of time is an event of a natural kind), yet inseparably connected with a continued miraculous interposition, which, if not real, no human imagination could have invented, and no human credulity believed. I mean the miraculous sustenance of the whole Jewish nation of six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, for forty years, within the compass of a barren wilderness, where a single caravan of travellers could never subsist, even marching through it by the shortest route, without having brought with them their own provisions. Yet so long the host of Israel remained in it. In the interval they were fed with food from heaven, even with manna, until in the plains of Jericho they did eat of the corn of the land; and the manna ceased the morrow after they had eaten the old corn of the land. Here then I close this argument. And I contend that the existence of the Jewish nation in the wilderness for forty years, their submission during that period to the authority of their leader, without attempting either to return to Egypt or to invade Canaan, is a fact which cannot be accounted for, without admitting the uninterrupted and conspicuous interference of the power of Jehovah, miraculously sustaining and governing this His chosen people; and by consequence establishing the Divine original of the Mosaic Law. (*Dean Graves.*)

THE MOSAIC LEGISLATION.—The legislative Books of the Pentateuch, from Exodus to Deuteronomy, may be contemplated either in the light (1) of their credentials, or (2) of their character and contents. The Christian Church, which had heretofore regarded them as an integral and instructive part of the Divine revelation, is now challenged by the voices of numerous critics to defend them. What is understood to be at issue is the date and authorship of the Books in the form in which we now have them. These are contested by the negative school on grounds of language and style, upon which none can properly attempt to follow or to judge them unless when equipped with the same special knowledge. They also allege, as parts of the destructive argument, that the Books contain anachronisms, contradictions, statements disproved by history. The matters of style and language we must contentedly take upon trust; but anachronism, contradiction of history, contradiction in the Books themselves, ought to be more or less within our cognisance. And there are many arguments of historical verisimilitude and likelihood, which are in no sense the exclusive property of specialism. Even within the compass of the Torah, a distinction has been drawn by some eminent critics in their writings on the canon of the Old Testament; who have assigned the legislative portion to Moses himself, and the historical part to scribes acting under his direction or at a later time. It does not appear easy to show why this singular intermixture of the two should have been made, unless by or under the direction of the lawgiver himself. His mixed, and evidently hard-pressed, life would account for a form of authorship, which is not in itself at all convenient. But the ordinary reader will not fail to observe that it is the legislation, for which in the sacred text itself the claim is constantly made of being due to direct communication from above, while no corresponding assertion in general accompanies the historical recitals. Speaking at large, every imaginable difference has prevailed among the critics themselves as to the source, date, and authorship of the Books. But on the whole the negative movement has brought them gradually towards later epochs: to Samuel,

to the age of David, to the severance of the kingdoms, to Josiah, to the Captivity, and those who followed it. The affirmative side has been also stoutly maintained, not without the admission of particular additions and interpolations. The distinction between substantial authorship and final editorship was largely recognized by writers of celebrity and weight. Bleek himself, sustained by Wellhausen as late as 1886, held that Moses had a hand (*einen antheil*) in the legislative books. Many of the laws are without sense or purpose, except in regard to circumstances which disappeared with the Mosaic period. Further, we have this remarkable declaration. Though the entire Pentateuch in its present form should not have been the work of Moses, and though many laws are the product of a later age, still the legislation, in its spirit and character as a whole, is genuinely Mosaic; and in dealing with the Pentateuch we stand, at least as to the three middle Books, upon historical ground, evidently meaning upon historical ground as opposed to that which is unauthenticated or legendary. And what is thus generally asserted of the spirit and character of the Pentateuchal laws, is asserted for an important share of them as to both the contents and even the form. These statements—it would not be fair to call them admissions—go to the root of the whole matter, and leave us in possession of that for which alone I contend: namely, that the heart and substance of the legislative and institutional system delivered to us in the Pentateuch is historically trustworthy. If this be so, it still remains highly important to distinguish by critical examination what, if any, particular portions of the work in its actual form may be open to question as secondary errors or as developments appended to the original formation; but the citadel, so long victoriously held by faith and reason, both through Hebrew and through Christian ages, remains unassailed, and the documents of Holy Writ emerge substantially unhurt from the inquisitive and searching analysis of modern time. When it is attempted to bring down the Books of the Pentateuch from the time of Moses, by whom they profess to have been written, to the period of the Babylonian Captivity, and this not only as to their literary form, but as to their substance, the evident meaning and effect of the attempt is to divest them of a historical and to invest them with a legendary character. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that those who have not seen reason to adopt the negation theory above described, leave entirely open numerous questions belonging to the institutions of the Israelites. It is not extravagant to assume that laws given to them as a nomad people, and then subjected to the varying contingencies of history for many centuries, may or even must have required and received adaptation by supplement, development, or change in detail, which the appointed guides of the people were authorized and qualified to supply, not in derogation, but rather in completion and in furtherance of the work of Moses, which remained his in essence from first to last. It is admitted, however, that the whole question must be tried on historical and literary grounds. On such grounds I seek to approach it, and to learn by testing what in the main is fact, what in the main is speculation, and to a great extent fluctuating and changeable speculation. It is never to be forgotten that our point of departure is from the ground of established historic fact. The exodus from Egypt, the settlement in Palestine, the foundation there of institutions, civil and religious, which were endowed with a tenacity of life and a peculiarity of character beyond all example: these things are established by Scripture, but they are also established independent of Scripture. They contribute a threefold combination of fact, which, in order to make them intelligible and coherent, in order to supply a rational connection between cause and effect, require not only a Moses, but such a Moses as the Scripture supplies. They build up a niche, which the Scripture fills. At all times of history, and specially in those primitive times, when the men made the countries, not the countries the men, these great independent historic facts absolutely carry with them the assumption of a leader, a governor, a legislator. All this simply means a Moses, and a Moses such as we know him from the Pentateuch. And this leads us, I do not say to, but towards, the conclusion that whatever be the disparaging allegations of the critics, they must after all in all likelihood turn upon matters of form or of detail, but that the substance of the history is in thorough accordance with the historic bases that are laid for us in profane as well as in sacred testimony. If so, then we have also to bear in mind that the phenomenon is most peculiar, and could only have been exhibited to the world as the offspring of a peculiar generating cause. A people of limited numbers, of no marked political genius, negative and stationary as to literature and art, maintain themselves for near a thousand years, down to the Captivity, placed in the immediate neighbour-

hood, and subject to the attacks, of the great Eastern monarchies, as well as of some very warlike neighbours. They receive the impress of a character, so marked, that not even the Captivity can efface it, but on the contrary helps to give a harder and sharper projection to its features. It retains its solidity and substance while everything else, including great political aggregations, such as the Hittite monarchy, becomes gradually fused in the surrounding masses; and this even when it has been subjected to conditions such as at Babylon, apparently sufficient to beat down and destroy the most obstinate nationalism. Can it be denied that this great historic fact, nowhere to be matched, is in thorough accordance with, and almost of itself compels us to presuppose, the existence from the outset of an elaborately detailed and firmly compacted system of laws and institutions, under which this peculiar discipline might gradually shape, determine, and mature the character of the people? Wherever we turn, we seem to find the broad and lucid principles of historic likelihood asserting themselves in favour of the substance of the legislative Books, apart from questions of detail and literary form. In its great stages, we are entitled to treat the matter of the narrative Books as history entitled to credit. An elaborate organization with a visible head and a hereditary succession is, after a long lapse of time, substituted for a regimen over Israel, of which the main springs had been personal eminence and moral force. It is represented in the Scripture, and it seems obvious, that the transition from this patriarchal republicanism to monarchy was in the nature of a religious retrogression. It showed an increasing incapacity to walk by faith, and a craving for an object of sight as a substitute for the Divine Majesty apprehended by spiritual insight, and habitually conceived of as the head of the civil community. This view of the relative condition of republican and of regal Israel is confirmed by the fact that with the monarchy came in another regular organization, that of the schools of the prophets. Prophecy, which for the present purpose we may consider as preaching, instead of appearing as occasion required, became a system, with provision for perpetual succession. That is to say, the people could not be kept up to the primitive, or even the necessary, level in belief and life, without the provision of more elaborate and direct means of instruction, exhortation, and reproof, than had at first been requisite. Notwithstanding the existence of those means, and the singular and noble energy of the prophets, the proofs of the decline are not less abundant than painful, in the wickedness of most of the sovereigns, and in the almost wholesale and too constant lapse of the Israelites into the filthy idolatry which was rooted in the country. And again, it is not a little remarkable that the enumeration by name of the great historic heroes of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews ends in the person of King David, with the first youth of the monarchy. The only later instances referred to are the prophets, named as a class, who stood apart and alone, and were not as a rule leaders of the people, but rather witnesses in sackcloth against their iniquities. Taking the history from the Exodus to the Exile as a whole, the latter end was worse than the beginning, the cup of iniquity was full, it had been filled by a gradual process: and one of the marks of that process was a lowering of the method in which the chosen people were governed; it became more human and less Divine. Under these circumstances, does it not appear like a paradox, and even a rather wanton paradox, to refer the production of those sacred Mosaic Books, which constituted the charter of the Hebrews as a separate and peculiar people, to the epochs of a lowered and decaying spiritual life? They formed the base on which the entire structure rested. It is hardly possible to separate the fabric from its foundation. Had they not been recorded and transmitted, it would have been reasonable, perhaps necessary, for us to presume their existence. They could only spring from a plant full of vigorous life, not from one comparatively sickly, corrupt, and exhausted. And so again we have, in the historic Moses a great and powerful genius, an organizing and constructing mind. Degenerate ages cannot equip and furnish forth illustrious founders, only at the most the names and shadows of them. Moses stands in historic harmony with his work. As we stand on historical ground in assuming that Moses was a great man, and a powerful agent in the Hebrew history, so we stand on a like basis in pointing to the fact that from the Captivity onwards (I say nothing of the prior period, as it would beg the question) the Jewish nation paid to the five Books of the Pentateuch a special and extraordinary regard, even beyond the rest of their sacred Books. These were known as the Torah; and the fact of this special reverence is one so generally acknowledged, that it may without discussion be safely assumed as a point of departure. Before, then, any sort of acceptance or

acquiescence is accorded to notions which virtually consign to insignificance the most ancient of our sacred Books, let us well weigh the fact that the devout regard of the Hebrews for the Torah took the form, at or very soon after the Exile, of an extreme vigilance on behalf of these particular Books as distinct from all others. If (such was their conception) we secure the absolute identity of the manuscripts, and reckon up the actual numbers of the words they contain, and of the letters which compose the words, then we shall render change in them impossible and conservation certain. The Hebrews were the only people who built up by degrees a regular scientific method of handling the material forms in which the substance of their Sacred Books was clothed, and this system had begun to grow from the time when a special reverence is known to have been concentrated upon the Torah. It may have commenced before the Captivity. It may have preceded, and may probably have been enhanced by, the division of the kingdoms. It must have been in great force when, soon after the Captivity, schools of scribes were entrusted with the custody of the text of the law as a study apart from that of its meaning. Now in our time we are asked or tempted by the negative criticism to believe that all this reverence for the Books of the Pentateuch, having primarily the sense for its object, but abounding and overflowing so as to embrace the corporeal vehicle, was felt towards a set of books not substantially genuine, but compounded and made up by recent operators who may be mildly called editors, but who were rather clandestine authors. Is this probable or reasonable? Is it even possible that these books of recent concoction, standing by the side of some among the prophetic Books possessing a greater antiquity, should nevertheless have attracted to themselves, and have permanently retained, an exceptional and superlative veneration, such as surely presumes a belief in the remoteness of their date, the genuineness of their character, and their title to stand as the base, both doctrinal and historic, of the entire Hebrew system? And now let us look for a moment at the rather crude and irregular form of the Mosaic books from Exodus to Deuteronomy. Taken as a whole, they have not that kind of consistency which belongs to consecutiveness of form, and which almost uniformly marks both historical and legal documents. They mix narrative and legislation: they pass from one to the other without any obvious reason. They repeat themselves in a manner which seems to exclude the idea that they had undergone the careful and reflective reviews, the comparison of part with part, which is generally bestowed upon works of great importance, completed with comparative leisure, and intended for the guidance not only of an individual but of a people. They are even accused of contradictions. They appear to omit adjustments necessary in the light of the subsequent history: such, for instance, as we might desire between the sweeping proscription not only of image worship, but of images or shapen corporeal forms, in the Second Commandment, and the use actually made of them in the temple, and the singular case of the serpent destroyed by Hezekiah. It seems not difficult to account for this roughness and crudeness of authorship under the circumstances of changeful nomad life, and the constant pressure of anxious executive or judicial functions, combined with the effort of constructing a great legislative code, which required a totally different attitude of mind. The life of Moses, as it stands in the sacred text, must have been habitually a life of extraordinary, unintermitted strain, and one without remission of that strain even near and at the close. As some anomalies in the composition of the Koran may be referable to the circumstances of the life of Mahomet, so we may apply a like idea to the shape of the legislative books. It is not difficult to refer the anomalies of such authorship to the incidents of such a life, and to conceive that any changes which have found their way into the text may yet have been such as to leave unimpaired what may be called the originality as well as the integrity of its character. But how do these considerations hold if we are to assume as our point of departure the hypothesis of the negative extremists? Under that supposition the legislative books were principally not adjusted but composed, and this not only in a manner which totally falsifies their own solemn and often repeated declarations, but which supposes something like hallucination on the part of a people that accepted such novelties as ancient. In addition to all this, they assumed their existing form, so wanting as to series and method, in a settled state of things, in an old historic land, with an unbounded freedom of manipulation, at any rate with no restraint imposed by respect for original form, and with every condition in favour of the final editors which could favour the production of a thoroughly systematic and orderly work. Does it not seem that if the preparation and presentation of the Hebrew code took place at the

time and in the way imposed on us by the doctrine of the thorough disintegrationist, then we stand entirely at a loss to account for the form of the work before us? And conversely do not the peculiarities of that form constitute an objection to the negative hypothesis, which it is an absolute necessity for its promoters to get rid of as best they can? I subjoin one further topic of the same class as fit to be taken into view. The absence from the legislative books of all assertion of a future state, and of all motive derived from it with a view to conduct, has been already noticed. The probable reason of that absence from a code of laws framed by Moses under Divine command or guidance, is a subject alike of interest and difficulty. It has sometimes occurred to me as possible that the close connection of the doctrine with public religion in the Egyptian system might have supplied a reason for its disconnection from the Mosaic laws, even as I suppose we might, from other features of those laws, draw proof or strong presumption that, among the purposes of the legislator, there was included a determination to draw a broad and deep line, or even trench, of demarcation, between the foreign religions in their neighbourhood and the religious system of the Hebrews. Be this as it may, it is enough for my present purpose that the absence of the doctrine of a future state from the work cannot be held to discredit the Mosaic authorship. But does not that absence clearly discredit the idea of a post-exilic authorship? Is it conceivable that Hebrews, proceeding to frame their legislative books, after the Captivity, and long after the dispersion of the ten tribes, and after the light which these events had thrown upon the familiar ideas of a future life and an underworld, as held both in the East and in Egypt, could have excluded all notice of it from their system of laws? If they could not so have excluded it, then the fact of the exclusion becomes another difficulty in the way of our accepting any negative hypothesis concerning the substance of the legislative books. It seems, then, that it is difficult to reconcile the results of the negative criticism on the Pentateuch with the known reverence of the Jews for their Torah, which appears absolutely to presuppose a tradition of immemorial age on its behalf, as a precondition of such universal and undoubting veneration. But if this be necessary in the case of the Jew, how much more peremptorily is it required by the case of the Samaritan, and what light does that case throw upon the general question? The Samaritan Pentateuch is one of the most remarkable monuments of antiquity. Its testimony, of course, cannot be adduced to show that the books following the Pentateuch have been clothed from a very ancient date with the reverence due to the Divine Word, and is even capable of being employed in a limited sense the other way. But as respects the Samaritan Pentateuch itself, how is it possible to conceive that it should have held, as a Divine work, the supreme place in the regard of the Samaritans, if, about or near the year 500 B.C., or, again, if at the time of Manasseh the seceder it had, as matter of fact, been a recent compilation of their enemies the Jews? or if it had been regarded as anything less than a record of a great revelation from God, historically known, or at the least universally believed, to have come down to them in the shape it then held from antiquity? The Samaritan Pentateuch, then, forms in itself a remarkable indication, even a proof, that, at the date from which we know it to have been received, the Pentateuch was no novelty among the Jews. But may we not state the argument in broader terms? Surely the reverence of the Samaritans for the Torah could not have begun at this period; hardly could have begun at any period posterior to the schism. If these books grew by gradual accretion, still that must have been a single accretion. A double process could not have been carried on in harmony. Nor can we easily suppose that, when the ten tribes separated from the two, they did not carry with them the law on which their competing worship was to be founded. In effect, is there any rational supposition except that the kingdom of Israel had possessed at the time of Rehoboam some code corresponding in substance, in all except mere detail, with that which was subsequently written out in the famous manuscripts we now possess? Let us close with a plea of a different order, one which, admitting a probable imperfection of the text, deprecates, as opposed to the principles of sound criticism, any conclusion therefrom adverse to its general fidelity. It has caused me some surprise to notice (1) that some negative writers lay considerable stress upon what they deem to be numerical errors in the books of the Old Testament; and (2) that, so far as I have seen, they do not advert to the increased risks of mistake in the transmission of numbers as compared with other literary matter, either by copying or by word of mouth. There is a broad and clear difference, of which note ought to be taken. Both in copying and in writing, as a general rule, the structure of the sentence, or what is called the

context, is mentally carried onwards, and the general drift confines within narrow limits the possibility of error in the particular words. Mistake in form would very commonly betray itself by inconsistency in the sense, and this inconsistency would not fail to be detected, because the relation between the parts of the sentence is ordinarily perceived as the process is carried on. But the relation between numerical amounts is not at once determined for the copyist by the context, and usually requires a distinct and careful examination. I will give two practical illustrations of this statement, the one very old and the other very modern; the one touching oral, and the other written transmission. The most elaborate invocation of the Muse, or appeal for Divine assistance, in the whole of the poems of Homer, is the preface to the catalogue of the Greek troops and ships; and this, although in no part of the poems could less effort properly poetic be required. But the catalogue consists partly of numerical statements of the strength of the contingents which made up the fleet, partly of geographical detail of the names of towns and districts; and here we find the rationale of the poet's call for special aid and care with a view to accuracy, and this although he had metre to assist him. I now turn to very modern practice. In the year 1853, it was my duty for the first time to submit to Parliament one of the large and complex statements of the public accounts for the year, which are associated in our country with the familiar name of Budgets. The speeches, in which these statements were contained, were made known to the country by reporting in the usual manner. But the art of the reporters could not be trusted to convey the figures with accuracy by the ear, and a practice had consequently grown up of supplying them from the official source in carefully written statements for their guidance, which were sent to them during the delivery of the speech. It has now been found more convenient not to trust at all to the ear, and the minister is understood to speak from printed figures. My position does not go beyond this, that the same care which insures general fidelity of statement in recitals does not suffice to secure numerical precision; and conversely that the want of such precision, which may often be suspected in the Old Testament, does not raise presumptions adverse to general correctness. (*W. E. Gladstone.*)

TESTIMONY OF THE PENTATEUCH TO ITSELF.—1. In the outset it is important to keep apart two questions that are not seldom confused. It is one thing to be the recipient of a revelation; it is another thing to write down such a revelation. The whole Pentateuch may be Mosaic, and yet Moses need not, *sua manu*, have written a single word in it, nor the Pentateuch, in its present shape, date from his age. 2. The direct evidence of the Pentateuch as to its literary author is very meagre. The only passages in which Moses is said to have written any portion of the words spoken to him by the Lord are Exod. xvii. 14, xxiv. 4 (cf. v. 7), xxxiv. 28; Num. xxxiii. 2, xvii. 2 sqq.; Deut. xxxi. 9, 24 (cf. v. 26, as also xvii. 18, xxviii. 58, 61, xxix. 19, 20, 26, xxx. 10). Of these Exod. xxxiv. 28 refers only to the writing of the ten commandments upon the two tables; Num. xvii. 2 refers only to the writing on rods; Num. xxxiii. 2 only to the list of desert stations, and these passages thus furnish their own limitation. In Exod. xxiv. 4 we are told that Moses wrote "all the words of the Lord," and in ver. 7 these "words" are identified with "the book of the covenant," which he read to the people, and to which the audience promised obedience. In the nature of the case this cannot refer to the whole Pentateuch, for the simple reason that it could not have existed at that time. It refers to a particular set of laws given in the chapters preceding the twenty-fourth. Hengstenberg considers this book of the covenant to be composed of chap. xx. 2-14, and chaps. xxi. to xxiii. There are then left only the two most difficult, but also most promising passages, viz., Exod. xvii. 14, and Deut. xxxi. 9, 24. In the former passage we read that the Lord commanded Moses to "write this for a memorial in a book." A "book" in the Hebrew is a written document of any kind or length. The Israelites then had other "books" besides their law books (cf. Num. xxi. 14). What is meant here is doubtless that Moses wrote or caused to be written the affair of Amalek, and that this document was incorporated into the Pentateuch. In Deut. xxxi. 9 and 24 matters seem to be more satisfactory. In the first passage it is said that Moses "wrote this law"; in the second that he "made an end of writing the words of this law in a book." What is meant by "this law"? Is it the whole Pentateuch? Of the law here meant, it is said in ver. 10 sqq., that every seven years, at the feast of the tabernacles, it shall be read before all Israel, in order to instruct the people in their duties toward Jehovah. It must accordingly

have been a document of such a kind that it could be read on such an occasion; and, secondly, it must have been formulated in such a way as to impress their duties upon the children of Israel. Both these features point not to the whole Pentateuch as such, but to the law in the exhortatory form in which it is presented in Deuteronomy. A fair explanation here seems to compel us to restrict "this law" in this connection to the Book of Deuteronomy, and doubtless to the strictly legal second half. We do not then think that we have any direct testimony of the Pentateuch to prove that Moses himself wrote or caused to be written the whole of the five books. He is declared to be the writer of portions of Exodus and Numbers, and of the legal portion and possibly the whole of Deuteronomy. Whether he also wrote the rest of the Pentateuch, or larger portions thereof, is not directly stated.

3. It is deeply significant, over against the somewhat scanty and disappointing testimony in reference to the writer of the Pentateuch, when we ask for the evidences as to the person who was chosen of God to promulgate the revelations, that the testimony is simply overwhelming. Moses may or may not have written these books, yet the contents of the last four, at least in their great bulk, claim to have been given by God to Moses. Yet it would be unfair to conclude that Moses must be regarded as the medium through whom Jehovah revealed every word and syllable in our present Pentateuch. Moses is nowhere declared to be the recipient of the whole Pentateuch as such, but of certain parts or portions. And here the question in each case arises, whether the testimony to the Mosaic source that heads each section covers all the ground, until the same declaration is made of a new section. In many instances this is probably the intention; in other cases it is not so certain, and in some quite doubtful. It may, however, be asserted that the great bulk and mass of the Pentateuch, from that period on which Moses first was called to his mission (Exod. iii. 2 sqq.), both the legal portion and also the historical narratives, claim to be the revelation of Jehovah given to His servant Moses. This still leaves open the critical and literary question as to whether into this Mosaic bulk or mass foreign elements were introduced then or later, and also the historical question as to the time and manner in which these Mosaic revelations were written, collected, or received their present shape, and the changes, if any, which they may have undergone in this process.

4. The indirect evidence on this point is also abundant. The Pentateuch contains a large number of laws, and narrates numerous events which can be understood only from the historical background of the sojourn and journey of the children of Israel through the desert under the leadership of Moses. From the standpoint of the advanced critics, these laws and events are glaring anachronisms, and could be explained only as bold *fraudes piæ*. Then there are other laws which, if not in their own character indicative of the Mosaic age, yet in the occasion which caused their promulgation connect with that age, and can be rationally and reasonably understood only from this point of view. Thus the law on the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi.) is based upon the historical events recorded in Lev. x. 1 sqq. Then the whole section Exod. xxv. to xxxi. is intelligible only from a Mosaic era. In Num. x. 1-8, in which the method of calling together the congregation is described, we have again the Mosaic era presupposed. The same is true of Num. i. 1 sqq., with its statistics; chap. ii., containing the description of the arrangement of the people's camp in the wilderness; chap. iv., with its regulations concerning the services of the Levites in the camp. . . . The evidence of the Pentateuch concerning itself may be thus summed up: Directly, it is claimed that the great bulk of the last four books are Mosaic in the sense that they are revelations of God to Moses, and portions of them in the sense that Moses himself wrote or caused them to be written. Indirectly, the testimony points to the author of the last four books as also the author of the first, as also that a large number of the laws and much of the history in these four books presuppose the Mosaic age. Whether these conclusions are applicable to the whole and entire Pentateuch or not, or whether these five books contain also direct or indirect evidence of post-Mosaic elements can be discussed only later, after it has been determined what the internal character of these books is.

5. What is the testimony of the Pentateuch concerning itself, both in regard to the substance and matter it brings, as also in regard to the books as a literary composition? In regard to the first point the evidence is overwhelming that these five books claim to be a revelation and the history of a revelation. The Pentateuch proceeds from the premises that the fall of man has seriously interfered with God's plans for man's welfare, and that God's providential guidance of man is specially directed toward his restoration and re-establishment. God chooses

from among the peoples of the earth one family, that of Abraham, and later one nation, that of the descendants of Abraham, and enters into a special covenant with them in order to accomplish His great ends in mankind. 6. Concerning the Pentateuch as a literary work there is but little direct testimony. But that the author did not simply mechanically record revelations directly given, but based at least part of his work on other literary documents, is plainly enough stated. . . . The inspiration of the Pentateuch certainly does not consist in this, that the author received all his information from the Holy Spirit as something entirely unknown to him before, but rather in directing him to make the correct use of the means of information at his command. . . . The great evil of modern Pentateuchal criticism does not lie in the analysis into documents, but in the creation upon this analysis of a superstructure of pseudo-history and religion that runs directly counter to the revealed and historic character of the Pentateuch. But as little as this analysis justifies such a building of hay and stubble, just so little does this abuse of this theory by advanced critics justify conservative men in refusing to accept what the evidences seem sufficient to warrant. The Pentateuch is essentially Mosaic, in the sense that the laws were promulgated through him. It becomes then an historical question as to the manner in which these laws were first written down and afterwards united into one code. 7. There are a number of passages which apparently can be explained only on the supposition that they were written in a period later than Moses. The existence of these would seem to prove that the collecting of the Mosaic revelations and the final editing was not accomplished until a later day. 8. What is the value of this evidence of the Pentateuch concerning itself? The testimony of a witness is measured by the amount of credence given to his words. Apodictically, no historical point can be proved. It is regarded as certain and sure only in the degree as its evidence is considered reliable. The same is the case with regard to the Pentateuch. What divides scholars in this department into such antagonistic camps is not the exegesis of this or that passage, but the "standpoint" of the investigators. The conservative scholar accepts the authority of the Pentateuch over against canons and laws drawn from philosophical speculations. The advanced critic, on the basis of his ideas concerning the nature of religion in general and revelation drawn from extra-biblical sources, regards his deductions as better testimony than the simple statements of the Pentateuch, and accordingly interprets the words of the Pentateuch in accordance with his philosophy. It is for this reason that he finds mythology in Genesis where others find history. In the nature of the case no historical fact can be proved with mathematical certainty. It is only a question of a greater or less degree of probability. Internal and external evidence must combine to determine this degree of probability. For the conservative scholar the conviction that the Pentateuch is an inspired work is a ground for believing its statements concerning itself. This conviction of inspiration he gains not by logical reasoning or historical criticism, but as a *testimonium spiritus sancti*. Another reason for accepting it is its acceptance as Mosaic and Divine by Christ and the New Testament. A conservative scholar is convinced that this authority is a better ground for belief than his own theories and hypotheses, in case these should clash with the former. (*Prof. G. H. Schodde.*)

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE AS TO THE DATE OF THE PENTATEUCH.—I. In the Book of Genesis we have no legislation, and only one prophetic passage; it is composed essentially of histories. That portion of the narrative which lies before the time of Abraham it is improbable (on literary grounds) was the work of contemporaries, though we cannot say it is impossible. The remainder may have been so; since writings fully equal in literary development to its pages are extant of very ancient date. It is certain, from its use of archaisms, that the book belongs to a much earlier period of Hebrew literature than the times of Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah. Turning, then, to the evidence afforded by the narrative itself, it appears that there are considerable portions which must be assigned to pre-Mosaic periods. One of these must have been composed as early as Abram's migration into Canaan; another probably during his lifetime; while the bulk were written during the early part of the sojourn in Egypt. These latter passages comprise portions of the history of Abraham, of Ishmael, and notably of Jacob; and among them may be also reckoned the blessing of Jacob, the historical basis of which distinctly points to this epoch as the time of its composition. To ascertain precisely how much of Genesis was written at this period would require a careful investigation into its structure, style, and phraseology, such as cannot here be attempted. It must suffice to know that

some considerable part was then written. The latter part of Genesis was composed by one familiarly acquainted both with the details of Egyptian life and customs, and also with the Egyptian language; at latest, therefore, by a contemporary of Joshua, but quite probably by one of a previous generation. Several brief notes, chiefly of an explanatory character, scattered throughout the book require the time of Joshua for their composition; or they may have been added later. In either case, their occurrence testifies indirectly to the early date of the narrative which stood in need of them. Only one passage of any length, the list of Edomite kings, seems to call for a later date (the reign of Saul), but this is doubtful. On the whole, then, we arrive at this result:—the Book of Genesis was completed, or all but completed, in its present form probably before the death of Joshua, but its contents appear in the main to be of an earlier date, and are in part certainly the work of contemporaries. II. The Book of Exodus consists of history and legislation, the former somewhat preponderating. In a literary point of view, all the evidence for early date applies here with full force, and requires the assignment of the book to a period long anterior to that of the prophets. The narrative is marked in its first sections by a great familiarity with Egypt, and in the succeeding ones by an equally striking familiarity with the desert; a combination scarcely explicable except on the view of strictly contemporary origin. This view is confirmed by the presence of an explanatory note in one place; and also by the historical basis of the song of Moses. The legislation is shown to be contemporary both by its essentially historical character, its subject-matter, its phraseology, and its references to Canaan as still future, as well as by its own claim; while history and legislation are so intertwined that the evidence for each tends not a little to strengthen and increase that for the other. With the exception of about three verses, there can be little doubt that the whole of Exodus was written before the death of Moses. III. The Book of Leviticus consists almost wholly of legislation; about three chapters only being occupied with narrative, and one with prophecy. The literary argument, owing to the absence of Egyptian words, is here somewhat less striking than in Exodus. This, however, is amply compensated for by the fulness of evidence in regard to the laws. Not only is there the witness of their own claim, and the many links, of the most varied character, which bind them one after another into the history of the wanderings: but when scrutinized internally, their references to the place where they were first delivered, and the persons concerned in their first accomplishment, their allusions to Egypt on the one hand and Canaan on the other, all point clearly to their origin in the wilderness at some period before the death of Aaron. The character of the narrative sections, and the historical basis and hortatory peculiarities of the prophetic chapter, fully accord with, and further sustain, this conclusion. IV. The Book of Numbers is occupied with narrative and legislation, much interspersed, in about equal proportions, with some prophecy. In a literary point of view it holds much the same position as Leviticus. The narrative, wherever opportunity offers, displays a similar familiarity with Egypt and the desert to that observed in Exodus, though from the nature of the case the range of evidence is considerably less extensive. The phraseology in one or two sections points to a time of composition which may be later than Moses, but need not be later than Joshua. The most notable point in Numbers, however, is the way in which a large portion of its laws are linked into the history, some by the narration of their historical origin, some by the connection between their enactment and the events which followed, some by their own intrinsic character and subject-matter. Both narrative and laws must clearly have been recorded by the same hand, and that a contemporary one. Much of what was said above in regard to Leviticus also applies here. The historical basis of the prophecies is unmistakably that of the wilderness. Saving only the doubtful narrative sections above referred to, therefore, Numbers must be assigned to a similar date with Exodus and Leviticus. V. The Book of Deuteronomy is composed in the main of prophecy and legislation, in nearly equal parts, with a little narrative as setting. In both these departments the evidence of Mosaic date is very striking. The laws abound with references to Egypt and the wilderness-journey, while they frequently speak of Canaan as unpossessed. On comparing these laws with those in the other books, they are found to differ from them precisely as their respective dates would have led us to expect. The new laws in Deuteronomy are largely occupied with topics especially suitable to the close of Moses' career; while the modified and repeated laws point in the clearest manner to the beginning and end of the desert wanderings, as the times when they must severally have been written, if their divergences

are to be rationally explained. This latter branch of evidence of course affects portions of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, as well as Deuteronomy, and affords valuable additional testimony to their early date. The hortatory prophecies of Deuteronomy, both in their personal allusions, their subject-matter, their aim, their tone, and their style, point most clearly to the time of Moses, as that in which they were composed; while the enormous differences, in all these respects, between them and the later prophetic writings render it wholly incredible that they could have originated at the same time with these. Similarly, the historical basis of the predictive passages is distinctly the close of Moses' life. Thus the whole of the substance of Deuteronomy is proved to be unmistakably Mosaic. The narrative sections must of necessity be somewhat later than the addresses; they may be referred with great probability to about the close of Joshua's leadership. It will have been observed in this survey of results, that in most of the books there is something which must be referred to post-Mosaic times. Especially is this the case in Genesis and Deuteronomy; though similar phenomena are seen also in Exodus, and perhaps in Numbers. The specific time to which this late matter points is, as a rule, the period between Moses' death and Joshua's, or thereabouts. It is probable, therefore, that in this period the entire Pentateuch received its final editing. (*G. Warrington, B.A.*)

ORIGINALITY AND DESIGN OF THE JEWISH RITUAL.—If the great Jehovah, the moral Governor of the world, did in reality separate the Jewish nation to be the depositaries of true religion and sound morality, in the midst of an idolatrous world, and for this purpose brought them forth out of Egypt by a series of stupendous and uncontrolled miracles; if He promulgated to them the moral law of the Decalogue, with the most awful display of Divine power and majesty; if He established over them, as their form of national government, a theocracy, which could not be supported without the continued interposition of an extraordinary providence; if He retained them in the wilderness for forty years, to discipline and instruct them, until the entire generation, which had been familiarized to the idolatry and corruptions of Egypt, had perished; and if He then planted them in the land of Canaan by a supernatural power, driving out before them its inhabitants, or compelling the Jews to exterminate them, as a punishment for their inveterate idolatry and its attendant crimes, commanding them carefully to avoid all similar profanation and guilt, under the terror of suffering similar punishment—if these facts have been established, so as to prove that the Jewish Lawgiver was clearly delegated by God to institute a particular form of worship, with a variety of regulations and rites, to preserve the separation of this chosen people from the surrounding nations—then the supposition that he should borrow anything from these rites and customs, in order to accommodate his system to the prejudices, habits, and propensities of his countrymen, becomes unnecessary, in proportion as we more clearly discern that he possessed authority to conciliate attention and enforce obedience without resorting to any such artifice. And if such an expedient was unnecessary, surely its adoption is extremely improbable. Thus to blend Divine appointments and human inventions; to degrade the worship of the great Jehovah with the intermixture of rites, originally designed to honour the basest idols; to reprobate the whole system of idolatry, all its profanations and crimes, with the most vehement and indiscriminate condemnation, and prohibit every attempt to introduce any part of it, under the severest penalties; and yet secretly, as it were, pilfer from it some of its most attractive charms, varnish them with a new colouring, and exhibit them as the genuine features of true religion; this seems altogether irreconcilable with the dignity of an inspired Legislator, and the purity of a Divine law, and indeed forms a scheme so jarring and inconsistent, that it appears utterly incredible it should be adopted by Divine Wisdom. It is true, some parts of the Jewish religion derived their origin from an authority more ancient than that of Moses: the observance of the Sabbath appears to have been coeval with the creation, and the use of sacrifice to have been instituted by God immediately after the fall. These, therefore, it is perfectly natural to suppose, had been received by other nations from the remotest antiquity, and when adopted into the Mosaic institutions, it was only requisite to free them from the superstitions and corruptions with which they had been blended, restore them to their original purity, and direct them to their true object. In truth, the whole tenour of the Jewish law exhibits not a studied imitation, but a studied opposition to the principles and rites of idolatry. That law required the worship of the one true God

exclusively; idolatry worshipped a rabble of deities. The Law proscribed all use of images, or resemblance of any creature, as emblems of the Divinity; idolatry multiplied them. The Law abhorred and condemned all impure rites and all human sacrifices; idolatry too frequently employed them. The Law forbade all necromancy and divination; it made no use of the inspection of the entrails of victims, or the observation of the flight of the birds, to discover future events; it relied for this, when necessary, on the Divine oracle consulted by public authority, and answering from the sanctuary, when the Divine glory was displayed, by a distinct and audible voice. The Law forbade a variety of practices, in themselves apparently innocent, but which we know were employed in the superstitions of idolatry; such as worshipping in high places or in consecrated groves. Thus Maimonides notices that the prohibition against rounding the corners of the hair on the head and the beard was given because the idolatrous priests were accustomed to use that particular tonsure. He assigns a similar reason for not making a garment of linen and woollen mixed together, this being a particular dress in idolatrous rites. Hence also he accounts for the prohibition against eating the fruits of the trees they should find in the land of Canaan for three years, which by the planters had been consecrated to idols. Thus also idolaters were brought to believe that it was acceptable to their gods to sow the ground on particular occasions with certain mixtures of seeds, which was therefore prohibited. Idolaters were accustomed to use blood in consulting the dead, to consecrate bats and mice, and other insects, as a sacrifice to the sun; these, therefore, were pronounced unclean. And it is abundantly evident, that all the peculiarities of the Ritual, as to its rites, sacrifices, and purifications, and its distinctions between things clean and unclean, contributed to guard against the infection of idolatry; not only by an opposition of rites and sacrifices, which would make the worshippers of Jehovah regard with habitual horror and contempt the rites and sacrifices of idolaters, but by establishing a similar opposition even in the customs of common life, and the use of even daily food, which would render all familiar intercourse between the peculiar people of Jehovah and idolaters impracticable. This effect really followed wherever these precepts of the law were observed. Thus, according to Josephus, when the Midianite women are represented as conferring with the young men whom their beauty had captivated, stating their fears of being forsaken by their lovers, and receiving their assurances of attachment, they go on: "If then," said they, "this be your resolution not to forsake us, since you make use of such customs and conduct of life as are entirely different from all other men, insomuch that your kinds of food are peculiar to yourselves, and your kinds of drink not common to others, it will be absolutely necessary, if you would have us for your wives, that you worship our gods; nor can there be any other demonstration of the kindness which you say you already have and promise to have hereafter for us, than this, that you worship the same gods that we do. For has any one reason to complain that, now you are come into this country, you should worship the proper gods of the same country, especially while our gods are common to all men, and yours such as belong to nobody else but yourselves? So they said they must either come into such methods of worship as all other came into, or else they must look out for another world, wherein they may live by themselves, according to their own laws." The same feeling of aversion and contempt from this studied opposition, not only in religious rites, but in the customs of common life, was universal amongst the heathens towards the Jews. Tacitus, in his eloquent but ignorant and gross misrepresentation of their origin and manners, expresses it strongly: "Moses" (says he), "that he might attach the nation for ever to himself, introduced rites new and in opposition to the rest of mankind: all things we hold sacred, are there profane; and what we deem abominable, are with them permitted." And again, "they slaughter the ram in sacrifice, as if in contempt of Ammon; and they also offer up an ox, which the Egyptians worship under the name of Apis." The decided feeling of opposition and hostility which the whole Jewish system excited, not merely in the vulgar, but in the most enlightened heathens, is evident in the passage already quoted from this philosophic historian; and still more in those which follow, where he terms their "rites perverse and polluted"; and while he remarks the good faith and benevolence for which they were noted in their intercourse with each other, charges them "with an hostile hatred towards the rest of mankind," and declares that "those who adopt their principles and customs, not only use circumcision, but are taught to despise their own gods, to renounce their country and to hold in contempt brothers, children, parents." Thus decided was the contrast between not

only the general principles of Judaism and idolatry, but also the particular rites of each—a contrast by which the Jewish Ritual so effectually contributed to the end for which it was originally designed, even to serve as a partition-wall to separate the chosen people of God from the surrounding nations, and form a barrier against the corruptions of heathenism—a purpose with which the supposition, that it borrowed and consecrated many of these rites and practices, appears to be entirely inconsistent. The evidence on which this supposition is founded has been proved to be as inconclusive as the supposition itself appears to be improbable. Witsius has shown, with a clearness which renders it altogether unnecessary to discuss the subject afresh, that the authors on whose testimony the superior antiquity of the Egyptian religion has been maintained, and who have asserted or supposed that the Mosaic Law derived from this source many of its principles and rites, lived so long after the facts, were so grossly ignorant of the Jewish history and system, so rash or so prejudiced, that their testimony can have no authority to obtain credit, not merely, as he expresses it, with a strict investigator of antiquity, but “even with any man of plain sense and moderate erudition.” In truth, the fancied resemblance between the rites of Judaism and idolatry amounts to little more than this: that in both were priests, temples, altars, sacrifices, festivals, calculated to catch the attention, captivate the senses, and engage the imaginations of the worshippers by their splendour or their solemnity. Should it be asked, Why should an inspired Lawgiver, instead of a simple and purely spiritual worship, adopt a Ritual, thus, in the variety and the splendour attending it, bearing even a remote resemblance to the more gross inventions of idolatry? it may be answered: that the Jewish Ritual, with its temple, its festivals, its priests, its sacrifices, its distinctions of food, its purifications, &c., not only served as a barrier against idolatry, but contributed to give the true religion dignity and attraction in the estimation both of strangers and of the Jews themselves. It marked out the Hebrew nation as a holy people, a nation of priests to Jehovah their God and King; it attached them to their religion by the habitual association of festive rites, of national exaltation and prosperity; it engaged their imagination and their senses, made them feel the necessity of circumspection and purity when they approached the presence of God, and by all these means formed some counterpoise to the seduction of idolatry. It is further to be remarked, that the appointment of the Tabernacles first, and of the Temple afterwards, as the sanctuary where Jehovah the God and King of Israel would manifest His presence by a visible display of His glory, and give answers to the public and solemn applications, made through the high-priest, to discover the will of this the supreme Sovereign of the Hebrew nation, gave rise to many peculiarities of the Jewish Ritual. Hence the solemn worship of the whole Church was to be directed to that place where Jehovah dwelt; and it was therefore declared unlawful, by this Ritual, to have any altar, or to offer any sacrifice, but before this presence, in honour of which the Ritual appoints the magnificence of the Temple, of the holy and most holy place, and the religious respect with which they were to be approached. For the same reason the Ritual appoints so many priests as servants to attend on the Presence, and to minister before the Lord Jehovah, who were to be invested in their sacred office by many solemn rites of consecration, and distinguished by a peculiar and splendid dress. This honour, continues Lowman, which ought to distinguish Jehovah as above all gods, in the perfections of His nature and supreme authority, is further well expressed by the whole ceremonial of the sacrificial rites: whether we consider the things that were to be offered, or the persons who were to offer them—the several kinds of sacrifices, whole burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, sin and trespass-offerings; which were to honour God as the supreme governor of the world, as forgiving iniquities, transgressions, and sins, as the author of all blessings, spiritual and temporal. These are plainly designed to give unto Jehovah, as their God, the glory due unto His name. Thus all the ritual holiness is manifestly designed for the same end, that “they might be a holy people, as their God was a holy God.” Hence the Ritual distinctions of unclean foods and of several pollutions, as well as the ritual purifications after legal uncleanness, expressed a due honour to the presence of Jehovah; constantly representing how fit, how becoming it was, for those who were honoured with the nearest approach to this Presence, to keep themselves pure, purged from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that they might honourably serve so pure and so holy a God. I will close my remarks on this subject, by removing a very ill-grounded prejudice, too frequently entertained, against the Jewish Ritual as a system intolerably burthensome. I observe, with Lowman, that it is the Ritual of a

national, and not a personal worship. In this view, all objections against the Jewish Ritual as personally burthensome, tedious, or expensive, evidently appears to be wholly founded on ignorance and error; while as a system of national worship, it was most wisely adapted to the great designs of the Jewish economy, even to preserve the Law, and the worship of the great Jehovah, in the Jewish race, and to prepare the way for the promised MESSIAH, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. (*Dean Graves.*)

THE CHARACTER AND AIMS OF MOSAIC LEGISLATION.—Many and diverse have been the theories advanced concerning the origin and nature of law. Some ascribe the origin of law to the will of the people, others to the wisdom of the rulers, some to the power of the strongest, others to the ordinance of a social compact. But the law given by Moses originated in a source distinct from any of these. 1. The idea lying at the root of all the Mosaic legislation was the theocratic idea. Every ordinance instituted by Moses, whether civic or ceremonial, political or ecclesiastical, was based upon the recognition of the supreme sovereignty of God. The lofty tribunal before which every action was to be tried, judged, and sentenced, did not sit upon earth—its chair was in heaven. The judgment-seat of Jehovah was the final court of appeal for the Jew, because the code of Moses declared itself to be the code of God. One of the aims, therefore, of the Mosaic legislation was to bring man face to face with God in the manners, customs, and usages of common daily life. 2. But the Mosaic code was instinct with a still deeper and more prophetic purpose. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." It was the "shadow of good things to come," of which Christ "is the substance." The statutes of Moses served as a pedagogue to the world, leading the steps of its childhood into the school of spiritual knowledge, there to be trained, in the fulness of time, for the salvation of Christ, "who is the end, the completion, the fulfilment, of the law." This purpose the Mosaic legislation accomplished by two principal instruments. (1) Its amplitude of constantly-recurring ceremonies was a dramatic preparation for the offering of the supreme sacrifice of the Messiah Himself. It would have been extremely difficult for the world to have understood the nature of the great redemption which Christ has wrought by the shedding of His blood, unless it had received centuries of previous preliminary training, in the significance and necessity of sacrifice. But the remarkable variety and perpetual routine of the worship prescribed by Moses for the Jews—many of whose incidents, as the Epistle to the Hebrews indicates, are easily and naturally capable of a Christian interpretation—served the world as the rudiments of an education introductory to Christ. (2) But the moral requirements of the Mosaic legislation operated as a much more searching educational discipline for the world than its ordinal of ceremonies and sacrifices. The Levitical customs made Christ a probability: the Ten Commandments made Christ a necessity. For with the giving of the Commandments there entered into the world a deeper consciousness of sin—the Divine preparation for the advent of the Redeemer. (*J. W. Diggle, M.A.*)

CHRIST IN THE PENTATEUCH.—What I wish to suggest, and as far as I may, to prove, is this: that a substantial unity may be discovered between the earlier revelations of God and that confessedly more perfect and final revelation which was made in Jesus Christ. I wish to show that in the Pentateuch, as St. Augustine has said of the Psalms, you may hear "the voices of Christ and His Church." 1. Perhaps the most obvious consideration with regard to the presence of Christ in the Pentateuch is that which arises from the prophetic character of the sacred books (2 Pet. i. 19). It is not so much that there are definite undeniable predictions of the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, though I do not say that these are wanting; but it is rather the general aspect of the events recorded and the uniformity of the direction in which they seem to point. The most obvious illustration of this prophetic character is the reference to the "seed of the woman" (Gen. iii.). It is no question how much or how little Adam and Eve understood of the promise; there is but little to guide us to an opinion upon this point; neither is it even a question how much their children understood before the coming of Christ; but the question is, in what light the Church of Christ is compelled to view the promise, now that it has been illustrated by the life and death of the Lord Jesus and the establishment of His kingdom. And looking upon the words spoken by the Almighty to Adam and Eve thus, we can hardly refuse to allow that they are prophetic of Jesus Christ and the triumph of Him and His people over the evil one.

The next conspicuous outpouring of the prophetic Spirit is in the case of Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18; cf. Gal. iii. 16). The design of such promises seems to have been, so far as the ancient recipients were concerned, not to give them an infallible insight into futurity, but to give them light enough to comfort, encourage, and guide them; and so far as we are concerned, upon whom the ends of the world are come, the design seems to have been, that we should perceive the mutual adjustment of prophecy and fulfilment as of lock and key, and so should recognize the one Divine hand which has ordered events from the beginning till now. (See also Gen. xlix. 10; Num. xxiv. 17; Deut. xviii. 15.) Nor are the prophetic utterances of the Pentateuch estimated at their right value, unless they be taken as the first terms of a series; later on in the history of the ancient Church we have clearer language still, but those later prophecies would lose much of their force, and would not have been so effectual as they proved to be in educating the Jewish mind to the hope of a Messiah, in leading men to wait for the Consolation of Israel, if they had not been prefaced by the prophetic language of the Pentateuch, and so made links in a continuous chain stretching from the first Adam to the second, and binding together the earliest hint of redemption with the great Redeemer Himself. 2. The Church of Christ has ever seen and loved to see in the historical events and the ordinances of the ancient dispensation, types and shadows of those greater blessings and clearer revelations which were reserved for the days of the gospel. And it is hardly necessary to say that the sacrifices of the old dispensation found their explanation and fulfilment in the sacrifice of the death of Christ. 3. There is one other declaration of Christ in the Pentateuch which ought to be noticed. The phrase "preludings of the Incarnation" has been happily used as descriptive of those manifestations of God to men of old time, to which I am about to refer. I will adduce two instances. The first shall be that of the three men who visited Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. One of these men seems to be made by the story identical with the Lord; and we can hardly resist the conclusion that the person in question was the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity. For the second instance I refer to the history of Jacob and the man with whom he wrestled (Gen. xxxii. 24). The point to be noticed is, that although the wrestler is spoken of as a man, still when he gives the name of Israel to Jacob the reason assigned is this, "as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." 4. One of the most striking features of the Pentateuch, to a mind considering its contents philosophically, is its anthropomorphic character. The revelation is intensely human, and yet there is no sinking of the Majesty of God. The principle of the Pentateuch is that of revealing God to man through humanity; God may be said to be stooping to man in order to lift up man to Himself. The full meaning of the Pentateuch can be found only in the Incarnation. The Pentateuch is anthropomorphic, because it is the preface to the record in which we read that God became man; there is a deep underlying unity between the shadowy record of God's early communion with His creatures and the clearer record of His perfect communion with them in the person of His Son. (*Bp. Harvey Goodwin.*)

HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE BOOKS IMPORTANT.—In a recent number of the "Contemporary Review" a voice from Oxford pleads in a temperate and harmless-looking article for the recognition of the new critical movement. To those who can read between the lines, that article will be noticeable for what it leaves unstated. And to those who are unacquainted with the bearings of the questions discussed the effect will be misleading. There are three propositions in it in particular on which I wish to make a passing remark. (1) That all critics are "satisfied that the historical books of the Old Testament—except the shortest, such as Ruth and Esther—are of composite structure." (2) "The difficulty (occasioned by the critical view) does not consist in the doctrines which the Old Testament enumerates, but in the historical setting in which they are placed before us." (3) "Critical investigations concern really not the fact of revelation, but its mode, or form, or course: upon Christian faith and practice they have no bearing whatever." With reference to the first proposition, that "the historical books are of composite structure," it has to be said that this circumstance is nothing more than what the books in question say of themselves. They are careful to say in numerous places whence their materials are drawn, and the circumstance may be regarded as a pledge of their veracity. History compiled from authentic sources will be more reliable as history than when it is written from

the imagination of the historian. But to put forward this particular as a leading feature of the new view of the Old Testament is misleading to simple people. The real distinction of Wellhausen and his friends in regard to the historical books is not that they are compiled from different sources, but that the sources have been so combined that the one part largely destroys the others, and that we cannot get at the residuum of fact contained in these books without taking them to pieces and casting away what the critic rejects. If the historical books are allowed to stand for good reliable history, the main positions of this school are easily overthrown. Further, when it is averred that the new theory does not alter or affect the doctrines of the Old Testament, but only concerns the "historical setting in which they are placed before us," two points are implied which require to be considered. (1) Whether a change in the setting will not affect the doctrine; and (2) to what extent a change in the setting would affect our faith in the credibility of Scripture itself. Obviously a change in the setting will affect the doctrine. What is spoken by a Prophet who is fully attested as God's messenger would not have the same claim upon our faith and obedience if spoken by an ordinary man whose authority has yet to be proved. I admit, however, that the main difference which the evolution conception would introduce into Old Testament doctrine would be a difference in the setting. But what would that difference mean in regard to the doctrine? The Oxford professor evidently thinks it would be immaterial. Let us take an example or two. (1) The Book of Exodus has set down the Mosaic tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai; it has attributed the plan of it to a pattern which was shown by God to Moses on the mount; it has connected the construction of its parts with various persons, some of whom are mentioned by name; it has recorded various incidents of a historical character of which this tabernacle is the centre and subject, and without which their place in the narrative would be meaningless. Now we are told that this tabernacle was never seen in the wilderness, that in fact it was never seen anywhere except in the imagination, and not even then till after Solomon's temple had been built and probably destroyed. I would ask, then, if this new setting of the tabernacle will not affect our belief in the doctrines which the tabernacle teaches? (2) As another illustration, take the story of Joseph, and let us ask how far the bright and imperishable jewels of that story would be dimmed by removing them from their present setting? The story relates how the family of Israel were preserved through the foresight and providence of God; how, all unknown to the actors in the story, the hand of God brought them down to Egypt for their safety in a time of famine, and how a home, protection, and honour were secured to them there until they were prepared to return to the land promised to their fathers. Now, the idea of a supreme Providence guiding the actions and the destinies of men through several generations, to fulfil a purpose, is undoubtedly taught in other parts of the Bible, both by precept and example. But would that idea have the same authority for us in the history of the time? If the framework be imagination, or chiefly imagination, is not the idea itself deprived of authority and driven from the sphere of objective and reality? (3) Another and last example, and this time from Prophecy. When the kingdom of the ten tribes revolted from the house of David, they set up, under the guidance of Jeroboam, a spurious worship in order to prevent the people of the north from joining in the great gatherings of the people at Jerusalem. On the day when the new worship was inaugurated at Bethel, and Jeroboam was about to offer incense before a public assembly, a man of God, a prophet from Judah, came forth and pronounced Jehovah's sentence upon the altar and its worship, uttering a prediction which, according to the history, was fulfilled some three hundred years afterwards. Now this prediction, together with the rending of the altar and the withering of Jeroboam's hand, are among the principal tokens by which the Divine mission of this prophet is attested, and if they are removed from their present setting, as this hypothesis does remove: hem, the testimony of this prophet against the new worship is reduced to the sphere of imagination, or at best to the level of a human opinion. Evidently then much will depend upon the setting. These and other features in the methods and principles of this school of critics ought, I think, to make us hesitate before accepting them as our guides. Their disavowal of the New Testament as authoritative for the interpretation of the Old, their undisguised opposition to the supernatural throughout, their treatment of the Old Testament history as if it were a mixture of fact and fable are far from assuring that upon Christian faith and practice their conclusions can have no bearing whatever. For those who know what faith means, how it is produced and sustained, the bearing is

of the greatest conceivable moment. With the Divine authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures to stand upon, our Churches have had a basis of fellowship, a principle of unity, and a fountain of life and inspiration which have enabled them to dispense with human authority, whether in the form of creeds or ecclesiastical courts and dignities. But if we must now begin to determine for ourselves what is Scripture and what is not, will our Church fellowships be able to stand? This, then, is the real alternative we have to face. For the authority of the Scriptures must be substituted the authority of the Church. Let the critics have their way, it is the Church which must determine what we are to believe! The place and uses of the Old Testament in Christian faith and the religious life, viewed as a practical question, will be obvious to most. As the most remarkable book in the world it will be read and studied as long as the world lasts. For the student of antiquity its place is assured for all time to come. What we have to fear chiefly at the present time is the widespread disparagement of it as the Word of God, of which Mr. Gladstone speaks, a disparagement which will surely result in the hiding of its treasures from the masses of the people and an enfeebled faith. May we, as some propose, let parts of it drop without detriment to faith? An adequate answer we cannot attempt here. I can only indicate where, in my opinion, the answer must be sought. We must (1) ascertain from the New Testament the exact relation of Old Testament faith and life to the faith and life of the early Church; and (2) examine the nature of Christianity itself as a spiritual religion whose ideal we see in the writings of the New Testament. These two points being given, we have to inquire how far the Old Testament is auxiliary and necessary to the production of the noblest types of Christ's religion. Given the spiritual man of St. Paul's type, or any other New Testament type you please, we ask: Is such a type conceivable without the Scriptures which they acknowledge? Take out of them what the Old Testament supplies and what would remain? Can we say that they would have been equally equipped for their life-work without it? We readily admit that the views of inspiration which were developed at a time when Biblical science hardly existed, do not answer to the facts which the Scriptures present, but there was one aspect of these Scriptures which the old doctrine saw and felt more fully than we seem to do—their Divine authority, their renewing and sanctifying power. We have forgotten when we read it that it is a religious book. We read its history as a mediæval chronicle. We speak of it as the history of Israel, as Hebrew literature, forgetting that it is neither the one nor the other. It is the history of the kingdom of God in the world. Its facts, its materials, its data, are there solely because of their relation to that kingdom. (*A. F. Simpson, M.A.*)

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

NAME AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.—The Jews have no title for this book but its first word—*Bereshith* (in the beginning). The Greeks called it *Genesis* (origination). All thoughtful men have recognized the value and dignity of this book as “the stately portal to the magnificent edifice of Scripture.” It is the oldest trustworthy book in the world, and conveys all the reliable information we possess of the history of man for more than two thousand years. The *Vedas* are ancient hymns and legends; the *Zendavesta* is a speculation on the origin of things; but *Genesis* is a narrative, written with a grave archaic simplicity. It is characteristically a book of origins and beginnings—it contains the deeply-fastened and widely-spread roots of all futurity. There is nothing afterward unfolded in the relationships of God with man, that is not at least in rudiment, or germ, to be traced in *Genesis*. (D. Fraser, D.D.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK.—The Book of *Genesis* is a record of the highest interest, not only as being probably the oldest writing in the world, but also because it is the foundation upon which the whole Bible is built. As well the Jewish as the Christian religions have their roots in this book, and there is even no doctrine of Christianity, however advanced, which is not to be found, at least in outline, therein. . . . This consistency of Holy Scripture with itself is made the more remarkable by the fact that in *Genesis* we have records of an age far anterior to the exodus from Egypt. Though the hand be the hand of Moses, the documents upon which the narrative is founded, and which are incorporated in it, date from primeval times. Upon them Moses based the Law, and subsequently the prophets built upon the Pentateuch the marvellous preparation for Christ. But though given thus “by diverse portions and in diverse manners,” through a vast period of time, and under every possible variety of culture and outward circumstance, the Bible is a book which from first to last is at unison with itself. It grows, proceeds onward, develops, but always in the same plane. It is no national anthology, full of abrupt transitions and violent contrasts, with the writings of one age at variance with those of another, and with subsequent generations ashamed of and destroying what went before. Rather like some mighty oak it has grown slowly through long centuries, but with no decaying limbs, no branches which have had to be lopped away. . . . From *Genesis* to *Malachi* there is in Holy Scripture a steady and homogeneous growth, advancing upwards to a stage so high as to be a fit preparation for the full sunshine of the gospel; and in the Book of *Genesis* we find the earliest stages of this work founded upon pre-Mosaic documents. (Dean Payne Smith.) The Book of *Genesis* is probably the most important contained in the Bible; it forms the basis of all revelation; is necessary to account for the moral condition of man, and his consequent need of redemption by Christ. The history, doctrine, and prophecy of all the inspired writings take their rise in its narrative, and without it would be unintelligible to us. The Book has an historical importance. It informs us of the creation of the world—of the coming forth of man to inhabit it, and of

his development into a family, a tribe, a nation. It also contains the record of many great and influential lives, and presents them with the pictorial vividness, with the simplicity and pathos of primitive times. Thus the Book of Genesis contains the history of the world's early progress, as presented in the lives of the most influential men of the times. It is therefore most important, certainly most interesting, and supremely reliable, as the outcome of a Divine inspiration then for the first time given to man. The Book has a doctrinal importance. It narrates the creation of man, with his temporal and moral surroundings. It teaches the Divine origin of the soul; that life is a probation; that communion with God is a reality; that man is gifted with moral freedom; that he is subject to Satanic influence, and that a violation of the law of God is the source of all human woe. Here we have the only reliable account of the introduction of sin into the world; the true philosophy of temptation, the true meaning of the redemptive purpose of God, the universal depravity of the early race; and we have exemplified the over-ruling providence of God in the history of the good. The Book has an ethical importance. It teaches the holy observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest and prayer; the intention and sanctity of marriage; and in its varied characters the retribution of deceit and envy. The morals of the Book are most elevating, and are especially emphatic in their appeal to the young. Nor are these principles contained merely in cold precept, but are invested with all the force and reality of actual life. Hence they are rendered pre-eminently human, attractive, and admonitory. The Book has a political importance. It traces the growth of social and national life; it indicates the method of commerce during the ancient times; it also proves that the national life of men may be rendered subservient to Divine ideas, and be made the medium for the advent of spiritual good to humanity. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

THE FORM AND MATTER OF THE NARRATIVE.—A part of the internal evidence lies in the form of the narrative. Its great simplicity, purity, and dignity; the sharp contrast which marks it, when laid side by side with the noblest forms of collateral tradition; the manner in which it is content to leave the mysterious and seemingly incredible, without toning it down, and without trying to explain it—these are some of the marks of a record of facts; of facts apprehended simply and clearly in their real relations; and of facts so profoundly impressing themselves upon a line of serious men, as to be held in tradition clear and unmixed, like bars of gold and inestimable jewels transmitted from generation to generation. Another part of the internal evidence lies in the matter of the narrative. Everything in it is weighty. There is not one trivial line. The profoundest themes are successively under treatment, and a purely original light irradiates them all. (*D. N. Beach.*) With the utmost directness and in smaller compass than that of the briefest of the articles that to-day stigmatize it as an "old Hebrew legend," this venerable book notes and answers the whole round of questions which modern thought agrees to reckon as involving the fundamental data of history, and to the solution of which in detail successive volumes are still being given. In the form given to the facts, from the description of the earth as emerging out of chaos to that of Israel about to emerge out of Egypt, and from the rejection of Cain's progeny to the dismissal of the Oriental civilizations with incidental allusion, there is always deliberate and intelligent rejection of that which has become obstructive or indifferent—that is to say, a recognition of the eminently modern notion of progress as dependent on the elimination of the unfit. But all the facts mentioned do not become even a background. There is a narrowing selective process. "The heaven and the earth" at first appear, but the earth alone is taken as the subject of the story. Chaos then passes, darkness falls apart, the blue vault lifts, the waters shrink, and light, air, and solid land emerge. So also the myriads of swarming life in its lower forms

recede that man may stand single and conspicuous in the foreground. Forthwith his history cleaves apart from that of "the ground from which he was taken," through the inspiration of the breath of God; and the lower creatures are equally shut out as furnishing no "helpmeet for him." The process of elimination goes steadily on in the strictly human history. Cain "went out," and reappeared no more. His stock, like that of Ishmael and Esau afterward, is soon dismissed from the record. The animalized antediluvians who were "flesh" were blotted out, and the idolatrous Chaldeans were left out of history, while Noah and Abraham alone were "selected" as "fitted" to "survive." The same rigid discrimination is exercised in fixing the range of history. The narrator goes on his chosen way avoiding much. He does not ignore, but neither does he dwell upon the growth of music, handicraft, or the beginnings of social and civic institutions. He is not insensible to the overhanging shadow of the massive Assyrian or Egyptian civilizations. But they do not awe or divert his thought. He leaves Nimrod's tower unfinished and Pharaoh's palace without an heir, while he pushes on to a shepherd's tent to detect in Judah and the Messianic promise the true thread of coming history. It was a marvellous prescience. For the tribe of Judah alone survives in an unbroken lineage from that earlier world, and all history to-day counts backward and forward from the date when that Messianic promise was fulfilled. (*J. B. Thomas.*) Of the Pentateuch itself, the first book, Genesis, is preparatory to the other four. These record the growth of the family of Jacob, or Israel, into the peculiar people; the constitution of the theocracy; the giving of a code of laws, moral, ritual, and civil; the conquest of part of the land promised to the forefathers of the nation; and the completion of the institutions and enactments needed for a settled condition. For this order of things the first book furnishes the occasion. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

UNITY OF PLAN AND PURPOSE THROUGHOUT.—The book begins with a general introduction, from ch. i. 1 to ch. ii. 3, wherein the creation of the universe is related in language of simple grandeur, very possibly in words handed down from the remotest antiquity, than which none could be more fitted here for the use of the sacred historian. After this the book consists of a series of *Toledoth*, or genealogical histories, the first of which is called "the *Toledoth* of the heavens and the earth" (ch. ii. 4); the others being the respective histories of the different families of man, especially of the ancestors of the people of Israel, from Adam to the death of Joseph. . . . As a rule, in each of these successive *Toledoth*, the narrative is carried down to the close of the period embraced, and at the beginning of each succeeding portion a brief repetition of so much as is needed of the previous account is given, and with it, very often, a note of time. (*Speaker's Commentary.*) Whether these primary documents were originally composed by Moses, or came into his hands from earlier sacred writers, and were by him revised and combined into his great work, we are not informed. By revising a sacred writing, we mean replacing obsolete or otherwise unknown words or modes of writing by such as were in common use in the time of the reviser, and putting in an explanatory clause or passage when necessary for the men of a later day. The latter of the above suppositions is not inconsistent with Moses being reckoned the responsible author of the whole collection. We hold it to be more natural, satisfactory, and accordant with the phenomena of Scripture. It is satisfactory to have the recorder, if not an eye-witness, yet as near as possible to the events recorded. And it seems to have been a part of the method of the Divine Author of the Scripture to have a constant collector, conservator, authenticator, reviser and continuator of that book which He designed for the spiritual instruction of successive ages. We may disapprove of one writer tampering with the work of another; but we must allow the Divine Author to adapt His own work, from time

to time, to the necessities of coming generations. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) Holiness, sublimity, truthfulness—these are the impressions left upon the mind of the thoughtful reader of Genesis. There is meant by this its subjective truthfulness. It is no invention. The one who first wrote it down, and first spoke it to human ears, had a perfect conscious conviction of the presence to his mind of the scenes so vividly described, and a firm belief in a great objective reality represented by them. It is equally evident, too, that it is the offspring of one conceiving mind. It never grew, like a myth or legend. It is one total conception, perfect and consistent in all its parts. There is nothing ideal about it. Myths and legends are the products of time; they have a growth. Thus other ancient cosmogonies, though bearing evidence of derivation from the one in Genesis, have had their successive accretions and deposits of physical, legendary, and mythological strata. This stands alone in the world. It has nothing national about it. It is no more Jewish than it is Assyrian, Chaldean, Indian, Persian, or Egyptian. It is no imitation. Copies may have been made from it, more or less deformed, but this is an original painting. The evidence is found in its simplicity, unity, and perfect consistency. Its great antiquity is beyond dispute. It was before the dawning of anything called science. We are shut up to the conclusion of its subjective truthfulness and its subjective authenticity. At a very early day, to which no profane history or chronology reaches, some man, who was not a philosopher, not a poet, not a fable-maker, but one who “walked with God,” and was possessed of a most devout and reverent spirit,—some such man, having a power of conception surpassing the ordinary human, or or else inspired from above, had present to his soul in some way, and first wrote down or uttered in words, this most wonderful and sublime account of the origin of the world and man. He believed, too, what he wrote or uttered. He was conscious of some source, whether by words or vision, whence he had received it, and he had no doubt of its relation to an outward objective truth which it purported to set forth. (*Taylor Lewis, LL.D.*)

THE BEAUTY AND UTILITY OF THIS BOOK.—We cannot wonder at the expression of the great German Reformer, Luther: “*Nihil pulchrius Genesi, nihil utilius.*” “There is nothing more beautiful than the Book of Genesis, nothing more useful.” There is, indeed, a beauty in it, which cannot be discovered in any other ancient work: there is a utility in it which we cannot fail, on inquiry and investigation, to appreciate. It is the record of the creation of the material world and of the founding of the spiritual world; and as such it stands at the head of all Scripture, as the authentic basis of the whole Bible, while, in the most special sense, it is the basis of the Pentateuch. It is, says Lange, the root whose trunk extends through all Scripture, and whose crown appears in the Apocalypse; or, as Delitzsch has expressed the same idea: “Genesis and Apocalypse, the Alpha and Omega of the canonical writings, correspond to each other. To the creation of the present heaven and the present earth corresponds the creation of the new heaven and the new earth on the last pages of the Apocalypse. To the first creation, which has as its object the first man Adam, corresponds the new creation, which has its outgoing from the Second Adam. Thus the Holy Scriptures form a rounded, completed whole—a proof that not merely this or that book, but also the canon, is a work of the Holy Spirit.” (*R. W. Bush, M.A.*)

THE BOOK OF GENESIS AS A WHOLE, A SUGGESTIVE PICTURE OF THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE.—When we read over this Book of Genesis we find great expectations and great promises in the beginning and throughout its progress, and in the end disappointment and great darkness. “In the beginning, God!” what expectation does not this grand exordium awaken, when we remember who God is, and what

He is; what His glory, what His power, what His love, what His grace! "In the beginning, God"—How does it end? "A coffin in Egypt!" That is the end. So, too, with the great promises made to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob. "I will be a God to thee." "I will be thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." What glorious expectations are excited there, and what is the end? A coffin in Egypt. Now, this seems to me to be just a picture of this world, so far as we can see, and so far as we can know. It is this world, as it is to sight and as it is to science. There are glorious expectations here. We look back to the origin of things, and we find wonderful preparations. We can trace back the history of our earth through the geological epochs, and find extraordinary development, wonderful evolution—rising, rising, rising up through inanimate creation, and then through the animate creation, until at last it reaches its crown and consummation in man; and now what glorious prophecies are there in man's nature, and what magnificent expectations in connection with his work and destiny! But, after all these hopes are so excited and stimulated, and we soar as high as heaven in our skyward aspirations, the end is a coffin. In Egypt perhaps. Yes, in Egypt. Egypt is a great country. It is the land of the pyramids. It is the land of the Sphinx, of science and art, of culture and civilization. In this nineteenth century civilization, of which we are so proud, we have better than Egyptian culture. We have better than Egyptian art. We have lordly magnificence all around us. There is wonderful progress in inventions and discovery—there seems no limit to the possibilities of inventive art and genius—the Egypt of the future bids fair to throw the Egypt of the present as far into the shade as it has already cast the Egypt of the past; but what is your portion and mine in the Egypt of the future? A coffin in it. Yes, that is the end for you and me and every one of us, so far as this world is concerned: a coffin in Egypt. In this world as in Genesis, there is much blessed light. There are many beautiful things in it; many things to admire, many things to impress us and inspire us; but it all ends in darkness. Hope springs exultant at the outset. Then it is "the evening and the morning." But when you reach the end you find the order has been sadly inverted. It is now the morning and the evening and the night. Can it be of God then, of Him who calls Himself "the Father of Lights"? Can it be that the development which commenced, "In the beginning, God," shall end with a coffin? No, it cannot be. If it had been, "In the beginning, Fate," or, "In the beginning, Chance," or, "In the beginning, Law," it might have been. But seeing that it is, "In the beginning, God," it cannot be. But is it not the end? Yes; but of what? Of Genesis. It is only the end of the beginning. That is the explanation of it all. Here is the key by which we can get out of the dark dungeon. "Now we see through a glass darkly." Now we know in part. Now we see only the beginnings of things. That is the reason they sometimes look so dark and so dreadful. And though to sight, and even to science, death seems to be the end of all our hope, remember that to faith it is the end of the beginning only. What a cheering thought it is to think that this life, that seems bounded by a grave, that seems to have so dark an end, is only the Genesis of our history. All the rest is yet to come, beyond the coffin in Egypt. It is because this life is only our Genesis that there is so much of prophecy in it, and so much of promise in it, and so little of fulfilment here. But beyond the coffin in Egypt there is an Exodus, without any wanderings. There is Joshua, the captain of the Lord's host in the heavenly places; and Judges too (Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3), but no desolating wars. There are Kings, but no Prophets ("whether there be prophecies; they shall cease"). There are Psalms, but no Lamentations. There are Gospels without a Cross. There are Acts of loving service without a dungeon. And whether in that world beyond the grave there be any need of Epistles, I cannot tell; but this we know, that there shall be a glorious Apocalypse, when the veil is

drawn and the glory is seen. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear"—He on whom all hopes are centred; to whom all the types did point; of whom all the prophets spake; in whom all the promises have been fulfilled—when He shall appear, the second time, in His glory, "we shall be like Him." And what our surroundings shall be then we cannot tell; but we know that there will be the fulfilment of every true desire and longing of the sanctified soul. All these promises, all these expectations, all these aspirations of our Genesis life, will be fulfilled in the coming Apocalypse of glory. (*J. M. Gibson, D.D.*)

THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

GENESIS THE THIRD: HISTORY, NOT FABLE.—I. The Place which the Mosaic Account of the Creation and Fall of Man occupies in Holy Scripture. In some scientific circles, in which Christian faith has no place, this narrative is now regarded as one of many similar fables of the early world, the truth being that there was no first man, and no fall of man, but a gradual rise from the animal level up to humanity, through the ages of an immeasurably distant past. In other scientific and theological circles, where Christian faith still maintains its hold on revelation in general, the narrative is regarded as an allegory wholly destitute of historical reality, but setting forth in pictorial form the early struggles of man with the lower forces of nature, and the ascension of the spirit, through discipline and temptation, to the heights of faith in God. Among Christian believers of this class it is now boldly affirmed that it is impossible to attach any historical value to the idea of the ruin of a world by the common ancestor of the race. I have thought that it might be a moderately useful contribution to the cause of Scriptural Christianity to show, in opposition to such methods of dealing with Holy Scripture, what may be fairly alleged in support of the historical reality of this narrative, and what may be fairly said in reply to the more common objections to its literal credibility. Our business will be to clear the ground by showing the place which the narrative of the creation and fall of man occupies in the Bible. There can be no hesitation in affirming that the books of the Old Testament, and emphatically the books of the New Testament, with one consent, treat the narrative of the recent creation and fall of man as historical, and make it the basis of the whole system of Divine dispensations towards our race which they profess to record. In modern writings the assertion is frequently made that the earlier chapters of Genesis are manifestly symbolical, and demand no faith in their literality. But in the Book of Genesis there are no signs of symbolism in the earlier portion. If there is a simple realistic style in ancient prose history anywhere, that style is found in the Book of Genesis, from the beginning to the end. It is surely a great violence in criticism to represent the author or compiler of Genesis as distinguishing in his own mind between the allegorical quality of his earlier and later chapters. Whether true or not, most certainly he delivers them as if he believed them to be true, and true in their literal sense; the first chapter relating to a very recent action of God in refitting the earth, and in creating man and certain animals upon it; the second and third recounting the moral trial of the newly-made human beings in order to decide the question of eternal obedience to their Maker, with the result of loss of life through sin, and of the prospect of immortality. The narrative professes to account for the entrance of death into the human world, and this problem could not be solved by an allegory. If the presence of direct Divine action, asserted in this narration, is sufficient ground for rejecting its literality, consistency will require the rejection of the whole subsequent narrative of Scripture on the same ground. The story in Genesis is not more open to objection for this reason than any other parts of the Bible. The whole Bible, certainly, may be a false record; but it is impossible to save or defend a long supernatural history simply by attempting to allegorize its earliest chapters. It is, I think, easy to show that, throughout the New Testament, in the teaching both of Christ and the apostles, the narrative of Eden is not only taken for historic truth, but is made the basis of Christianity itself as a religion of redemption. In St. Matt. xix. 3-6 we find our Lord Jesus Christ establishing the sanctity of the marriage union for all mankind from the beginning of the world, and forbidding divorce, except for unfaithfulness, on the basis of the truth of the Mosaic account of the creation of Adam and Eve, and on the authority of the words said to be spoken on the occasion

of that first marriage. This is repeated in Mark x. 2-9. Christ's teaching surely is Christianity, or an important part of it, and He here most distinctly founds His own legislation in respect to the indissolubleness of marriage, except for the cause of adultery, on the historical reality of the narrative in Genesis. If He took this part of the narrative as historical truth, it is certain that He did not look upon the remainder as allegory. If the story of Adam and Eve is a fable, and these persons had no real existence, then the alternative is that Christ founds His law of marriage, one of the most important laws in any religion, on a fable which He mistook for a truth. And with that primary mistake His authority as a Divine legislator falls altogether. In St. John viii. 44 our Lord again refers to the Edenic narrative, and supplies the explanation of the temptation by the serpent. But if Jesus Christ did not rightly understand the origin of the race which He came to save, did not understand, in fact, why they required to be saved, mistook an allegory for a history, and falsely imagined the action of an Adam, and of an adversary who had no real existence, what remains in His teaching to which it is possible to attach any real importance? It will be requisite to carry the allegorizing process much further, and to convert the gospel history itself and all our Lord's teaching into a fabulous representation of truths which He Himself did not understand, and which have nothing whatever to do with authentic history. If next we pass from Christ to His biographers and apostles, we find St. Luke, in the genealogy of Jesus, placing "Adam, the son of God," at the summit of the table, evidently with as firm a persuasion of his real personality as that of any of his successors. If we open the Epistle to the Romans, we find St. Paul, the chief apostle of the gospel, in his chief doctrinal Epistle, addressed to the chief Church in Christendom, laying the very foundation of the doctrine of salvation through the Incarnation, in the historic truth of the Fall of man in the Book of Genesis. Nine times in eight verses does St. Paul affirm the literal truth of the Edenic history, and represent the Redemption in Christ as having a distinct relation to the entrance of sin and death therein described. If St. Paul was in error here at the foundation, he erred at least along with his Master, as we have seen; and if he erred in his belief on the Fall, and we can certainly know it, it is quite certain that there is nothing whatever left in his doctrinal teaching respecting the Redemption to which any Divine authority can be attached. He is mistaken in the two foci of his theological system. It is, nevertheless, an error which he repeats in many forms in his writings. Thus, in chap. xvi. 20 of the same Epistle, he promises the Romans, in manifest allusion to Gen. iii. 15, that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Again, in writing several years before to the Corinthians, when treating of the resurrection of the saints to eternal life, in the glory of God, he had thus spoken of the origin of death and of the cause of resurrection in these words: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in the Christ shall all be made alive." And lower down, when speaking of the different constitutions of the animal and spiritual humanities, he adds: "There is a natural, or soulual, or psychical body, and there is a spiritual or pneumatical body. And so it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul, or *psyché*, the last Adam became a life-giving spirit, or *pneuma*. Howbeit, that is not first which is spiritual or pneumatical, but that which is natural, or soulual, psychical, then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, *chôikos*, a man of dust. The second Man is of heaven. As is the man of dust, such also are the men of dust, and as is the heavenly One, such also are the heavenly ones. And as we have borne the likeness of the man of dust, we shall also bear the likeness of the heavenly One" (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 44-49). How is it possible to avoid seeing that in every expression of these verses St. Paul refers to the detailed account of the creation of Adam in the second and third chapters of Genesis, and treats the whole narrative, not only as historical, but as the record of an essential part of the general system of the Divine dealings with humanity in its psychical and pneumatical stages of development under its two federal heads, Adam and Christ? Again, in the same Epistle (1 Cor. xi. 8), St. Paul gives as a reason why women were to be attired in a manner to represent subjection to man, thus: "For a man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not out of the woman, but the woman out of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Can there be any doubt that the apostle here refers

to the words of Gen. ii. 23, and reasons from them as a true history? In his Second Epistle St. Paul does not hesitate to hold up the example of Eve's weakness as a warning to the philosophical Corinthians. In his Epistle to the Ephesians the apostle quotes the words of Gen. ii. 24, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother," &c., just as our Lord had done before him, to describe to his converts the law of marriage union fixed at the creation of Adam and Eve—a quotation without the force or authority even of antediluvian legend, unless he held the history as authentic, real, and indisputable. In his First Epistle to Timothy he assigns as a reason for the subjection of women and their silence in church, so far as teaching in the Church is concerned, the original constitution of things and the truth of the narrative of the Fall in Eden. It is easy to see that St. Paul regarded the Edenic history as a fable no more than he looked on the rest of the Old Testament as mythical or allegorical. Indeed, there is no narrative in the Old Testament which St. Paul so frequently refers to in his writings as true and instructive as that of the earlier chapters of Genesis. In the same manner Apollos, or whoever wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of the history of the antediluvians in his eleventh chapter, from Abel downwards, as if equally authentic with that of all subsequent ages. St. John, in his Epistle, refers, as we have seen, similarly to the history of Cain and Abel as a practical instruction in the ways of piety and faith. And, lastly, in the Apocalypse, not only is the scenery of the earthly paradise taken as a type and symbol of loftier realities beyond, but "the devil and Satan" is twice pointed out as the "mankiller from the beginning," and described as "the ancient serpent, which deceiveth the whole world," so as to fix beyond dispute the diabolical nature of the power which brought upon our first parents ruin and destruction (Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2). Every one who has followed attentively this complete induction of Biblical reference to the Mosaic history of man's creation and fall must allow that the modern attempt to resolve the early chapters in Genesis into an allegory or a fable is inconsistent with any rational recognition of the inspiration or authority of Jesus Christ and His apostles. It seems to me quite useless to disguise this conflict between the Bible and—not science, but that which, in the opinion of not a few in our time, is thought worthy of the name of science. There can be no doubt that it is held for certain by many, including no small number of able and accomplished persons, that modern discovery has decisively proved the immense antiquity of man, his animal origin, and, consequently, the falsity of the Mosaic cosmogony and Edenic story, so that the fable of "Eve and the Apple" and the "talking serpent"—to use the favourite profane description—is widely regarded as a test measurement of any man's ignorance and credulity. A man who will believe that is proved to be both ignorant of facts and undeserving of argument. Who that reflects on this state of things can fail to conclude that there is some great mistake somewhere? If the so-called scientific view of man's origin is really scientific—that is, is a matter of certain knowledge, and not of mere guess-work (and nothing less than certain knowledge is science)—why, undoubtedly it follows that not merely Moses was mistaken, but that Christ and all His apostles were mistaken also. Christianity is one complicated mistake, for it founds a doctrine of redemption on the history of the recent creation and fall of Adam, on the moral and not animal origin of sin; and if the Adam of Genesis never sinned, because he never existed, Christ was certainly not "sent from God," and "died in vain." Is it, then, possible that this so-called scientific conclusion of the antiquity of man, and of his bestial origin, is only a hideous delusion, notwithstanding the loud tones in which some are proclaiming it? Is it possible that, when closely examined, this theory of man's immense antiquity, however boldly affirmed by some, is resting at this moment chiefly on the sub-structure of so-called inferences from the growth of stalagmite and the age of gravels, which rouse nothing less than the indignation of men of the very first rank in knowledge, who grieve to see a mere succession of changing guesses represented to the multitudes as ascertained European science? Is it possible that statements which were put forth a few years ago in support of this theory have, one after another, been compulsorily withdrawn? Is it true that, in general, ordinary men's assurance of its truth is in inverse proportion to their detailed acquaintance with the state of the evidence? And, lastly, is it a fact that if it were attempted at this moment to make it a test of membership in any of the great scientific societies of Europe to confess the truth of the evolution theory in general, as universally and irrevocably established—much more the evolution of man from the animal races as proved with any show whatever of positive evidence—or even the remotest antiquity of the present race of man as supported by any

decisive evidence at all, there is not one of these societies—English, French, German, or American—which would not be rent asunder by a violent convulsion of opposing conviction, from the Royal Society downwards, so deep, so strong, so indignant is the revolt of many of the leading lights of biology and archæology against the notion that anything has been demonstrably settled to shake the public faith in the recent and direct Divine creation of the human race? Professor Stokes, one of the secretaries of the Royal Society, a man closely conversant with the principal scientific men in Europe, in a paper recently read before the Church Congress, and repeated in a revised form elsewhere, said that in the absence of biological knowledge of our own what must be done in order to test the value of opinions involving such momentous issues for all mankind is to examine the mode of argument of these writers in departments with which we are more familiar, and to compare the utterances of biological leaders in Europe and America with one another, so as not to be carried away by the authority of one or two considerable names. Science signifies absolute knowledge, not the opinion of some distinguished scientific men. What is absolutely known for certain is accepted by properly-qualified investigators in all lands. Tried by this test, the widely-diffused notions of the animal origin and remote antiquity of the human race break down instantly. There is scarcely a single fact in the interpretation of which the leading biologists and archæologists of the world are agreed—certainly not one which can serve as a basis for a theory solid enough to overthrow the teaching of Divine revelation. II. The General Objections Urged against the Truth of the History of the Fall. It is wonderful sometimes to listen to the objections to the supernatural Bible history which are made by men who are well acquainted with the work of God in nature. The objection, if it means anything at all, means that you must not associate the idea of Deity with details in the universe, but only with universal laws; that to impute to God minute or definite acts of creation or providence, or to think of Him as the “man in the next street”—to use Dr. M. Arnold’s phrase—is to dishonour the idea of an Eternal Cause. The notion seems to be that the Infinite Mind can be occupied only with general and abstract ideas, and not with the detailed application of laws or forces, as if these abstract and general ideas were anything more than the algebraic symbols required by the weakness of finite minds, or as if we could even conceive of an all-pervading intelligent Deity who did not see all general ideas in every one of their special applications, and, if He worked at all, worked in detail. Now, let any man who believes in an intelligent Power behind nature, and working in nature, think of what we know of the interior economy of a spider’s nest, an anthill, a beehive, as described by Lubbock and Romanes, and then tell us whether Creative Power is too great for details. Why, all natural history proves that God “taketh care” for animals down to the very animalcule—in Christ’s sublime language, that “not one of them is forgotten before Him.” There is no remedy for disbelief in Bible history, because of its details of Divine action and interference, so effectual as study of natural history both in animal and vegetable life. The objection to the supernatural element in the history of paradise is but one specific example of a wider objection to the supernatural altogether, and lies equally against the whole recorded history of the Bible. Those who are resolved to account for all things by the single action of natural causes will allow of no Divine direct agency whatsoever, and against these objectors it is idle to attempt to establish the truth of this particular supernatural history; but those who admit the reality of Divine direct agency in the subsequent history of man are to the last degree unreasonable in objecting to the record of such agency at its commencement. The Bible is one prolonged denial of the doctrine that a uniform course of nature is an adequate description of the history of this world. It is professedly a record, from first to last, of a series of direct interferences of God, both in creation and providence, supernatural because the end to be attained was above law—the salvation of man; and this series of interferences becomes credible to the mind precisely in proportion as it is studied in connection with nature, studied as a whole, and studied in the light of its alleged object, the bestowment of eternal life on sinful and dying men. Assuredly the earlier chapters of Genesis are full, in every line, as was likely if man had a beginning in God, of statements of such direct Divine operations. In the first chapter we see Almighty God directly creating certain animals at the time of the creation of man. We see Him directly creating woman “out of man,” the reverse of the subsequent order of nature. In the third chapter we see God placing man in the paradise, under a special trial of his moral nature, arraigning him for disobedience, and then passing sentence on

the man, the woman, and the serpent-tempter. This style of writing is not peculiar to the opening pages of Moses. It continues to the end of the Bible—the assertion of the direct, constant, minute, supernatural action of God in mercy and in judgment. Now, when such statements do not meet with the assent of faith, faith which discerns the truth even in the miracle, the counter-feeling which they raise is that of strong disbelief, and generally of ridicule, ridicule being the expression of the sense of incongruity and total incredibility. Accordingly the Bible is in our time either believed as a supernatural whole, or, quite logically, rejected and ridiculed as a whole. Nothing is easier than to ridicule the Bible by comparing it with common life. The more closely men study the uniformity of nature and the ordinary course of events, the more will they be struck with the extraordinary quality of the miraculous record of Scripture; and, unless they have spiritual reasons for believing it, the more incongruous and ridiculous will it all appear. But such a sense of the ridiculous offers no solid basis of argument. It requires little candour to admit that any true account of the origin of mankind must be, in its circumstances, exceedingly unlike our modern development, and that to require similarity to our own experiences as the condition of belief in such an account is a sign of a somewhat narrow apprehension. Whatever theory of man's origin be adopted, the beginning must have been so unlike the ending that, if unlikeness to our own experience is to bring down ridicule, no theory can escape it. Even if the favourite notion be true, that man originated in some collateral ancestor of the anthropoid apes or gorillas, it must have been a day of wonder in "the infinite azure of the past" when that black-faced, long-tailed, hairy monster, described for us by Mr. Grant Allen, first thought and spake as a man; and another day, much unlike our own, when this developed brute first stood upright, and found a half-rational helpmeet in a similarly developed female anthropoid. If ridicule here is to be the test of truth, ridicule excited by unlikeness to modern experience, the story of Adam and Eve, glowing fresh in strength and beauty from the direct hand of God, will bear comparison with that of the infinitely slow development of this prognathous brute of pseudo-science, whose fierce dull eye gradually gleamed with reason, and whose bellowsings and roarings, during the course of thousands of years spent amidst the post-glacial morasses and jungles (Dr. Max Müller says it is quite inconceivable), gradually subsided into human speech. A second difficulty which has been felt in the reception of the Edenic story as historical is what is spoken of as its childish tone, in which the Almighty Creator is represented as working with His hands as a potter or sculptor; walking, talking, professing ignorance of the hiding-place of Adam; and then condemning His new-made creatures to death when tempted to make progress in intelligence by a speaking serpent. That is one way of putting the case. Now let us try the effect of another. This narrative presents a succession of the sublimest ideas of which the human mind is capable. The expression of them is indeed childlike, in the simplest language, language suitable to the childhood of the world; but there is nothing childlike, nothing unworthy of the faith of the manliest intelligence, and nothing unworthy of the Infinite Lord of Nature dealing with mankind in its beginnings. The Bible as a whole is credible and defensible, partly because it offers a history of humanity from its infancy to its mature age, the race having, as a matter of fact, passed through the stages of individual life from childhood to maturity; so that the early portion of the Bible, professing to record revelations of God in the earliest stages of man's life, wins credibility from reflective readers just because its opening pages are answerable in style to the opening ages of the world. Had they been less childlike in tone, they would have lacked one necessary note of genuineness in the adaptation of the Divine Father's voice to the early understanding of His sons. The books of the nursery are indeed childlike in tone, but often embody the maturest wisdom; and no wise man dreams of deriding his own childhood, or of burning the library of his children's nursery. Judged by these canons, the histories of Genesis assume a place of high importance in the annals of the world. As a record of early religious literature, compared with the deciphered rubbish of Egypt and Chaldea, it is a pre-eminent example of the survival of the fittest. Let us now point out some of the noble thoughts which underlie the Edenic story. 1. Here, then, first of all, we find the sublimest possible conception of man's original. Man is Deiform, the image of the Infinite Being on earth, the direct creation of the Eternal Mind and Will. He is formed of the dust of the ground, *Adamah*, from which he takes his name of Adam, or *Earth*—dust and ashes, in the language of Abraham. He is formed as the last link in a series of

animal lives, and on one side of his nature strongly resembles those beasts which perish. He belongs to the *Vertebrata*. His form has been typified and foretold in a long succession of old-world prophecies, in the structure of previous animals. But he does not spring from the earth, or from previous forms, as they did. He is specially fashioned by the Almighty Hand; God is represented as moulding him, working out in living art the eternal idea; and then as breathing into him, by direct afflatus of Divinity, the breath of life. The seal of the living God, of the Infinite Life, is on his forehead, and though capable of dying, he is not made to die. There is no idea in the modern books on the Descent of Man so grand as this.

2. An equal splendour and originality characterizes the relation of the creation of woman. As if foreseeing the debasing gorilla-philosophy of the last days, here, in the very dawn of history, the strongest possible contradiction is given, while humanity was still in its beginning, to the notion of human derivation from the animals. For a modified gorilla a modified simian would have served well enough. But Adam was of a Divine original, "made in God's image," and therefore Eve, in her glory and beauty, is the direct work of the Supreme Sculptor, Painter, Poet, and Life-giver; fashioning out of Adam himself the woman who should be one with him in life and love for ever and ever. Here is the strongest possible denial of the bestial original of humanity. He could not pair with the lower races, for his origin was directly from the sacred fount of Deity. The building up of the frame of Eve out of materials of bone and flesh taken from the entranced form of Adam is only a specific difference under the general principle that living beings descend from each other, under the plastic agency of God; and in this case the form of the action was specially fitted to lay the foundation of spiritual marriage, the only true human marriage, in the consciousness of their deep unity in Him. It is God who "joins together" man and woman in a unity which is no mere partnership or trading company with limited liability, but a unity consecrated by the bond of God's Spirit, and which, therefore, "no man may put asunder."

3. Next observe that the man and woman thus formed are designed for immortal life. So long as Adam abstained from the forbidden tree he is free to take of the tree of life, the effect of which is to cause him to "live for ever." To take of one tree was death, but to take of the other was life eternal. What can convey more clearly the sublime idea that man was originally designed for a dependent but endless life in God?

4. But if man is not a "beast of the field," and if a "beast's heart is not given him," neither is he here represented as an automaton. He is free, and is placed at once under the necessity of choosing between good and evil, truth and falsehood, right and wrong, God and self-will—in an immediate trial. He must, by a deliberate choice under temptation, against all lower seduction, declare his allegiance to the Eternal, as the condition of the endless life. It was a trial of faith; that is, of intelligent voluntary choice of the Infinite Life and Perfection as Ruler and Lord, precisely in the same sense in which we are tried in the contest between faith and unbelief. How could this faith be tested? The law of the Ten Commandments was, as Mr. Henry Rogers has pointed out in one of his memorable letters, inapplicable. The law of the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments was unsuited to a creature who had but one single earthly relationship. There must, therefore, be appointed some positive external trial, by which the question of allegiance might be determined at once and for ever. The test selected was the taking of the fruit of a tree which was called the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," which was good for food, desirable to the eyes, and in some mysterious sense described as a "tree desirable to make one wise." This tree appealed, by its complex qualities, to the whole nature of man on its un-moral side, to the lower senses of taste and smell, to the sense of beauty, above all to his intellectual curiosity and ambition, as carrying with it some awful mystery of "knowledge of good and evil" which should liberate him from dependence on the Creator's word—in fact, from a life of faith in God. It was a test which brought out the whole strength of the two counter-attractions by which their being was drawn in two opposite directions, towards God the Infinite or away from Him. Between these two the choice must be made for eternity of loyal obedience or of empirical rebellion. And the lower attraction was supplemented by the permitted assistance of a living tempter, enforcing the seduction of the inanimate object, since the rejection of animated evil was as much due to God as the rejection of the inanimate. In Adam's case, the still further fidelity was required of deafness to the voice of his wife when she became an auxiliary to the seduction. What is there of ridiculous in such a trial? It precisely resembles in its essence the trial to which every man

in the world is still exposed—the trial of faith and fidelity to God, to right, to duty as against created forces of seduction. How shamefully is this lofty trial now misrepresented! Here is not one word of “an actual apple”—the fruit is not named; the material attractiveness is scarcely noticed, in the emphasis given to the intellectual attractions of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”—the temptation to know good and evil experimentally, apart from the will and word of the Creator. It was a test of the root-principle of obedience to the Eternal Mind and Will, the prime condition of co-existence in eternity with God; since such obedience of faith is, and must be in all worlds, but the fulfilment of the primary law of created free agency. For pride is the sin through which “fell the angels.”

III. The Sentences Pronounced on the Man, the Woman, and the Serpent-tempter. We now proceed to examine the narrative of the trial of Adam in paradise on the side of its results, with a view to an opinion on its credibility when taken as a real history. And, first of all, I observe that the narrative, as it stands in the Book of Genesis, ought not to be made answerable at the bar of modern thought for the traditionary accumulations which have gathered round it after thirty-four centuries of rabbinical and theological comment upon it. It is defensible as it stands in the primitive record; but, I admit, wholly indefensible and incredible as interlined by the additions of a later philosophy and tradition. On the face of the narrative as it stands we find only that, after other things set in order, and other living beings created, “God made man of the dust of the ground in His own image, and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” This last expression, applied in the Hebrew original hundreds of times to the animals, signifies only that man, animated by the Divine Spirit, became a “living creature.” It most certainly was not intended to signify that Adam was created in possession of an indestructible life. On the contrary, being made “in God’s image,” he was a creature that might live for ever if God so pleased; but he might also die and pass away if he disobeyed his Maker. On the face of the narrative it appears plainly that, being created in the likeness of God, and allowed access to the “Tree of Life,” he was originally designed for immortality—for life eternal; but it was conditional on the obedience of faith. If he transgressed, he would “die.” The object set before him, therefore, was to secure, by faith in God, an absolute possession of the eternal life for which God made him. If he departed from the living God, and set up himself to be a self-determining power, to be “as God, knowing good and evil,” he would “return to the dust whence he was taken.” This is all that is in the narrative. The penalty of withdrawing from God was death—the termination of his life (just as death would have borne that meaning to him for all other living beings in the world), and with that, of course, the life of the unborn race which he represented. If now we examine closely the history of the consequences resulting from the disobedience of our first parents, through whom it is falsely said that we have become “guilty and accursed of God,” it is seen at once, as was pointed out seventeen centuries ago by Irenæus, the scholar of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John the Divine, in his second book on Heresies, that God pronounced no curse whatever on Adam or on Eve after their transgression, much less on their posterity. It is said that God “cursed the ground for Adam’s sake,” cursed it with comparative sterility, so as to demand extraordinary toil in its cultivation. The lightning passed from the head of Adam to the soil, whence he should draw his sustenance. Similarly, there is no single word of a “curse” pronounced on Eve. The life-penalty of her offence was sorrow in child-bearing; but child-bearing itself was a blessing, not a curse. The curse turned aside from her also, and descended on the serpent-deceiver. The ground and the serpent were accursed, but not Adam and Eve. They were both to undergo the death-penalty, and to “return to the dust whence they were taken,” and thus were “constituted sinners”; but, first, the penalty was deferred, and, secondly, in the very act of sentencing them to death, God spake a word of hope and restoration through the “seed of the woman.” And then it was that Adam called his wife by a new name, “Eve,” or Life, because she was to be the mother of a world of living beings which would never have existed but for the promised “seed of the woman” and the suspension of the sentence. Their continued life was itself a sign of the pardoning mercy of God, abstaining from the infliction of the threatening that “in the day” of their transgressions they should “surely die.” The postponement of death rendered possible the existence of mankind, and the birth of their Deliverer who should “crush the serpent’s head.” If, next, we turn to consider the results of the transgression recorded in the Genesis-fragment, probably of antediluvian antiquity,

we find first of all a statement that the sense of shame in nakedness entered into the human world with sin, and as the effect of it. Few features in the narrative have been more steadily derided than this, that both man and woman were created in a state of nakedness, and that the sense of outward shame began only with the sense of transgression, leading to the first attempt at imperfect clothing. No ridicule has been more inconsiderate and superficial. The account given in Genesis is at least a striking solution of a problem under atheistic views hopelessly insoluble. Think of it. The whole world of living creatures is either unclothed, or, if dressed in plumage or fur, is so dressed by nature for protection from the weather, or for flight, or for beauty, and not as a remedy for any shame at exposure of the body or any part of it. There is no trace of this feeling in the animal world throughout all its ranks. Even our nearest analogues, the most unsightly anthropoids, are destitute of any similar instinct of self-concealment. Whence the irresistible instinct through which the most noble and beautiful forms in the whole world clothe themselves from view, just in proportion as culture and civilization render them more majestic and more beautiful? and in a world where all the rest of animated nature is "naked, and is not ashamed"? The fact is indisputable. Not the most infidel or the most beautiful nation in Europe, in its finest, warmest climate, could possibly venture to live one day absolutely unclothed. Absolute public nudity is itself a synonym for disgrace and shameless vice in all nations and ages. Even the half-nakedness of modern fashion and of theatrical display is condemned by the public conscience. Let those who ridicule the narrative in Genesis be pleased to give us some account of this phenomenon. Will any one assign a more rational account of this extraordinary exception to the rule of nature among living creatures than this—that the sense of shame in nakedness, the outward crimson blush at exposure of the person, the impulse to hide and cover, entered with sin, with sin of a crimson dye, entered when the ancestors of the race had cause to be inwardly ashamed of themselves; and that this sense of shame is the perpetual mark of the truth of this narrative; just as the tremendous and abnormal toils of mankind regarded as a historic whole, and the still more tremendous and thoroughly exceptional infliction denounced on woman—however varying with climate—equally confirm our faith in the Mosaic account of the circumstances attending the first origin of our race and nature. We now arrive at the last point in the history—the temptation by the serpent. So heavily has the difficulty been felt of what is called this "miraculously talking reptile," that I suppose the prevailing mode of explaining this incident in the history of the Fall, even by those who do not reject the historical reality of Adam and Eve, is by resorting to the notion that there was no serpent at all concerned in the transaction, any more than in Christ's temptation by the devil; but that this reptile name was assigned allegorically to an invisible spirit, who did not in any way appear, but who enforced the temptation presented by the tree of knowledge of good and evil by his murderous suggestions. There is no doubt that under this view the essential elements of the narrative may be preserved intact, and the foundation of Christian faith remain unshaken, against the assaults of honest unbelievers. But, after paying the utmost attention to these allegorical hypotheses of interpretation, I confess that I follow the majestic intelligence of Milton, rather than modern critics, in thinking that a deeper study of the case will enable and compel us to hold fast to the literal and natural interpretation here also. But I frankly admit that we do not expect to persuade any one to adopt this old-fashioned conclusion who does not accept the following premisses as a basis of argument:—

1. That the narrative, as a whole, in Gen. iii., of the recent creation and trial of Adam in paradise, is a true story, contradicted by nothing that is really ascertained by modern science, and that there is no more reason *a priori* for converting into an allegory one part of the narrative than the other.
2. That it is necessary, in order to do justice to any part of the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments, to bring the light thrown by the Bible as a whole, as a record of the work of God, on to each special portion of it.
3. The acceptance of the mysterious Scripture doctrine of fallen angels, with one mighty adversary of truth and right at the head of them, the mortal enemy of mankind and the permitted tempter for a short season of the servants of God. Suppose it be true, as is laid down uniformly in Scripture, that although man is tempted by the envious evil power who receives permission to try his faith, this whole process of trial is, in all its details, under the strictest Divine limitation and control, so that Satan can, neither by himself, nor by angels, nor by his human agents, go one step further than God "suffers them." Suppose it be true that God will permit no well-disposed person to be "tempted above what he is able to bear"; suppose, as in the dramatic history of Job, revealing ancient

beliefs, Satanic power is never allowed to advance beyond the line dictated by a merciful regard to man's infirmity, and that each trial is regulated and limited by the Divine knowledge of an honest soul's resources of resistance; suppose that this law was applied to the temptation of our newly-created first parents, and that, in their youthful and inexperienced state, knowing nothing of the history of the universe, or of the fall of angels, or the purpose of God, it was forbidden to Satan to assail their life or tempt them in the form of an equal or a superior, so that the permission to tempt was limited by the most humiliating condition—that the temptation must come, if at all, through the apparent action of one of those undeveloped and inferior animals which sported around them. Under such conditions the action of the murderous adversary becomes, at least, more intelligible. But you will ask, last of all, What reasonable explanation can possibly be given of the alleged curse on the serpent—"On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life"? Professor Huxley has sometimes said, in former years, to his pupils at Jermyn Street: "Serpents have in all ages of the world, so far as I know, gone upon their bellies; yet in the Book of Genesis it seems as if at least an early specimen once went erect, a thing unknown before; and he was punished by being reduced to creep and crawl for ever, on the general plan of the ophidia." Professor Huxley has an excellent defence for his sardonic gloss in the example of some Christian commentators, who have alleged this to be the meaning of the Divine curse on the serpent. But there is not a word in the narrative supporting such a notion. Suppose we take the history thus, and offer an explanation in the terms following to the evolutionists and palæontologists, which, from their point of view will, I think, be acknowledged to be more credible, because more consonant to the facts: "Gentlemen, you have taught us as the result of your studies of animal nature, of which we all alike are proud, that the probable doctrine—at least over large areas of life—is that of the evolution of species, the one from the other, through all past history. You have taught us that the class of reptiles filling up the space between fishes and birds has in past ages, and in the existing world, contained nine orders, of which four are now existing and five are extinct, having left their fossil remains in the sedimentary rocks below. Among these nine orders of reptiles, one order alone—that of serpents—is, and always has been, through all past ages, wingless, finless, footless. The germs of hinder legs are concealed in some few kinds of serpents, as in the boa-constrictor, enough to show their relationship with the eight other orders of limbed reptiles, which fill up the space between fishes and birds. Now, of you, gentlemen, as evolutionists, I, as an expositor of Scripture respectfully ask, Supposing this curse on the serpent was really uttered by the Author of nature, by a living God, who knew all past history, and all anatomy, and therefore knew the strange abnormal history of the serpent order, through all its generations up till then—that is, knew the history of the one reptile order which alone among nine never developed its limbs, or any of the organs of locomotion which belong to all the other eight, since the Permian epoch; and supposing—as I must ask you to suppose for the sake of argument—this narrative of man's trial in paradise, as explained in the later portions of the Bible, were true, so that the serpent was the organ of a brighter but viler intelligence—I put it to you, evolutionists, would it be utterly irrational to take the words of the Supreme Judge thus, speaking first to the serpent, but more profoundly to the evil power which had sunk so low as to employ this reptile form, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; so long as the world shall last; no higher development awaits thee, no evolution into a nobler type; but still carrying the marks, in thy unborn hinder limbs, of a better kinship, thou shalt go on hissing, crawling, poisoning the world, hateful and hated, striking man's heel, yet punished by his enmity, until the time comes when thou shalt be added to the already extinct orders of reptiles, and the "woman's seed," destined to endless duration, shall bruise thee out of the creation"? Such a meaning, I think, might have been conveyed in full biological truth by such a Divine Speaker to such a serpent. Here would be no implication of his being reduced from a previous higher form to a limbless creeper, but a sentence of continued crawling on the ground, without any hope of evolution into a noble development. And, on the supposition that the typical serpent-form concealed some mighty spirit of evil, the antagonist of human life, how awful the deeper enigmatical meaning of the words of the

Judge, not understood by the fallen pair, but understood well enough by the object of the curse—"Origin of evil! thou hast sunk so low from thy once heavenly brightness—so low in envy, spite, and murder, as willingly to take even a reptile form, and that form the hatefullest, to reach thy end. Crawl, then, Spirit of Darkness, to the end of thy days, and 'lick the dust,' with all the enemies of sunlight and righteousness. For evil is not noble, and is not eternal, and has no future evolution into greatness and victory. Thou thoughtest to devour this man of 'dust' in thy abhorred embrace, but thy malice shall be defeated; thy victim shall be rescued from thy fangs; mau shall attain to the life immortal; the Seed of the woman shall crush thy head, and the dust of death 'shall be the serpent's meat.' God shall bruise thee and thy seed under man's feet shortly." IV. The Philosophy of the Hebrews on Good and Evil compared with Asiatic Dualism. It appears that in ages preceding the times of Moses by at least a thousand years the evil power which has ruined the work of the supreme goodness was represented all over the world by the name of the Serpent. In the very earliest epoch of the Egyptian monarchy there is evidence that the legend of Osiris was firmly established, of which the essence was that this son of the supreme god was put to death by the poisonous serpent, from the effects of whose murderous attack he is delivered by resurrection and final enthronement in the celestial realms. The same idea is found in ancient India, in the redemptive story of Krishna, who is depicted as setting his foot on the serpent's head. Moses, therefore, has recorded, in the narrative of the Fall of man, a history which had much earlier diffused itself over the post-diluvian world in more or less corrupted traditions. In a word, the universal traditions of mankind confirm, even amidst their fanciful variations, the record which stands at the beginning of Genesis, as all subsequent revelation confirms the original reality whence those traditions sprang. But there is this difference between the beliefs of the whole civilized world in ancient times and the doctrine of the Hebrew religion, that, without exception, the heathen worshippers deified evil as well as good, and regarded it as engaged in an eternal and often successful conflict with a god of goodness; while, from one end to the other of the Mosaic and Christian revelations evil is represented as an incident, vanishing and temporary, in the everlasting dominion of supreme righteousness and love, a conviction which imparted a wholly new aspect both to religious worship and to religious character. The place and value of the Hebrew revelation in the systems of Asiatic thought will appear the more clearly if we picture to ourselves the earlier movements of the human mind in contemplating the mystery of life, where natural speculation was unaided by light from heaven. Let us endeavour to throw ourselves backward in fancy to that early time when the knowledge of the true God had been lost amidst growing heathenism. How would thoughtful men attempt under such conditions to solve the problem of the world? Clearly there would emerge in succession two leading explanations of this scene of mingled good and evil, moral and physical, in which chaotic darkness seems struggling with the light and order which could create a kosmos. Of these, the first and the more ancient was the dualistic, based on faith in spiritual powers; the second and more recent was the sceptical, or Buddhistic, based on scientific observation of things visible, and the positive rejection of Divine causes in accounting for the state of the world. The earliest step downwards from the patriarchal religion (which acknowledged one God, and traced up the origin of evil to the rebellion of created free agency) was into dualism, or the exaltation of evil to the rank of a Divine power coeval with the good. If in our time a mind so great as Mr. John Stuart Mill could, in his latest works, indicate some tendency to this solution of the mystery, is it to be wondered at if men whose philosophy was primitive and tentative found an easy if terrible resource in such a doctrine? If, further, they started from a primitive tradition of personal evil agency in the supernatural sphere, it was inevitable that the idea of an evil demon should be aggrandized into the idea of an evil deity. Of this early dualism several things must be noted. Its essential identity of principle must not be lost sight of under varying forms of expression. Its reign extended over all Central Asia and India and China in the ages preceding the Buddhistic "reform." The relative prominence given in different ages and countries respectively to the good or the evil powers was determined by the physical, intellectual, and moral conditions of the nations who embraced the general doctrine. The inevitable tendency of dualism among ignorant nations in a state of suffering is towards religious pessimism—the special service of the malignant deity, in order to propitiate him by atrocious rites, or to ward off his injuries. The beneficent power will no doubt endure neglect, but

hatred is inexorable. Hence the Moloch-worship of Syria, the devil-worship of Asia, of which some awful relics survive even to this day among the far-descended aborigines of Ceylon. Hence, too, the remarkable fact that although the Medo-Persian dualism, as organized by Zerdusht in a remote antiquity, gave the supremacy to Ormuzd, the Eternal Light, in the course of ages of conflict the popular mind, acted upon by terror and misery, by superstition and magian priestcraft, had, by the time of Cyrus, arrived at so complete a prostration under the shadow of the power of darkness, whose secrets the magians professed to know, that much of the territory had been abandoned to sterility from a conviction that it was useless to fight with destiny, an enemy who was omnipotent and eternal. With the reviving fortunes of the people under the bright and energetic rule of the Medo-Persian kings, and very probably through the diffusion of Hebrew ideas in the East, a more luminous faith returned to the nation. A profound theological revolution signalized the reign of Darius Hystaspes, the final result of the happy victories of Cyrus. Darius records it in the famous triumphal inscription on the rocks of Behistun. He asserts that he has overthrown the magians, for ages leagued with Ahriman, and declares that Ahuramasda or Ormuzd is king. It was as great a revolution as if Satan had been worshipped in terror for ages in England, and then suddenly a political revolution had revived the worship of God. In the more ancient sculptures of Nineveh and Persepolis abundant memorials occur of the varying types of dualism. In every better period of these monarchies the king is represented as under the protection of the beneficent deity, depicted as a winged human form surrounded by the wheel of nature, while the evil power, symbolized by a dragon, is portrayed only in a form of subjection or comparative defeat. With these brief historical indications in view, it is easier to estimate aright the value of the original Hebrew monotheism, and of its successive dispersions, as factors in ancient Asiatic thought. At a time when India was dimly striving to uphold faith in a beneficent deity against a malignant energy which was itself divine; at a time when Zerdusht, in Central Asia, was more vigorously maintaining the same faith against a popular superstition which was ever darkening into the direful worship of Ahriman, Moses and the sons of Israel were maintaining at once against Egyptian polytheism, and against all the might of Eastern dualism, the existence and supreme sovereignty of one living and true God, the Almighty, the just, the merciful, in whose government evil was a possible, perhaps inevitable, incident, arising from the defect of the creature's freewill or the slothfulness of the creature's intelligence, but which had no root in the nature of things. It is this idea of the Infinite as one living eternal personality which has bound the Jewish race together by the sublimest of spiritual ties from first to last. They were monotheists when Egypt, in the times of Amenophis and Aahmes, were bowing down before a Pantheon of gods and goddesses—symbolized by oxen, by beetles, and by hooded cobras—in a superstition redeemed from contempt by the single sublime legend of Osiris. They were then monotheists, believing and declaring the unity of God, as Lord of universal nature, the God of the heavenly forces and of a man's conscience—the Eternal God, in whose sight evil is but a transitory incident, the outcome of the creature's freewill; one God, the everlasting antagonist of moral evil, destined speedily to be vanquished as the serpent beneath the heel of humanity. Yes, when all Asia held evil to be incurable and eternal and divine, the race of Abraham held that evil was "but for a moment," and that God's goodness and justice alone were eternal; and they stuck unto this testimony age after age without varying, the witnesses alone and unconquerable in antiquity to the sole sovereignty and eternity of God. And it is they who have taught this lesson to the nations of the modern world. If we, the gloomy dwellers in these half-lighted lands of the North, are still agonizing in the terrific folds of an evil power who is a match for all goodness, and the destined tormentor of the universe for ever, we owe it to Abraham and his sons, and to those precious books which have held their own race together through all their wanderings. Under these references in thought, it becomes doubly interesting to note the phrases in which Christ and His apostles describe the relations of the good and evil powers. The New Testament affirms, as we have seen, in every form, the historical truth of the Genesis narrative. In the Gospels, Christ's Messianic life begins with a temptation by a personal devil. In Christ's teaching Satan is a real personality; he is a mighty king, and, in a lower sense, lord of this world. He claims all political sovereignty as his gift. He is "the prince" or ruler "of this world." But his origin is in measurable time, and his history is that of a murderous apostate who

once dwelt in the light, but "standeth not in the truth." His destiny, too, is eternal damnation and destruction. So in St. Paul's writings there is a "kingdom of darkness" and a "course of this world" from which Christians are delivered. There is even a "god of this world" and a "prince of the aerial powers"; there are evil "principedoms in the heavenlies," but here, again, evil is a recent evolution—the work of unreason, of will that prefers government by passion to government by Divine law. And its end is destruction. St. John adds: "The Kosmos passeth away and its passion, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." It is but faintly we can imagine how the world of mankind breathed more freely when these glorious truths were first heard in Asia, crushed down under the dark ancestral belief in an eternal reign of evil, and beneath the stupefying fatalism to which it inevitably leads. When, then, Christ was made known as the messenger of the one eternal power of good, warring against an evil power which was not Divine and was not eternal, He was gladly listened to by Europeans and Asiatics, who had been confounded between the rival theories of dualism and atheism. We are now in a position to appreciate more correctly the contention of those who would regard as a fable, having no foundation in fact, the history of the entrance of evil through the serpent-tempter, placed at the beginning of the Hebrew Bible. Surely it could have been no mere fable, no mere allegory, which thus carried a whole theology, and philosophy, and civilization along with it. It showed God the Beneficent as supreme, omnipresent, and eternal; and evil as a reptile perishing power. It engaged the will of man to a personal conflict, both in nature and in human life, with a mighty but a conquerable foe. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," was the battle-cry through all ages. It showed all honest men that nothing was noble except goodness, nothing immortal but righteousness; that even the strongest and subtlest wickedness was ever ready to descend to the meanest concealments and falsehoods to attain its ends; but that all those ends should fail, because the history of the earth and of mankind was destined to be that of a prolonged conflict of right against wrong, resulting in the enthronement of Justice in the person of the true Osiris, the Son of Mary, who is also the Son of God. Lastly, turning to our own times, we are still in the thick of this awful and world-wide conflict; but oh, how glorious the retrospect of the war against evil, how marvellous the succession of victories already won, and how thrilling the hope that now shortly the atmosphere shall be cleansed from the pestilential influence of that dark "power of the air" which rains down falsehood and death upon the nations! The belief in the living God is nowhere stronger than among many of the very foremost students of nature. The belief in Christ, the Son of God, is nowhere more fervent than among many of those who have fathomed all the depths of ancient and modern philosophy. The belief in the Bible, as a whole, is nowhere more profound than among many of those who command a view of the literature of the world in all ages. And the belief in life eternal, through the Word made flesh, is nowhere more potent than in many of those who know all the reaches and "oppositions of science falsely so called." (*Edward White.*)

SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE LITERAL HISTORY OF THE FALL EXAMINED.—I. First, as to the severity of the penalty inflicted upon the violation of the command not to eat of the tree of knowledge, it must be remembered that morality being founded in the will of God, whatever He commands or forbids, though in itself perhaps indifferent, is of indispensable obligation. The injunction, therefore, not to eat of the fruit of a particular tree was as binding upon the protoplasts as any moral precept whatsoever, and the infringement of it was an act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of heaven. Some circumstances also convict it of more than ordinary criminality. They were then in the keen relish of new-created existence; the impression of the Almighty's goodness was still fresh upon their minds; they, in all likelihood, held familiar converse with Him; and they well knew that their being, their faculties, their happiness, all they possessed and enjoyed, as well as all the glories of creation, were derived from His bounty and goodness. Their disobedience, then, evinced the blackest ingratitude. The breach of so easy a command as to abstain from one single tree, when full liberty was given to taste all the other delicious fruits of paradise, greatly aggravated the offence; and the eating of that particular tree, which the Almighty had reserved, as it were, holy unto Himself, was a kind of sacrilege. As all necessary knowledge was communicated, and all needful aid imparted to them, their transgression was wilful and presumptuous; it was, in the strong language of Horsley, "nothing less than a

confederacy with the apostate spirit against the sovereign authority of God." The motives, likewise, for the commission of the offence, a secret distrust of the Divine promises, and the diabolical pride of aspiring to be like God, rendered it a deed of unparalleled atrocity. II. The curse pronounced upon the ground, and the consequent sterility of the earth, was a merciful dispensation even towards Adam, who, having this standing memorial of his transgression, would be the more earnest in his repentance, and from experiencing the toils and hardships of life, would be the more resigned to leave this world when summoned away by death. To his posterity it was an act of mercy to take away some of the fascinations of a world which was to be only a temporary sojourn; and by diminishing its allurements, to stimulate their hopes of a better. The labour required for the attainment of food, and clothing, and needful comforts, is attended with many beneficial effects; and the earth, with all its barrenness, weeds, poisons, tempests, and convulsions, is better adapted to a probationary state for creatures such as we are than if it revolved in perpetual serenity and brought forth its fruits with spontaneous fertility. III. Such being the case, it were unreasonable to complain of the fallen pair's dismissal from paradise to a state of labour and toil. It was an act of justice, inasmuch as they had forfeited all right to the happy bowers of Eden by violating the Divine command; and of mercy, inasmuch as they were thus brought to a sense of their destitution and of their dependence upon God, and were taught experimentally to quit this world without regret. The bloom, and verdure, and pleasures of paradise might well suit a state of contented innocence; but pain, and toil, and anxiety are no less befitting fallen creatures, whose appetites are to be conquered by labour and abstinence, and whose holy aspirations would die away unless quickened by a train of calamities and sickness. Nor could it be any longer desirable for the lamenting pair to continue in a place every object of which would remind them of their seduction and disobedience. In vain might the feathered songsters carol in the groves; for them the opening flowers would have no beauty, no fragrance; the fruits would pall upon their appetite; and, as the charm that springs from conscious innocence was fled, they would have wandered amidst the sweets of paradise without enjoyment or content. IV. Why God suffered Adam to be seduced when such fearful punishment was to be the consequence is among those secret things which belong to the Lord our God. What can we know of the Divine counsels, we who are but of yesterday, whose existence is but a span, and whose utmost intellectual ken can scarcely peep into the confines of immensity? From all, however, that we can comprehend, from everything we can observe in the moral and the natural world, we are led to the belief that the present transitory scene is a part of a stupendous scheme tending through all its gradations to consummate the counsels of Divine benignity and love. God could, no doubt, by an exertion of omnipotent power, have prevented the introduction of evil into the world, but we find He has made men free agents; He has subjected them to the temptations of sin, to pain, and to death; and His design in permitting such a state of things, we humbly believe, is the production of higher degrees of ultimate happiness. V. This supplies us with an adequate answer to the question, why the Almighty suffered the devil to tempt the first pair when He must have foreseen that they would become the victims of his treachery. It was not in any mutability of His designs, not in abandonment of the works of His hands, that He granted this permission to the apostate spirit, but because He had predestinated in His eternal foreknowledge and decree to bring good out of evil, and to make even the malignity of the arch-fiend instrumental to His own glory. Man was created free; an easy duty was enjoined, and the penalty of disobedience laid before him; he had sufficient power and abilities to stand; it was not, therefore, by an irresistible necessity that he fell, but by an abuse of his own free agency; and Satan was permitted to make trial of him, because God, who foresaw the consequences, foresaw that it would, in the end, be productive of a greater degree of glory to Himself and of happiness to His creatures. In the same way we may often account for the often condemned ordination of Providence, by which all mankind were subjected to condemnation and death for the sin of one man. It is easy to harangue upon the apparent injustice exercised towards the whole human race, who thus share in the punishment, though not in the crime. But such is the course and constitution of nature, where children suffer for the vices of their parents, and where even a whole nation is oppressed and afflicted by the errors and wickedness of one individual. That the innocent often suffer through the crimes of the guilty, and that the dire effects of sin are extended to the unoffending, are matters of daily experience; and if such

circumstances are reconcilable with the Divine administration, as the Deist must allow, why should he condemn the appointment by which the penalty of Adam's transgression is transmitted to his posterity? Both cases are similar, and both must be referred to the sovereign will and pleasure of the Deity, who, as we reverently believe, has for infinitely wise and good reasons established this order of things, since all His counsels and designs are laid in the immensity of His benevolence. Some beneficial purposes answered by it our faculties are able to discover, among which must be numbered its excellent adaptation to a probationary state and the evidence it supplies of a future existence, where the irregularities of this will be adjusted, and where all the instances of terrestrial partiality and injustice will be rectified according to the rules of inviolable equity. The grand solution, then, is to be sought in the cheering and consolatory doctrine that all things are working together to produce ultimate felicity, and that, through the benevolent appointment of God, all partial evil will finally end in universal good. This may be inferred from the attribute of transcendent benevolence in the Godhead, as well as from a contemplation of the Divine love and mercy displayed in the works of creation; and, aided by the light of Christianity, we are able to point out some of the benefits arising from the Fall, which, on a superficial view, may appear to be attended only with fatal and unhappy consequences. And, first, we are placed in a state of greater security than Adam under the paradisiacal covenant, notwithstanding the comparative perfection of his nature and the unsullied purity of his heart. Though the protoplasts had retained their integrity, yet some of their descendants might, by virtue of their freewill, have fallen from their righteousness, and introduced sin and death into the world, the consequence of which would have been irretrievable misery, there being no covenant to admit transgressors into favour. The atonement, perhaps, might have been made, though the first offence had not been committed till many centuries after the creation; but who shall say whether this would have been consonant with the wisdom of the Divine mind? Or if it had, who shall say whether some good might not have arisen from the early more than from the late entrance of sin into the world? On such a subject, however, it is right for the frail children of the dust to speak with reverential humility. Unbecoming in man is the presumption of deciding what might have taken place under a different order of things. Let us rather accept the ransom with grateful hearts, and, while revering the unbounded benignity of God, let us strive to participate in the offered pardon by a religious life conducted on the principles of Christian faith. Secondly, we are capable of attaining greater happiness than if our first parents had continued in their integrity. The terrestrial paradise presents only a faint image of the celestial paradise of God; and it is most agreeable to infinite mercy to suppose that the loss of the happiness of the one will be followed by the acquisition of still greater felicity in the other. And if this transitory life has its pains and its miseries, it has also its consolations and its hopes; if it be a state of probationary difficulty, it is alleviated by spiritual aid and cheered by the most glorious promises; if sin abounds, we know its remedy; and when we err, we know that there is also room for reconciliation, of which the transgressor could have but a transient hope under the Adamitical covenant of works. Exulting in the prospect of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory to be revealed hereafter, when the ransomed shall come to the celestial Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, we are led to believe that the first sin in the garden of Eden was permitted in mercy to mankind, and to exclaim with an ancient writer, "A happy Fall; and happy unhappiness which was the occasion of so great happiness!" Thirdly, the glory of the Divine attributes is more advantageously displayed by the grand scheme of human redemption through the blood of Christ and sanctification of the blessed Spirit than it could have been by the uninterrupted innocence of the first man. The state of paradise gave evidence to the might, the majesty, and the goodness of the Deity, but if it had continued unchanged, where would have been the stupendous plan whereby infinite mercy is exhibited to intelligent beings seated upon the same throne with infinite justice? There could have been no room for the ways of Providence in calling, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying the faithful which now form the subject of unceasing admiration and gratitude. Such are the consolatory views of the present, and the enlivening hopes of the future, which we are taught in the sacred writings to draw from the primeval transgression. Little as they may avail with the Deist, who objects to revelation in general, they will be embraced by every Christian with the transports of gratitude and veneration which a Christian alone can feel. But if we consult the light of nature only,

there is no more difficulty in accounting for God's permitting the temptation and fall of Adam than upon any other hypothesis for His permitting the origin of sin and its miserable attendants which are allowed to exist. All our reasonings upon the moral government of the world presuppose the existence of a great Creator; and if we believe Him to be infinitely wise and good, as may be inferred from a contemplation of His works, we must believe that the widespread evil is, in some way or other, consistent with infinite wisdom and goodness. (*G. Holden, M.A.*)

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE EARLY RECORDS OF GENESIS.—It would be the veriest truism to say that the earliest records of Genesis excel in interest and in religious importance almost all other portions of the Bible. It is obvious at once that the facts they narrate and the problems they raise lie at the root, not only of all Old Testament theology, but still more of all New Testament theology. Take them away, or rather take away the great truths they teach, and our faith loses its natural foundations; it becomes a lovely flower without a root, a shining river without a source, a vast building without a base. So it has been said, and rightly said, that the whole of the Bible is only the unfolding of Gen. iii. 15. If, however, it is a truism to assert the extreme importance of these records, it is also a truism to assert their extreme difficulty. God, in His wisdom, has joined these two things together, so that what the devout Christian most strongly clings to as inspired is most fiercely assailed as false and legendary. Nor must we say simply "most fiercely assailed." It would be an affectation most unworthy of the "children of light" to deny or to ignore the fact that the assaults made upon these records in the name of science are to a large extent unanswered and unanswerable. One of the first things which the new science of geology established with certainty was the now acknowledged fact that the world is of great and incalculable age, and was formed and fashioned through enormous periods of time. This discovery cut up by the root the old and very natural idea that the world was made in six literal days. The "days," accordingly, were lengthened out into "periods" of indefinite duration, and many schemes were propounded whereby the successive creations of Genesis might be reconciled with the results of geological research. It is not too much to say that all these attempts at reconciliation, and the many thoughtful and once popular books in which they were set forth, have become discredited and out of date; having in many cases a certain plausibility, they were fatally vitiated by one or other (or both) of these things: they either strained the text in order to force it into conformity with the facts, or they manipulated the facts in order to extort some apparent confirmation of the text. No assignable "six periods" are known to geology, nor can the order of creation as revealed to Moses be read into the testimony of the rocks except by an ingenuity which is as painful to the man of faith as it is unconvincing to the man of science. The only real result of striving to maintain the geological truth of the first chapter of Genesis is to empty it of all truth by making it mean anything which it seems convenient at the moment it should mean. The same conflict, with the same result, has gone on concerning the Deluge of Noah. Nothing, as Bishop Wordsworth justly argues, can be more plainly stated than the universality of that Deluge and the utter destruction of all human and animal life outside the ark. Yet that universality and that total destruction is as plainly contradicted by the whole strength of scientific evidence. If any one fails to realize the strength of that evidence, let him study briefly the present distribution of the animal tribes on the earth's surface. Let him take one single fact from amongst the multitude, and let him consider that all the animals in Australia are marsupials, and that these are the only marsupials in existence, saving a single family in North America. Will he maintain that the marsupials of Australia really came out of the ark? that the many hundred ancestors of all their families—widely differing in size, in form, and in habits—journeyed together across land and sea from Ararat, nowhere settling, nowhere breeding, until they, and they alone, reached their future home? Will he maintain the same thing of the Lemuroids of Madagascar? Not to multiply instances, it is no exaggeration to say that if all the land animals, even of the three continents, came out of the ark, then there is no science of natural history, and the distribution of animal life in different lands is not simply an arbitrary thing without explanation, but is a delusive thing irresistibly suggesting a false explanation. Probably, therefore, there is not to be found a single person who has made himself acquainted with natural history who believes that the present distribution of animal life in the globe was even seriously affected by the Noachian Deluge. If believed at all, it is

regarded as a very local and partial catastrophe overwhelming possibly the whole tract inhabited by man, probably only that tract which was inhabited by a particular race of men. These two cases are examples of those in which the fixed conclusions of science have compelled us to abandon the apparently plain historical declarations of those Scriptures which we love and reverence with all our hearts as the inspired Word of God. There are other cases, in which the conclusions of science, not at present fixed, nevertheless promise to become so in a very short time. The evidence of geology in favour of the great antiquity of man, far beyond any antiquity which can be assigned to Adam and Eve as historical personages, is already tolerably convincing, and bids fair to become overwhelming. Similarly the evidence of history and philology is strong in favour of a far more ancient era of separate languages than any which can be assigned to the Tower of Babel; and this evidence, too, bids fair to become conclusive. In either case, a really devout man, who believes that the sober and confirmed conclusions of science are the indirect teaching of God Himself, must keep the question open in his own mind, and must be ready to revise, if need be, what has hitherto been his understanding of the Scriptures. The problem, as it presents itself to a devout Churchman, is this: Here is a record, apparently historical, to the inspiration and spiritual truth of which Christ and the Church and his own soul bear testimony—such testimony as he could not for a moment set aside. And yet reason, and the course of nature, and the testimony of the rocks, proclaim aloud that this record is not historically true. What, then, shall he think? Is there no form of literature which might at once bear the weight (so to speak) of inspiration, and satisfy at the same time the required conditions? There is one, and only one; and that one the most ancient of all the forms into which the thoughts of men ran spontaneously when first they sought to put their thoughts on record. At the beginning of all histories stand myths, and those myths are historic in form but (more or less) unhistoric in substance. Is it lawful to hold that sacred history, like all other history, which runs its natural course from the first, begins with myths? No doubt it is at first sight a startling, and even a shocking position. The very word "myth" has gathered associations around it which jar painfully upon a devout mind in connection with the Word of God. But this feeling may disappear if we look at the matter more calmly. A genuine "myth" is not false, if we imply by "false" any intention to deceive. The myth is true in its own way, often profoundly true. Sometimes it embodied a great fact, sometimes a deep yearning, sometimes a noble aspiration. No one now would throw a national myth away because it is not historically true; he would treasure it up reverently, he would try to find out what it meant to convey; he would not weave it into a prosaic record of actual events, but he would not value it less highly in its own sphere. This being so, the question presents itself thus: Is it incredible that the Holy Spirit of God should adopt the most primitive of the known forms of literature as the vehicle of His earliest revelations to men? Is it not at least possible, however strange at first sight, that the Holy Spirit should have employed myths in the first instance, even as He employed poems, parables, visions, in other places? If it be in itself not incredible, if it be a possible position for a loyal Churchman to take up, it is unquestionably a position of enormous strength. In the first place, it preserves and completes the thorough "naturalness" of the Bible as to its outward and human element. As the true Divinity of our Lord did not in the least mar or hinder the development of His perfect humanity, even from its smallest and humblest beginnings, so the most devout belief in the inspiration of Holy Scripture need not hinder any one from recognizing its entire conformity to the general type of all other literatures. If it should appear that the earliest inspired documents are myths, then the written Word would but dimly reflect in its development the humility of the incarnate Word, who, being God, was yet at one definite time an unborn Babe. In the second place, such a position is one absolutely unassailable from the side of science. As things are at present, the believer in inspiration is ever being attacked, and ever being driven backwards, from one position to another. No sooner has he taken up, with much difficulty, some new line of defence than this too is turned and made untenable by some fresh advance of science on one side or other of the field. But if he can say boldly, "These writings are myths, not histories," then all conflict ceases; science and history are left in full and free possession of the territory which belongs to them, which God has marked out for them and allotted to them from the beginning; faith and religion are left in undisturbed sovereignty within their own domain, the domain of moral and of spiritual truth. In the third place, the

theory which regards these early records as myths, while it does not sacrifice anything that is valuable in them, does very greatly enlarge their highest value by giving due prominence to their moral and spiritual truth. It does not sacrifice even their historical value (as it might easily be accused of doing); for, in saying that such and such a story is a myth, the critic does not mean for a moment to say that it is a falsehood or a fiction, or to empty it of historical significance; he only means to say that it is not to be read as a literal statement of facts. It would be the extreme of folly to say that there was no element of historic truth in the first ten chapters of Genesis: unquestionably there is, only that element is not distinctly assignable; perhaps it will never be exactly fixed, although it will be approximately fixed by the progress of historical science. Meanwhile that value of these records, which the Church has ever recognized as their true value, remains wholly independent of the progress, and even of the existence, of historical science. Being myths as to their literary form and human origin, they are parables for all practical intents, and share to the full those wonderful advantages which have so greatly commended the parable to the use of the Holy Spirit, and which all men feel instinctively if they cannot express. The records of Genesis were written, it is certain, not for one age, but for all—for the uninquiring ages of the past, with their utter ignorance of everything beyond their own immediate relations to one another and to God; for the ages of inquiry, present and to come, with their rapidly growing knowledge of the world. For the past and for the present it was alike needful that those records should not clash with their ignorance or with our knowledge; neither anticipating then what God would teach men to find out thereafter, nor limiting and confusing now what He had led them to discover. Now, in point of fact, no one can help seeing that this purpose has been answered, to a great extent, by the peculiar form into which these earliest revelations are thrown, and would be answered still more completely if they were clearly recognized as myths. Does it make any difference to the welfare of immortal souls whether the world was brought into its present form in six days or in countless ages? whether the race of men appeared upon the globe six thousand years ago or six hundred thousand? whether the woman was actually made out of one of the man's ribs or whether that only typify her derivative and subordinate position? What really does concern immortal souls is that the moral and spiritual lessons of these records should be drawn out in the spirit of St. Paul and of the early teachers of the Church. The story of Adam and Eve was applied by our Lord and by St. Paul, and ought to be applied by the Church of Christ to-day, to define the mutual relation of the sexes and the Divine ideal of marriage. The same story was used by St. Paul, and ought to be used by the Church to-day, in order to set forth what is for us perhaps the most important, and certainly the least appreciated, of Christian doctrines, the spiritual relation betwixt Christ and His Church. Yet where do we find this teaching worked out upon the outlines laid down for us by an inspired apostle? Who ever hears a sermon preached upon it? Bishop Wordsworth, in his invaluable commentary, has indeed done much, but much more remains behind. The allegory is carried on, not only in the sleep of Adam and the opening of his side; not only in the name he gave his bride and the words he used of her; but also in the sentences which God pronounced upon them after the Fall. "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee," is, of course, a sentence fulfilled in the case of women in general, although not now as a curse. But it is in a much deeper and truer sense fulfilled in the Church of Christ. "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" is the very law of her spiritual fruitfulness, a law which must always, and under all advantages, hold good, however much she may think to escape it. Without pain and conflict and distress, and even agony, she will never get to herself spiritual children. The calm serenity in which mere schools of thought may thrive can never be for her, unless it be to die in. Who does not hear, as he thinks upon this deep saying, the sad voice of the great apostle complaining, "My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you"? It was in the nature of things that he should suffer the birth-pangs once in the travail of their first conversion; but it was hard, very hard, that he should have to go through the same distress again for them. "And thy desire shall be to thy husband"; of course it is, and this desire is that he should rule over her absolutely and without any hindrance or cessation. But there may be noted in this word "desire" an element of pain, which comes out most strongly and affectingly in the hymns and prayers which are the voice of the Bride; it is a yearning desire, a longing desire, in which there is much of unsatisfied and

a little of afraid; it is the destiny of the Bride now to long for the Bridegroom with a sense of weariness at His long delay, of faintness because He cometh not, almost of dread lest, coming, He be not wholly pleased with her. All this, and much more, which is so profoundly evangelical, is in the sentence on the woman; for it springs from the great conflict between the sin of earth and the love of heaven. Again, the sentence on the man only finds its real significance when understood of the Second Adam. Because He hearkened to the voice of His wife, of the Church which He foreknew; because He listened to the cry of His own in many lands, in many tongues, "O come, O come, Emmanuel"; therefore He came, and was made man, and did eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and got to know all physical evil as well as good by way of experience; and all moral evil, too, as well as good, by way of temptation and of constant struggle. And therefore, because He had laid Himself open to all this, was the ground cursed for His sake, and in sorrow did He eat of it all the days of His life. Thorns also and thistles did it bring forth to Him, all that could annoy and vex His gentle soul; and thorns, too, in literal truth, wherewith to crown His head. Much more there is in the same passage, but this may suffice as one instance, out of so many, of the marvellous wealth of these sacred myths in moral and spiritual teaching. This great treasure would be available, far more than it is now, if these records were boldly treated as allegories, if the reader and the preacher were not hampered and perplexed by having to ask and answer (if he can) a thousand useless questions, as to whether Adam and Eve were really the ancestors of the whole human race; as to whether the Euphrates and the Nile ever really flowed from one source; as to whether all existing tongues were really separated from the Hebrew less than three thousand years before Christ. Again the question presses us—May a loyal Churchman hold and teach that these records are myths, inspired indeed, but not strictly historic? In all fairness it must be conceded that the objections to such a solution are serious and weighty. Many who do not feel the difficulties of the present position very keenly will deem these objections fatal. In the first place, it will be said by many that the myth is not such a form of literature as could become the vehicle of Divine teachings. As no one was responsible for the myth, as it could not be traced to any definite source, so no one could have been inspired to indite it, and therefore it could not itself be inspired in any intelligible way. It is, however, sufficiently certain and allowed that many of the proverbs and sayings which go by the name of Solomon's were drawn from common life; they must have been current among the "wise," and done duty in expressing the common sense and feeling of men long before they were caught up (so to speak) by the Holy Ghost, and set in the firmament of Scripture. There is also many a fragment of national song and of popular lore in the historical books. That must surely be an unduly narrow view of inspiration which would exclude the spontaneous products of the national mind, the anonymous poetry, the deep sayings, which form so large and so true a part of the literature of an archaic age. It may not be possible to say how such can be inspired, but neither is it necessary: the inspiration of the written Word, like the incarnation of the personal Word, passes all human definition. In the second place, it will be put forth as an unanswerable objection by many that to acknowledge anything mythical in the beginning of Scripture is to introduce such an element of vagueness and mistiness as will destroy the value of all the rest; "For where," they will say, "are you to stop? If the story of the Tower of Babel appear a myth to one, why not the story of Jacob and Esau to another, and the story of the Exodus to a third?" Unquestionably it is of the nature of myths to slide insensibly into history, so that it is mostly impossible to draw the precise line between them. But the practical difficulty which ensues may easily be exaggerated. The narrative, which is obviously mythical to begin with, becomes obviously historical as it goes on, and is accepted without reserve as history. Most of the reigning families of Europe are descended from divine beings through lists of ancestors half-historical, half-mythical. Does any real or considerable confusion result from that? In the third place, it will be urged (and this is no doubt the gravest objection) that the mythical theory is already a deadly weapon in the hands of unbelief. If myths are possible in the Old Testament, can we say that they are impossible in the New? May not the Resurrection itself be a myth, as many have taught, and teach now? It may, of course, be called a myth, but it would not and could not be a myth in the same sense in which the story of paradise is a myth; it could only be a myth in that corrupt sense of the word in which it is a euphemism for a lie. If we read, in some fragment of primitive tradition, that such and such a hero was the grandson of

Wodin, we rightly call it a myth; if a special correspondent telegraphs that such and such a general has gained a splendid victory, because he wished him to gain the victory, we rightly call it a disgraceful falsehood. There is no real similarity between them, although both may be called (in different senses) mythical. No one would use any harder word than "unhistoric" of the legend of St. George and the Dragon, because it was simply an atmospheric myth turned into a Christian allegory. A reported fight between a dwarf and a dog, which never happened, was rightly spoken of in very different language. It is unhappily true that the mythical theory has been carried into the New Testament, where it has no sort of place, and therefore it is an object of very natural suspicion in the beginning of Genesis, where it is in exact accordance with the conditions of the age. But it should be remembered why it has been carried into the New Testament, and with what result, in order to see whether there be any similarity whatever in the two cases. The Resurrection has been resolved into a myth on the simple *à priori* ground that miracles are incredible, and on no other. The whole character of the narrative, of the men, of the age, is dead against it; a mythical resurrection, tacked on to an actual crucifixion, is a monstrosity which does violence to human intelligence in general, and to all the conditions of the special case in particular. The earliest records of Genesis are recognized as myths, in accordance with their apparent character and the genius of their age, on the plain *à posteriori* ground that science has demonstrated what internal evidence suggested, that they are not historical. Again, if the Resurrection be a myth, then our hope is vain, and we are, of all men, most miserable; if the story of the Fall be a myth, it does not lose one particle of its moral and spiritual value, and none is any the worse. What is there in common between a criticism which destroys the gospel and Christianity itself, and a criticism which removes certain early records from one literary category to another? Lastly, it will be urged that our Lord and His apostles continually quote these stories as if they were histories. Most assuredly, and the parables of our Lord Himself are quoted every day in a thousand pulpits exactly as if they were veritable histories. Those who now believe that the early records of Genesis are myths, scientifically and historically considered, have no more hesitation in talking about Adam and Eve, Enoch and Noah, than they had before, or than they have now in talking about the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. In order to justify the use made of parables from the New Testament, or of myths from the Old, it is not in either case necessary to assume that they are historically true; it is only necessary to assume that they are inspired, and are therefore warranted by the Holy Ghost to be true for all moral and spiritual purposes. They are in the Bible, and that is enough for the loyal Churchman. The Bible is the Word of God, and as long as he uses any part of it for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, he knows he is perfectly safe. If he go further, and imagine that the holy writings were given either to anticipate or to contradict the discoveries of natural and historical science in their own proper field, he is assuredly deceived.

(R. Winterbotham, M.A.)

THE BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR.

GENESIS.

CHAPTER I.

VER. 1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.—*The Christian doctrine of creation*:—In considering the subject of creation we see, first of all, that a distinction must be drawn between what I would call primary and secondary creation. Primary creation is creation proper. It is that grand act whereby Almighty God in the beginning called into being the finite world. Secondary creation, on the other hand, belongs to the sphere of Providence, or to the sphere of the history of the finite world. If we look at the history of the finite world, we see that during its course a vast series of beings have been called into existence. All the generations of mankind have come into existence during ages gone by. In like manner all the countless hosts of living creatures, the animals and plants that inhabit the world. Nor is this all. Men of science now tell us, that even the earth itself, the sun, the moon, and the planets, have come into existence during the history of the world. There was a time in the history of the finite world when there was neither sun, nor moon, nor earth, when the matter of which all these bodies are composed was diffused in a previous state. They have, therefore, like ourselves, received their existence during the history of the world. Now, the origination or bringing into existence of all these things I call a creation. Creation is that which is the work of an intelligent being. It is the giving of existence, by an intelligent being, to that which had previously none. And since all these things have received existence, and have received it at the hand of God, their origination is a creation. I. In regard to SECONDARY CREATION, the great difficulty is this—If you will think over what I have been saying to you about it, you will see that the truth of my view all depends upon this, that the laws of nature alone and unaided are not sufficient to govern the course of nature. The view which I have given requires us to suppose that, in addition to the laws of nature, there is needed the Divine Intelligence to combine and direct them. In a word, we must suppose that the Divine Intelligence never leaves nature, but continually guides and directs its course to those great ends and purposes which God has in view. Now here it is that the difficulty comes in. It is held, by a large class of reasoners, that the laws of nature alone and unaided are perfectly sufficient for the purpose indicated. But is this view true? I think not. In fact there are many ways in which I could show its inadequacy were this the place to discuss the question. I shall not attempt any such discussion, but shall content myself with simply pointing out one fact which makes it impossible; I mean the fact that the course of nature is a history. If the course of nature were governed solely by the laws of nature, it must, as a necessary consequence, flow in grooves or cycles. But, in point of fact, it does neither. If we look at the course of nature, we see that it is a varied and ever-varying stream. From the beginning of the world up to the present moment, no two events, and no two objects, however similar, have been exactly the same in all respects. The course of nature is a free, orderly, progressive sequence, or series of events flowing towards, and attaining high ends and purposes. The course of nature being thus confessedly a history, what principle is it, which alone can account for it? You may ponder over the matter as much as you please, you may

turn it and twist it in every possible way, but you will in the end be obliged to confess that the only principle sufficient for the purpose, is Intelligence. No other principle but Intelligence can account for the order of a free, varied, and progressive whole such as the course of nature actually is. Why is it that the conviction of a never-ceasing Providence in the affairs of the world is written in such living characters on the hearts of all men? It is from the perception that the course of nature is a history, and the inference which is instantaneously drawn, that it must be ordered by intelligence. The result then is, that the course of nature cannot be conceived by us as possible apart from the Divine Intelligence. We must suppose that the Divine Intelligence presided over it in the beginning and has ever since continuously guided its course. Now what follows from this? It follows that the first chapter of Genesis is literally true, in the sense in which the ordinary English reader understands it. It is still literally true that God created the sun, the moon, the sea, the dry land, the various species of plants and animals. For God prepared the conditions under which all these things came into existence. He guided the course of nature so that it should aid or abut in their production. They are, therefore, His creations; and owe their existence to His creative fiat. I wish I could stay to point out the many striking consequences which flow from this view—the air of grandeur and living interest it imparts to nature, the Divine light it sheds into every corner and crevice of it. But I must content myself with merely indicating one point, viz., how this view satisfies all our religious aspirations. It brings us very near to God. It brings God all round us and within us. But what comes home especially to the religious mind is the assurance which this view gives us, that we, as individuals, owe our existence not to dead and unintelligent laws, but to the will and purpose of the living God. Our individual existence was prepared and intended by God. We are His creation. II. We have next to consider PRIMARY CREATION, which is far more difficult. Primary creation, as I have said, is that grand act whereby God called into being the finite world. It differs from secondary creation in these two respects: first, that there were no pre-existent materials out of which the finite world was formed, and secondly, in that the process whereby it was made was not one of natural law, but a process of intelligence. The difficulties which have been raised in modern times against this cardinal doctrine have been very great, and in dealing with them I do not well know how to make myself intelligible to some of you. One of the most perplexing of these difficulties is the view which regards creation as a breach of the law of continuity. The law of continuity obliges us to suppose that each state of the material world was preceded by a previous state. Hence, according to this law, it is impossible that the material world could ever have had a beginning. For the law compels us to add on to each state of things, a previous state, without ever coming to a stop. If we do stop short we break the law. And hence those who take this view would exclude creation, as being nothing else but a stopping short, and consequent breaking of the law. Creation, they say, is the doctrine that there is an absolutely first link in this grand chain, and if we are to adhere to the law of continuity we must exclude it. But this whole view of the matter is radically wrong. In supposing creation to be the first link in the chain of continuity, we necessarily suppose that, like all the other links, it took place in time. There was a time before, and a time after it. But if you will think over the matter, you will see that this could not be; for time only came into existence when the creative process was completed. In fact, space and time, the laws of nature, and the law of continuity, are all relations of the finite world; and they could not possibly have any existence till the finite world itself existed, that is, till the creative act was completed. Hence, if we would grasp in thought the creative act, we must transcend the law of continuity; we must transcend all the laws of nature; we must transcend and forget even space and time. If we would understand aright the creative act, we must view the finite world solely in relation to the Divine Intelligence, of which it is the product. The great question in regard to primary creation is, Is it conceivable by us? There is a sect of people called agnostics, who say that it is utterly inconceivable, that no intelligible meaning can be attached to the word. They have wrongly compared creation to a process of natural law, and finding no analogy in this comparison, they have rashly set it down as unthinkable by us. But I have shown you that creation is not a process of natural law; I have shown you that it transcends natural law; I have shown you that it is purely a process of intelligence. Regarded in this point of view, I will now show you that it is intelligible to us, not, perhaps,

perfectly intelligible, but still so much so, as to afford us a very tangible notion. The Bible conception of creation is simply this. The finite world as a whole, and in each one of its details, was formed as an image or idea in the Divine Intelligence, and in and by that act of formation it obtained objective or substantial reality. God had not, like *us*, to seek for paper whereon to describe His plan, nor for materials wherein to embody it. By His absolute power, the image of the world formed in the Divine Intelligence became the actual, substantial, external world. It obtained, as we say, objective reality. Thus the finite world was not a creation out of nothing, neither was it the fall of the finite out of the infinite, nor a necessary evolution out of the Divine Essence, it was the objectified product of the Divine Intelligence. It may, however, be said that this goes a very little way in making the act of creation conceivable to us, for we have no experience of the immediate and unconditioned externalization of a mere mental idea, and we cannot imagine how it could be possible. I admit that we have not the experience indicated. And yet, I would ask you, which is the most marvellous point in the whole process—the act by which the image of the finite world was constituted in the Divine Intelligence, or the act by which it obtained objective reality? Plainly it is the former. It is far more marvellous that the finite world in its first beginning, and in its whole subsequent development, should be imaged forth in the Divine Intelligence, than that this image should crystallize into concrete objective existence. Thus the very point of creation which is the most difficult is made conceivable to us by being reflected in the processes of our own minds. We can create to the extent of forming the mental image. It is only in the externalization of our idea that we are hemmed in and hampered by conditions. I maintain, therefore, that the Bible doctrine, whether we believe it or not, is conceivable by us. We have, first of all, a clear notion of the human intelligence, which is infinite and absolute in one of its aspects; this gives us a notion, inadequate no doubt, but still a tangible notion of the Divine Intelligence which is infinite and absolute in every aspect. Then we have a clear notion of the origination or creation of mental images or plans of things by the human intelligence; this enables us to understand how the plan or pattern of the finite world originated in the Divine Intelligence. The last point, viz., the externalization of the Divine idea, is the most difficult. But though a hard one to you and me, you see it did not present the same elements of difficulty to those great men who had made the powers and processes of intelligence their peculiar study. But I will say more for the Bible doctrine. It is the only philosophical account of the finite world that does not throw human knowledge into irretrievable confusion. The bearing of the question is simply this. If we view the finite world apart from intelligence, the moment we begin to reason on it, we fall into contradiction and absurdity. The consequence of this is, that we land ourselves first of all in agnosticism, and then in utter scepticism; disbelieving in God, in the moral world, nay, even in the most assured results of physical science. Hence, if we would save human knowledge, the finite world must be viewed in relation to intelligence; and the whole question lies between the Bible and a doctrine such as that of Fichte. Is the finite world the product of our intelligence? or is it the product of the Divine Intelligence? We cannot hesitate between the two. Indeed the logic of facts has already decided for us. (*D. Greig, M.A.*) *Import of faith in a Creator*:—When man looks out from himself upon the wonderful home in which he is placed, upon the various orders of living things around him, upon the solid earth which he treads, upon the heavens into which he gazes, with such ever-varying impressions, by day and by night; when he surveys the mechanism of his own bodily frame; when he turns his thought, as he can turn it, in upon itself, and takes to pieces by subtle analysis the beautiful instrument which places him in conscious relation to the universe around him; his first and last anxiety is to account for the existence of all that thus interests him; he must answer the question, How and why did this vast system of being come to be? Science may unveil in nature regular modes of working, and name their laws. But the great question still awaits her—the problem of the origin of the universe. This question is answered by the first verse in the Bible: "In the beginning God created," &c. And that answer is accepted by every believer in the Christian Creed: "I believe in one God," &c. I. WHAT IS MEANT BY CREATION? The giving being to that which before was not. Creation is a mystery eminently satisfactory to reason, but strictly beyond it. We men can do much in the way of modifying existing matter, but we cannot create the minutest particle of it. That God summoned it into being is a truth which we believe on God's authority, but which we can never verify.

II. BELIEF IN THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE OUT OF NOTHING IS THE ONLY ACCOUNT OF ITS ORIGIN WHICH IS COMPATIBLE WITH BELIEF IN A PERSONAL AND MORAL GOD.

1. Men have conceived of the relation between the universe and a higher power in four different ways. Either God is a creation of the world, that is to say, of the thinking part of it; or God and the world are really identical; or God and the world, although distinct, are co-existent; or God has created the world out of nothing. (1) If God is a product of human thought, it follows that the universe is self-existent, and that it alone exists. A purely subjective deity is in truth no deity at all. (2) If God and the world are two names for the same thing, though the name of God be retained, the reality has vanished as truly as in the blindest atheism. For such a deity is neither personal nor moral. Murder and adultery become manifestations of the Infinite One as truly and in the same sense as benevolence or veracity. (3) If, to avoid this revolting blasphemy, we suppose God and the world to be distinct, yet eternally co-existent, do we thereby secure in human thought a place for a moral and personal God? Surely not. God has ceased to be if we are right in imagining that there never was a time when something else did not exist independently of Him. (4) It is necessary, then, to believe in the creation out of nothing, if we are to believe also in God's self-existent, personal, moral life.

2. Again, belief in the creation of the universe by God out of nothing naturally leads to belief in God's continuous providence; and providence, in turn, considering the depth of man's moral misery, suggests redemption. If love or goodness was the true motive for creation, it implies God's continuous interest in created life.

3. Belief in creation, indeed, must govern the whole religious thought of a consistent believer. It answers many *a priori* difficulties as to the existence of miracle, since the one supreme inexplicable miracle, compared with which all others are insignificant, is already admitted.

4. Once more, belief in creation is of high moral value. It keeps a man in his right place. "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." At first sight, man is insignificant when confronted with external nature. Yet we know that this is not so. The heavens and the earth will pass away. But the soul will still remain, face to face with God. (*Canon Liddon*.)

The Creator and the creation:—I. THE WHOLE TRINITY, each in His separate office, though all in unity, addressed themselves to the work of creation.

1. The Holy Spirit brooded over the watery chaos. 2. The Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was that power, or "Arm of the Lord," by which the whole work was executed. "In the beginning was the Word." 3. The Father's mind willed all, planned all, and did all.

II. God created ONLY "the heaven and the earth." He provided a heaven, but He did not provide a hell. That was provided, not for our world at all, but for the devil and his angels.

III. If we ask WHY God created this universe of ours, three purposes suggest themselves.

1. It was the expression and out-going of His wisdom, power, and love.

2. It was for the sake of His noblest work, His creature, man.

3. The heaven and the earth were meant to be the scene of the exhibition of His own dear Son. Remember, that marvellously grand as it was, that first creation was only a type and earnest of a better. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*)

The Creator and His work:—I. THEN ATHEISM IS A FOLLY. Atheism is proved absurd—1. By the history of the creation of the world. It would be impossible for a narrative to be clearer, more simple, or more divinely authenticated than this of the creation. The very existence of things around us is indisputable evidence of its reality. 2. By the existence of the beautiful world around us. The world standing up around us in all its grandeur—adaptation—evidence of design—harmony—is a most emphatic assertion of the Being of God. Every flower is a denial of atheism. Every star is vocal with Deity. 3. By the moral convictions of humanity. There is probably not an intelligent man in the wide universe, who does not believe in, and pay homage to, some deity or other.

II. THEN PANTHEISM IS AN ABSURDITY. We are informed by these verses that the world was a creation, and not a spontaneous, or natural emanation from a mysterious something only known in the vocabulary of a sceptical philosophy. Thus the world must have had a personal Creator, distinct and separate from itself.

III. THEN MATTER IS NOT ETERNAL. "In the beginning." Thus it is evident that matter had a commencement. It was created by Divine power. It had a birthday.

IV. THEN THE WORLD WAS NOT THE RESULT OF A FORTUITOUS COMBINATION OF ATOMS. "In the beginning God created." Thus the world was a creation. There was the exercise of supreme intelligence. There was the expression in symbol of great thoughts, and also of Divine sympathies.

V. THEN CREATION IS THE OUTCOME OF SUPERNATURAL POWER. "In the beginning God.

created." There must of necessity ever be much of mystery connected with this subject. Man was not present to witness the creation, and God has only given us a brief and dogmatic account of it. God is mystery. The world is a mystery. But there is far less mystery in the Mosaic account of the creation than in any other, as it is the most natural, the most likely, and truly the most scientific, as it gives us an adequate cause for the effect. The re-creation of the soul is the best explanation of the creation of the universe, and in fact of all the other mysteries of God. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The theology of creation*:—Man naturally asks for some account of the world in which he lives. Was the world always in existence? If not, how did it begin to be? Did the sun make itself? These are not presumptuous questions. We have a right to ask them—the right which arises from our intelligence. The steam engine did not make itself; did the sun? In the text we find an answer to all our questions. I. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. There is no attempt at learned analysis or elaborate exposition. A child may understand the answer. It is direct, positive, complete. Could it have been more simple? Try any other form of words, and see if a purer simplicity be possible. Observe the value of simplicity when regarded as bearing upon the grandest events. The question is not who made a house, but who made a world, and not who made one world, but who made all worlds; and to this question the answer is, God made them. There is great risk in returning a simple answer to a profound inquiry, because when simplicity is not the last result of knowledge, it is mere imbecility. II. THE ANSWER IS SUBLIME. God! God created! 1. Sublime because far-reaching in point of time: in the beginning. Science would have attempted a fact, religion has given a truth. If any inquirer can fix a date, he is not forbidden to do so. Dates are for children. 2. Sublime because connecting the material with the spiritual. There is, then, something more than dust in the universe. Every atom bears a superscription. The wind is the breath of God. The thunder is a note from the music of his speech. 3. Sublime, because revealing, as nothing else could have done, the power and wisdom of the Most High. III. THE ANSWER IS SUFFICIENT. It might have been both simple and sublime, and yet not have reached the point of adequacy. Draw a straight line, and you may describe it as simple, yet who would think of calling it sublime? We must have simplicity which reaches the point of sublimity, and sublimity which sufficiently covers every demand of the case. The sufficiency of the answer is manifest: Time is a drop of eternity; nature is the handiwork of God; matter is the creation of mind; God is over all, blessed for evermore. This is enough. In proportion as we exclude God from the operation, we increase difficulty. Atheism never simplifies. Negation works in darkness. The answer of the text to the problem of creation is simple, sublime, and sufficient, in relation—1. To the inductions of geology. 2. To the theory of evolution. Practical inferences: 1. If God created all things, then all things are under His government. 2. Then the earth may be studied religiously. 3. Then it is reasonable that He should take an interest in nature. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *What we learn here about God*:—1. His being. 2. His eternity. 3. His omnipotence. 4. His absolute freedom. 5. His infinite wisdom. 6. His essential goodness. (*J. White.*) *A revelation of God and of nature*:—I. A REVELATION OF GOD. 1. His name: names have meaning. 2. His nature: spirituality, personality. 3. His mode of existence: manifold unity. II. A REVELATION OF NATURE. 1. Matter not eternal. 2. The antiquity of the earth. 3. The order of creation. (*Pulpit Analyst.*) *Love in the fact of creation*:—I. WHAT IS CREATION? Creation is a work of free condescension on the part of God. There was a time when it was not, and God willed that it should be. It was by Him called into existence out of nothing. It is not only not God, but it is not Divine—partakes in no way of His essence, nor (except in one, its spiritual department, where He has specially willed it) of His nature; has in itself no principle of permanence, cannot uphold itself, but depends altogether for its being, and well being, on the good pleasure of Him, whose Divine love created and upholds it. The world is a standing proof of God's condescension—that He lowers Himself to behold the things which are in heaven and in earth, which He needeth not. Creation, viewed in its true light, is as really a proof of the self-forgetting, self-humbling love of our God, as redemption; for in it He left His glory which He had, the Father with the Son, and the Holy Spirit with both, before the worlds began, and descended to converse with and move among the works of His own hands; to launch the planets on their courses through space, and uphold in them all things living by His ever-abiding Spirit. II. WHY IS CREATION? May we presume to ask, What moved

Him who was perfect in Himself, who needed nothing beyond Himself, whose character of love was fulfilled in the unity of the Three Persons in the God-head—what moved Him to lower Himself to the creation and upholding of matter, and of life organized in matter? We have already attributed the act to free condescending love; but what love—love for whom? Here again Scripture gives us an answer. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand.” “By Him (the Son) were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible—all things were created by Him and for Him.” I hesitate not then in saying that all creation was the result of the love of the Father for the Son; the result of His Almighty will to carry forward, and to glorify, His Divine character of love, by the glorification of His beloved and only-begotten Son. This world is Christ’s world—made by and made for Christ—made as the theatre whereon, to all created beings, and even to the Father Himself, was to be shown forth the glorious self-denying love of the Son of God. Thus the world is to the Christian a fact in the very path and process of his faith, and hope, and love. Thus creation is to him part of redemption; the first free act of love of his God, which provided for his being called into existence, as the next free act of love provided for his being called to be a partaker of the Divine nature. (*Dean Alford.*)

Creation.—I. God. No attempt made to prepare mind of reader for idea of God; as though every human being had this naturally; and so they all have. II. CREATED. God made world out of nothing; then He must have absolute power over it and all in it. Nothing can hurt those whom God loves, and protects. Events of world are still in His hands. All must work for Him. III. COURSE AND PROGRESS OF CREATION’S WORK. 1. Gradual, in measured stages, deliberate. But, observe, never lingering or halting; no rest until complete. Each day has its work; and each day’s work, done for God, and as God appoints, has its reward. Result may not always be seen; as seed is not seen unfolding beneath ground, yet as truly growing there as when it shoots up green in face of day. So in a good man’s life. He looks onward. 2. Orderly. (*C. P. Eden, M.A.*)

Creation.—The language of man follows things and imitates them; the Word of God precedes and creates them. Man speaks because things are; but these are because God hath spoken. Let Him speak again, and things will revert together with man who speaks of them, to nothing. Let us be content to perceive in creation a character which belongs only to God, and which distinguishes His work from that of His creatures. The human mind works only with the materials with which God supplies it; it observes, imitates, combines, but does not create. The best painter in the world, composing the most beautiful picture that ever proceeded from the hand of man, creates nothing: neither the canvas, nor the colours, nor the brushes, nor his own hands, nor even the conception of his work, since that conception is the fruit of his genius, which he has not given unto himself. Trace to the origin of each of the several things which have combined to form this picture, and you will find that all the channels from which they came, converge towards, and meet in the Creator, who is God. In thus showing us from its first page that the visible world has had such a wonderful beginning, the Bible informs us that it is also as a Creator that God saves souls. He not only develops the natural dispositions of our hearts, but creates in them new ones, “For we are labourers together with God”; but labourers working like the painter, with what God has given to us. We hear, read, seek, believe, pray, but even these come from God. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure”; and if we seek the principle of our salvation we shall find that we owe all to God from the beginning, and from the beginning of the beginning. “For we are His workmanship created in Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” “You have been taught in Christ,” writes St. Paul to the Ephesians, “to put off the old man, to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” “In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Thus speaks the New Testament. The Old uses the same language. Not only does David, rising from his fall, pray in these words by the Spirit: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (*Psa. li. 12*); but all the Lord’s dealings towards the people of Israel, that type of the future Church, are compared by Isaiah to a creation—“I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King” (*Isa. xliii. 15*). If He alternately deals out to them good and bad fortune—He creates. “I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I, the Lord,

do all these things" (Isa. xlv. 6, 7). If He tries them for a time by chastising them through the hands of their enemies, He creates: "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument of destruction for his work" (Isa. liv. 16). If He raises up prophets to them, He creates: "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near" (Isa. lvii. 19); and if ultimately He give to that people, after many vicissitudes, happier days and an eternal rest, He will create: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: but ye be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing" (Isa. lxv. 17, 18). The creation of the world affords us a new lesson as to the manner in which God acts in the dispensation of grace. There again, all that God makes is good, and very good; what is evil proceeds from another source. For all that is good and holy, let us ascribe the glory to God; for what is evil let us accuse ourselves. This doctrine, too, is necessary in order that you should not make a false application of what you have just heard respecting the sovereignty of God. He acts as Creator, we should say in things which belong to His government, but He only uses this sovereign power for good; He only gives birth to good thoughts, holy desires and dispositions, consistent with salvation. God creates, but how does He create? At first view we only see here the sovereign Lord, alone at first in His eternity, alone afterwards in the work of creation. But a more deliberate contemplation leads us to discern in this singleness a certain mysterious union of persons previously hidden in the depths of the Divine nature, and displaying itself at the creation, as it was to be manifested at a later period in the redemption of our race. And have you the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? The Three unite in the creation of the world; they unite in the redemption of man; are they also united within you? Are you born of the Father, and become His children? Are you washed in the blood of the Son, and become members of His body? Are you baptized with the Spirit, and become His temples? Ponder upon these things; for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life. Finally, God creates, but for what purpose? does He only wish to spread before you an enchanting exhibition? No, He has nobler designs. The Lord has created all things for His glory, and His first object is to render visible the invisible things hidden within Himself, by giving them a body, and, if one may so speak, by exhibiting them in the form of flesh. (*J. Monod, D.D.*) *Chance cannot explain order in creation:*—How often might a man, after he had jumbled a set of letters in a bag, fling them upon the ground before they would fall into an exact poem, yea, or so much as make a good discourse in prose! And may not a little book be as easily made by chance as this great volume of the world? How long might a man be in sprinkling colours upon a canvas with a careless hand before they could happen to make the exact picture of a man? And is a man easier made by chance than his picture? How long might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent out from the several remote parts of England, wander up and down before they would all meet in Salisbury Plains, and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army? And yet this is much more easy to be imagined than how the innumerable blind parts of matter should rendezvous themselves into a world. (*Archbishop Tillotson.*) *Chance not creative:*—Athanasius Kircher, the celebrated German astronomer, had an acquaintance whom he much esteemed, but who was unfortunately infected by atheistical principles, and denied the very existence of a God. Kircher, sincerely desirous to rescue his friend from his mistaken and ruinous opinion, determined to try to convince him of his error upon his own principles of reasoning. He first procured a globe of the heavens, handsomely decorated, and of conspicuous size, and placed it in a situation in his study where it would be immediately observed. He then called upon his friend with an invitation to visit him, which was readily responded to, and on his arrival he was shown into the study. It happened exactly as Kircher had planned. His friend no sooner observed it than he inquired whence it had come, and to whom it belonged. "Shall I tell you, my friend," said Kircher, "that it belongs to no one; that it was never made by any one, but came here by mere chance?" "That," replied the atheist, "is impossible; you jest." This was Kircher's golden opportunity, and he promptly and wisely availed himself of it. "You will not, with good reason, believe that this small globe which you see before you originated in mere chance, and yet you will contend that those vast heavenly bodies, of which this is but a faint diminutive resemblance, came into existence without either order, design, or a creation!" His friend was first confounded, then convinced, and, ultimately abandoning all his former scepticisms,

he gladly united with all who reverence and love God in acknowledging the glory and adoring the majesty of the great Creator of the heavens and earth and all their host.

Order no proof of evolution.—His (Professor Huxley's) conclusion is an hypothesis evolved from an hypothesis. To see that this is indeed the case, let us put his argument in syllogistic form. It is as follows: Wherever we have an ascending series of animals with modifications of structure rising one above another, the later forms must have evolved themselves from the earlier. In the case of these fossil horses we have such a series, therefore the theory of evolution is established universally for all organized and animal life. Now, even if we admit his premises, every one must see that the conclusion is far too sweeping. It ought to have been confined to the horses of which he was treating. But passing that, let us ask where is the proof of the major premise? Indeed, that premise is suppressed altogether, and he nowhere attempts to show that the existence of an ascending series of animals, with modifications of structure ascending one above another, is an infallible indication that the higher members of the series evolved themselves out of the lower. The existence of a series does not necessarily involve the evolution of the higher members of it from the lower. The steps of a stair rise up one above another, but we cannot reason that therefore the whole staircase has developed itself out of the lowest step. It may be possible to arrange all the different modifications of the steam engine, from its first and crudest form up to its latest and most complete organized structure, in regular gradation; but that would not prove that the last grew out of the first. No doubt in such a case there has been progress—no doubt there has been development too—but it was progress guided and development directed by a presiding and intervening mind. All present experience is against this major premise which Huxley has so quietly taken for granted. It is a pure conjecture. I will go so far as to say that even if he should find in the geologic records all the intervening forms he desires, these will not furnish evidence that the higher members of the series rose out of the lower by a process of evolution. The existence of a graduated series is one thing; the growth of the series out of its lowest member is quite another. (*W. M. Taylor, D.D.*) *The creation.*—I. In the first place, THE OBJECT OF THIS INSPIRED COSMOGONY, OR ACCOUNT OF THE WORLD'S ORIGIN, IS NOT SCIENTIFIC BUT RELIGIOUS. Hence it was to be expected, that while nothing contained in it could ever be found really and in the long run to contradict science, the gradual progress of discovery might give occasion for apparent and temporary contradictions. II. Then again, in the second place, let it be observed that THE ESSENTIAL FACTS IN THIS DIVINE RECORD are,—the recent date assigned to the existence of man on the earth, the previous preparation of the earth for his habitation, the gradual nature of the work, and the distinction and succession of days during its progress. III. And, finally, in the third place, let it be borne in mind that the sacred narrative of the creation is evidently, in its highest character, MORAL, SPIRITUAL, AND PROPHETICAL. The original relation of man, as a responsible being, to his Maker, is directly taught; his restoration from moral chaos to spiritual beauty is figuratively represented; and as a prophecy, it has an extent of meaning which will be fully unfolded only when "the times of the restitution of all things" (Acts iii. 21) have arrived. Conclusion:—The first verse, then, contains a very general announcement; in respect of time, without date,—in respect of space, without limits. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *On the existence and character of God.*—I. THE ARGUMENT FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSATION. The belief in causation is one of the primary convictions of the human mind. It will be unnecessary for the purposes of this argument to discuss its origin. It is also certain that this conviction is not the result of any conscious process of reasoning. We acquiesce in it because we cannot help doing so. Any one may satisfy himself that this is the case, by trying whether it is possible for him to believe that any particular phenomenon has come into existence without a cause. One of these primary beliefs is that every phenomenon must owe its existence to a cause adequate to produce it. This proposition therefore constitutes one of the highest rectitudes which is attainable by man, and lies at the foundation of all reasoned truth. Such being the case, it becomes necessary to determine what we mean by the term "cause," not what philosophers mean by it, but what is the idea which the common sense of mankind attaches to it? Unless we are under the bias of some particular theory, we invariably associate the idea of efficiency with that of cause. We may frequently mistake non-causes for causes, but efficiency, i.e., power to produce the effect, is the fundamental idea which underlies the conception

of cause in the minds of ordinary men. This being so, the following important consequences follow. 1. Whatever exists in the effect, must exist either actively or potentially in the cause. 2. The cause of one effect may be the effect of some preceding cause. 3. Various things, which philosophers and men of science have designated causes, are not causes, but necessary conditions of the existence of a particular thing. Thus space is the necessary condition of the existence of extended bodies, but is certainly not the cause of their existence. In a similar manner, in the language of the Darwinian theory, the environment of a thing is frequently spoken of as its cause. It may be the necessary condition of the existence of a thing in that particular form, but to designate it its cause is an inaccuracy of thought. The truth is, necessary conditions limit the action of causes, and may direct their activity into this or that channel; but to treat them as causes is absurd, for they neither do, nor can produce anything. 4. Law is not a cause. The reader's attention cannot be too carefully directed to this fact, for, in scientific language, law is habitually used as the equivalent of force, and the greatest confusion of thought has been the result; nay, more, it is frequently personified even by those who refuse to allow that we have any means of knowing that the First Cause of the universe is a personal Being. Thus even scientific men are constantly in the habit of affirming that the laws of nature effect this or that; and that feeble man is unable to resist their overwhelming power. The truth is, that while the forces of nature effect much, the laws of nature can effect nothing. What are the laws of nature? They are merely expressions of the definite order of the occurrence of phenomena. I must now recur to one more point above referred to, as fraught with consequences of extreme importance. I have observed that the very conception of an efficient cause (and an efficient cause is the only one which satisfies the idea of real causation), involves the consequence that it must contain within itself, either actively or potentially, all the effects of which it is the cause; otherwise, such portions of the effects which are not inherent in the cause must be self-produced, which is a self-contradiction, or be produced by the energy of an independent Creator, a conclusion which the theist will readily accept. This being so, all the effects, or in other words, the phenomena, which exist in the universe, must exist either actively or potentially in its first cause, *i.e.*, in God. Now, one of the phenomena of the universe is intelligence. Intelligence therefore must exist in God. Another of its phenomena is the moral nature of man, and the principles of morality founded on the moral law. God therefore must be a moral Being. Another of its phenomena is free agency as it exists in man. The first cause of man (*i.e.*, God) must therefore be a free agent. Another of its phenomena is will, for it exists in man. Volition therefore must exist in God. Another of its phenomena is personality, for it exists in man. Personality therefore must exist in God. Another of its phenomena is that its forces act in accordance with invariable law, from which action the order of the universe springs. Invariable law therefore must be an expression of the Divine will, and the love of order must exist in God. This argument may be pursued to a much greater length; but this will be sufficient to indicate its character. II. THE ARGUMENT FOUNDED ON THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE. This argument proves that its first cause (*i.e.*, God) must be possessed of intelligence. It is one of the instinctive beliefs of our minds, when our rational powers have attained their full development, that whenever we contemplate an orderly arrangement of a complicated character, we instinctively draw the inference that it denotes the presence of intelligence. We feel that this is an inference which we cannot help drawing, for order and intelligence are in our minds mutually correlated. Observe, I make this affirmation under the qualification that we cannot help drawing this inference when our rational powers have attained to their full development. I do so because I maintain that the ideal of human nature and the testimony which its constitution affords to the realities of things, are to be found in the perfect and not in the imperfect man. The opponents of theism dispute the correlation of order and intelligence on two grounds. First, they affirm that the conception is an anthropomorphic one, inapplicable to the works of nature. Secondly, that the production of all the phenomena of the universe by the unintelligent forces of nature, acting in conformity with laws from which they are incapable of varying, is an adequate account of these orderly arrangements. With respect to the fact of these objections to the validity of our argument, I answer—First, that our belief in this correlation between order and intelligence is not a relative, but an absolute belief, embracing all things, all places, and all times. Secondly, that even if the objection were valid, it makes no attempt

to propound an alternative theory of the origin of these orderly arrangements. Thirdly, the affirmation that the alternative theory, viz., that all existing phenomena have been evolved by the action of the unintelligent forces of nature, in conformity with invariable law,—affords an adequate account of the existence of this order, contradicts alike our reason and our experience. First, it contradicts our reason. What, I ask, is the conclusion which we draw, when we contemplate an orderly arrangement of a complicated character? I answer that we cannot help inferring that it has originated in intelligence. If the suggestion is made, that it is due to what is commonly called chance, we reject it with scorn. Scientific unbelief, I know, affirms that there is no such thing as chance. Let me adduce one or two simple illustrations. Suppose a traveller had met in some foreign country a construction (it is my misfortune, and not my fault, that I can only express myself in language which has the appearance of assuming the point at issue), which on examination he found to bear a striking resemblance to the machinery in the arsenal at Woolwich, and that no one could tell him how it had originated. Further, that he succeeded in setting it in motion; and that after carefully observing it, he discovered that all its movements took place in a constantly recurring definite order. Let us also further suppose, that on making inquiry how it got there, he was told that during some distant period of the past, a number of the unintelligent forces of nature, after a prolonged struggle, had succeeded in evolving this singular result. Would he, I ask, consider this an adequate account of its origin, or view it as an attempt to impose on his credulity? Or let us take a case nearer home, the library of the British Museum for example, or its collections of minerals or fossils. On walking round them he could observe that their contents were arranged in a certain definite order, yet he is entirely ignorant how they got arranged in this order. But he would scorn the idea, if it were suggested to him, that these arrangements were the result of the concurrence of a number of unintelligent forces, and would without a moment's hesitation draw the conclusion that they were due to the agency of intelligence. Of this he would feel as certain as of his own existence. These instances will be equally suitable as illustrations of the argument from adaptation. But it will be needless to multiply examples. I therefore ask if in these, and in an indefinite number of similar cases, we esteem this conclusion to be one of the most unquestionable of certitudes, why should the inference become inconclusive, when we observe similar arrangements in the phenomena of nature, the only difference being that the latter are on a vaster scale, and in an endless variety of complication? It follows, therefore, that the alternative suggested by unbelief contradicts the convictions of the reason of an overwhelming majority of civilized men. Secondly, the alternative theory derives no support from experience. No one has ever witnessed an orderly arrangement issue from the meeting together of a number of the unintelligent forces of nature. If on throwing up twelve dice an equal number of times, they invariably fall in the same order, the conclusion is inevitable—they are loaded. In a similar manner the conclusion is equally inevitable, when we contemplate the orderly arrangements of the universe. They are loaded with a Divine intelligence. III. THE ARGUMENT

FOUNDED ON THE INNUMERABLE CORRELATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS WHICH EXIST IN THE UNIVERSE, COMMONLY CALLED THE ARGUMENT FROM FINAL CAUSES. The argument from adaptation may be best exhibited under two heads. First, those adaptations which denote plan, or the realization of an idea through a gradual course of evolution; and, secondly, those adaptations by which a particular result is produced, and which alone render its production possible. To take an example of each. The human hand, if contemplated as a piece of mechanism, is one of the most wonderful of contrivances. We all know the innumerable and the delicate functions which it is capable of executing. It consists of a number of parts marvellously adjusted and correlated together, which, if any one of them had been different from what it is, or had been differently correlated one to the other, the mechanism in question would either never have come into existence, or it would have failed to produce the results which it is now capable of accomplishing. This serves as an illustration of the argument from both kinds of adaptation above referred to. This marvellous instrument, as it exists in man, is found in embryo in the fore feet of the lowest form of vertebrate animals. Its parts are all found there, yet in such a form that they are utterly unable to produce the results which they do in man. They exist there in type only, or idea, of which the human hand is the realization. Before it has attained to this realization it has appeared in different orders of animals, each time making a nearer approach to the realization which the

idea has received in the hand of man, and each time correlated to a corresponding advance in mind. Throughout the whole series of these improvements in the instrument, we recognize what in ordinary language we designate a plan, or, the gradual realization of an idea, commencing in a very rudimentary form, and gradually attaining to higher stages of perfection, until it has culminated in the human hand. A process of this kind, when we witness it under ordinary circumstances, we designate a plan. But a plan implies the presence of intelligence. When, therefore, we see such plans carried out in nature, which only differ from ordinary ones in the multitude of the adaptations and correlations which are necessary to enable them to become realities, we may surely draw the inference that they must have originated in intelligence. But the hand forms an apt illustration of the other kind of adaptation. I have already observed that it is admitted on all hands to be a marvellous piece of mechanism, so constituted as to be capable of executing an almost endless variety of functions. The unbeliever, however, asks us to believe that this affords no proof that it has originated in intelligence. But if he were to fall in with an instrument devoid of life, which was capable of executing only half of the functions which are performed by the human hand, he would not only infer that it had had a contriver, but he would be loud in the praises of his ingenuity. Why then, I ask, should the contemplation of the one piece of mechanism afford unquestionable evidence of the presence of an intelligent contriver, and the contemplation of that of which it is the copy, only far more elaborate and perfect, afford none? The reason why the opponent of theism accepts the one inference, and rejects the other, must be left to him to explain. I will only adduce one further illustration, viz., our faculty of hearing, because this is effected by three sets of adjustments, each of which is entirely independent of the others; and each of which consists of a number of complicated correlations. The first of these adjustments consists of the vocal organs, which form a musical instrument of a far more complicated character than has ever been invented by man. Be it observed also that this musical instrument is so constituted, that it subserves a multitude of purposes beyond the production of noise. Yet exquisite as this instrument is, it never would have produced a single sound unless it had been correlated to the atmospheric air, or the air to it, in such a manner that its waves should correspond with the different movements of the instrument. These correlations, in order that they may produce musical sounds, must be of the most complicated character; and yet the one set are absolutely independent of the other. Yet both these sets of marvellous adjustments and correlations would fail to produce a single sound, except for the existence of another highly-complicated set of correlations and adjustments, independent of both, viz., the human ear, adapted to receive the impressions of the waves of sound, the auric nerves, and the brain to perceive them, and the human mind to interpret their meaning. Each of these is composed of a number of the most complicated adjustments; and unless the entire series, of which all three sets of adaptations are composed, had been mutually correlated the one to the other, with the utmost care, hearing would have been impossible, and the remaining complicated adjustments would have existed in vain. I have only adduced these two examples for the purpose of illustrating the nature of the argument. The reader must estimate its force, remembering only that the universe is admitted on all hands to be full of similar adjustments, in numbers which surpass the powers of the human intellect even to conceive. What then must be the conjoint force of the whole? Let me draw the inference. Reason affirms that the theory that these adaptations, adjustments, and correlations, with which every part of the universe abounds, have originated in an intelligence which possesses a power adequate to their production, is an account of their origin which satisfies the requirements alike of common sense and a sound philosophy; or to employ the metaphor used above, these adjustments, adaptations, and correlations proclaim the fact that the forces of the universe are everywhere loaded with intelligence. This argument acquires an additional conclusiveness, the amount of which it is difficult to estimate, from considerations derived from the mathematical doctrine of chances. I have already observed that these adjustments and correlations are conditioned on a number of the forces of the universe concurring in meeting together at the same time and place; and that if any one of them had failed to do so, the result produced by their correlation would have either not existed at all, or would have been a different one from that which would have been produced by the conjoint action of the whole. Now, it is obvious that if these adaptations, &c., have not been produced by a superintending intelligence, they can only have been the result of that

fortuitous concurrence of forces which we have above described as constituting what is popularly designated chance. This being so, the production of those sets of complicated correlations, which I have above described as necessary for the production of that infinite variety of sounds which the ear is capable of distinguishing, by the fortunate meeting together of a number of independent forces at the same time and place, in accordance with the mathematical doctrine of chances, could only be expressed by a fraction, which, if its numerator is unity, its denominator would be some number followed by an array of ciphers, the length of which I must leave to the reader to conjecture. But this is only an inconsiderable part of the difficulty which besets the theory which I am controverting. This process would have to be repeated in the case of every independent correlation in the universe; and to get at the combined result, these fractions would have to be multiplied together; and the result would be a fraction whose numerator is unity, having for its denominator some number followed by an array of ciphers continued *ad infinitum*. According, then, to the mathematical doctrine of chances, it is an improbability, amounting to an impossibility, that these adaptations and correlations can have been the result of a fortuitous concurrence of the unintelligent forces of nature. They must then originate in intelligence. The theory which opponents of theism ask us to accept, as affording a rational account of the origin of those adaptations and correlations with which the universe is full, is this. The forces of the universe have gone on energizing in conformity with laws from which they cannot deviate during the eternal ages of the past; and in their course have passed through every possible combination. The unstable ones have perished, and the stable ones have survived, and by means of this ever-reiterated process have at length emerged the order and adaptations of that portion of the universe which is destitute of life, without the intervention of intelligence. How these forces originated, and became endowed with their specific qualities, which have rendered them capable of effecting such marvellous results, we are asked to believe to be a secret into which the limitations of the human mind render it impossible for us to penetrate, and which must therefore remain for ever unknown. But with respect to the process by which animated existence has been evolved, its language is less vague. Its theory is as follows. The original germs of life, the existence of which it is compelled to postulate, and which, in a manner wholly unaccounted for, became possessed of a most convenient power of generating their like, with a number of inconsiderable variations, produced a progeny greatly in excess of their means of subsistence. Hence originated among them a struggle for life, with the effect that the weaker living forms have perished, and the stronger, *i.e.*, those better adapted to their environment, have survived. This struggle has been continued during an indefinite number of ages. This theory is called the theory of natural selection, or the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence; and modern atheistic unbelief propounds it, aided by another theory, *viz.*, that of sexual selection, and a third, *viz.*, that of the accumulation of habits through a long succession of transmissions from remote ancestors, which have gradually become fixed, as an adequate account of the origin of all the adaptations and correlations which are presented in the existing forms of animal and vegetable life. This theory utterly breaks down, as affording even a specious account of the origin of these adaptations and correlations at several points. First, it fails to account for the origin of life, or to show that it is possible to produce living out of non-living matter. Until it can effect this, it is simply useless for the purposes of atheism. Strange to say, unbelief is now compelled to live by faith. It is confident that the discovery will be made hereafter. Secondly, it fails to give any account of the origin of those qualities, which the original germs of life must have possessed, in order that a starting-point may be found for the course of evolution which it propounds. Thirdly, it assumes the concurrence of a multitude of fortunate chances (I use the word "chance" in the sense above described), so numerous as to approximate to the infinite, of what common sense and reason refuse to believe to be possible, and which hopelessly conflicts with the mathematical doctrine of chances and probabilities. Fourthly, it demands an interval of time for the carrying out of this vast process of evolution, which although abstractedly possible, other branches of science refuse to concede to it as lying within the existing order of things. Fifthly, it utterly fails to bridge over that profound gulf which separates the moral from the material universe, the universe of freedom from the universe of necessity. All that it can urge with respect to the origin of life and of free agency, is that it hopes to be able to propound a theory at some future time which shall be able to account for these

phenomena. Sixthly, the theory in question, including the Darwinian theory of the production of the entire mass of organisms that have existed in the past, and exist in the present, by the sole agency of natural selection, without the intervention of intelligence, is, in fact, a re-statement in a disguised form of the old theory of the production of all the adaptations and correlations in the universe, by the concurrence of an infinite number of fortunate chances—a theory which contradicts the primary intuitions of our intellectual being. Seventhly, as a fact, the recorded observations by mankind for the last, say, four thousand years, show no instance of evolution of one species from another, but display variation, not infinite but limited, and recurrent to the original form. Eighthly, as a fact, geology (Palæontology) shows the same absence of such evolution and of indefinite variation. Ninthly, all the ascertained facts point only to creation by a plan, or in accordance with a rule, which permits variability within discoverable limits, and requires adaptation, and therefore furnishes no evidence of evolution of species. Let me set before the reader in two sentences the result of the foregoing reasonings. The atheistic theory of evolution utterly breaks down as affording a rational account of the origin of adaptations and correlations with which every region of the universe abounds. Consequently the theistic account of their origin, which satisfies alike sound philosophy and common sense, is the only adequate one; or, in other words, they have originated in an intelligence which is possessed of a power adequate to their production. IV. THE EVIDENCE WHICH IS FURNISHED BY CONSCIENCE AND THE MORAL NATURE OF MAN. Two universes exist beside each other. One, in which the laws of necessity dominate; the other in which free agency is the essential factor. The first may be designated the material, and the second the moral universe. These are separated from each other by a gulf which no theory of evolution can bridge over. When the first free agent came into existence, a power essentially different from any which had preceded it was introduced into that universe, where necessary law had hitherto reigned supreme. The question therefore presents itself, and demands solution: How did it originate? It could not have produced itself. It therefore issued from a cause adequate to produce it. That cause must ultimately resolve itself into the first cause of the universe, that is, God. From this follow the following conclusions—Man is a free agent; therefore God must be a free agent. Man's free agency is limited by conditions; but God is not limited by conditions. Therefore His free agency is more absolute and perfect than the free agency of man. A moral universe exists. God is the cause of its existence. Therefore the essential principles of morality, as affirmed by conscience, and witnessed by the moral nature of man, must exist in God. Personality exists in man as an essential portion of his moral nature; therefore, He who framed man, *i.e.*, God, must be a person, who is at the same time the Creator, the Upholder, and the moral Governor of the universe which He has created. Such are the inferences which we are entitled to draw by the aid of our reason respecting the existence and the moral character of God. (*Preb. Row, M.D.*) *Pantheism*:—We object to this system as follows. 1. Its idea of God is self-contradictory, since it makes Him infinite, yet consisting only of the finite; absolute, yet existing in necessary relation to the universe; supreme, yet shut up to a process of self-evolution and dependent for self-consciousness on man; without self-determination, yet the cause of all that is. 2. Its assumed unity of substance is not only without proof, but it directly contradicts our intuitive judgments. These testify that we are not parts and particles of God, but distinct personal subsistences. 3. It assigns no sufficient cause for that fact of the universe which is highest in rank, and therefore most needs explanation, namely, the existence of personal intelligences. A substance which is itself unconscious, and under the law of necessity, cannot produce beings who are self-conscious and free. 4. It therefore contradicts the affirmations of our moral and religious natures by denying man's freedom and responsibility; by making God to include in Himself all evil as well as all good; and by precluding all prayer, worship, and hope of immortality. 5. Our intuitive conviction of the existence of a God of absolute perfection compels us to conceive of God as possessed of every highest quality and attribute of men, and therefore, especially, of that which constitutes the chief dignity of the human spirit, its personality. (*A. H. Strong, D.D.*) *The end of God in creation*:—I. LET US FIRST EXPLAIN WHAT WE MEAN BY THE END OF GOD IN CREATION. It will be seen at once that an ultimate end, or that for which all other ends in the series exist, and from which they derive their importance, is in the mind of the agent his chief end. It is contended by some that the same series of subordinate ends may

have more than one ultimate end, of which one may be chief, and the others inferior ends. This was the opinion of Edwards. He says: "Two different ends may be both ultimate ends, and yet not be chief ends. They may be both valued for their own sake, and both sought in the same work or acts, and yet one valued more highly and sought more than another. Thus a man may go a journey to obtain two different benefits or enjoyments, both which may be agreeable to him in themselves considered, and so both may be what he values on their own account, and seeks for their own sake; and yet one may be much more agreeable than the other; and so be what he sets his heart chiefly upon, and seeks most after in his going a journey. Thus a man may go a journey partly to obtain the possession and enjoyment of a bride that is very dear to him, and partly to gratify his curiosity in looking in a telescope, or some new-invented and extraordinary optic glass. Both may be ends that he seeks in his journey, and the one not properly subordinate, or in order to another. One may not depend on another, and therefore both may be ultimate ends; but yet the obtaining his beloved bride may be his chief end, and the benefit of the optic glass his inferior end. The former may be what he sets his heart most upon, and so be properly the chief end of his journey." Our view differs somewhat from that of Edwards upon this point. As these different objects are to be obtained by the same course of action, or by the same series of subordinate ends, we believe it would be speaking more correctly to represent them as forming one compound ultimate end, rather than two distinct ultimate ends. Again: The ends or purposes of intelligent beings are divided into subjective and objective ends. The subjective end has reference to the feelings and desires of the agent or being, which are to be gratified by the selection and accomplishment of the objective end. It consists in the gratification of these feelings and desires. The objective end is the thing to be done or brought to pass, and to the accomplishment of which the agent is prompted by these feelings, affections, or desires. It is not the subjective end of God in creating the universe that we seek. We know this must have been based in the perfections of His character; it must have been for the gratification of His infinite benevolence, His boundless love, that He adopted and spake into being the present system of things. But there must be some objective end toward which He is impelled by His benevolence and love, and for the accomplishment of which the present system was caused to exist. It is this objective end that we are endeavouring to ascertain. II. WE PROCEED TO POINT OUT WHAT WE CONSIDER GOD'S END IN CREATION TO HAVE BEEN. And here we premise that whatever this end was, it was something in the order of time future; that is, something yet to be obtained or accomplished. It would be absurd to suppose a being to adopt and carry out a plan to obtain a good, or to accomplish an end which was already obtained or accomplished. We are now prepared for the general statement that, according to our view, the end of God in creation is not to be found in Himself—that God is not His own end. The differences between Edwards and ourself upon this point may be traced mainly to a distinction which he has omitted to make, but which we deem of great importance. We mean the distinction which exists between the display of the attributes and perfections of God, and the effect produced by that display upon the mind of the beholder. These attributes and perfections belong to God; their display is the act of God; but the impression made upon the mind of another, by this display, forms no part of God; it is not the act of God, but the result of that act; it is an effect which was not produced, nor does it exist in the mind of God, but which was produced and exists in the mind of the creature. The importance of this distinction will be made apparent hereafter. That God could not have been His own end in creation, we argue from the infinite fulness of His nature. We can conceive of but one way in which a being can become his own objective end in anything he does, and that is by supposing that he is destitute of something of which he feels the needs, and consequently desires for himself. To illustrate: Take the scholar who pursues with diligence his studies; he may do this because he delights in knowledge, and his ultimate objective end may be an increase of knowledge; or he may do it because knowledge will render him more worthy of esteem. In either case, the ultimate end is to be found in himself, and in both the idea of defect on the part of the agent is prominent. Were his knowledge already perfect, there would be no need that he should study to increase it. Now until some defect is found to exist in God—until it can be shown that He does not possess, and has not from eternity possessed, infinite fulness; that there is in His case some personal want unsupplied, it is impossible to show that God is His own end in creation. But it may be well to

dwell more at large upon this part of the subject. 1. God's own happiness could not be His ultimate end in creation. It will be borne in mind, that the ultimate end is something in the future, something yet to be accomplished. God's happiness can be made His end in creation in only two ways—by increasing it, or by continuing it. But this happiness can never be increased, for it is already perfect in kind, and infinite in degree. And the only way in which the continuance of this happiness can be made God's end in creation is by supposing it necessary in order to the continued gratification of His benevolent feelings. While the feelings of God's heart are fully gratified He must be happy; and we admit that His failing to accomplish any purpose, and thus failing to gratify these feelings, would disappoint and render Him unhappy. So that the continued gratification of these feelings, and thus the continuance of His happiness, was undoubtedly an end of God in creation; but, as we have seen, this was His subjective, and not His objective end. We perceive, then, that God's happiness, either in its increase or continuance, is not the end for which we seek. 2. God's attributes, natural or moral, could not have been His end in creation. The only ways in which we can conceive the attributes of God to be His end in creation, are to increase them, to exercise them, or to display them. The first could not have been His end, for the increase of attributes already infinite is impossible. It will be seen that Edwards makes the exercise of God's infinite attributes a thing desirable in itself, and one of His ends in creation. If we understand him, he teaches that God exerted His infinite power and wisdom in creation for the sake of exerting them; their exercise was in itself excellent, and one ultimate object or end which Deity had in view in exerting them, was that they might be exerted. That is, the exercise itself, and the end of that exercise, are the same thing. To show the absurdity of this position, we remark—(1) The moral attributes of God were not exercised at all in the work of creation. Benevolence cannot create, nor justice, nor mercy. The only attributes which were, or could have been exerted by God in the work of creation, are His infinite wisdom to contrive, and His eternal power to execute. We admit that the gratification of the benevolent feelings of God's heart led Him to exercise these natural attributes in one direction rather than another; but the gratification of these feelings, as has been already shown, is the subjective end of God in creation. But it may be asked, Did not the work of creation furnish an occasion for the exercise of God's moral attributes, viz., His benevolence, justice, and mercy? Certainly it did. But that which is a mere incident of creation cannot be its end. (2) To suppose God to exercise His natural attributes or powers, simply for the sake of exercising them, or that this forms any part of His ultimate end in exercising them, is a supposition entirely unworthy of Deity. We deny that there is anything excellent in itself in the exercise of natural powers, simply for the sake of exercising them; and this denial holds good whether these powers are finite or infinite; whether they belong to the creature or to the Creator. The truth is, that all the excellence which attaches to the exercise of natural powers, depends upon and is borrowed from, their designed results. The exercise of God's wisdom and power in the work of creation is excellent, because the designed result is excellent, and for no other reason. It is evident, then, that the mere exercise of God's attributes, whether natural or moral, forms no part of His ultimate end in creation. Nor can the mere display of His attributes form any part of God's end in creation. Now the position we take is, that such a display as this, considered separately from any effect to be produced upon mind by it, formed no part of God's end in creation. We are led to this conclusion, because such a display, simply in the light of a display, and aside from the effect it produces upon intelligent mind, is entirely valueless. God understood and delighted in His own attributes just as perfectly before this display as afterward, and, aside from its effect upon other minds, it must be made in vain; which is unworthy of the Great Supreme. What would be thought of an author who should write and publish a book simply to display the powers of his mind, without any idea of having it read to produce an effect upon other minds? Let us recapitulate, and see to what point we have arrived. We started with the proposition, that God was not His own end in creation; or that God's end in creation cannot be found in Himself. We have shown that God's happiness was not His end; that His attributes, natural and moral, whether we consider their increase, their exercise, or their display, were not, and could not have been His end. We have shown that His end could not consist in any good which He expected to receive, or was capable of receiving from His creatures, owing to impressions made upon their minds by the display of His attributes in the work of creation. We know of no

other way in which God can be His own end in creation. And if there is no other way, then the end which we seek is not to be found in God, and we must look for it in some other direction. To this view it is objected by Edwards, that the supposition that God's end is out of Himself militates against His entire and absolute independence. "We must," says he, "conceive of the efficient as depending on His ultimate end. He depends on this end in His desires, aims, actions, and pursuits; so that He fails in all His desires, actions, and pursuits, if He fails of His end. Now if God Himself be His last end, then in His dependence on His end, He depends on nothing but Himself. If all things be of Him, and to Him, and He the first and last, this shows Him to be all in all: He is all to Himself. He goes not out of Himself for what He seeks; but His desires and pursuits, as they originate from, so they terminate in Himself; and He is dependent on none but Himself in the beginning or end of any of His exercises or operations. But if not Himself, but the creature, be His last end, then, as He depends on His last end, He is in some sort dependent on the creature." The fallacy of the position assumed in this objection lies in the supposition that the relation which subsists between the happiness of a being and the accomplishment of his ends has to do with his independence. The question of independence is based upon entirely a different principle, viz., that of the power or ability of the being. If he possesses in himself the power to accomplish his ends, without aid from any other source, then, as far as they are concerned, he is entirely independent; and this is equally true, whether these ends are within or without himself. If a being had no power, or not power sufficient to accomplish his ends, were they all within himself, he would still be dependent: on the other hand, if he has within himself absolute power to accomplish all his ends, although these ends are out of himself, he is still independent. The question of independence has nothing to do with the position of these ends; but it has everything to do with the ability of the agent to execute them. So the question of God's independence does not depend upon the position of His ends, but upon His perfect ability to accomplish them, whatever they are, and wherever they may be located. Having shown that God's end in creation is not in Himself—and having answered the objection of Edwards to this position, the question returns, Where and what is this end? We shall now attempt to answer this question by the following train of reasoning:—1. The attributes of God are most wonderfully displayed in the work of creation. His power and wisdom are everywhere conspicuous. So, likewise, the moral excellencies of His character are written in sunbeams upon the works of His hand: and to minds not darkened by sin, these excellencies stand out in bold relief. Now a display of this character must produce a powerful effect upon intelligent mind; and upon the supposition that the mind is perfectly formed and rightly attuned, the effect must be blessed indeed. The result to which we come, then, is, that the display of the Divine perfections would produce an effect upon mind, perfectly organized and undisturbed by adverse influences, which would cause the recipient to admire and love the Lord his God with all his heart, mind, and strength; and this effect would be limited only by his capacity. 2. There is another display or exhibition secured by, or consequent upon, the work of creation, viz., that of the attributes, both natural and moral, of the creatures themselves. 3. There is still another effect secured by the work of creation, and the display consequent upon, it, viz., that produced upon a being by the display of his own powers, attributes, or qualities. These he becomes acquainted with by consciousness, and by a careful observation of their workings in various directions. The impression which these attributes of self must make upon the mind of self, provided this mind is perfect in its organization, and undisturbed by adverse influences, will be in exact proportion to the worth of self in the scale of being. This is self-love as distinguished from selfishness; which is self-love overleaping its boundaries, or overflowing its banks. We have arrived, then, at the following result, viz., that the effect which the display of character consequent upon the work of creation is calculated to produce upon perfect mind, is admiration of, love toward, and delight in God, to the full extent of the powers of the creature, and love to self, and all creature intelligences, measured by their worth in the scale of being. In other words, it is entire conformity to the moral law, which consists in loving God with all the soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourself. This is the result of the action of perfect mind in the direction of perfection itself. It is easy to perceive that perfect bliss, happiness, or delight must inhere in, or constitute a part of such action—and this, not merely in the sense of an effect, but that it must be woven into its very texture,

so as to form a part of its web and wool. This effect is denominated holiness ; and as it is produced in the mind of the creature, and not in the mind of God (who was perfectly and infinitely holy before creation began), we call it creature holiness, *i.e.*, holiness belonging to the creature ; and the happiness which inheres therein and forms a part of it is, for the same reason, creature happiness. The production of this effect upon the minds of intelligent creatures, we believe to have been God's end in creation—that end without which the universe would not have existed. This position thrown into the form of a proposition would run thus : God's last end in creation was to secure the greatest possible amount of creature holiness, and of that happiness which inheres in and forms a part of such holiness. Or thus : The ultimate, objective end for which God created the universe, was the production of the greatest possible amount of creature holiness and happiness. We use the term creature holiness and happiness in opposition to the position of Edwards, that this holiness and happiness are emanations from God in such a sense, that they are communicated to the creature from His fulness ; so that, in fact, they are God's holiness and happiness diffusing themselves among the creatures of His empire. He holds that communication of holiness and happiness formed a part of God's last end, or one of His ultimate ends, in creation. But then, to carry out his theory, which makes God His own end, he calls this holiness and happiness an emanation from Deity Himself, like a fountain overflowing its banks, or sending forth its waters in streams. The idea that creation is an emanation from God is not strictly true. It is a production of God, and a production of something out of nothing, not an emanation from Him. We can see how the benevolence of God could lead Him to purpose from all eternity to create the universe at a certain time,—in which case, the universe would not exist until that time arrived. But we cannot see how an original tendency can exist in God, for something to flow out of Himself, as water streams from a fountain, unless the flowing out co-exists with the tendency ; and if so, then the universe has co-existed with God, that is, it has existed from eternity. The phraseology used by Edwards would go to show that the universe is a part of God ; and that the holiness of the creature is simply God's holiness communicated to the creature. He says : " The disposition to communicate Himself, or diffuse His own fulness, which we must conceive of as being originally in God as a perfection of His nature, was what moved Him to create the world." . . . " But the diffusive disposition that excited God to give creatures existence was rather a communicative disposition in general, or a disposition in the fulness of the divinity to flow out and diffuse itself." If these statements are correct, then the creation must be a part of the fulness of God. If the act of creating was the flowing out and the diffusion of the Divinity itself, then the result must have been a part of that divinity ; or, in other words, the universe must be a part of God. Again, in speaking of the knowledge, holiness, and joy of the creature, he says : " These things are but the emanations of God's own knowledge, holiness, and joy." So that the universe is not only a part of God, but the very attributes of His intelligent creatures, their perfections, their holiness and happiness, are only communications of the perfections, the holiness and happiness of God : they are God's perfections, God's holiness and happiness, communicated by Him to the creature. We believe that the universe, instead of being an emanation from Deity, is the work of His hand ; instead of being the overflowing of His fulness, it is a creation of His omnipotence—a causing something to exist out of nothing ; and the holiness and happiness of creatures, instead of being the holiness and happiness of God communicated to them, consists in their conformity to the rule of right, and that delight which inheres in and is consequent upon such conformity. The production of these, or the securing them to the greatest possible extent, we hold to be God's last end in creation. We repeat, then, that the ultimate objective end of God in creating the universe was, to secure the greatest possible amount of creature holiness and happiness. Our reasons for this opinion are as follows : 1. As we have seen, God's ultimate end must be something desirable in itself, and not desired merely as a means to an end. The holiness of God is the most excellent thing in the universe ; and next to it, is the holiness of His creatures. God's end in creation could not have been to promote the former, for it was perfect from eternity. It must, therefore, have been to promote the latter, which is so excellent in itself, and so much to be prized for its results, that it is entirely worthy to be the ultimate end of Jehovah. But it may be asked, May not God's end in creation have been to display His own holiness, on account of the delight He takes in having that holiness praised, loved, and adored ? No doubt God delights to have the perfections of His character

praised, loved, and adored; but, is this delight selfish, or is it benevolent? If selfish, then it is sin. If benevolent, then it is a delight in holiness. God delights to be praised, loved, and adored, because this praise, love, and adoration, form the principal ingredient in holiness; and as it is the creature who praises, loves, and adores, so that this effect is produced in the mind and heart of the creature, we call it creature holiness. 2. We argue that creature holiness is the end of God in creation, from the fact that for God to promote His own glory, or to promote such a state of mind in the creature as will lead the creature to glorify Him, is the same thing as to promote holiness in the creature. The Scriptures teach that God does what He does for His own name's sake, or, which is the same thing, for His glory's sake; and we are commanded, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God." If, therefore, "God's glory," and "God's being glorified," as they are set forth in the Scriptures, differ from creature holiness, then His holiness is not the end of God in creation; but if they can be shown to be the same thing, then is it His last great end in creating the universe. God's glory consists either in that which constitutes His intrinsic glory, or in that in which He delights and glories, as something which He desires and seeks to accomplish above everything else; or in that state of mind in others, which leads them to praise and glorify Him. That God's intrinsic glory was not, and could not have been His end in creation, is evident from the fact that it was and is the same from eternity, before creation existed; it has never been in any sense changed or altered, nor is it possible that such change should take place; and it is perfectly evident that that which existed before an event, and is not in the least changed by the event, could not have been the end or object of that event. Again: If we mean, by God's glory, that in which He delights and glories, as something which He desires and seeks to accomplish above everything else; then, as we contend, this something is holiness: and as it cannot be His own holiness (for He cannot seek to accomplish what is already accomplished), it must be creature holiness. That holiness is what God delights in above everything else, and desires to promote, is evident from the following considerations: (1) It is the most excellent or desirable thing in the universe, and, therefore, God must delight in it supremely; it must be that in which He glories. This we have already illustrated. (2) The moral law contains the foundation and essence of true holiness; and, if this law is (as it is universally admitted to be) a transcript of God, then does He delight supremely in holiness. (3) The rewards and penalties which God has attached to His law, and the development which He has made of his feelings in the death of Christ, and the work of the Spirit, all go to show that He has set His heart supremely upon holiness, that He delights and glories in it, and seeks, above everything else, to promote it. (4) The Scriptures teach that, without holiness, it is impossible to please God; and that faith is peculiarly pleasing in His sight, because of its relation to holiness; it appropriates the righteousness of Christ; it purifies the heart, and produces good works. (5) It must be evident to every student of the Bible, and close observer of the providences of God, as they are developed in the history of the Church, that the whole economy of grace has for its object the production and conservation of sanctification or holiness; and that, when this is accomplished, the gracious economy will be exchanged for one purely legal. (6) The transcendent glory of heaven consists in its holiness—nothing unclean or impure shall be admitted into it. These considerations go to show that God delights supremely in holiness, and that its production to the greatest possible extent is the thing upon which He has supremely set His heart. Again: If we mean by God's glory, the impression made upon the minds of others, which leads them to praise and glorify Him, then we say, This impression is holiness, and as it is made in the minds of creatures, it is creature holiness. When we love the Lord our God with all our soul, mind, and strength, we glorify Him for what He is in Himself; and when we love His creatures, according to their worth in the scale of being, we glorify Him through His creatures, as the servants of His household, and the subjects of His empire. If we are holy, we shall glorify God; and if we glorify God, we shall be holy. The one cannot exist without the other; and they resolve themselves into the same thing. This view perfectly accords with the Scriptures. As our limits forbid an extended examination, we will select from those passages quoted by Edwards, to prove that God is His own end in creation. The first class are those which speak of God as the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Isa. xlv. 6; Rev. i. 8; Rev. i. 11). These passages simply teach the eternity and absolute sovereignty of God. They have nothing to do with His end in creation; and the wonder is that a divine like

Edwards should have quoted them for such a purpose. A second class of passages are those which declare everything to have been created for God (Col. i. 16; Heb. ii. 10). These texts teach that God is the Creator and Proprietor of all things—that they were made by Him, and for His use; but they do not decide what use God intends to make of them, nor what end He means to accomplish by them. They have no sort of bearing upon the question under discussion. A third class are those passages which speak of God's glory as the end of all things. They may be arranged under three heads. 1. Those passages which speak of what God does as being done for His name's sake, or for His own glory (Isa. xliii. 6, 7; Isa. lx. 21; 2 Sam. vii. 23; Psa. cvi. 8). These texts teach that God does what He does, to lead His subjects to praise and glorify Him, and to magnify His great and holy name; in other words, to love Him with all their soul, mind, and strength: and what is that but creature holiness? 2. Those passages which enjoin it upon the creature to do what He does to the glory of God (1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Cor. x. 31). 3. Those passages which speak of the glory of God as the result of certain acts of the creature (Phil. i. 11; John xv. 8). But how is it that, "being filled with the fruits of righteousness," and "bearing much fruit," glorifies God? It does this in two ways: These fruits are holiness embodied in the life, and they present the transcendent excellence of God's ultimate end in creation. They produce their effect upon other minds, and lead them to praise and glorify God, and thus promote holiness in them. To love and adore God with all the heart, is to glorify God; and to love and adore God with all the heart, is holiness in exercise: so that, in this sense, God's glory and the exercise of holy affections are the same thing. And to lead others to love and adore God with all the heart, is to lead them to glorify God; and to lead others to love and adore God with all the heart, is to lead them to exercise holy affections: so that to promote the glory of God in others, and to promote holiness in them, is the same thing. The end of God in creation, then, as we think we have shown, is not in Himself, but consists in the promotion of creature holiness, and that happiness which may appropriately be called the happiness of holiness. (*W. C. Wisner.*)

The creative laws and the Scripture revelation:—It is proposed to examine the general teaching of the Scriptures in the light of six laws, according to which, by the common consensus of competent authorities, the Creator worked in the production of this present terrestrial order. 1. The first of these laws is the law of progress. It may be taken as a fact, settled by overwhelming scientific evidence, and no less clearly affirmed in Genesis, that the world was not created all at once, and that there was a certain order in which its various parts appeared. It was, without an exception, an order under a law of progress; first, that which was lower, afterward that which was higher. The illustrations are so familiar that they scarcely need to be mentioned. Is this law of progress still in force; or is the progress ended, and is man, as we know him, the last and highest form of life that earth shall see? The impossibility of further progress cannot therefore be argued on the ground of inconceivability. It can only be established if it be proved beyond controversy that the end of creation has been reached in man. Is there sufficient reason to believe this? Reason itself teaches that if there be a personal God, the Creator of all, then the self-manifestation of God must be the highest end of the earthly creation. When, therefore, the Holy Scripture tells us of the appearance on earth of a God-man, the perfect "image of the invisible God," and of a new order of manhood begotten by a new birth into union with this second man, and renewed after the image of the Creator, to be manifested hereafter in a corresponding embodiment and in a changed environment, through a resurrection from the dead, all this is so far from being contrary to the order established in creation, that it is in full accord therewith, and only furnishes a new illustration of that law of progress according to which God worked from the beginning. 2. A second law which has been discovered to have been characteristic of the creative process, is the law of progress by ages. That this was the law of Divine procedure is clear both from the book of revelation and of nature. There were periods of creative activity. The work had its evenings and its mornings, repeatedly recurring. The line of progress was not a uniform gradient; not an inclined plane, but a stairway, in which the steps were æons. In each instance a "new idea in the system of progress" was introduced, and that fact constituted, in part at least, the new age. But it may be further remarked, that each new age was marked, not merely by the presence, but by the dominance, of a higher type of life than the one preceding. Now we have seen that, according to Scripture, the law of progress is still in force; after man as he now is, shall appear manifested

in the earth a humanity of a higher type than the present animal man, namely, the "spiritual man," as Paul calls him. Does the Scripture also recognize this plan of progress by ages as still the plan of God? The contrast between the present age and that which is to come, is indeed one of the fundamental things in the inspired representation of the divinely established order. And we can now see how, in this mode of representation, the Scriptures speak with scientific precision, and harmonize completely with the best certified conceptions of nineteenth century science. Not only, according to their teaching, is there to be still further progress, progress manifested in the introduction of a new and higher type of manhood, even that which is "from heaven," but the introduction of that new manhood of the resurrection to dominance in the creation is uniformly represented as marking the beginning of a new age. And just herein, according to the Scripture, lies the contrast between the age which now is and that which is to come; that in the age which is now, the dominant type of life is that of the natural, or "animal," man; in that which is to come, the dominant type of life shall be "spiritual" or resurrection manhood, manifested in men described by our Lord as those "who cannot die any more, but are equal unto the angels." 3. Another law of the Divine working in the bygone ages of the earth's history, we may call the law of anticipative or prophetic forms. This law has been formulated by Professor Agassiz in the following words, which have been endorsed by the most recent authorities as correctly representing the facts: "Earlier organic forms often appear to foreshadow and predict others that are to succeed them in time, as the winged and marine reptiles of the Mesozoic age foreshadow the birds and cetaceans (that were to succeed them in the next age). There were reptiles before the Reptilian age; mammals before the Mammalian age. These appear now like a prophecy in that earlier time of an order of things not possible with the earlier combinations then prevailing in the animal kingdom." Such, then, has been the law in all the past ages. Is it still in force, or is its operation ended? What a momentous question! How full of both scientific and religious interest! For even on scientific grounds, as has been shown, we are led to anticipate an age to come which shall be marked by the dominance of a type of life higher than the present. And, as we have seen, the suggestion of science is in this case confirmed by Scripture, which describes the life and characteristics of that "age to come," as science could not. Such descriptions are not very minute, but so far as they go they are very definite and clear. Perhaps the most full and clear single statement is that found in the words of Christ to the Sadducees, to whom He spoke of an age to follow the present, to be inherited by men in resurrection; a type of men who "neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." (Luke xx. 35, 36). Men incapable of subjection to death, sons of God, perfectly holy—such is the race which shall come to headship in creation in the future age. Herein again, then, the record of Scripture is consistent at once with the system of law as revealed in the past, and with itself, in that, having predicted an age to come, to be inherited by the higher order of resurrection manhood, it sets forth also, as historic fact, the appearance of anticipative forms in the age which now is. Not to speak of the cases of Enoch and Elijah, we have an illustrious instance of a prophetic type in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In Him was manifested a type of life transcending beyond measure embodied life as we know it here. It appeared in One who claimed to be the Son of God, and who manifested powers, in proof of this claim, such as well befitted it—powers which later, by one of His disciples, were suggestively called "powers of the age to come," and who finally became the first-born from the dead, being the first-born son of the resurrection. 4. Another law to be observed in the Divine working in the early history of the earth, is the law of creative interpositions. We must, on scientific grounds, affirm creative intervention at least in the origination of matter, and of life, and of free moral agents. The only alternative is absolute agnosticism on this subject. So much, then, as regards the past. Creative interposition appears as included in the system of law. How is it as regards the future? Are we now done with these manifestations of creative power, or shall they, according to the Scripture, be witnessed again in the future? For we are taught, as we have seen, that the present age, marked by the presence and dominance of the animal man, shall end; and that another age shall then follow, marked by the introduction of a new physical order, "a new heavens and a new earth,"—an order of things to be inherited by an order of men called by our Lord "children of God and sons of the resurrection," sexless, sinless, and incapable of dying. Has the man of the present age power to raise

himself into this exalted order of life? No one will pretend this. In particular, the natural, or psychical, animal man of the present age cannot by any self-development or self-culture raise himself into the order of the spiritual manhood of the coming age. For regeneration and for resurrection alike he is powerless. Hence Holy Scripture tells us with utmost plainness that what has been in time past, is now and shall be again. It tells us that even in this present age the creative power of God is secretly working, in the "new birth" of those who are chosen to become the sons of God and heirs of the age to come, and therefore styles the regenerated man "a new creature." As yet, however, it is but the faint dawn of the creative morning. When the day breaks, the same Scriptures teach us, shall be seen a new and magnificent display of the creative might of God, introducing "a new heavens and a new earth," and bringing in also the sons of the resurrection with their spiritual bodies to inherit the glory. For as the new order of the new age shall itself be introduced by creative power, so shall the new manhood which is destined to inherit that order. For resurrection is by no possibility the outcome of a natural process; it will be the direct result of an act of the almighty power of God.

5. Reference may be made to another law of the Divine administration in the earlier terrestrial history. It may be called the law of exterminations. The rocks bear testimony to the fact that from time to time during the long creative ages, at the close of one great period after another, there occurred exterminations, more or less extensive, of various orders of life. Professor Dana, for instance, tells us, "At the close of each period of the Palæozoic ages, there was an extermination of a large number of living species; and, as each epoch terminated, . . . one, in most cases, less general." In particular, he says, again, that at the close of the Cretaceous age there was an extermination "remarkable for its universality and thoroughness"; "the vast majority of the species, and nearly all the characteristic genera disappeared." The same thing occurred again at the close of the Tertiary, and again in the Quaternary. The causes of these various exterminations were different in different instances. Often they were due to the elevation or submergence of extensive areas of the earth's surface; sometimes to the more sudden and rapid action of earthquakes; sometimes, within narrow limits, they were caused by fiery eruptions from the interior of the earth. Sometimes, again, they were due to changes of climate more or less extensive, through the operation of causes which need not be here detailed. As a matter of fact, it appears that the bringing of a higher order of life and organization commonly involved the extermination of various genera and species unsuited to the new environment. This was demonstrably a part of the plan of God in the development of His creative thoughts. Even lesser divisions of the great creative æons were sometimes marked in like manner. Up to the present human period, therefore, there has been in force a law of exterminations, operating under the conditions specified. But yet another age, according to Scripture, is to succeed the present. Is there reason to anticipate that when the point shall be reached of transition from the present to the coming age, the law of exterminations will again take effect? Does Scripture give any hint in answer to this question, and is it here again in harmony with scientific discovery as regards the laws of the past? The reader will have anticipated the answer which must be given. For it is the repeated declaration of the New Testament Scriptures that the present age shall end, as earlier ages have sometimes ended, with catastrophic changes; this next time, with a catastrophe, not of water, but of fire, giving a new and very terrible application of the ancient law of exterminations. For we are told that a day is coming when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." The day for which the present heavens and earth are "reserved into fire," shall also be a "day of the perdition of ungodly men." (2 Pet. iii. 7).

6. Yet one other law of the creative working may be discerned as we study the record of the rocks. We may well call it the law of preparation. It were thinkable, since God is almighty, that each age should have been introduced as something absolutely new, having no connection with the ages that had preceded it; that He should have prepared the earth for the new orders of life which were to inhabit it, by a direct act of creative power. But, as a matter of fact, God did not do in this way. On the contrary, He so constituted the successive ages in the earth's history that each was a preparation for that which was to come afterward. Illustrations are as numerous as the ages and periods of geologic time. Each age had its roots, so to speak, in the age or ages that had preceded it. Indeed, the whole Scripture history is a series of illustrations of this law. Just as in the geologic ages there were subordinate periods, less sharply distinct indeed, into which the greater

ages were subdivided, so the Scriptures divide the whole present age of the natural man into what, in theological and biblical language, we call successive "dispensations." In the case of each of these we may see this law of preparation exemplified. Each dispensation was in order to another which was to follow. The Adamic age prepared for the Noachian; the Noachian, for the Mosaic; the Mosaic—and indeed all of these again—for the Christian. So also, according to the same revelation, shall it prove to be as regards the whole great age of the natural man. In a manner still more momentous and comprehensive, this age is set forth as a preparation for the age which is to come, the resurrection age. This may be true even in a physical sense. For in the new age, according to Isaiah, Peter, and John, there is to be a new earth, which shall appear out of the fires which shall yet consume the present world; and for this and the physical changes which shall thus be brought about, we know not what forces may not even now silently be working beneath our very feet. They teach this as regards regeneration and sanctification. These are preparatory in their nature. It is thus that the new man is "made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Even death, whether it be of the saint or of the sinner, has its part in the preparatory plan. The application of this is evident. Whence such a harmony in the one case, and in such unexpected directions, for which we search in the authoritative books of other religions in vain? Whence had these men who wrote the Scriptures this their wisdom? Assume what they claim for themselves, a special inspiration from the Former of the universe Himself, and then the harmony with the original system of natural law which pervades the representations of the past, present, and future, is what we should expect. Deny this, and how shall the fact be explained? Further, it is evident that the facts to which our attention has been directed, reverse the argument which one often hears from unbelievers against the probability of the truth of Scripture history and prophecy, derived from the observed uniformity of the system of natural law. Instead of saying that the observed invariability of the system of natural law makes the Scripture teachings with regard to the incarnation, the resurrection, the new heavens and the new earth, and the judgment by which they shall be introduced, to be intrinsically improbable, we must say the opposite! These thoughts also have a bearing on the theodicy. Much in the present age is dark with painful mystery. If there be a God infinite in holiness, goodness, and power, then, it has been asked in all ages, Why such a miserable, imperfect world? Why the earthquake, the pestilence, and the famine, with the destruction and agony they bring? Why sorrow, and sin, and death? Why the disappointed hopes, the darkened homes, empires wrecked, races degenerating, and disappearing from sight at last in a morass of moral corruptions? These questions burden the holy, while the scoffers answer in his desperation, "There is no God such as you dream!" If this were the last age of earth, it is hard to see how such questions could be answered. But if we recall to mind the ancient law of progress, and progress by ages, and that other law of preparation, we may be able to see—not indeed the answer to our questionings, but so much as shall enable us to hold fast, without wavering, our faith in the God of nature, of history, and of revelation. (*S. Kellogg, D.D.*)

Creation:—

I. DEFINITION OF CREATION. By creation we mean that free act of the triune God by which in the beginning for His own glory He made, without the use of pre-existing materials, the whole visible and invisible universe. In explanation we notice—

1. Creation is not "production out of nothing," as if "nothing" were a substance out of which "something" could be formed.
2. Creation is not a fashioning of pre-existing materials, nor an emanation from the substance of Deity, but is a making of that to exist which once did not exist, either in form or substance.
3. Creation is not an instinctive or necessary process of the Divine nature, but is the free act of a rational will, put forth for a definite and sufficient end. Creation is different in kind from that eternal process of the Divine nature in virtue of which we speak of generation and procession. Begetting is eternal, out of time; creation is in time, or with time.
4. Creation is the act of the triune God, in the sense that all the persons of the Trinity, themselves uncreated, have a part in it—the Father as the originating, the Son as the mediating, the Spirit as the realizing cause.

II. PROOF OF THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION. Creation is a truth of which mere science or reason cannot fully assure us. Physical science can observe and record changes, but it knows nothing of origins. Reason cannot absolutely disprove the eternity of matter. For proof of the doctrine of Creation, therefore, we rely wholly upon Scripture. Scripture supplements science, and renders its explanation of the universe complete.

III. THEORIES WHICH OPPOSE CREATION. 1. Dualism. Of

dualism there are two forms. (1) That which holds to two self-existent principles, God and matter. These are distinct from and co-eternal with each other. Matter, however, is an unconscious, negative, and imperfect substance, which is subordinate to God, and is made the instrument of His will. This was the view of the Alexandrian Gnostics. It was essentially an attempt to combine with Christianity the Platonic conception of the *δύναμις*. In this way it thought to account for the existence of evil, and to escape the difficulty of imagining a production without use of pre-existing material. A similar view has been held in modern times by John Stuart Mill, and apparently by Frederick W. Robertson. With regard to this view we remark: (a) The maxim *ex nihilo nihil fit*, upon which it rests, is true only in so far as it asserts that no event takes place without a cause. It is false, if it mean that nothing can ever be made except out of material previously existing. The maxim is therefore applicable only to the realm of second causes, and does not bar the creative power of the great first Cause. The doctrine of creation does not dispense with a cause; on the other hand, it assigns to the universe a sufficient cause in God. Martensen, "Dogmatics," 116—"The nothing out of which God creates the world, is the eternal possibilities of His will, which are the sources of all the actualities of the world." (b) Although creation without the use of pre-existing material is inconceivable, in the sense of being unpicturable to the imagination, yet the eternity of matter is equally inconceivable. For creation without pre-existing material, moreover, we find remote analogies in our own creation of ideas and volitions, a fact as inexplicable as God's bringing of new substances into being. Mivart, "Lessons from Nature," 371, 372—"We have to a certain extent an aid to the thought of absolute creation in our own free volition, which, as absolutely originating and determining, may be taken as the type to us of the creative act." We speak of "the creative faculty" of the artist or poet. We cannot give reality to the products of our imaginations, as God can to his. But if thought were only substance, the analogy would be complete. Shedd, "Dogm. Theol.," i. 467—"Our thoughts and volitions are created *ex nihilo*, in the sense that one thought is not made out of another thought, nor one volition out of another volition." (c) It is unphilosophical to postulate two eternal substances, when one self-existent Cause of all things will account for the facts. (d) It contradicts our fundamental notion of God as absolute sovereign to suppose the existence of any other substance to be independent of His will. (e) This second substance with which God must of necessity work, since it is, according to the theory, inherently evil and the source of evil, not only limits God's power, but destroys His blessedness. (f) This theory does not answer its purpose of accounting for moral evil, unless it be also assumed that spirit is material—in which case dualism gives place to materialism. The other form of dualism is: (1) That which holds to the eternal existence of two antagonistic spirits, one evil and the other good. In this view, matter is not a negative and imperfect substance which nevertheless has self-existence, but is either the work or the instrument of a personal and positively malignant intelligence, who wages war against all good. This was the view of the Manichæans. Manichæanism is a compound of Christianity and the Persian doctrine of two eternal and opposite intelligences. Zoroaster, however, held matter to be pure, and to be the creation of the good Being. Mani apparently regarded matter as captive to the evil spirit, if not absolutely his creation. Of this view we need only say that it is refuted (a) by all the arguments for the unity, omnipotence, sovereignty, and blessedness of God; (b) by the Scripture representations of the prince of evil as the creature of God and as subject to God's control. 2. Emanation. This theory holds that the universe is of the same substance with God, and is the product of successive evolutions from His being. This was the view of the Syrian Gnostics. Their system was an attempt to interpret Christianity in the forms of Oriental theosophy. A similar doctrine was taught, in the last century, by Swedenborg. We object to it upon the following grounds: (1) It virtually denies the infinity and transcendence of God—by applying to Him a principle of evolution, growth, and progress which belongs only to the finite and imperfect. (2) It contradicts the Divine holiness—since man, who by the theory is of the substance of God, is nevertheless morally evil. (3) It leads logically to pantheism—since the claim that human personality is illusory cannot be maintained without also surrendering belief in the personality of God. 3. Creation from eternity. This theory regards creation as an act of God in eternity past. It was propounded by Origen, and has been held in recent times by Martensen. The necessity of supposing such creation from eternity has been argued upon the grounds—(1) That it is a necessary result of God's omnipotence. But we reply that omnipo-

tence does not necessarily imply actual creation; it implies only power to create. Creation, moreover, is in the nature of the case a thing begun. Creation from eternity is a contradiction in terms, and that which is self-contradictory is not an object of power. (2) That it is impossible to conceive of time as having had a beginning, and since the universe and time are co-existent, creation must have been from eternity. But we reply that the argument confounds time with duration. Time is duration measured by successions, and in this sense time can be conceived of as having had a beginning. (3) That the immutability of God requires creation from eternity. But we reply that God's immutability requires not an eternal creation but only an eternal plan of creation. (4) That God's love renders necessary a creation from eternity. Although this theory claims that creation is an act, in eternity past, of God's free will, yet its conceptions of God's omnipotence and love, as necessitating creation, are difficult to reconcile with the Divine independence or personality. 4. Spontaneous generation. This theory holds that creation is but the name for a natural process still going on—matter itself having in it the power, under proper conditions, of taking on new functions, and of developing into organic forms. This view is held by Owen and Bastian. We object that (1) It is a pure hypothesis, not only unverified, but contrary to all known facts. (2) If such instances could be authenticated, they would prove nothing as against a proper doctrine of creation—for there would still exist an impossibility of accounting for these vivific properties of matter, except upon the Scriptural view of an intelligent Contriver and Originator of matter and its laws. In short, evolution implies previous involution—if anything comes out of matter, it must first have been put in. (3) This theory, therefore, if true, only supplements the doctrine of original, absolute, immediate creation, with another doctrine of mediate and derivative creation, or the development of the materials and forces originated at the beginning. This development, however, cannot proceed to any valuable end without the guidance of the same intelligence which initiated it. IV. GOD'S END IN CREATION. In determining this end, we turn first to—1. The testimony of Scripture. This may be summed up in four statements. God finds His end (1) in Himself; (2) in His own will and pleasure; (3) in His own glory; (4) in the making known of His power, His wisdom, His holy name. All these statements may be combined in the following, namely, that God's supreme end in creation is nothing outside of Himself, but is His own glory—in the revelation, in and through creatures, of the infinite perfection of His own being. Since holiness is the fundamental attribute in God, to make Himself, His own pleasure, His own glory, His own manifestation, to be His end in creation, is to find His chief end in His own holiness, its maintenance, expression, and communication. To make this His chief end, however, is not to exclude certain subordinate ends, such as the revelation of His wisdom, power, and love, and the consequent happiness of innumerable creatures to whom this revelation is made. 2. The testimony of reason. That His own glory, in the sense just mentioned, is God's supreme end in creation, is evident from the following considerations: (1) God's own glory is the only end actually and perfectly attained in the universe. But while neither the holiness nor the happiness of creatures is actually and perfectly attained, God's glory is made known and will be made known in both the saved and the lost. This, then, must be God's supreme end in creation. This doctrine teaches us that none can frustrate God's plan. God will get glory out of every human life. (2) God's glory is the end intrinsically most valuable. The good of creatures is of insignificant importance compared with this. Wisdom dictates that the greater interest should have precedence of the less. (3) His own glory is the only end which consists with God's independence and sovereignty. If anything in the creature is the last end of God, God is dependent upon the creature. But since God is dependent only on Himself, He must find in Himself His end. To create is not to increase His blessedness, but only to reveal it. (4) His own glory is an end which comprehends and secures, as a subordinate end, every interest of the universe. The interests of the universe are bound up in the interests of God. Glory is not vain-glory, and in expressing His ideal, that is, in expressing Himself, in His creation, He communicates to His creatures the utmost possible good. This self-expression is not selfishness but benevolence. No true poet writes for money or for fame. God does not manifest Himself for the sake of what He can make by it. Self-manifestation is an end in itself. But God's self-manifestation comprises all good to His creatures. (5) God's glory is the end which in a right moral system is proposed to creatures. This must therefore be the end which He in whose image they are made proposes to Himself. V. RELATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION TO

OTHER DOCTRINES. 1. To the holiness and benevolence of God. This is not a perfect world. It was not perfect even when originally constituted. Its imperfection is due to sin. God made it with reference to the Fall—the stage was arranged for the great drama of sin and redemption which was to be enacted thereon. We accept Bushnell's idea of "anticipative consequences," and would illustrate it by the building of a hospital-room while yet no member of the family is sick, and by the salvation of the patriarchs through a Christ yet to come. If the earliest vertebrates of geological history were types of man and preparations for his coming, then pain and death among those same vertebrates may equally have been a type of man's sin and its results of misery. If sin had not been an incident, foreseen and provided for, the world might have been a Paradise. As a matter of fact, it will become a Paradise only at the completion of the redemptive work of Christ. 2. To the wisdom and free-will of God. 3. To providence and redemption. (*A. H. Strong, D.D.*) *The creation as a revelation of God*:—1. His omnipotence. 2. His wisdom. 3. His goodness. 4. His love. (*J. P. Lange, D.D.*) *The world according to its various forms*:—1. As creation. 2. As nature. 3. As cosmos. 4. As æon. (*Ibid.*) *The work of God and the work of man*:—What is different, and what is common to both. 1. The order. 2. The constancy. 3. The gradual progression. 4. The aim. (*Ibid.*) *The creation and revelation of life from God*:—1. The foundations of life in the elementary world. 2. The symbolical phenomena of life in the animal world. 3. The reality and truth of life in the human world. (*Ibid.*) *The birth of the world also the birth of time*:—1. The fact that the world and time are inseparable. 2. The application. (1) The operations in the world are bound to the order of time. (2) Time is given for labour. (*Ibid.*) *The outline of creation: heaven and earth*:—1. Heaven and earth in union. 2. Earth for heaven. 3. Heaven for earth. (*Ibid.*) *Creation*:—How to begin to write the Bible must have been a question of great difficulty. The beginning which is given here commends itself as peculiarly sublime. Regard it as you please, as literal, historical, parabolical, it is unquestionably marked by adequate energy and magnificence of style. He finds that he must say something about the house before he says anything about the tenant, but he feels that that something must be the least possible. I. THIS ACCOUNT OF CREATION IS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS, and from this fact I infer that the whole book of which it is the opening chapter is intended to be a religious and not a scientific revelation. II. THIS ACCOUNT OF CREATION EVIDENTLY ADMITS OF MUCH ELUCIDATION AND EXPANSION. Moses does not say, "I have told you everything, and if any man shall ever arise to make a note or comment upon my words, he is to be regarded as a liar and a thief." He gives rather a rough outline which is to be filled up as life advances. He says in effect—"This is the text, now let the commentators come with their notes." This first chapter of Genesis is like an acorn, for out of it have come great forests of literature; it must have some pith in it, and sap, and force, for verily its fertility is nothing less than a miracle. III. This account of creation, though leaving so much to be elucidated, is in harmony with fact in a sufficient degree to GIVE US CONFIDENCE IN THE THINGS WHICH REMAIN TO BE ILLUSTRATED. IV. THERE IS A SPECIAL GRANDEUR IN THE ACCOUNT WHICH IS HERE GIVEN OF THE ORIGIN OF MAN. "Let Us make man"—"make," as if little by little, a long process, in the course of which man becomes a party to his own making! Nor is this suggestion so wide of the mark as might at first appear. Is man not even now in process of being "made"? Must not all the members of the "Us" work upon him in order to complete him and give him the last touch of imperishable beauty? The Father has shaped him, the Son has redeemed him, the Spirit is now regenerating and sanctifying him, manifold ministries are now working upon him, to the end that he may "come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *God the Maker of heaven and earth*:—I. As regards the time of creation we are told nothing. There is no note of date or time until after the creation of Adam. Six successive periods of creation are spoken of, with no indication as to the length of each. II. There is no contradiction, I think, between any result as to the world's age at which science may arrive, and the record with which the Book of Genesis opens. Are there not clear indications that the creation of the world was not the result of the omnipotent act of a moment, but of the Divine creative energy working (as we ever still see it working) through gradual processes, through successive gradations? III. As long as science keeps to her own great sphere of discovering and codifying facts, we have only to thank her for her labours. I need scarcely say, however,

that a certain school of scientific men are not content with this. They leave the boundaries of science, and enter the domain of theology. They say, because we find these successive stages of progress in creation—this development of one period from another—we will regard matter as having in itself all power and potency of life. They will not mention God at all, or if they do it is merely as another name for law. In the law which they discover from its operations—in the potency which they find in matter itself, they see sufficient to account for all creation; and we can dispense with that myth which we call "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." It is here they impugn Genesis. It was not "God" who created these things; they were evolved from eternal matter, in accordance with irresistible law. The Bible is primarily a religious book. This chapter is not meant to tell us all the varied processes through which God carried on His great creative work. The lesson Moses had to tell the people he ruled when he brought them out of a land where material force was everything; where men worshipped the physical universe—the fruits of the field, and the moon and stars of heaven—was, that there was a God beyond all these; that these were only the works of His creative power. Without Him they could not be. It was not a scientific view of the material universe, but a religious view, that Moses wished to give these people. He sought to impress on them that, though these things passed through various and successive stages, God was there. God did it. (*T. T. Shore, M.A.*) *The creation*:—We must judge the book by the times. I. The first principle to be inferred is that of THE UNITY OF GOD. One Divine Being is represented as the sole Cause of the universe. Now this is the only foundation of a true religion for humanity. II. The next principle in this chapter is that ALL NOBLE WORK IS GRADUAL. God spent six days at His work, and then said it was very good. In proportion to the nobility of anything, is it long in reaching its perfection. The greatest ancient nation took the longest time to develop its iron power; the securest political freedom in a nation did not advance by bounds, or by violent revolutions, but in England "broadened slowly down from precedent to precedent." The greatest modern society—the Church of Christ—grew as Christ prophesied, from a beginning as small as a grain of mustard-seed into a noble tree, and grows now more slowly than other society has ever grown—so slowly, that persons who are not far-seeing say that it has failed. The same law is true of every individual Christian life. Faith, to be strong, must be of gradual growth. Love, to be unconquerable, must be the produce not of quick-leaping excitement, but of patience having her perfect work. Spiritual character must be moulded into the likeness of Christ by long years of battle and of trial, and we are assured that eternity is not too long to perfect it. III. Connected with this universal principle is another—that THIS GRADUAL GROWTH OF NOBLE THINGS, CONSIDERED IN ITS GENERAL APPLICATION TO THE UNIVERSE, IS FROM THE LOWER TO THE HIGHER—is, in fact, a progress, not a retrogression. We are told in this chapter that first arose the inorganic elements, and then life—first the life of the plant, then of the animal, and then of man, "the top and crown of things." It is so also in national life—first family life, then pastoral, then agricultural, then the ordered life of a polity, the highest. It is the same with religion. First, natural religion, then the dispensation of the law, then the more spiritual dispensation of the prophets, then the culmination of the external revelation through man in Christ, afterwards the higher inward dispensation of the universal Spirit, to be succeeded by a higher still—the immediate presence of God in all. So also with our own spiritual life. First, conviction of need, then the rapture of self-forgiveness, then God's testing of the soul, through which moral strength and faith grow firm; and as these grow deeper, love, the higher grace, increasing; and as love increases, noble work and nobler patience making life great and pure, till holiness emerges, and we are at one with God; and then, finally, the Christian calm—serene old age, with its clear heaven and sunset light, to prophesy a new and swift-approaching dawn for the emancipated spirit. IV. The next truth to be inferred from this chapter is that THE UNIVERSE WAS PREPARED FOR THE GOOD AND ENJOYMENT OF MAN. I cannot say that this is universal, for the stars exist for themselves, and the sun for other planets than ours; and it is a poor thing to say that the life of animals and plants is not for their own enjoyment as well as ours! but so far as they regard us, it is an universal truth, and the Bible was written for our learning. Therefore, in this chapter, the sun and stars are spoken of only in their relation to us, and man is set as master over all creation. It is on the basis of this truth that man

has always unconsciously acted, and made progress in civilization. V. The next principle is THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF REST AND WORK. The Sabbath is the outward expression of God's recognition of this as a truth for man. It was commanded because it was necessary. "The Sabbath was made for man," said Christ. And the same principle ought to be extended over our whole existence. VI. Lastly, there is one specially spiritual principle which glorifies this chapter, and the import of which is universal, "GOD MADE MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE." It is the divinest revelation in the Old Testament. In it is contained the reason of all that has ever been great in human nature or in human history. In it are contained all the sorrows of the race as it looks back to its innocence, and all the hope of the race as it aspires from the depths of its fall to the height of the imperial palace whence it came. In it is contained all the joy of the race as it sees in Christ this great first principle revealed again. In it are contained all the history of the human heart, all the history of the human mind, all the history of the human conscience, all the history of the human spirit. It is the foundation-stone of all written and unwritten poetry, of all metaphysics, of all ethics, of all religion. (*Stopford A. Brooke, M.A.*) *Creation's birth*:—1. What a strange opening to a book! Without observation, parade, flourish. 2. Strange that there is no argument on the being of God. The Architect is simply named in the description of the building. A portrait in oil suggests a painter. 3. There is a gradual unveiling of God as you proceed with the book. God reveals Himself to us by slow processes. I. What was BEFORE the beginning? 1. God in undervived and perfect existence. 2. God dwelling in the silence and grandeur of His own eternity. II. What was IN the beginning? 1. When was the beginning? Date not fixed here. We only know the fact, that there was a beginning. 2. What occurred in the beginning? The material universe began to be. III. What FOLLOWED the beginning? 1. Law. 2. Life. 3. History. 4. Redemption. Remarks: 1. From a beginning we know not what may come. 2. The beginning contains what follows. (*J. S. Withington.*) *God first*:—I. THE DEVOUT RECOGNITION OF GOD SHOULD PRECEDE ALL PHILOSOPHY. The God whom we worship is not a metaphysical idea; a form of thought; a philosophical abstraction; but a living, personal, eternal Being, apart from and prior to all human thought. He is not a creation of the intellect, but the intellect's Creator. We must begin with Him. Is not this one of the child's first thoughts, and one which life's long experience but deepens and confirms—that it was God who created all things? Does not the bare statement carry with it its own conviction? What need is there of proof? Who argues that there is a solid earth on which he stands; a sun shining in mid-day sky? Who constructs arguments to prove his own existence? And does not God stand at the beginning of all thought and all argument? And is not the denial of Him a sheer and wilful absurdity which no attempt at proof can make even plausible? II. THE DEVOUT RECOGNITION OF GOD SHOULD PRECEDE ALL SCIENCE. The fact of His existence lies at the foundation of all physical science, and must be admitted as its first and most essential fact. For what is science in general, or a science in particular, but the knowledge of facts—their qualities, relations, and causes—arranged and classified? But if science begins by refusing to admit, or by failing to perceive, the First Fact, and the Great Cause of all things? Does nothing exist but what the knife of the anatomist, or the tests of the chemist can detect? Matter and force do exist, or matter under some plastic power passing through innumerable changes. But what is it? And is this all? Are there no marks of intelligence?—purpose?—will? Is there no distinction of beauty?—of right and wrong? And what are these but marks of the ever-present God? Atheism explains nothing, and Pantheism nothing. No! Science cannot discover God. It is in the light of God's presence that science is best revealed. Science and philosophy alike presuppose Him. III. THE DEVOUT RECOGNITION OF GOD PRECEDES ALL MORALITY AND RELIGION. It lies at the basis of any sound ethical theory, and any true religious system of doctrine and practice. Religion, whether natural or revealed, is based on this fact. It is no more the part of religion than it is of philosophy and science to discover or to demonstrate the existence of God, but to worship Him. (*F. J. Falding, D.D.*) *The creation*:—I. THERE WAS A BEGINNING, AND THIS WAS THE ACT OF GOD. II. THE DISORDER OF PRIMAL CREATION IS REDUCED TO ORDER BY THE POWER AND INTELLIGENCE OF THE DIVINE WILL. The life of God is imparted to the chaotic world. III. THIS PROGRESS OF CREATION PASSES FROM ORDER, THROUGH ORGANIZATION, INTO LIFE, UNTIL IT CULMINATES IN MAN. Plants and animals are "after

their kind." Not so with man. He is "after the likeness" of God. Lessons: 1. The adaptation of this world to be man's place of abode while God tries him by the duty He has placed upon him to perform. 2. All things are subject to man's use and government. 3. The human race is of one blood, derived from one pair. 4. God loves order. (*L. D. Bevan, LL.B.*) *Creation*:—This simple sentence—I. DENIES ATHEISM. It assumes the being of God. II. DENIES POLYTHEISM. Confesses the one eternal Creator. III. DENIES MATERIALISM. Asserts the creation of matter. IV. DENIES PANTHEISM. Assumes the existence of God before all things, and apart from them. V. DENIES FATALISM. Involves the freedom of the Eternal Being. (*Jas. G. Murphy, LL.D.*) *Moses and Darwin*:—Though the Hebrew prophet was not a teacher of science, he has in this chapter given us the alphabet of religious science. The great principles of things were disclosed to him, and in these verses he has given us a rapid and suggestive sketch of the great outlines of God's creative work. His instructions were not incorrect, but incomplete, in order to meet the pupil's capacity. I. LOOK AT THE HARMONY BETWEEN MOSES AND DARWIN. 1. According to Moses, creation has its origin in God. Darwin has gone down into the bowels of the earth, he has traced this globe to a nebulous light, and pursued the molecules to their furthest point. But he has confessed that beyond there is a mystery which baffles all skill, and this mystery he calls God. According to him the material universe has a spiritual origin, and before and after each creation he would write the word "God." 2. According to Moses, God's method of creation was by slow development. Evolution is the great faith of the scientific world to-day. It directs us to trace everywhere the processes of unfolding growth. And according to Darwin these processes are the methods of creative wisdom. II. THE GROUNDLESSNESS OF ALL FEARS FROM THE TEACHING OF TRUE SCIENCE. 1. No honest criticism can destroy God's truth. 2. Evolution does not banish God or design from nature. III. LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF DARWIN. 1. Patience and perseverance in study. He accumulated facts, but he took time to reflect upon them before he formed them into systems. All great work is slow work. 2. Darwin loved nature, and therefore could interpret her. 3. Darwin lived a simple, true, and loving life. (*D. B. James.*) *The creation*:—I. THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE. 1. The universe not self-existent, self-evolved, or eternal, but "created." 2. Brought into existence by the exercise of Divine power. "God created." 3. Stages in process of formation implied. II. THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT ORDER OF OUR PLANET. 1. The chaotic condition of the planet described. 2. The Divine Author of the present order. 3. The first recorded fiat. III. THE SUMMARY OF THE CREATIVE WEEK (Ch. ii. 4-8). Lessons: 1. Learn the comprehensiveness of the opening sentence of the Bible. 2. Learn to appreciate this clear, refreshing, and authoritative declaration that the origin of the universe and of man is a personal, all-wise, almighty, and loving God. 3. Learn the lofty dignity of our primal spiritual nature in its identification with the ineffable nature of God. 4. Learn that to worship, love, and obey God, is our reasonable service. (*D. C. Hughes, M.A.*) *Genesis of the universe*:—I. A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION. What is the origin of things? Perhaps the sublimest question mortal man can ask. A profoundly religious question, going down to the very roots of Truth, and Science, and Theology, and Character, and Worship. II. THE PRECISE PROBLEM. It is not touching the shaping of matter already existing; it is touching the origin of matter itself. III. IMMENSITY OF THE PROBLEM. The universe, practically speaking, is infinite. IV. THE PROBLEM ITSELF. Here are sixty or seventy elements which, so far as we know at present, make up the existing universe. And the point to be exactly observed is this: not one solitary atom of these elements which make up the universe can man make. All that man can do is to operate on these elements, compounding them in various proportions, using the compounds in various ways, shaping them, building with them, and so on. In short, man must have something on which, as well as with which, to operate. Here, then, is the mighty question: "How account for this tremendous fact? Whence came this inconceivable amount of material?" 1. The question is legitimate. We cannot help asking it. Every effect must have a cause. Here is a stupendously measureless effect: what caused it? Not one man, not all mankind together, with the most perfect machinery conceivable, can make one solitary atom of matter. Where, then, did all this measureless, unutterable, inconceivable quantity of matter composing this material universe come from? Suppose you say it came from a few cells or germs, or perhaps one. That does not answer the question. The

axiom, "Every effect must have a cause," implies another axiom: "Effects are proportional to their causes"—that is to say, causes are measured by their effects.

If the whole material universe came from a few germs and from nothing else, then the weight of these germs must be equal to the weight of the universe. You cannot get out of a thing more than is in it. 2. Only two answers are possible.

(1) The answer of logic. The first is this: Matter never had any origin at all; it has always existed. It is the one and only conclusion at which the logician, trusting solely to the logical processes and denying miracles, can possibly arrive.

(2) The answer of Scripture. The other answer is the first verse of the Book of God: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Ah, here comes out the infinite difference between man and God: Man is only a builder, constructing with materials; God is a Creator, constructing without materials. God creates atoms; man fashions molecules. 3. Grandeur of the answer. Thus this word "create" is the divinest word in language, human or angelic. It is the

august separatrix between the creature and the Creator, between the finite and the Infinite. Well, then, may our text stand forth as the opening sentence of God's communication to man. For all theology is wrapped up in this one simple, majestic word—Created. It gives us an unbeginning, almighty, personal, self-conscious, voluntary God. 4. Final cause of creation. Why did God create the

material universe? Let us not be wise above what is written. And yet I cannot help thinking that there is a reason for the creation in the very constitution of our spiritual nature. We need the excitation of sensible objects. We need

a material arena for self-discipline. As a matter of fact, we receive our moral training for eternity in the school of matter. It is the material world around us, coming into contact with our moral personalities through the senses of touching and seeing, and hearing and tasting, which tests our moral character. And so it

comes to pass that the way in which we are impressed by every object we consciously see or touch probes us, and will testify for us or against us on the great day. But while this is one of the proximate causes of the creation, the final

cause is the glory of God. It is the majestic mirror from which we see His invisible things, even His eternal power and Godhead (Rom. i. 20). (G. D. Boardman.)

Creation.—I. THE MAKER OF THE WORLD, God. The great I AM. The First Cause. II. THE MAKING OF THE WORLD. 1. By God's Word. 2. By God's Spirit. III. THE MEANING OF THE WORLD. God created the world—1. For His own pleasure and glory (Rev. iv. 11.) 2. For the happiness of all His creatures (Psa. civ.). LESSONS: 1. Faith in God, as the Almighty, the All-wise Creator.

2. Reverence for God, as wonderful in all His doings. 3. Gratitude to God, as providing for the wants of His creatures. (W. S. Smith, B.D.)

The word "earth" as used in Scripture.—In Scripture, as well as in ordinary language, the word "earth" is used in two different meanings: sometimes it means the whole globe on which we live; and sometimes only the solid dust with which the globe is covered, which is supposed not to be much more than from

nine to twelve miles in thickness. 1. The word "earth" is used to express the whole globe in the 1st verse of Genesis—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; and it is so used also in the 40th chapter of Isaiah, verse 22; and again in the 26th chapter of Job, verse 7, where we are told that the Lord "hath covered the earth upon nothing." 2. The word "earth" is also used to express the solid and rocky crust with which our globe is everywhere covered, and on which rest the vast waters of the ocean. It is used in this sense in the 10th verse of the 1st chapter of Genesis: "God called the dry land earth." Earth

is the dry land as distinguished from the sea; it means the continents and islands which appear above the waters. (1) You know that it is round. (2) We know that our earth goes round the sun once every year in an immense oval course, turning round upon itself at the same time as a ball does when it rolls along. (3) The earth has been measured. It is 25,000 miles all round, or in circumference, and nearly 8,000 miles straight through, or in diameter. You may imagine its size when I tell you that it has been reckoned that Mont Blanc, the highest mountain of Europe, is no larger when compared with the earth than the thickness of one of your hairs is to your head, or like a small grain of sand placed on a house twenty feet in height. (4) This earth, although covered all round with a solid crust, is all on fire within. Its interior is supposed to be a burning mass of melted, glowing metals, fiery gas, and boiling lava. This was mentioned in the Bible long before learned men had found it out for themselves by observation. It is spoken of in the Book of Job, about three thousand years ago (Job

xxviii. 5). We often read also in Scripture of the mountains being "melted like wax," rising and leaping like lambs, and raised from the depths of the earth by the force of the inward fire (Psa. xcvi. 5). We read in the Psalms of a time "before the mountains were brought forth" (Psa. xc. 2); and we read also in Proverbs of a time "before the mountains were settled" (Prov. viii. 25), while they were yet being tossed and thrown up by the mighty power of fire. So great is the heat within the earth, that in Switzerland and other countries where the springs of water are very deep, they bring to the surface the warm mineral waters so much used for baths and medicine for the sick; and it is said that if you were to dig very deep down into the earth, the temperature would increase at the rate of a degree of the thermometer for every hundred feet, so that at the depth of seven thousand feet, or a mile and a half, all the water that you found would be boiling, and at the depth of about ten miles all the rocks would be melted. (*Prof. Gaussens.*)

Design.—Creation is not caprice or chance. It is design. The footprints on the sands of time speak of design, for geology admits that her discoveries all are based upon design. And this verse, as the whole creation narrative, confirms the admission of science as to design. Therefore, both the Revelation of God and the Revelation of Nature go hand in hand. Which, then, is the higher? Surely, Revelation. And why? 1. Because Revelation alone can tell the design. Nature is a riddle without revelation. I may admire the intricate mechanism of machinery, or even part of the design hanging from the loom; but all is apparent confusion until the master takes me to the office, places plans before me, and so discloses the design. Revelation is that plan—that key by which man is able to unlock the arcana of nature's loom. 2. Because that design is the law of Christ. All are parts of one mighty creation, of which Christ is the centre. (*Wm. Adamson.*)

On beginnings.—I. VARIOUS KINDS OF BEGINNINGS. 1. Some beginnings are thoroughly evil, and their evil nature is beyond dispute. To begin to steal, however small the theft; to begin to lie, however trifling the falsehood; to begin selling things for what they are not, and by false weight and measure, however the deception may escape discovery; to begin to swear, however silent the oath may be kept; to begin dissolute practices, however trimly they may be dressed up. 2. Other beginnings are innocent, but such as are easily turned into an evil course. One begins to take proper recreation, and ends in a pleasure-seeking, self-indulgent, idle, undutiful habit. 3. Other beginnings are a mixture of good and evil. It is undoubtedly well that a drunkard should become a total abstainer; but it is not an unmixed good when with his abstention he mingles self-righteous pride and unjust reflections on others. 4. Moreover, there are good beginnings whose good character is complete and unquestionable. It is always good to set ourselves, for Christ's sake, to do honestly, to work diligently, to show mercy, to pray believingly, to help and succour, and sympathize with one another. Every really Christian beginning is an entire good. II. HOW BEGINNINGS ARE MADE. 1. Bad beginnings are made without forethought and resolve, without definite intention, choice, and premeditation; in a word, heedlessly. 2. Good beginnings are made with forethought, and election, and predetermination. "What shall I do with my life?" is a question for every man who would be right-minded. (1) Good beginnings are made in the light. An enlightened choice is a first requisite. (2) Good beginnings are made with worthy ends in view. (3) Good beginnings are to be made earnestly. If our desire is for the beginning of the goodness of God in our characters, it is a desire which shames sloth. (*J. E. Gibberd.*)

God the Author of all things.—"In the corner of a little garden," said the late Dr. Beattie, of Aberdeen, "without informing any one of the circumstance, I wrote in the mould with my finger the initial letters of my son's name, and sowed garden cress in the furrows, covered up the seed, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after this he came running up to me, and with astonishment in his countenance told me his name was growing in the garden. I laughed at the report, and seemed to disregard it, but he insisted on my going to see what had happened. "Yes," said I carelessly, "I see it is so, but what is there in this worth notice? Is it not mere chance?" "It cannot be so," he said, "somebody must have contrived matters so as to produce it." "Look at yourself," I replied, "and consider your hands and fingers, your legs and feet; came you hither by chance?" "No," he answered, "something must have made me." "And who is that something?" I asked. He said, "I don't know." I therefore told him the name of that Great Being who made him and all the world. This lesson affected him greatly, and he never forgot it or the circumstances that introduced

it." *Seeking the true God*:—Twenty years ago, when Christian missions scarcely existed in Japan, a young Japanese of good family met with a book on geography in the Chinese language, which had been compiled by an American missionary in China. It began with these words: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What could this mean? Who was that God? Certainly He was not known in Japan; perhaps He might live in America, whence the author of the book came. The young man determined to go to America and seek for God. He left Japan secretly, at the peril of his life; for the old law was then still in force, under which death was the penalty incurred by any Japanese who quitted his country. He made his way to China, and thence to the United States. There, after some perplexing experiences, he did find the God he had been seeking, and with his whole heart embraced the faith of Christ. That young man, Joseph Nisima, is now Principal of a Native Christian College at Kioto, the ancient sacred capital of Japan. (*E. Stock.*) *A question for atheists*:—Napoleon the First, with all his disdain for men, bowed to one power that he was pleased to regard as greater than himself. In the heart of an atheistic age he replied to the smattering theorists of his day, "Your arguments gentlemen, are very fine. But who," pointing up to the evening sky, "who made all these?" And even the godless science of our times, while rejecting the scriptural answer to this question, still confesses that it has no other to give. "The phenomena of matter and force," says Tyndall, "lie within our intellectual range; and as far as they reach we will, at all hazard, push our inquiries. But behind, and above, and around all, the real mystery of the universe lies unsolved, and as far as we are concerned, is incapable of solution." But why incapable of solution? Why not already solved, so far as we are concerned, in this "simple, unequivocal, exhaustive, majestic" alpha of the Bible—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"? (*J. B. Clark.*) *The folly of atheism*:—A suggestive scene took place lately in a railway car that was crossing the Rocky Mountains. A quiet business man, who with the other passengers, had been silently watching the vast range of snow-clad peaks, by him seen for the first time, said to his companion: "No man, it seems to me, could look at that scene without feeling himself brought nearer to his Creator." A dapper lad of eighteen, who had been chiefly engaged in caressing his moustache, pertly interrupted, "If you are sure there is a Creator." "You are an atheist," said the stranger, turning to the lad. "I am an agnostic," raising his voice. "I am investigating the subject. I take nothing for granted. I am waiting to be convinced. I see the mountains, I smell the rose, I hear the wind; therefore, I believe that mountains, roses, and wind exist. But I cannot see, smell, or hear God. Therefore—" A grizzled old cattle-raiser glanced over his spectacles at the boy. "Did you ever try to smell with your eyes?" he said, quietly. "No." "Or hear with your tongue, or taste with your ears?" "Certainly not." "Then why do you try to apprehend God with faculties which are only meant for material things?" "With what should I apprehend Him?" said the youth, with a conceited giggle. "With your intellect and soul?—but I beg your pardon"—here he paused—"some men have not breadth and depth enough of intellect and soul to do this. This is probably the reason that you are an agnostic." The laugh in the car effectually stopped the display of any more atheism that day. *Creation a comforting thought*:—When Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge, was on his dying bed, his biographer relates that, "After a short pause, he looked round with one of his bright smiles, and asked, 'What do you think especially gives me comfort at this time? The creation! Did Jehovah create the world, or did I? I think He did; now, if He made the world, He can sufficiently take care of me.'" *Man's limited knowledge of nature*:—Systems of nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, nature remains of quite infinite depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and square miles. The course of nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a planet, is partially known to us, but who knows what deeper courses these depend on! What infinitely larger cycle (of causes) our little epicycle revolves on! To the minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native creek may have become familiar; but does the minnow understand the ocean tides and periodic currents, the trade winds and monsoons, and moon's eclipses; by all which the condition of its little creek is regulated? (*T. Carlyle.*)

Ver. 2. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was

upon the face of the deep.—*Genesis of order*.—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. The primeval chaos. (1) Origin of chaos. The direct issue of the Creative Will. God created the atoms of the universe, starting with them in a chaotic state. (2) Picture of chaos. All the elements which now exist were doubtless there; but all were out of relation. (3) Confirmation of science. If the magnificent nebular hypothesis of the astronomers—first propounded by Swedenborg, adopted by Kant, elaborated by Laplace and Herschel, and maintained with modifications by such scientists as Cuvier, Humboldt, Arago, Dana, and Guyot—be true, there has been a time when the earth, and indeed the whole universe, was in a state of nebula, or chaotic gaseous fluid. As such, the earth was indeed without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. Being in a gaseous state, it was “without form and void”; being as yet in an inactive state, it was “dark”; being in a state of indefinite expansion, it was a “deep.” 2. The organizing energy. (1) The breath of God. (2) Moved over the face of the fluids. II. And now let us attend to THE MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. And, first: all life begins chaotically. It is true of physical life. Look at this bioplast; the most powerful microscope fails to detect in it much sign of system, or structure: the most that it detects is a tiny grouping of seemingly unarranged, chaotic material; in fact, so structureless does it seem, that the microscope declines to prophesy whether it will unfold into a cedar, an elephant, or a man. Again, it is true of intellectual life. Look at this new-born infant: how nebulous and chaotic its conceptions! Your little one may grow into a Shakespeare; but at present, and intellectually surveyed—forgive me, fond mother, for saying it—your little one is scarcely more than a little animal. Do we not apply indiscriminately to infants and animals the impersonal pronoun “it”? Once more: it is true of moral life. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: then that which is spiritual. Look at humanity as a whole, and through the ages, ancient, mediæval, modern. How vast but abortive its endeavours! How besmeared its history with idolatries, barbarisms, wars, butcheries, oppressions, crimes, blasphemies! Verily, humanity, compared with its latent, transcendent possibilities, is indeed a chaos, without form, and void, and darkness is over its deep. And what is so sadly true of humanity as a whole, is as sadly true of each member of humanity, at least in his natural, or rather unnatural, denatured state. For each man is a microcosm, a miniature world of his own. And each man, compared with what is conceivable concerning him, is a chaos. 2. Is there any hope here? Thank God, there is. That same breath of God which moved over the face of those ancient fluids, is moving to-day over the soul of humanity. Ah, this is the blessed energy by which the chaos of our moral nature is being organized into order and beauty. Observe: as, in shaping the material earth out of the old chaos, the Spirit of God added no new elements, but simply fashioned into order the old; so, in organizing the spiritual chaos, He adds no new faculties, but simply quickens and organizes the old. What man needs is not creation, but re-creation; not generation, but regeneration. And this it is which the Holy Ghost is achieving. Brooding, incubating as God’s Holy Dove over the chaos of humanity, He is quickening its latent forces, arranging its elements, assorting its capacities, organizing its functions, apportioning its gifts, perfecting its potentialities: in short, completing, fulfilling consummating man in the sphere of Jesus Christ. (*G. D. Boardman.*)

An emblem of unrenewed man.—I. EMPTINESS OF GOOD. Chaos was absolutely unproductive. Not a single tree, bush, or flower. Not even the seeds of any useful herbs. So is man as a spiritual being till God’s Spirit begins to work on his fallen nature. “In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” II. DARKNESS. A meet covering for such an unsightly spectacle. The wicked man is said to “walk in darkness” (1 John i. 6); “darkness blindeth his eyes” (1 John ii. 11); his “understanding is darkened” (Eph. iv. 18); his “foolish heart is darkened” (Rom. i. 21); he “loves darkness rather than light” (1 John iii. 21); “he knows not nor understands, but walks on in darkness” (Psa. lxxxii. 5); and if he repent not he “shall be cast into outer darkness” (Matt. xxv. 30). The children of God were “at one time darkness, but now are light in the Lord;” “they walk as children of light” (Eph. v. 8); they are “called out of darkness into marvellous light” (1 Pet. ii. 9); they are “delivered from the power of darkness” (Col. i. 13); they “cast off the works of darkness, and walk honestly as in the day” (Rom. xiii. 12, 13). III. CONFUSION. The chaos was a hideous mixture of all discordant materials—earth and water; mud and rock;

vegetable and mineral; mire, slime, lees, scum, clay, marl, crag, and pool. This is but a faint image of the turmoil, struggle, and strife that go on continually in the heart of a man who is under the dominion of "lusts and passions that war against the soul." Was there a visible form? If so it may have been some white cloud like the Shechinah. But if cloud there were, there was no vitality in that; it was only a symbol made use of by the vitalizing Agent to intimate that He was present. This power was—1. Silent in its operation. 2. Efficacious. 3. Instantaneous. In one word, the chaotic state of man's soul before God can only be restored to light, warmth, order, beauty, and life by the working of the Divine Spirit, through applying "the truth as it is in Christ Jesus" as the means. This work is done silently and gently. Zaccheus was thus awakened (Luke xix. 5-8); Nathanael (John i. 47-49); the woman of Samaria (John iv. 9-29). *The teaching of chaos*:—I. THAT THE MOST ELEMENTARY AND RUDE CONDITIONS OF THINGS ARE NOT TO BE REJECTED OR OVERLOOKED. "And the earth was without form and void." 1. This may be true of the world of matter. 2. This may be true of the world of mind. Desolate. Not peopled with great thoughts. Not animated by great and noble convictions. 3. This may be true of the world of the soul. The soul-life of many lacks architecture. II. THAT THE MOST RUDE AND ELEMENTARY CONDITIONS OF THINGS, UNDER THE CULTURE OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT, ARE CAPABLE OF THE HIGHEST UTILITY AND BEAUTY. 1. This is true of the material world. The earth was without form and void; but now it is everywhere resplendent with all that is esteemed useful and beautiful. It manifests a fertility most welcome to the husbandman. Whence this transition? It was the gift of God. It was the result of the Spirit's hovering over the darkness of Nature. The world is under a Divine ministry. 2. This is true of the world of mind. The chaos of the human mind is turned into order, light, and intellectual completion, by the agency of the Divine Spirit. 3. This is true of the world of soul. The chaos of the soul of man can only be restored by the creative ministry of the Holy Spirit. He will cause all the nobler faculties of the soul to shine out with their intended splendour. He will make the soul a fit world for the habitation of all that is heavenly. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Without form and void*:—1. A type of many souls. 2. A type of many lives. 3. A type of many books. 4. A type of many sermons. 5. A type of many societies. (*Ibid.*) *On looking back to original condition*:—The best way to judge of things aright is to consider them in their first original. 1. To bring down our pride. 2. To quicken our endeavours. 3. To fill our mouths with praises to Him that made us what we are, and might have continued, without His free and infinite mercy. (*J. White.*) *The chaos*:—The text is easily divided into two parts: first, the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; second, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. I. The first subject then for our consideration is THE STATE OF THE WORLD IN THE BEGINNING OF TIME. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: that is, the earth lay a hideous, barren, and desolate heap; as a waste, howling wilderness, earth and sea mingled together. How short and wretched must have been the existence of creatures, if God had doomed any to dwell in such a state!—how utterly impossible would it have been for them to fix a comfortable habitation, or to remedy one even of the existing evils! Where should we have made our pleasant homes and warm firesides? Could we "have commanded the morning, and caused the day-spring to know its place"? Could we have driven away the darkness, or "have shut up the sea with doors"? 1. Here, then, we are led to reflect, first, upon the wisdom and goodness of God manifested in His gracious design in the creation. God had no design to form creatures for misery, but for happiness, as the apostle declares when speaking of the Christian dispensation: "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain mercy by Jesus Christ." So here He had determined to make man; but to make him, not a child of sorrow, but a comfortable and happy creature: He therefore first begins, with infinite goodness, to prepare him a pleasant and goodly dwelling-place. But which among the angels would have supposed that He would form it from this gloomy chaos, this miserable and barren spot we have been considering? They had no such power themselves, not the mightiest of them; and it is probable they did not yet know the almighty power of God, or, at least, that they had not seen it so marvellously displayed. When, therefore, He fixed the foundation of the earth, and formed the world, He tells Job that then "the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy": they sung of the mighty power and glory of God: they

shouted for joy at the goodness and wisdom of their everlasting Father, here displayed so gloriously. Thus, when we consider the works of the Holy Spirit, how lovely does He himself appear to us!—how worthy of our highest adoration and gratitude! But, further, the word here translated “moved,” literally means settled or brooded, and it is understood by some to express that act of the Holy Spirit by which He imparted life and activity. This is the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit, “it is the Spirit that quickeneth,” saith our Saviour: “the Spirit giveth life,” says St. Paul: it was the Spirit that “raised Jesus from the dead”: it is the Spirit that shall breathe upon our dry bones, that they may live; for in like manner it was the Spirit of God that entered Adam, and man became a living soul. To this Holy Spirit of God then we are indebted, not only for our own life and preservation from day to day and from year to year, but for all those living creatures which increase and multiply to supply us with food and clothing, and many other comforts. As often, therefore, as we use them, should not our hearts be grateful to Him who is the author of them, and take heed not to abuse them? Now, we have considered the state of this world before the Word of God and the Spirit of God began their operations upon it. You have seen its disorder and confusion, its barren, empty, and useless condition, and the utter darkness in which it was buried. You have seen, then, an exact representation of the fallen state of man, and what the Word and Spirit of God, and these only, can do for him. The whole soul and body of man without these is without form, and void: his heart is a misshapen, hideous, and disordered mass of empty, unprofitable, and good-for-nothing matter; and, when the Holy Spirit of God enters it, He finds it lifeless, dark, and barren, and, like the unrestrained and troubled waters, all ruinous and in wild disorder, as in chaos. This is the state of man, and therefore he is fit for nothing else but destruction, except he is rendered “fit for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” There is, as in chaos, a continued strife of elements within us, a continual war and confusion among “our lusts, which war in our members”: we “are full of uncleanness,” ungodliness, intemperance, and sin: while the ungoverned waters struggle for a vent, and rage and swell, the earth is rent and torn asunder, and at last overwhelmed; and thus, while one desire, one lust, one inclination in our frame rages, and is indulged, another part of us is convulsed and disordered, and at last perhaps “sudden destruction comes upon us.” Here, then, we see the free mercy of God towards us, in His willingness to rescue us from this chaotic state. It is plain, then, that a change must be wrought in us if we would be saved: for think not that God will pollute His heavens with such creatures: think not that He will suffer the holiness and harmony of heaven to be interrupted by unsubdued, deformed man. This change, then, from darkness to light, from barrenness to fruitfulness, from confusion to peace, from sin to holiness and loveliness, and happiness, in short “from the power of Satan unto God,” this change is needed in all, and none can be saved without it; and it is the work of the Word and Spirit of God: none other can do it; none other has any part in it. I say it is the work of the Word and Spirit: not the Word alone, nor the Spirit alone; but it is the work of the two conjointly. (*J. Matthews, M.A.*) *The inability of chaos apart from God to evolve order:*—It would be unphilosophical to hold that chaos evolved from herself the order that everywhere appears. Can I believe that the pile of rubbish that marks the site of Babylon will ever produce a city so beautiful and magnificent as that which witnessed nightly the revels of the Chaldean Monarchs? Shall I see, as if by magic, street after street arise, square after square occupy its ancient position, temple after temple point its glittering canopy to heaven; shall I see the city enclosed by walls, filled with a busy, trading, pleasure-seeking population, and be told that all this order, and magnificence, and life, has come of the pile of ruins? (*G. Wight.*) *The chaos of the earth illustrated by the chaotic condition of the moon:*—Of such a condition of the earth, a definite idea may be formed by an examination of the moon’s surface—a very chaos of explosive action. Thousands of small pits are there, and, as certainly, immense chasms, whose flattened interiors rival a congeries of English counties, while stupendous ridges and peaks encompass them, standing out like the Apennines and Pyrenees, and sometimes transcending the loftiest eminences of the Alps. He who has traversed the Great Schiedegg and the Wengün Alp, beneath the shadow of the almost vertical steep of the Wetterhorn and the Eiger, has been awe-struck by summits so towering, and descents so profound; and yet feeble is their image of the heights and depths of the moon’s Himalayas. What evidences

are these of volcanic agency, while other elevations, due possibly to the same mighty power, astound him who steadily contemplates them, by their rectilinear extent. Yet, amidst these cindery plains, no river makes a path, no stream meanders; down those precipices neither silver thread of water winds its way, nor is there the gushing, the tumbling, and foaming of some huge cascade; and hence the great desert of Africa resembles the naked and arid wastes, where no life springs forth to relieve, much less to cheer, this immense scene of unmitigated desolation. As, then, the moon is, so was this earth of ours, when Moses described not its contents, of which he knew nothing, but its surface, as without form and void. (C. Williams.)

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.—*The work of the Holy Spirit*:—It is a significant, suggestive fact, that the work of the Holy Spirit is historically coeval with the work of creation. The Divine Being who inspired the Bible appears upon its first page, a mystic centre of light and beauty in the midst of an universe of darkness. And St. Paul tells us that God the Holy Spirit, who first illumined the dark world of matter, still illuminates the dark world of mind. All is midnight in the heart, mind, and soul of a sinner, until He, the Light of Life, saith, "Let there be light." I. The work of the Spirit in the NATURAL man. The force of Paul's allusion to the creation in Genesis implies that man's original earth, in its perennial darkness, waste, and submersion, is a type of man's heart, as nature moulds it, and sin corrupts it. "The earth was without form and void"; and the heart is without grace, or capacity of spiritual discernment, till the Spirit of God moves in His creative, enlightening energy, upon both the one and the other. This is equally true of every man, for "who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou, O man, that thou didst not receive?" It is our part to preach Christ, but it is the Spirit's office to convince "of sin, righteousness, and judgment." The Spirit Himself is the foundation of all spirituality. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, and the Spirit giveth life: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit," because He spake in the Spirit, lived in the Spirit, and commanded His disciples "to wait" for the Spirit, before they commenced their ministry, that they might be "endued with power from on high." That is the only power still to convert souls. The most powerful ministry is simply that which is the most spiritual, which most prays in the Spirit, preaches in the Spirit, lives in the Spirit, and most constantly insists upon congregations seeking the Spirit, and resting on His gifts and graces as their only source and secret of edification. II. The work of the Spirit in the REGENERATE man. "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," for He who gives the first convicting and converting impulse, "giveth more grace." As the original motion of the Spirit of life and light was followed by the creation of the sun, the moon, and the stars, each in their appointed orbits, fulfilling their Creator's munificent purposes of love and goodness; so the work of the quickening Spirit in individual regeneration is succeeded by ampler revelations of Christ as the "Sun of Righteousness," the centre of His redeeming system; of the Church, as His satellite, "fair as the moon," borrowing all her light and influence upon many waters from the Lord, whose fainter image she is, a light shining in dark places: and of Christ's ministers and sacraments, as stars in His right hand, by whose "lesser lights" He deigns to carry on His gracious offices of mercy to "a world lying in darkness, and in the power of the wicked." But it is the Spirit which gives the weight and efficacy to all these means of grace, and channels of edification, by which the child of God is built up in his most holy faith, and rendered more and more conformed to the image of God's dear Son. At every step there is the scriptural impress of the Spirit, from first to last. (J. B. Owen, M.A.) *The Spirit of God considered as the chief agent in the work of the new creation*:—In fulfilment of this process of new creation, the Spirit of God descends upon the benighted surface of the human soul. 1. In order to dissipate the darkness in which it is naturally involved. The mind of man, as disordered, corrupted, and clouded by sin, may well be compared to that confused and rayless obscurity which rested over the face of the abyss. It is enveloped in a thick, impenetrable mantle of ignorance, prejudice, and unconcern. And it is only when the Spirit of God begins to move upon the stagnant waters of his cold and damp indifference, that light breaks in upon his mind. 2. Another function equally necessary and important, which the Spirit of God performs in the new creation of the soul, is that of purification. The mind of each one of us, by nature, is full of all impurity and pollution. In this condition we are utterly unfit for the service of God here, and the presence of God hereafter—unfit for communion with God by prayer and

devout meditation—unfit for the suitable and acceptable discharge of any one of the duties of God's worship—unfit for life—unfit for death. Under these circumstances it becomes a question of supreme and paramount importance, whether a renovating process has been commenced upon us—whether, under the influence of the salutary motions of the Spirit of God, we have made it our endeavour to cleanse ourselves from all impurity of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God—whether the various streams of thought, feeling, and conduct, are gradually purifying from their drossy and turbid aspect, and whether our whole character from day to day becomes more thoroughly assimilated to the Divine image, and assumes more of the complexion and the hue of heaven. 3. In connection with the effects already specified, the human soul requires to be reduced to order, and to be harmonized in its various principles and habits. By the fatal shock which it received in Eden, the whole system has been disorganized. In relation to the character and attributes of Jehovah—to His revealed will and the whole range of His service—to the objects and pursuits connected with a spiritual and eternal world, it is altogether out of joint. By the original apostasy from God, in fact, the whole nature of man went to wreck. The various elements of his being forsook their proper combination and position in the system, and entered into new and most destructive relations. The wild and tumultuous anarchy of his affections is like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. The scene of chaos, in which heaven and earth, fire and water, were commingled together into one vast ocean of jarring elements, was not more replete with confusion than is the mind, when let loose unto itself, and freed from the soothing restraints, and the controlling and regulating impulses, of that Spirit which moved upon the face of the waters. It is this Spirit alone, who can rectify the deep disorders of our nature. It is He alone who can separate, direct, soothe, and harmonize the warring elements of our carnal and unsubdued mind, and reduce every faculty and affection into the cheerful and meek obedience of the faith. It is He alone who can restrain the aberrations of the judgment—who can check the wanderings of the imagination—who can curb the impetuosity of the passions, and attempt the whole soul and spirit into one harmonious and well-balanced scheme of Christian character and conduct. Other means may be used, indeed, and ought to be used. The Bible should be read—the ordinances of religion should be attended—the duties of prayer, and devout meditation and reflection, should be solemnly and uninterruptedly discharged; but other means, without the accompanying and moving energies of the Spirit, will be found ineffectual. 4. Nor is the Spirit merely the author of light, purity, and order, in the formation of the new creature, but life itself: that which is essential to the exercise and enjoyment of all other endowments in His special gift. While He moved upon the face of the waters, the command went forth, and they were at once seen to teem with animated existence. Impregnated with His vital energies, the great deep became instinct with life and motion. The various forms of vegetable and organized existence—the tenants of the land, and those that wing their flight through the regions of air, were seen to burst forth from its capacious bosom, until every quarter of the universe became peopled with its appropriate inhabitants. The great Spirit, who was thus the primary agent in kindling material nature into life, is also the author of that higher life which pervades the new creation. (*J. Davies, B.D.*)

The creation:—I. THE SPIRIT OF GOD BROUGHT ORDER AND DEVELOPMENT TO THE MATERIAL WORLD. How did that shapeless mass become such a world as this? What account of the transition does science give? It says, "Change succeeded to change, in strict accordance with physical law, very slowly but surely, with no sudden transitions, till, step by step, the one condition passed into the other." Those regular changes were all that appeared; and they are all which appear now, though the same changes are still going on. We cannot see the intelligence, the mind, which directs the works of nature; but it is equally true that we cannot see them in the works of man. Yet the mind of man is at work, though invisible, animating his body; and it is truer to speak of his mind as planning the house he builds, and the steam-engine he sets to work, than to say that the materials came together into their right places, though that is all that we see. And so it is truer to say that the Invisible Mind, the unseen Spirit of God, moved upon the formless earth, and brought it to its present ordered form, than to say it happened so. Science mentions only what appeared; but Genesis tells the deeper truth, that the informing mind accomplished all—Genesis, which was written centuries before science was born. There is special fitness in the words employed, "The

Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." It indicates the quiet untiring ways in which God works in the heavens and the earth. II. THE SPIRIT OF GOD MUST BRING ORDER AND DEVELOPMENT TO THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. The moral and spiritual nature of man forms quite another world from the material universe, and yet how closely the two are linked in the human body and soul! Look at the moral and spiritual nature of men. How high they can rise! so high that there is fitness in speaking of God's image in them as a real kinship of nature with God. What noble examples there have been among men, of righteousness, faithfulness, and love—the very attributes of God—yet we feel man has not realized the greatness and goodness that he may. But how low men can sink! to what extremes of wrong, and treachery, and selfishness, and cruelty! We cannot picture it all; to do so would be to have present to the mind what human society has been and is—the crimes, the woes, the degradation, and shame, of generations of human lives and hearts. To picture human society as it is—I mean especially its evils—would be more, not only than imagery could realize, but more than any feeling heart could bear. The material chaos is but a faint image of this deeper spiritual chaos; but taking it as such, we may ask, Does God leave the world in this chaos of degradation and woe? Turn to another Bible picture: "I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes" (emblems of purity), "and palms in their hands" (emblems of victory). (T. M. Herbert, M.A.)

Vers. 3, 4. *Let there be light.—The creation of light:—*I. DIVINELY PRODUCED.

1. For the protection of life. Plants could not live without light; without it, the flowers would soon wither. Even in a brief night they close their petals, and will only open them again at the gentle approach of the morning light. Nor could man survive in continued darkness. A sad depression would rest upon his soul. 2. For the enjoyment of life. Light is one of God's best gifts to the world. (1) It is inexpensive. The world has to pay for the light produced by man; that created by God, we get for nothing. Man has limitations; God has none. Man is selfish; God is beneficent. (2) It is extensive. It floods the universe. It is the heritage of the poor equally with the rich; it enters the hut as well as the palace. (3) It is welcome. 3. For the instruction of life. Light is not merely a protection. It is also an instructor. It is an emblem. It is an emblem of God, the Eternal Light. It is an emblem of truth. It is an emblem of goodness. It is an emblem of heaven. It is an emblem of beneficence. II. DIVINELY APPROVED. "And God saw the light, that it was good." 1. It was good in itself. The light was pure. It was clear. It was not so fierce as to injure. It was not so weak as to be ineffectual. It was not so loud in its advent as to disturb. 2. It was good because adapted to the purpose contemplated by it. Nothing else could more efficiently have accomplished its purpose toward the life of man. Hence it is good because adapted to its purpose, deep in its meaning, wide in its realm, happy in its influence, and educational in its tendency. 3. We see here that the Divine Being carefully scrutinises the work of His hands. When He had created light, He saw that it was good. May we not learn a lesson here, to pause after our daily toil, to inspect and review its worth. Every act of life should be followed by contemplation. III. DIVINELY PROPORTIONED. "And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night." 1. The light was indicative of day. In this light man was to work. The light ever active would rebuke indolence. By this light man was to read. In this light man was to order his moral conduct. 2. The removal of light was indicative of night. In this night man was to rest from the excitement of pleasure, and the anxiety of toil. Its darkness was to make him feel the need of a Divine protection. (J. S. Exell, M.A.) *Light and the gospel compared:—*I. THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE METAPHOR. 1. Light and the gospel resemble each other in their source and Divine resemblance. 2. Light and the gospel resemble each other in their adaptation to the end designed. 3. Light and the gospel resemble each other in their purity. 4. Light and the gospel resemble each other in their inseparable connection with joy and happiness. II. THE WILL OF GOD RESPECTING IT. 1. That man should have the light of salvation. 2. That His Church should be the light of the world. 3. That the world should be filled with the light of the gospel of Christ. (1) Now the gospel is adapted to all the world. It is as much suited to one part of it as to another. (2) It is expressly said that it is designed for the whole world. "I am the light of the world." "Go into all

the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (3) The whole world shall finally enjoy its saving rays. "This gospel of the kingdom," &c. (See Isa. xi. 9, lx. 19, and Hab. ii. 14.) APPLICATION. 1. Have you the light of Divine grace in your hearts? 2. Have you this light in your families? 3. Have you this light in your neighbourhood? 4. Are you assisting to enlighten the world? (*J. Burns, D.D.*)

Genesis of light.—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. "God said": an anthropomorphism. 2. The God-said of Moses the God-word of John. 3. The first light chemical. 4. "And God saw the light, that it was good." It is to light that the cloud, the sunset, the rainbow, the diamond, the violet, owe their exquisite hues. Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun (Eccl. xi. 7). Nay, more: Light is one of the essential conditions of all life itself—alike vegetal, animal, human, and, doubtless, angelic. Yes, there is a better curative than allopathy or homœopathy, hydropathy or aërotherapy; it is heliopathy, or light of the sun. Physicians understand this, and so seek for their patients the sunny side of hospitals. And so they unconsciously confirm the holy saying, "To you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. iv. 2). 5. Evening; Morning. Observe the order of the words: It is not first morning, and then evening; it is first evening, then morning: "And there was evening, and there was morning, day one." II. MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. God is light (1 John i. 5). For aught I know, the apostle's message is literally true. Remember that when we are talking of light we are moving in presence of a very subtle mystery. The origin and nature of light is still a profound problem. True, we talk learnedly and correctly about the laws of light; its laws of reflection, refraction, absorption, dispersion, polarization, &c. But these are only phenomena; they tell us nothing about the nature or origin of light itself. All we know of light is merely a knowledge of the mode and laws of its motion. We do not know the essence of light itself. One thing is certain: light is the nearest known, sensible approach to immateriality, being classed with its apparent kindred—heat, electricity, magnetism—among the imponderables. Indeed, the modern magnificent undulatory theory denies that light is material, and affirms that it is but a mode of motion. We are accustomed to say that there are but two things in the universe—spirit and matter—and that the chasm between these is infinite. Possibly this is one of those assumptions which, did we know more, we would affirm less. Possibly light is an instance of what the philosophers call *tertium quid*—a third something, intermediate between spirit and matter, ethereally bridging the measureless chasm. 2. Possibly light is God's natural expression, outflow, radiation, manifestation, vestment (Psa. civ. 1, 2). Possibly, when the Creator moves in that finite world we call time, He leaves light as His personal vestige and train. His mantle ripples into light, is light itself. In view of this possibility, how natural as well as fitting that the ancient token of God's personal presence among the Hebrews should have been the shechinah, or dazzling glory-cloud. 3. And as God is light, so also are His children light. Expressly are they called Sons of Light (Luke xvi. 8). Expressly is He called Father of Lights (James i. 17). We know that light is latent in every form of matter; for, when sufficiently heated, it becomes incandescent—that is to say, self-luminous. What is flame but a mass of heated, visibly glowing gas? True, it doth not yet appear what we shall be (1 John iii. 2). Nevertheless, I believe that light is latent within us all, and that by-and-by, at least in the case of God's saintly children, it will stream forth; not that it will be evolved by the action of any heat or chemical force, but that, under the free, transcendent conditions of the heavenly estate, it will ray forth spontaneously. 4. Jesus Christ Himself, as Incarnate, is the shadow of God's light. Infinite God, Deity as unconditioned and absolute, no man hath ever seen or can ever see, and live (Ex. xxxiii. 20). He dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto (1 Tim. vi. 15), is light itself. "Dark with excess of light," we poor finite beings cannot behold Him except through the softening intervention of some medium. Therefore the Son of God, brightness of His glory and express image of His person (Heb. i. 3), radiance of His effulgence and character, or impress of His substance, became incarnate, that in the softer morning star and suffused dayspring of the Incarnation we might be able to look on the dazzling Father of Lights, and not be dazed into blindness. 5. Jesus Christ is not only the shadow or tempered image of God; in the very act of becoming that shadow Jesus Christ also became the Light of the World (John viii. 12). Ah, how much the world needed His illumination! 6. As Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, so also is His Church. He, clear as the

sun; she, fair as the moon, both together resplendent as an army with banners (Cant. vi. 10). In conclusion: 1. A word of cheer for the saint. Ye are sons of light. Recall now how much light means. It means all that is most bright and clean, and direct, and open, and unselfish, and spotless, and lovely, and healthful, and true, and Divine. How exceedingly great, then, your wealth! Oh, live worthily of your rich estate. 2. A word of entreaty to the sinner. Of what use is the most abounding light if we persist in keeping our eyes closed? As there is an eternal day for the sons of light, so there is an eternal night for the sons of darkness. (G. D. Boardman.)

Light and life:—I. THE UPWARD PROGRESS OF NATURE, as created by God. II. THE ORDERLY ARRANGEMENT OF NATURE, as settled by God. III. THE VARIETY OF LIFE IN NATURE, as filled by God. LESSONS: 1. Trust in God's overruling providence. 2. The study of nature should not be separated from religion. (W. S. Smith, B.D.)

Light:—I. Light is PURE. Its property repels defilement. It traverses unstained each medium of uncleanness. II. Light is BRIGHT. Indeed, what is brightness but light's clear shining. III. Light is LOVELY. Beauty cannot live without it. So Christ decks all on whom His beams descend.

IV. Light is FREE. The wealth of the wealthy cannot purchase, nor the poverty of the poor debar from it. Waste not time in seeking a price for Him, compared with whom an angel's worth is nothing worth. V. Light is ALL-REVEALING. By Christ's rays, sin is detected, as lurking in every corner of the heart; and the world, which we so fondled, is unmasked, as a monster whose embrace is filth, and in whose hand is the cup of death. VI. Light is the PARENT OF FRUITFULNESS. In Christ's absence, the heart is rank with every weed, and every noxious berry. But when His beams enliven, the seeds of grace bud forth, the tree of faith pours down its golden fruit. VII. Light is the chariot which CONVEYS HEAT. Without Christ, the heart is ice. But when He enters, a glow is kindled, which can never die. VIII. Light is the HARBINGER OF JOY. Heaven is a cloudless God. (Dean Law.)

The Word of God:—"Let there be." 1. How the growth of the world points back to the eternal existence of the Word. 2. How the eternal Word is the foundation for the growth of the world. (J. P. Lange, D.D.) *Light, a source of life*:—1. Its good, as existing in its ground. 2. Its beauty, as disclosed in its appearing. (Ibid.)

The creation of light a day's work of God:—1. The first day's work. 2. A whole day's work. 3. A continuous day's work. 4. A day's work rich in its consequences. (Ibid.)

All the blessings of the light:—"We, who worship 'the Father of lights,' have reason every day that we live to thank God for life and health, for countless blessings. And not least among these may be reckoned the free gift of, and the many 'blessings of the light.'" For in many ways that we can tell off, at once, upon our fingers, and in very many more ways that we neither dream of nor think of, does light minister to our health, wealth, and comfort. 1. The very birds sing at daybreak their glad welcome to the dawn, and the rising sun. And we all know and feel how cheering is the power of light. In the sunlight rivers flash, and nature rejoices, and our hearts are light, and we take a bright view of things. 2. So, too, light comes to revive and restore us. Darkness is oppressive. In it we are apt to lose heart. We grow anxious, and full of fears. With the first glimmer of light in the distance, hope awakens, and we feel a load lifted off our minds. 3. Again, we have often felt the reassuring power of light. In the darkness, objects that are perfectly harmless take threatening shapes; the imagination distorts them, and our fancy creates dangers. Light shows us that we have been alarmed at shadows; quiets and reassures us. 4. Once again, the light comes to us, often, as nothing less than a deliverer. It reveals dangers hidden and unsuspected; the deadly reptile; the yawning precipice; the lurking foe. 5. And when, over and above all this, we remember that light is absolutely essential, not to health only, but to life in every form, animal and vegetable alike, we shall heartily echo the words of the wise king in Ecclesiastes: "Truly the light is sweet; and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." (J. B. C. Murphy, B.A.) *The first day*:—The work begins with light. God said, "Let there be light," and at once light shone where all before was dark. God says, "Repent ye—the kingdom of heaven is at hand": then our darkness displeases us, and we are turned to light. Thus of all those blessings hid in Christ from everlasting, and which are predestinated to be accomplished in the creature, light is the first that is bestowed: "God shines in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." But the "heaven" announced "at hand" is yet unformed. No sun yet shines, no fruits adorn the creature. Many steps remain

before the image of God will come, the man created in righteousness, to rule all things. Then at once comes a division between what is of God and what is not; between the natural darkness in the creature and the light which God has made. The light shines in darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not. Two conflicting powers are striving each to gain the day, making the old domain of darkness a continually shifting but ceaseless battle field. Then a name is given by God both to light and darkness; that is, the character of each is learnt according to the mind of God. Now the darkness has a name. What God calls it, we call it. His thoughts are not altogether strange to us. Natural as the darkness may seem to the creature, God calls it "night," or deviation. It is a turning from the right or straight line. The light is "day," or movement; there is a disturbance of the darkness. Death rules no longer; life with light is come. Besides, in this name there is a form given to both. Until now light and darkness were unformed, but "day" and "night" intimate order and distribution. Night is darkness put within limits. So with light; it is not "day" till it is arranged and put in form and order. (*A. Jukes.*) *Light, natural and spiritual*.—Every saved man is a new creation. I. THE DIVINE FIAT. "Let there be light." The work of grace by which light enters the soul is—1. A needful work. No heart can be saved without spiritual light, to reveal self and Jesus Christ. 2. An early work. First day. 3. A Divine work. 4. Wrought by the Word. God spake. 5. Unaided by the darkness itself. Darkness cannot help to bring day. 6. It was unsolicited. 7. Instantaneous. 8. Irresistible. II. DIVINE OBSERVATION. III. DIVINE APPROBATION. Natural light is good. Gospel light is good. Spiritual light is good. 1. Because of its source. 2. Because of its likeness. God is light. 3. Because of its effects. 4. It glorifies God. IV. DIVINE SEPARATION. The Christian man has light and darkness contending within him; also contending forces without him. V. DIVINE NOMINATION. We must call things by their right names. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Light and its laws*.—I. The light God has made, and His mind concerning it. 1. Physical light—good; light, sweet; pleasant. Sun, the emblem of many things; cheerful revealing. 2. Mental light—good. Hence in some parts an idiot is called "dark." 3. Gospel light—good; the light of the story of God; light that shined out of darkness to enlighten Gentiles; Christ, the Light of the world, the Sun of Righteousness. 4. Spiritual light—good. 5. Essential light—light of heaven from the Father of lights. II. The law by which it is governed. 1. Not mixed, but separated. 2. Sons of light must have no communion with darkness. 3. Churches should be lights in the world. 4. Truth not to be mixed with error. Learn: 1. Love the light. 2. Walk in it. 63. Enforce the law concerning it. (*J. C. Gray.*) *The ceaseless act of the Almighty*.—I. THE THINGS SPOKEN OF IN THE TEXT, LIGHT AND DARKNESS. To each of these terms there are different significations. There is what we term natural light; there are also mental and moral light (the illumination of the understanding and of the heart); there are also providential, spiritual, and eternal light: each of these has its opposite state of darkness. It is true that our text speaks only of light natural; yet, as the works of God in nature are often typical of His works of grace, we may follow the example of Scripture, and in tracing out the truths it teaches, may endeavour to prove, that in the whole economy of nature, providence, and grace, it is the practice and prerogative of God to divide the light from the darkness. Is it darkness with any of the Lord's people present? Are His dealings mysterious? Are their state and prospects full of gloom and obscurity? Child of sorrow, strive to bow with submission to the will of your Heavenly Father. "Let patience have her perfect work." "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?" "Hope in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him who is the health of thy countenance." "At evening time it shall be light." Yes, then, when you are expecting the darkness to increase—when the sun of enjoyment seems to have set for ever,—then, "at evening time it shall be light." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of His servant: that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." "Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness." There are also spiritual and eternal lights, with their opposite states of darkness. "With Thee is the fountain of life," said the sacred writer, and "in Thy light shall we see light." While we are in the darkness of natural corruption and alienation from God, we know nothing aright, nothing of the evils of sin, nothing of the astonishing love of Jesus, we have no just conceptions of the amazing

and stupendous work of redemption, or of the work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul of man. But when in infinite compassion Jehovah enlightens the understanding and touches the heart, we see and feel the reality and vast importance of eternal things—we see at what an awful distance sin has placed us from a God of spotless purity—we feel how deeply we are steeped in the poison and pollution of iniquity—we adore the infinite wisdom manifested in the plan of redemption, that stupendous plan, which while it redeems, pardons, and sanctifies the sinner, satisfies also the high claims of Divine justice, magnifies the Divine perfections, and brings "Glory to God in the highest." II. We have now to consider WHAT MAY BE AFFIRMED CONCERNING THE OBJECTS HERE SET BEFORE US: GOD DIVIDES THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS. He is accomplishing this upon earth by a mysterious but infinitely wise process. Much light and darkness dwells in the minds of individuals—in the various religious sects throughout the land, and among the different nations of the world. Whatever true light is in the world, it is of God. He is its Author. By nature all are under the dominion of the prince of darkness, and are enslaved by him. But a stronger than he comes upon him, and delivers the captive from the dark dungeons of iniquity. Jesus came to be a light to them that sit in darkness; He sends His Spirit with His Word to subdue the rebellious heart, to awaken the insensible heart—to pour the light of celestial day upon the benighted spirit—to show the sinner to himself, and to reveal the saving mercy of God in Christ—to reveal the dangers that lie in his pathway to eternity—to give him right views of every essential truth connected with salvation and eternal life—to teach him everything it is requisite he should know and experience ere he can inhabit the realms of light above—in short, to separate the light from the darkness. Hitherto the very light had been darkness; there had been light in the intellect perhaps, but darkness in the soul (for in many an unrenewed character the one is strangely mixed with the other). There may even possibly exist a theoretic knowledge of Divine things where blackest crimes dwell in the heart and are perpetrated in the life. But where Jesus shines forth in mercy—where the Holy Spirit exerts His power, the light is separated from the darkness: there is no longer that heterogeneous mixture of knowledge and sin, of Divine truth in the intellect and sin in the life, which formerly existed. Jehovah has wrought His wondrous work, has divided the light from the darkness, has separated the sinner from his sins, "and behold all things become new." To conclude: The day of final separation is hastening on, then, for ever and at once, God will divide "the light from the darkness," truth from error, holiness from iniquity, the righteous from the wicked. Truth and righteousness shall dwell in heaven, error and iniquity shall sink to hell. The wicked will then be all darkness, the righteous will then be all light. (*W. Burgess.*) *Darkness before light*:—And do you think, children, that you were first light and then became dark? or that you were first dark and then became light? Because when you were a baby boy or girl you did not know much; it was very dark: now I hope that the light of the Sun of Righteousness is upon you, that the evening has become the morning. The morning star has risen, I hope. It is light! light! (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*) *Night a necessity*:—A remarkable effect was mentioned by Mr. Robert Hunt (to whom the public are indebted for much valuable information on solar and other phenomena) to the present writer. In the course of his early experiments on the active power of the sun's rays, he subjected a metal plate to its operation, and, of course, received upon it a picture of the objects within its range. He now rubbed this off, making the surface clear and fresh as at first; photographed a different picture, and then effaced this as he had done the former. In this way he proceeded some ten or twelve times, now receiving, and now rubbing off the traces of the sunlight, when the question arose in his mind, "What would be the result were I to transmit an electrical current through this plate?" To determine it, he caused a current to pass through it diagonally, when, to his astonishment, the various objects that had been, as he supposed, effaced from the surface, rushed to it confusedly together, so that he could detect there a medley of them all; thus proving that there had not been merely a superficial action of the light, but that it had produced a molecular disturbance throughout the plate. Only let, therefore, the sunbeams play uninterruptedly on the iron, the brass, or the granite, and they will crumble into dust under an irresistible power; the falling over them of the mantle of night alone prevents the occurrence of a catastrophe. (*C. Williams.*) *It was good*:—*The first day of creation*:—1. Man's fallen nature is a very chaos, "without form and void," with darkness thick and sevenfold covering all. The Lord begins His work upon man by the visitation of the Spirit, who enters the soul mys-

teriously, and broods over it, even as of old He moved upon the face of the waters. He is the quickener of the dead soul. 2. In connection with the presence of the Holy Spirit the Lord sends into the soul, as His first blessing, light. The Lord appeals to man's understanding and enlightens it by the gospel. 3. If you keep your eye upon the chapter you will observe that the light came into the world at first by the Word—"God said, 'Let there be light.'" It is through the Word of God contained in this book, the Bible, that light comes into the soul. This is that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 4. The light which broke in upon the primal darkness was of a very mysterious kind, and came not according to ordinary laws, for as yet neither sun nor moon had been set as lights in the firmament. Can we tell how spiritual light first dawns on nature's night? How He removes darkness from the understanding, and illuminates the intellect, is a secret reserved for Himself alone. 5. The light came instantaneously. Six days were occupied in furnishing the earth, but a moment sufficed for illuminating it. God works rapidly in the operation of regeneration: as with a flash He darts light and life into the soul. The operations of grace are gradual, but its entrance is instantaneous. Although instantaneous, it is not, however, shallow and shortlived. I. THE LORD SEES WHATEVER HE CREATES. "The Lord saw the light." 1. He was the sole observer of it. Neither eye of man, nor bird, nor beast was there to behold the golden glory; but God saw the light. Newly enlightened one, it may be you are pained because you have no Christian companion to observe your change of heart: cease from your sorrow, for God beholds you. 2. That light had come into the world in a noiseless manner, yet the Lord saw it. The entrance of God's Word which giveth light is effected in "solemn silence of the mind." If men make an illumination, we can hear the crackling of their fireworks over all the city; but when God illuminates the earth with the sun, the orb of day arises without a sound. Although the work in your soul has been so quiet, so hidden from the eyes of men, so unremarkable and commonplace, yet take comfort from the text, "The Lord saw the light." No trumpet proclaimed it, but the Lord saw it; no voice went forth concerning it, but the Lord saw it and it was enough; and in your case it is the same. 3. The earth itself could not recognize the light, yet the Lord saw it. How often do we mourn that we have scarcely more light than suffices to reveal our darkness and make us pine for more. Oh, troubled one, lay this home to your soul, the Lord saw the light when earth herself could not perceive it. 4. Let us not forget that besides the light there was no other beauty. The earth, according to the Hebrew, was "*tohu* and *bohu*," which, in order to come near both to the sense and sound at the same time, I will render "anyhow and nohow." Even so your experience may seem to be a chaos, nohow and anyhow, exactly what it should not be, a mass of unformed conceptions, and half-formed desires, and ill-formed prayers, but yet there is grace in you, and God sees it, even amid the dire confusion and huge uproar of your spirit. 5. Remember, too, that when the light came it had to contend with darkness, but God saw it none the less. So, also, in your soul there still remains the darkness of inbred corruption, ignorance, infirmity, and tendency to sin, and these cause a conflict, but the light is not thereby hidden from the eyes of God. 6. For many reasons the Lord sees the light, but chiefly He sees it because He made it, and He forsakes not the work of His own hands. II. THE LORD APPROVES OF WHAT HE CREATES. "God saw the light that it was good." He took pleasure in it. 1. Now, as far as this world was concerned, light was but young and new; and so in some of you grace is quite a novelty. You were only converted a very little while ago, and you have had no time to try yourselves or to develope your graces, yet the Lord delights in your new-born life. Light is good at dawn as well as at noon: the grace of God is good though but newly received; it will work out for you greater things by-and-by, and make you more happy and more holy, but even now all the elements of excellence are in it, and its first day has the Divine blessing upon it. 2. Here we must mention again that it was struggling light, yet none the less for that approved of by the Lord. We do not understand how it was that the light and the darkness were together until God divided them, as this verse intimates; but as John Bunyan says, "No doubt darkness and light here began their quarrel," for what communion hath light with darkness. My brethren, I am sure you are no strangers to this conflict, nor is it to you altogether a thing of the past. You are in the conflict still. Still grace and sin are warring in you, and will do so till you are taken home. Let this help you, O ye who are perplexed; remember that struggling as the light is, God approves of it, and calls it good. 3. As yet the light had not been divided from the

darkness, and the bounds of day and night were not fixed. And so in young beginners; they hardly know which is grace and which is nature, what is of themselves and what is of Christ, and they make a great many mistakes. Yet the Lord does not mistake, but approves of that which His grace has placed in them. 4. As yet the light and darkness had not been named; it was afterwards that the Lord called the light "day," and the darkness "night," yet He saw the light that it was good. And so, though you do not know the names of things, God knows your name. 5. The light of the first day could not reveal much of beauty, for there was none, and so the light within does not yet reveal much to you; and what it does reveal is uncomely, but the light itself is good, whatever it may make manifest. 6. But why did God say that light was good? (1) I suppose it was because its creation displayed His attributes. (2) He loves the light, too, because it is like Himself, for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (3) Light is eminently good, for the Lord spent a whole day in creating and arranging it—a whole day out of six. This shows that He attaches great importance to it. Moreover, he gave it the front rank by occupying the first day of creation's week upon it. Even thus the plan of grace was early in the mind of God; it was and is His masterpiece, and He has never yet placed it in the background. (4) I suppose that the Lord approved of the light because it was a seasonable thing. It was what was wanted to begin with. Not but what God could work in the dark, for, as to natural light, in that respect darkness and light are both alike to Him; but we can all see that the works of His creating skill needed light, for how could plants, animals, and men live without it? III. THE LORD QUICKLY DISCERNs ALL THE GOODNESS AND BEAUTY WHICH EXISTS IN WHAT HE CREATES. The Lord did not merely feel approbation for the light, but He perceived reason for it: He saw that it was good. He could see goodness in it where, perhaps, no one else would have been able to do so. 1. Let us note, then, that light is good in itself; and so is Divine grace. What a wonderful thing light is! Just think of it! How simple it is, and yet how complex. Light, too, how common it is! We see it everywhere, and all the year round. Light, too, how feeble and yet how strong! Its beams would not detain us one-half so forcibly as a cobweb; yet how mighty it is, and how supreme! Scarcely is there a force in the universe of God which is more potent. The grace of God in the same manner is contemptible in the eyes of man, and yet the majesty of omnipotence is in it, and it is more than conqueror. 2. Light is good, not only in itself, but in its warfare. The light contended with darkness, and it was good for darkness to be battled with. Grace has come unto you, and it will fight with your sin, and it ought to be fought with, and to be overcome. 3. The light which came from God was good in its measure. There was neither too much of it nor too little. If the Lord had sent a little more light into the world we might all have been dazzled into blindness, and if He had sent less we might have groped in gloom. God sends into the new-born Christian just as much grace as he can bear; He does not give him the maturity of after years, for it would be out of place. 4. Light was good as a preparation for God's other works. He knew that light, though it was but the beginning, was necessary to the completion of His work. Light was needful, that the eye of man might rejoice in the works of God, and so God saw the light that it was good, in connection with what was to be. And, oh, I charge you who have to deal with young people, look at the grace they have in them in relation to what will be in them. 5. What a mass of thought one might raise from this one truth of the goodness of light and the goodness of grace, as to their results. Light produces the beauty which adorns the world, for without it all the world were uncomely blackness. Light's pencil paints the whole, and even so all beauty of character is the result of grace. Light sustains life, for life in due time would dwindle and die out without it, and thus grace alone sustains the virtues and graces of the believer; without daily grace we should be spiritually dead. Light heals many sicknesses, and grace brings healing in its wings. Light is comfort, light is joy, the prisoner in his darkness knows it to be so; and so the grace of God produces joy and peace wherever it is shed abroad. Light reveals and so does grace, for without it we could not see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. IV. GOD RECORDED HIS ESTIMATE OF THIS FIRST DAY'S PRODUCT. "God saw the light that it was good." 1. This leads me to say to the young Christian, the Lord would have you encouraged. 2. My last word is to older Christian people. If the Lord says that His work in the first day is good, I want you to say so too. Do not wait till you see the second, third, fourth, fifth, or sixth day before you feel confidence in the convert and offer Him

fellowship. If God speaks encouragingly so soon, I want you to do the same. (C. H. Spurgeon.)

Ver. 5. *And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night.—Light, natural and spiritual:—*The Holy Ghost mysteriously quickens the dead heart, excites emotions, longings, desires. I. *DIVINE PLAN:* God said, Let there be light, and there was light. The Lord Himself needed no light to enable Him to discern His creatures. He looked upon the darkness, and resolved that He would transform its shapeless chaos into a fair and lovely world. 1. We shall observe that the work of grace by which light enters the soul is a needful work. God's plan for the sustaining of vegetable and animal life, rendered light necessary. Light is essential to life. It is light which first shows us our lost estate; for we know nothing of it naturally. This causes pain and anguish of heart; but that pain and anguish are necessary, in order to bring us to lay hold on Jesus Christ, whom the light next displays to us. No man ever knows Christ till the light of God shines on the cross. 2. Next observe it was a very early work. Light was created on the first day, not on the third, fourth, or sixth, but on the first day; and one of the first operations of the Spirit of God in a man's heart is to give light enough to see his lost estate, and to perceive that he cannot save himself from it but must look elsewhere. 3. It is well for us to remember that light-giving is a Divine work. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4. This Divine work is wrought by the Word. God did not sit in solemn silence and create the light, but He spake. He said, "Light be," and light was. So the way in which we receive light is by the Word of God. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Christ Himself is the essential Word, and the preaching of Christ Jesus is the operative Word. We receive Christ actually when God's power goes with God's Word—then have we light. Hence the necessity of continually preaching the Word of God. 5. While light was conferred in connection with the mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit, it was unaided by the darkness itself. How could darkness assist to make itself light? Nay, the darkness never did become light. It had to give place to light, but darkness could not help God. The power which saves a sinner is not the power of man. 6. As this light was unassisted by darkness, so was it also unsolicited. There came no voice out of that thick darkness, "Oh God, enlighten us"; there was no cry of prayer. The first work of grace in the heart does not begin with man's desire, but with God's implanting the desire. 7. This light came instantaneously. 8. As it is instantaneous, so it is irresistible. Darkness must give place when God speaks. II. *DIVINE OBSERVATION.* "And God saw the light." Does He not see everything? Yes, beloved, He does; but this does not refer to the general perception of God of all His works, but is a something special. "God saw the light"—He looked at it with complacency, gazed upon it with pleasure. A father looks upon a crowd of boys in a school and sees them all, but there is one boy whom he sees very differently from all the rest: he watches him with care: it is his own child, and his eye is specially there. Though you have come here sighing and groaning because of inbred sin, yet the Lord sees what is good in you, for He has put it there. Satan can see the light and he tries to quench it: God sees it and preserves it. The Lord watches you, and He sees the light. He has His eye always fixed upon the work of grace that is in your soul. III. *DIVINE APPROBATION.* "God saw the light, that it was good." Light is good in all respects. 1. The natural light is good. Solomon says, "It is a pleasant thing to behold the sun"; but you did not want Solomon to inform you upon that point. Any blind man who will tell you the tale of his sorrows will be quite philosopher enough to convince you that light is good. 2. Gospel light is good. "Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see." You only need to travel into heathen lands, and witness the superstition and cruelty of the dark places of the earth, to understand that gospel light is good. 3. As for spiritual light, those that have received it long for more of it, that they may see yet more and more the glory of heaven's essential light! O God, Thou art of good the unmeasured Sea; Thou art of light both Soul, and Source, and Centre. (1) It must be good from its source. The light emanates from God, in whom is no darkness at all, and, as it comes absolutely and directly from Him, it must be good. (2) It is good, again, when we consider its likeness. Light is like to God. It is a thing so spiritual, so utterly to be ungrasped by the hand of flesh, that it has often been selected as the very type of God. Ignatius used to call himself, Theophorus, or the God-bearer. The title might seem eccentric, but the fact is true of all the saints—they bear God about

with them. God dwelleth in His saints as in a temple. (3) It is good, also, in its effect. It is good for a man to know his danger—it makes him start from it. It is good for him to know the evil of his sin—it makes him avoid it, and repent of it. (4) It is good, moreover, because it glorifies God. Where were God's glory in the outward universe without light? Could we gaze upon the landscape? Spiritual light shows us our emptiness, our poverty, our wretchedness, but it reveals in blessed contrast His fulness, His riches, His freeness of grace. The more light in the soul, the more gratitude to God. (5) Let me say of the work of God in the soul as compared to light, that it is good in the widest possible sense. The new nature which God puts in us never sins: it cannot sin, because it is born of God. "What!" say you, "does a Christian never sin?" Not with the new nature; the new nature never sins: the old nature sins. It is the darkness which is dark: the light is not darkness; the light is always light. IV. DIVINE SEPARATION. It appears that though God made light there was still darkness in the world: "And God divided the light from the darkness." Beloved, the moment you become a Christian, you will begin to fight. You will be easy and comfortable enough, as long as you are a sinner, but as soon as you become a Christian, you will have no more rest. 1. One part of the Divine work in the soul of man is to make a separation in the man himself. Do you feel an inward contention and war going on? Permit me to put these two verses together—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." How can these two things be consistent? Ask the spiritual man: he will tell you, "The Lord divideth between light and darkness." 2. Whereas there is a division within the Christian, there is certain to be a division without. So soon as ever the Lord gives to any believer light, he begins to separate himself from the darkness. He separates himself from the world's religion, finds out where Christ is preached, and goes there. Then as to society, the dead, carnal religionist can get on very well in ordinary society, but it is not so when he has light. I cannot go to light company, wasting the evening, showing off my fine clothes, and talking frivolity and nonsense. V. DIVINE NOMINATION. Things must have names; Adam named the beasts, but God Himself named the day and the night. "And God called the light day, and the darkness called He night." It is a very blessed work of grace to teach us to call things by their right names. The spiritual aspirations of God's people never can be evil. Carnal reason calls them folly, but the Lord would have us call them good. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Lessons from the night*:—1. One of the first lessons which God intends us to learn from the night is a larger respect for wholesome renovation. Perhaps this may not show itself in any great lengthening of our bodily life, but rather in a more healthy spirit, less exposed to that prevailing unrest which fills the air and which troubles so many minds. 2. The night is the season of wonder. A new and strangely equipped population, another race of beings, another sequence of events, comes into and fills the world of the mind. Men who have left their seal upon the world, and largely helped in the formation of its deepest history—men whose names stand up through the dim darkness of the past, great leaders and masters, have admitted that they learned much from the night. 3. The next thought belonging to the night is that then another world comes out, and as it were, begins its day. There is a rank of creatures which moves out into activity as soon as the sun has set. This thought should teach us something of tolerance; senses, dispositions, and characters are very manifold and various among ourselves. Each should try to live up to the light he has, and allow a brother to do the same. 4. Such extreme contrasts as are involved in light and darkness may tell us that we have as yet no true measure of what life is, and it must be left to some other conditions of existence for us to realize in anything like fulness the stores, the processes, the ways of the Kingdom of the Lord which are provided for such as keep His law. 5. Let us learn that, whether man wake or sleep, the universe is in a state of progress, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." 6. Let us learn to use day rightly and righteously, to accept the grace and the forces of the Lord while it is called to-day, and then the night shall have no forbidding, no repulsive significance. **The evening and the morning were the first day.**—*The first day*:—I. THINK OF THE DAY'S BEGINNING. Evening came before morning. Light issued out of darkness. The first goings of creative power were in obscurity. II. THE DAY'S CHARACTER—"Evening and morning." In all life are alternations of darkness and light—shadow and sunshine. Rest is the condition of labour, and

labour of rest. III. THE DAY'S RELIGION. There was a morning and an evening sacrifice. IV. THE DAY'S END. That which began in darkness is followed by darkness, which ushers in a new day. "The night cometh." (*The Preacher's Monthly.*) *The evening and the morning*:—I. Let us reflect on what is God's way of estimating THE PERIODS OF HISTORY. I do no unjust disparagement to the common way of recording the course of human history, when I say that it takes the form of a record of failures and catastrophes coming down upon splendid beginnings of empire. It is the morning and the evening that make the day; not the evening and the morning. For one Motley to tell the story of the Rise, there be many Gibbons to narrate the Decline and Fall. History, as told in literature, is a tragedy, and ends with a death. So human history is ever looking backward; and the morning and the evening make the day. But it is not so that God writes history. The annals of mankind in the Holy Book begin in the darkness of apostasy; but the darkness is shot through with gleams of hope, the first rays of the dawn. The sentence of death is illuminated with the promise of a Saviour: and the evening and the morning are the first day. There is night again when the flood comes down and the civilization and the wickedness of the primeval world are whelmed beneath it. But the flood clears off with a rainbow, and it is proved to have been the clearing of the earth for a better progress, for the rearing of a godly race, of whom by and by the Christ shall come according to the flesh: and the evening and the morning are the second day. And again the darkness falls upon the chosen race. They have ceased from off the land of promise. They are to be traced through a marvellous series of events down into the dark, where we dimly recognize the descendants of heroic Abraham and princely Joseph in the gangs and coffles of slaves, wearing themselves out in the brickyards of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage. And this—is this the despairing evening of so bright a patriarchal age as that gone by? No, no! it is so that men reckon, but not God. This is the evening, not of yesterday, but of to-morrow. The elements of a new civilization are brooding there in that miserable abode of slavery: of a civilization that shall take "the learning of the Egyptians" and infuse into it the spirit of a high and fraternal morality, that shall take its religious pomps and rituals and cleanse them of falsehoods and idolatries and inform them with the spiritual worship of the one invisible God. The holy and priestly civilization of David and Solomon, of the sons of Asaph and the sons of Korah, is to come forth out of that dark chaos of Egyptian slavery. And the evening and the morning shall be the fourth day. We need not trace the history of humanity and of the Church on through all its pages. We have only to carry the spirit of this ancient story forward into later times, and the dark places of history become irradiated, and lo! the night is light about us. We behold "the decline and fall of the Roman Empire"—that awful convulsion of humanity; nation dashing against nation; civilization, with its monuments and records, its institutions and laws, going down out of sight, overwhelmed by an inrushing sea of barbaric invasion, and it looks to us, as we gaze, like nothing but destruction and the end, ruin and failure. So it seems to us at this distance: so it seemed to that great historian, Gibbon. But in the midst of the very wreck and crash of it sat that great believer, Augustine, and wrote volume after volume of the *Civitas Dei*—the "city of God," the "city that hath foundations," the "kingdom that cannot be moved." This awful catastrophe, he tells the terrified and quaking world, is not the end—it is the beginning. History does not end so. This is the way its chapters open. The night was a long night, but it had an end: and now we look back and see how through all its dark and hopeless hours God was slowly grinding materials for the civilization of modern times. So long, so long it seemed: but the morning came at last. And the evening and the morning made the day. And we, to-day, are only in the morning twilight, after just such another convulsion and obscuration of the world. I have spoken to you now of this principle of the divine order, which begins the day with the evening, as illustrated, first in creation, and then in history; and now, can I safely leave it with you to make the more practical application of it.—II. TO THE COURSE OF HUMAN LIFE? For this is where you most need to know and feel it, and where, I suspect, you most fail to see it. It has been such a common blunder, from the days of Job and his friends down to the days when Christ rebuked the Pharisees, and from those days again down to ours—the blunder of supposing that the evening goes with the day before, and not with the day after—that the dark times of human life are a punishment for what is past, instead of being, as they always are to them that love God, a discipline and preparation for what is coming.

There are many and many such eventides in life—times of enforced repose; hard times, when business stagnates or runs with adverse current; times of sickness, pain, seclusion; times of depression, sorrow, bereavement, fear. Such are the night-times of life; and blessed are they who at such times have learned to “look forward, and not back”; to say, not, What have I done, that this thing should befall me? but, rather, What is God preparing for me, and for what is He preparing me, that thus He should lovingly chasten and instruct me in the night season? Then lift your heads, ye saints, and answer: “No, no! this is not the end; this is the beginning. The evening is come, and the morning also cometh; and the evening and the morning are the day. Look! look at the glory of the evening sky. It shall be fair weather in the morning, for the sky is red.” So shall it “come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.” (*L. W. Bacon.*) *The first day*:—“The evening and the morning were the first day.” The evening came first. God’s glorious universe sprang into existence in obscurity. “There was the hiding of His power.” It is very remarkable that the creation-work and the redemption-work of God were both alike shrouded in darkness. When God spake, and the worlds were made, it is said, “darkness was upon the face of the deep.” When Christ hung upon the cross, having finished His work of love, it is said, “There was a darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.” What a lesson does this teach us! The glory was so exceeding that it needed to be overshadowed: for us the veil was thrown over Jehovah’s brightness; the light would have been too strong for mortal eyes; the diadem of the King of kings would have been too dazzling to meet our gaze, had it not been dimmed for our sakes. Nevertheless, hidden as He is in unapproachable majesty, His secret is with them that fear Him; and while the evening lasts, they wait with longing expectation for that morning when they shall see no longer through a glass darkly, but rather face to face. “The evening and the morning were the first day.” It was the alternation of light and shade which constituted this first day; and is it not so with the spiritual days of a Christian? Darkness and light succeed each other. If, then, thou art one who, as a child of God, art sitting in darkness, there is comfort in this word for thee. If it is evening now, the sunlight shall arise again. Even the record of God’s creation speaks to thee of consolation: there is in it a promise of joy to come; thy day would not be perfect, if there were not a morning to succeed thy night. But if thou art one with whom there is the brightness of sunshine in providence and in grace, this sentence speaks to thee in warning. Although now thou canst look up to an unclouded sky, and there is light in thy dwelling and in thine heart; remember the evening shadows. The longest day has its sunset. God hath ordained the alternation of light and darkness. As it is with individuals, so it is with the whole Church of Christ; and now it is peculiarly with her the night time, the deepest night she has ever known, and, blessed be God, the last night. She standeth now beneath the darkened sky of that “tribulation” which is to issue in the millennial brightness of her coming Bridegroom’s kingdom. How often does she inquire, “Watchman, what of the night?” and the answer is, “The morning cometh, still as yet there will be night: if ye inquire already, yet must ye return; come and inquire again” (*Isa. xxi. 12, Geneva version*). It shall be darker yet with her, ere the breaking morn appeareth: but how glorious will be the dawn of that light, when the Sun of Righteousness Himself shall arise with healing in His beams. Truly, said David, when he saw the glory of the King of kings and spake of Him—“He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds.” “Even so,” Saviour, “come quickly.” “The evening and the morning were the first day.” I cannot help noticing another thing in the consideration of this subject. The evening of a natural day is the season of rest from labour: “Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.” In the darkness of the night, the various occupations of busy men are laid aside, and the world is hushed in silence, waiting the returning morning. Is there nothing of this in the Christian’s experience? Can he work when the night sets in upon his soul? Does not he, too, wait and long for sunrise? “The evening and the morning were the first day.” There is yet another lesson in these words, which I would notice. What is it which constitutes the evening of a natural day? It is not that the position of the sun is changed; but that the inhabitants of the earth are turned from Him. Let us not forget that it is so with the evening of the soul. There are some in the religious world, who seem to be just like the philosophers of a former day, who believed and taught that the sun moved round our planet; they speak as if the light of the Christian were caused by some change in Christ, the eternal Sun of

Righteousness. Nay, it is not so. Our Saviour God is ever the same, in the glory of His salvation, in the brightness of His redemption; but we, alas! turn away our faces from Him, and are in darkness. It is sin which causes it to be evening with us; it is our iniquity which has made it dark. There is one thought connected with the evening and the morning, which is so precious to me, that I cannot pass it over. There was, under the law, a sacrifice appointed both for the morning and the evening. Ah! when it is day-light with thee, Christian, and thou goest into the sanctuary, having boldness to enter into the very holiest, having free access unto the Father; thy soul can there offer its sacrifice of willing, loving praise. But the evening cometh, and then thou dost shrink back from saying aught to God, from bringing thine offering with so heavy a heart. Still, go even then; and pleading the blood of that richer sacrifice which never faileth to bring down a blessing, lay the tribute of thy broken heart beside it, and ask thy God, for His sake not to despise it. He will not do so, for, in the provisions of His temple-service, there was a sacrifice for the evening too. (*The Protoplast.*) *The record of the first day of creation reminds us of the first day of human life:—*How rapidly do the "few days" which succeed the first evening and morning in the life of man, pass away. I think I have somewhere read of a philosopher who was seen in tears, and on being asked, "Why weepest thou?" answered, "I weep because there is so much for me to do, and my life is too short to do it in." Whether the philosopher said so or not, I am sure my own heart has said it oftentimes, and so, I doubt not, have the hearts of others. Sorrow and sickness are the two great means by which many a young heart has become aged; the mind is early matured, and the stranger wondering says, "How old such an one is in character!" Yet every day of natural life has its burden, as fore-ordained of God. There is one thought connected with the day, that is a very solemn one. The evening and the morning will succeed each other, without break or change, year after year; but a day will come upon us, the evening of which we shall never see; a sun will rise that we shall never see go down; the morning will come and find us in a body of sin and suffering, and before the evening we shall have passed away. (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 6-8. Let there be a firmament.—*The atmosphere:—*I. THE ATMOSPHERE IS NECESSARY TO THE POSSIBILITY OF HUMAN LIFE. 1. Gathers up the vapours. 2. Throws them down again in rain, snow, or dew, when needed. 3. Modifies and renders more beautiful the light of the sun. 4. Sustains life. II. IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE PRACTICAL PURPOSES OF LIFE. 1. The atmosphere is necessary for the transmission of sound. If there were no atmosphere, the bell might be tolled, the cannon might be fired, a thousand voices might render the music of the sweetest hymn, but not the faintest sound would be audible. Thus all commercial, educational, and social intercourse would be at an end, as men would not be able to hear each other speak. We seldom think of the worth of the atmosphere around us, never seen, seldom felt, but without which the world would be one vast grave. 2. The atmosphere is necessary for many purposes related to the inferior objects of the world. Without it the plants could not live, our gardens would be divested of useful vegetables, and beautiful flowers. Artificial light would be impossible. The lamp of the mines could not be kindled. The candle of the midnight student could never have been lighted. The bird could not have wended its way to heaven's gate to utter its morning song, as there would have been no air to sustain its flight. III. LET US MAKE A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE SUBJECT. 1. To be thankful for the air we breathe. How often do we recognize the air by which we are surrounded as amongst the chief of our daily blessings, and as the immediate and continued gift of God? How seldom do we utter praise for it. 2. To make the best use of the life it preserves. To cultivate a pure life. To speak golden words. To make a true use of all the subordinate ministries of nature. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Uses of the atmosphere:—*1. The atmosphere is the great fund and storehouse of life to plants and animals; its carbonic acid is the food of the one, and its oxygen the nourishment of the other; without its carbonic acid the whole vegetable kingdom would wither, and without its oxygen the blood of animals, "which is the life thereof," would be only serum and water. 2. It is a refractor of light. Without it the sun's rays would fall perpendicularly and directly on isolated portions of the world, and with a velocity which would probably render them invisible; but by means of the atmosphere they are diffused in a softened effulgence through the entire globe. 3. It is a reflector of light. Hence its mysterious, beautiful, and poetical blue, contrasting and yet harmonizing with the green mantle of the world.

4. It is the conservator and disperser and modifier of heat. By its hot currents constantly flung from the equatorial regions of the world, even the cold of the frigid zones is deprived of its otherwise unbearable rigour; while the mass of cold air always rushing from about the poles towards the equator quenches half the heat of tropical suns, and condenses the vapour so needful to the luxuriant vegetation. 5. It is the great vibratory of sound, the true sounding-board of the world, and without it the million voices and melodies of this earth would all be dumb; it would be a soundless desert, where an earthquake would not make a whisper. By its pressure the elastic fluids of animal bodies are prevented from bursting their slender vessels and causing instantaneous destruction. Its winds propel our ships, its electricity conveys our messages. By the aid of its warm gales and gentle dews the desert can be made to blossom as the rose. (*John Cobley.*) *The composition of the atmosphere*:—But the atmosphere with which the Creator has surrounded the earth is wonderful also in its composition. The two elements of which it chiefly consists—oxygen and nitrogen—are mixed in definite proportions, as 20 to 80 in 100 parts. If this proportion were but slightly altered, as nitrogen destroys life and extinguishes flame, the result of any perceptible increase of it would be that fires would lose their strength and lamps their brightness, plants would wither, and man, with the whole animal kingdom, would perform their functions with difficulty and pain. Or if the quantity of nitrogen were much diminished, and the oxygen increased, the opposite effect would be produced. The least spark would set anything combustible in a flame; candles and lamps would burn with the most brilliant blaze for a moment, but would be quickly consumed. If a house caught fire, the whole city would be burnt down. The animal fluids would circulate with the greatest rapidity, brain fever would soon set in, and the lunatic asylums would be filled. A day is coming when “the elements shall melt with fervent heat.” God has but to subtract the nitrogen from the air, and the whole world would instantly take fire; such is the activity and energy of the oxygen when left uncontrolled. (*Brewer.*) *Interesting illustrations of design in the atmosphere*:—Vast quantities of oxygen are daily consumed by animals, and by combustion. Carbonic acid gas is evolved instead. But this gas is so injurious that when the air is charged with only one-tenth part of it, it is wholly unfit for animals to breathe, and is unsuitable to the support of fires. The vegetable kingdom meets the whole difficulty. It gives out oxygen and takes in carbonic acid in amply sufficient measure to balance the disturbance created by the animals. Thus every breath we draw instructs us to admire the wisdom of Him who doeth all things well. (*Ibid.*) Again, oxygen is a little heavier and nitrogen a little lighter than common air. Had it been otherwise, had nitrogen been a little heavier, and carbonic acid gas been a little lighter, we must have breathed them again, so that, instead of breathing wholesome air, we should have been constantly inhaling the very gases which the lungs had rejected as noxious. The consequences would have been most fatal. Life would have been painful; diseases ten times more prevalent than they now are; and death would have cut us off at the very threshold of our existence. (*Ibid.*) Further, if the air had possessed an odour, such as that of phosphuretted hydrogen, it would have interfered not only with the perfume of flowers, but also with our faculty of discriminating wholesome foods by their smell. If it had been coloured like chlorine gas, or a London fog, we should have seen only the thick air, and not the objects around us. Had it been less transparent than it now is, it would have obstructed the rays of the sun, diminished their light and warmth, and abridged our power of distant vision. (*Ibid.*) The air is the great means of life, not only to man, but to all living things. It is also essential to combustion. Without it no fire would burn, and all our industries which depend on the use of fire would necessarily be at a standstill. By the heat of the sun an immense quantity of water in the form of vapour is daily carried up from the earth, rivers, and seas—amounting, indeed, to many millions of gallons! In the course of a year it is not less than forty thousand cubic miles! But if there were no atmosphere this circulation could not exist. There would be no rain, rivers, or seas, but one vast desert. Neither could the clouds be buoyed up from the surface of the earth, nor could the winds blow to disperse noxious vapours, and produce a system of ventilation among the abodes of men. (*Ibid.*) *The influence of sin seen in its deterioration*:—There is something in the earth's atmosphere that blights and injures. It is not the same healthful, genial, joyous firmament that it was when God created it. (*H. Bonar.*) *Genesis of the sky*:—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Ancient conception of the sky. To the ancient Hebrew the sky seemed a vast, outstretched, concave surface or expansion,

in which the stars were fastened, and over which the ethereal waters were stored. (See Prov. viii. 27; Heb. i. 12; Isa. xxxiv. 4, xl. 22; Job xlii. 14, xxxvii. 18; Psa. cxlviii. 4.) "Ah, all this," you tell me, "is scientifically false; the sky is not a material arch, or tent, or barrier, with outlets for rain; it is only the matterless limit of vision." Neither, let me again remind you, is there any such thing as "sunrise" or "sunset." To use such words is to utter what science declares is a falsehood. And yet your astronomer, living in the blaze of science, fresh from the discovery of spectrum analysis and satellites of Mars, and knowing too that his words are false, still persists in talking of sunrise and sunset. Will you, then, deny to the untutored Moses, speaking in the child-like language of that ancient infant civilization, the privilege which you so freely accord to the nineteenth-century astronomer? 2. **Panorama of the emerging sky.** Everywhere is still a shapeless, desolate chaos. And now a sudden break is seen. A broad, glorious band or expanse glides through the angry, chaotic waste, separating it into two distinct masses—the lower, the heavy fluids; the upper, the ethereal vapours. The band, still bearing upward the vapour, swells and mounts and arches and vaults, till it becomes a concave hemisphere or dome. That separating, majestic dimension we cannot to this day call by a better name than the expanse. And that expanse God called heavens. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. II. **MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY.** 1. The heavens suggest the soul's true direction—it is upward. To express moral excellence by terms of altitude is an instinct. How naturally we use such phrases as these: "Exalted worth, high resolve, lofty purpose, elevated views, sublime character, eminent purity!" How naturally, too, we use opposite phrases: "Low instincts, base passions, degraded character, grovelling habits, stooping to do it!" Doubtless here, too, is the secret of the arch, and especially the spire, as the symbol of Christian architecture: the Church is an aspiration. Even the very word "heaven" itself, like the Greek Ouranos, means height, and, according to the etymologists, is an Anglo-Saxon word, *heo-fan*; meaning what is heaved up, lifted, *heav-en*—heaven. Well, then, may the vaulting sky stand as a symbol of human aspiration. The true life is a perpetual soaring and doming; or rather, like the mystic temple of Ezekiel's vision, it is an inverted spiral, for ever winding upward, and broadening as it winds (Ez. xli. 7). The soul's true life is a perpetual exhalation; her affections evermore evaporating from her own great deep, and mounting heavenward in clouds of incense. 2. As the heavens suggest human aspirations, so do the heavens suggest their complement, Divine perfections. It is true, *e.g.*, in respect to God's immensity. Nothing seems so remote from us, or gives such an idea of vastness, as the dome of heaven. Climb we ever so high on mountain-top, the stars are still above us. Again: It is true in respect to God's sovereignty. Nothing seems to be so absolutely beyond human control or modification as the sun and stars of heaven. Again: It is true in respect to God's spirituality. Nothing seems so like that rarity of texture which we instinctively ascribe to pure, incorporeal spirit, as that subtle, tenuous ether which, it is believed, pervades the clear, impalpable sky, and, indeed, all immensity. And in this subtle ether, so invisible to sight, so impalpable to touch, so diffused throughout earth and the spaces of the heavenly expanse, we may behold a symbol of that invisible, intangible, ever-omnipresent One who Himself is Spirit; and who, accordingly, can be worshipped only in spirit and truth (John iv. 24). Again: it is true in respect to God's purity. Nothing is so exquisite an emblem of absolute spotlessness and eternal chastity, as the unsullied expanse of heaven, untrodden by mortal foot, unswept by aught but angel wings. Again: It is true in respect to God's beatitude. We cannot conceive a more perfect emblem of felicity and moral splendour than light. Everywhere and evermore, among rudest nations as well as among most refined, light is instinctively taken as the first and best possible emblem of whatever is most intense and perfect in blessedness and glory. And whence comes light—the light which arms us with health, and fills us with joy, and tints flower and cloud with beauty, and floods mountain and mead with splendour—but from the sky? Well, then, may the shining heaven be taken as the elect emblem of Him who decketh Himself with light as with a robe (Psa. civ. 2), who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto (1 Tim. vi. 16), who Himself is the Father of lights (James i. 17). (*G. D. Boardman.*) *The atmosphere.*—The word "atmosphere" indicates, in general, its character and its relation to the earth. It is compounded of two Greek words, one signifying vapour and the other sphere, and, taken together, they denote a sphere of vapour enveloping or enwrapping the whole earth. The ancients regarded the air, as

children do now, as nothing at all. A vessel filled only with air, had nothing in it. "As light as air" is a proverbial expression, but a very false one, to denote nothingness. We may not be aware of it, but yet it is true that the breathing of the air yields us three-quarters of our nourishment, while the other quarter only is supplied by the food, solid and liquid, of which we partake. The principal parts of this food are oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbonic acid, and these, too, are the constituent elements of the atmosphere. There is a sense, therefore, in which we may truly say of the air, what the apostle and the old Greek poet before him said of God, "In it we live and move and have our being." The weight of the atmosphere is so great that its pressure upon a man of ordinary size has been computed to be about fourteen or fifteen tons. A man of large frame would have to carry one or two tons additional. But as the air's pressure is lateral as well as vertical, and equal upon all sides and parts of every body, it not only does not crush or injure the frailest flower, but actually feeds and nourishes it. There are other than atmospheric burdens, and those which consciously press more heavily, which yet a man may find a great blessing in carrying with a cheerful face and courage. The atmosphere is tenanted by myriad forms of life, vegetable and animal. A French naturalist of great eminence, M. Miquel, writing upon "Living Organisms of the Atmosphere," has found numberless organisms dancing in the light of a single sunbeam. The atmosphere, moreover, is the great agent by which nature receives the wonderful colours which are her most beautiful adorning. It is owing to the reflection of the sun's rays that the sky and the distant horizon assume that beautiful azure hue which is subject to endless variations. It is owing to the refraction of these rays as they pass obliquely through the aerial strata, that we have the splendours of the morning and evening twilight, and that we seem to see the sun three or four minutes before he actually rises above the eastern horizon, and three or four minutes after he actually disappears below the western horizon. If it were not for the atmosphere, the light would instantaneously disappear as the sun sank below the horizon, and leave the world in utter darkness, while at his rising in the morning the world would pass in an instant from complete darkness into a flood of dazzling and blinding light. Such daily and sudden shocks to vision would be painful, and probably destructive to sight. Without the atmosphere there would have been no place in the universe for the dwelling-place of man, because without it the waters would have prevailed. But as by the atmosphere the waters below were, on the second day of the creative week, divided from those above, a place was provided suitable for the abode of man. Without the air, which gathers the moisture in the clouds and sends it down again upon the earth, there could be no precipitation of rain or snow. Without the atmosphere there could be no purifying winds, which are but air in motion, no medium to transmit and diffuse the light and heat of the sun, no agent to modify and make surpassingly beautiful the light of the sun, and no possibility of respiration for plants or animals, without which it would be impossible to maintain any form of organic life. The atmosphere, too, is indispensable for all the practical purposes of life. If by some miraculous intervention it should be made possible for human life to exist without the air, it would be useless and vain. The air is necessary for the transmission of sound. Without it, the bell might be tolled, the cannon might be fired, a great multitude of voices might unite to render the music of the sweetest hymn, but not the faintest sound would be audible either to the performers or to the listeners. In the worship of God we should need no tune-books, no organ, no choir, no preacher, "for there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard," and the voices of none of these could be heard. You might breathe or even loudly speak your words of love into the very ear of some dear one, and yet not one of your words would be heard without the presence of air in the ear to empower its wondrous mechanism for hearing. As light is indispensable for seeing, so in exactly the same way is the air necessary for hearing, and without it the ear would be a perfectly useless organ, instead of being, as now, a wonderful organ to minister to our joy and delight. And since without the atmosphere we could not hear each other speak, it follows that all commercial, educational, and social intercourse would be at an end, and the earth would become one vast grave. 1. Let us learn from the air a lesson—and it is a most impressive one—as to the inestimable value of our "common mercies," which we enjoy every moment, without a thought and without an emotion of gratitude to the great Giver of them. 2. Let us learn from the atmosphere a lesson as to how to overcome our difficulties. The dove in the fable was irritated because the wind ruffled its feathers and

opposed its flight. It foolishly desired to have a firmament free from air, through the empty spaces of which it vainly thought it could fly with the speed of lightning. Silly bird! It did not know that without the air it could not fly at all, nor even live. And just so it is with the difficulties we encounter. Without them and without conquering them, a high Christian manhood or character is unattainable. 3. Let us learn from the atmosphere a lesson of thankfulness. It is amongst the chief of our daily blessings, and is the immediate and continuous gift of God, to whom our praises are continually due. 4. Let us learn from the atmosphere to make the best use possible of the life it nourishes and preserves. As in itself the air is sweet, wholesome, and life-giving, let us be taught by it to live pure and noble lives which shall yield for others wholesome and helpful and not poisonous and corrupt influences. Our example makes a moral atmosphere for others to breathe, which is wholesome or noxious, according as the example is good or bad. (G. C. Noyes, D.D.)

The atmosphere.—The atmosphere, like an ocean, overlies the whole surface of the earth; in fact, it is an ocean; and it is literally true, that, like crabs and lobsters, we live and move and spend our days at the bottom of a sea—an aerial sea. This atmospheric ocean rises far above us, and, like that of waters, has its waves, its currents, and its tides. It is found to grow more rarified, as well as colder, as we ascend towards its upper limit, which is supposed to be about forty-five miles above the level of the sea. Barometrical observations, however, show that on ascending to the height of three and a half miles (nearly that of Cotopaxi), we leave behind us, by weight, more than one-half the whole mass of the atmosphere. And from the experience of aeronauts, it is believed that there is no such air as man can breathe at an elevation of eight miles; probably death would be the certain consequence of exceeding seven, though some, of late, at great risk and suffering, have ascended to nearly that height. On the summit of Mont Blanc, which is a trifle under three miles, the sensations of those who make the ascent are very painful, owing to the levity of the air; the flesh puffs out, the head is oppressed, the respiration is difficult, and the face becomes livid; whilst the temperature is cold almost past endurance. This ocean of air, like that of water, has also its weight and pressure. People, in general, are not aware, because they are not conscious, of any weight resting upon them from the atmosphere; yet reliable experiments prove that at the sea level it presses with a force equal to fourteen and three-fifths pounds on every square inch, or 2,100 pounds on every square foot, or 58,611,548,160 pounds on every square mile; or on the whole surface of the earth with a weight equal to that of a solid globe of lead sixty miles in diameter! How few reflect that they live under an ocean of such stupendous weight! But to bring this fact more sensibly before the mind, we may state that the atmospheric pressure on the whole surface of a medium-sized man is no less than fourteen tons—a weight that would instantly crush him, as hollow vessels collapse when sunk deep in the ocean, but for the elasticity and equal pressure of the air on every part without, and the counterbalancing pressure and elasticity of the air within. The air encompassing the earth is a compound substance, made up of two gases, mixed in the proportion of twenty-one parts of oxygen to seventy-nine parts of nitrogen, by measure; mixed with these is a small proportion of carbonic acid gas, which does not exceed one two-thousandth part of the whole volume of the atmosphere. Whether the air is taken from the greatest depths, or the most exalted heights which man has ever reached, this proportion of the oxygen and nitrogen gases is maintained invariably. Considering the vast and varied exhalations that constantly ascend from sea and land, together with the incessant agitation of winds and tempests, this stands before us a most astonishing fact, indeed! But it is not more wonderful than it is important. No possible change could be made in the composition of the air, without rendering it injurious both to animal and vegetable life. If the quantity of nitrogen were but a little increased, all the vital functions of man would be performed with difficulty, pain, and slowness, and the pendulum of life would soon come to a stand. If, on the other hand, the proportion of oxygen were increased, all the processes of life would be quickened into those of a fever, and the animal fabric would soon be destroyed, as it were, by its own fires. (H. W. Morris, D.D.)

Reflections.—1. On the mass of the atmosphere. Vast an appendage as this is to our globe, its dimensions and density have been adapted with the utmost exactness to the constitution of all organized existences. Any material change in its mass would require a corresponding change in the structure of both plants and animals, and, indeed, in the whole economy of the world. If its mass were considerably reduced,

all the difficulties experienced by travellers on the summits of lofty mountains, and by aéronauts at great elevations above the earth, would ensue; on the other hand, if much increased, opposite and equally disastrous results would follow. If the atmosphere had been twice or three times its present mass, currents of air would move with double or triple their present force. With such a change nothing on sea or land could stand against a storm. But how happily do we find all things balanced as now constituted. And how obvious, that, ere ever God had breathed forth the fluid air, in His all-comprehending Mind, its mass was measured and weighed, and the strength and wants of all living creatures duly estimated before one of them had been called into being. All the works of God have been done according to a determinate counsel and infallible foreknowledge. 2. On the pressure of the atmosphere. Contemplating the enormous weight of the air, resting upon all things and all persons, who but must devoutly admire both the wisdom and the goodness of the Creator, in so adjusting all the properties of the firmament, that under it we can breathe and walk and act with ease, unconscious of weight or oppression, while in fact we are every moment under a load, which, when reduced to figures, surpasses both our comprehension and belief. 3. On the composition of the atmosphere. How very wonderful is this! When we reflect upon the proportions and combinations of its constituent elements, we cannot but look up with adoring reverence to its Divine Author. What wisdom, what power, what benevolence, have been exercised in arranging the chemical constitution and agencies of this world, to adapt them unfailingly to the strength and wants of animals and of plants, even the most delicate and minute! How very slightly the atmosphere of life differs from one that would produce instant and universal death! How trifling the change the Almighty had need make in the air we hourly breathe, to lay all the wicked and rebellious sons of men lifeless and silent in the dust! (*Ibid.*)

A type of prayer and its answer :—In the natural world, the sun pours down its light and heat, and diffuses his genial influences over all; yet warming and animating, in a special degree, those fields and hill-sides turned more directly towards him, and drawing upward from them a proportionally greater amount of vapour; this vapour, as we have seen, in due time, returns in showers, refreshing and beautifying all nature. So in the world of Christian devotion. Under the benignant beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the exhalations of prayer and praise are drawn upwards to the heavenly throne, more abundantly, as in nature, from those more completely under His gracious influences; and these exhalations of the heart, through a Saviour's mediation, are made to return in richer showers, even showers of grace, to refresh and strengthen those souls to bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Again: As the earth, without showers, would soon become parched and barren and dead; so, without the rain and dew of Divine grace, the moral earth would become as iron, and its heavens as brass; every plant of holiness, every flower of piety, and every blade of virtue, would soon droop and die. Nor does the parallel end here: as in the physical world, the greater the quantity of vapours drawn up from sea and land, the greater will be the amount of rain that sooner or later will come down on plain and mountain; so in the spiritual, the more abundant the exhalations of prayer and supplication from the children of men, the more copious the showers of grace that will be poured out in return. Let prayer, therefore, daily ascend as the vapours from the ends of the earth, and rise as clouds of incense before the throne, and this wilderness shall yet blossom as the rose, flourish as the garden of the Lord, and bloom with all the beauties of an unblighted paradise. (*Ibid.*)

Atmospherical adjustments :—The atmosphere constitutes a machinery which, in all its complicated and admirable adjustments, offers the most striking displays and convincing proofs of this. This vast and wonderful appendage of our globe has been made expressly to meet the nature and wants of the living creatures and growing vegetation that occupy its surface; and all these plants and animals have been created with distinct reference to the properties of the atmosphere. Throughout design and mutual adaptation are most manifest. The atmosphere has been composed of those elements, and composed of them in just the proportions that are essential to the health and nurture of all living creatures. The atmosphere has been made for lungs; and lungs have been made for the atmosphere, being elaborately constructed for its alternate admission and expulsion. And how beautiful that adjustment by which animals breathe of the oxygen of the air, and set carbonic acid free for the use of plants, while plants absorb carbonic acid, and set oxygen free for the benefit of animals! The atmosphere and the ear have also been formed one for the other. This organ is so

constructed that its use depends entirely upon the elastic properties of the air. In like manner the atmosphere and the organs of speech have been formed in mutual adaptation. The whole mouth, the larynx, the tongue, the lips, have been made with inimitable skill to form air into words. Equally evident is the mutual adaptation of the atmosphere and the organs of smell, as the latter can effect their function only in connection with the former. In one word, all the parts of all animal organizations, even to the very pores of the skin, have been contrived with minute nicety in adaptation to the constituent elements and elastic properties of the atmosphere. Add to all the foregoing, its admirable qualities for disseminating heat, evaporating moisture, equalizing climate, producing winds, forming clouds, and diffusing light—and we behold in the Firmament of heaven a concourse of vast contrivances, that constitute a sublime anthem to the Creator's praise! The various elements composing the atmosphere, its gases, and vapours, and electricity, are, indeed, as if instinct with life and reason. Animated by the solar beams, they are everywhere in busy and unerring activity,—sometimes acting singly, sometimes in combination, but always playing into each other's hands with a certainty and perfection which might almost be called intelligence, and which nothing short of Infinite Wisdom could have devised. Thus, by their manifold and beneficial operations, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." (*Ibid.*) *The firmament*:—The use of it was to "divide the waters from the waters": that is, the waters on the earth from the waters in the clouds, which are well known to be supported by the buoyant atmosphere. The "division" here spoken of is that of distribution. God having made the substance of all things, goes on to distribute them. By means of this the earth is watered by the rain of heaven, without which it would be unfruitful, and all its inhabitants perish. God makes nothing in vain. There is a grandeur in the firmament to the eye; but this is not all: usefulness is combined with beauty. Nor is it useful only with respect to animal subsistence: it is a mirror, conspicuous to all, displaying the glory of its Creator, and showing His handiworks. The clouds also, by emptying themselves upon the earth, set us an example of generosity; and reprove those who, full of this world's good, yet keep it principally to themselves. (*A. Fuller.*) *The second day*:—The second day's work is the forming of an expanse or heaven in the creature, by which the hitherto unbounded waters are divided from the waters. God then names the expanse. At this stage the state of the creature, that it is drowned in waters, begins to be perceived. Such is the second state or stage in the new creation. In the midst of the waters a heaven is formed in the once benighted creature. That unstable element, so quickly moved by storms, is the well-known type of the restless desires of the heart of fallen man; for "the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Before regeneration, inquiet lusts everywhere prevail: the whole man or creature is drowned and buried in them. In the progress of the new creation, these waters are not at once removed: indeed, they are never wholly removed till that other creation comes, when there is "no more sea." They are first divided by a heaven; then bounded on the third day, when the dry land rises up out of them. This heaven represents the understanding opened, as the rising earth upon the third day shows us the will liberated. For till now, "the understanding has been darkened"; nay, it is written of the natural man that he has "no understanding." But now the heaven is stretched. Christ "opens the understanding" of those who before this had been His disciples. And thus another precious gift, once hid with Christ in God, now by Christ is wrought in us also. A heaven is formed within the creature; a heaven into which darkness may return, and through which clouds shall pour as well as bright sunshine; a heaven which for sin may be shut up and become like brass, but which was made to be the home and treasure-house of sweet and dewy showers; a heaven like Israel's path through the sea of old, sorely threatened by dark and thick waters, but, like that same path, a step to resurrection power, and worthy to be called "heaven," even by God Himself; influencing the earth in untold ways, here attracting, there repelling; the great means after light of arranging and disposing all things. (*A. Jukes.*)

VERS. 9, 10. The gathering together of the waters called He seas.—*The sea and the dry land*:—I. THE SEA. "Let the waters . . . unto one place." 1. The method of their location. Perhaps by volcanic agency. 2. The degree of their proportion. If the sea were smaller, the earth would cease to be verdant and

fruitful, as there would not be sufficient water to supply our rivers and streams, or to distil upon the fields. If the sea was larger, the earth would become a vast uninhabitable marsh, from the over abundance of rain. Hence, we see how needful it is that there should be a due proportion between the sea and dry land, and the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, in that it is established so exactly and beneficently. 3. The extent of their utility. They not only give fertility to the earth, but they answer a thousand social and commercial purposes. II. THE DRY LAND. 1. The dry land was made to appear. The land had been created before, but it was covered with a vast expanse of water. Even when things are created, when they merely exist, the Divine call must educate them into the full exercise of their utility, and into the complete manifestation of their beauty. So it can remove the tide of passion from the soul, and make all that is good in human nature to appear. 2. It was made to be verdant. "And let the earth bring forth grass." The plants now created are divided into three classes: grass, herb, and tree. In the first, the seed is not noticed, as not obvious to the eye. In the second, the seed is the striking characteristic. In the third, the fruit. This division is simple and natural. 3. It was made to be fruitful. "And the fruit tree yielding fruit." The earth is not merely verdant and beautiful to look at, but it is also fruitful and good for the supply of human want. Nature appears friendly to man, that she may gain his confidence, invite his study, and minister to the removal of his poverty. III. AND IT WAS GOOD. 1. For the life and health of man. 2. For the beauty of the universe. 3. For the commerce and produce of the nations. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Various uses of the sea*.—1. Water is as indispensable to all life, whether vegetable or animal, as is the air itself. But this element of water is supplied entirely by the sea. All the waters that are in the rivers, the lakes, the fountains, the vapours, the dew, the rain, the snow, come alike out of the ocean. It is a common impression that it is the flow of the rivers that fills the sea. It is a mistake. It is the flow of the sea that fills the rivers. 2. A second use of the sea is to moderate the temperature of the world. A common method of warming houses in the winter is by the use of hot water. The water, being heated in the basement, is carried by iron pipes to the remotest parts of the building, where, parting with its warmth and becoming cooler and heavier, it flows back again to the boiler, to be heated anew, and so to pass round in the same circuit continuously. The advantage of this method is, that the heat can be carried to great distances, and in any direction. 3. A third important use of the sea is to be a perpetual source of health to the world. Without it there could be no drainage for the lands. The process of death and decay, which is continually going on in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, would soon make the whole surface of the earth one vast receptacle of corruption, whose stagnant mass would breathe a pestilence, sweeping away all the life of a continent. The winds would not purify it; for, having no place to deposit the burden, it would only accumulate in their hands, and filling their breath with its poisonous effluvia, it would make them swift ministers of death, carrying the sword of destruction into every part of the world at once. 4. It may be mentioned, as a fourth office of the sea, that it is set to furnish the great natural pathways of the world. Instead of a barrier, the sea is a road across the barrier. Hence the ocean has been the great educator of the world. The course of empire began on its shores, and has always kept within sight of its waters. No great nation has ever sprung up except on the seaside, or by the banks of those great navigable rivers which are themselves but an extension of the sea. Had it not been for the Mediterranean, the history of Egypt, of Phœnicia, of Greece and Rome and Carthage, would have been impossible. 5. A fifth office of the sea is to furnish an inexhaustible storehouse of power for the world. Of the three great departments of labour which occupy the material industry of the race,—agriculture, commerce, and manufactures,—we have seen how the first depends upon the ocean, the one for the rains which support all vegetable life, the other for the thousand paths on which its fleets are travelling. We now find that the third one also, though at first appearing not to have very intimate connection with the ocean, does in fact owe to it almost the whole of its efficiency. Ninety-nine hundredths of all the mechanical power now at work in the world is furnished by the water-wheel and the steam-engine. 6. A sixth office of the sea is to be a vast storehouse of life. The sea has a whole world of life in itself. It is said that the life in the sea far exceeds all that is out of it. There are more than twenty-five thousand distinct species of living beings that inhabit its waters. Incredible numbers of them are taken from the sea; in Norway, four hundred millions of a single species in a single season; in Sweden, seven

hundred millions; and by other nations, numbers without number. 7. Omnipresent and everywhere is this need and blessing of the sea. It is felt as truly in the centre of the continent, where, it may be, the rude inhabitant never heard of the ocean, as it is on the circumference of the wave-bent shore. He is surrounded, every moment, by the presence and bounty of the sea. It is the sea that looks out upon him from every violet in his garden-bed; from the broad forehead of his cattle, and the rosy faces of his children; and from the cool-dropping well at his door. It is the sea that feeds him. It is the sea that clothes him. It is the sea that cools him with the summer cloud, and that warms him with the blazing fires in winter.

8. There is a sea within us which responds to the sea without. Deep calleth unto deep, and it is the answer and the yearning of these inward waves, in reply to that outward call, which makes our hearts to swell, our eyes to grow dim with tears, and our whole being to lift and vibrate with such strong emotion when we stand upon the shore and look out upon the deep, or sit in the stern of some noble ship and feel ourselves cradled on the pulsations of its mighty bosom. There is a life within us which calls to that sea without—a conscious destiny which only its magnitude and its motion can symbolize and utter. (*Bib. Sacra.*) *Genesis of the lands*.—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Panorama of emergent lands. A sublime spectacle it is—this resurrection of the terrestrial forms out of ocean's baptismal sepulchre—this emergence of island, and continent, and mountain—this heaving into sight of Britain and Madagascar and Cuba and Greenland, of Asia and Africa and Anstralia and America, of Alps and Himalayas and Andes and Sierra Nevada; more thrilling still, of Ararat and Sinai and Pisgah and Carmel and Lebanon and Zion and Olivet. 2. Geologic confirmation. How could the geologist make out his magnificent geological calender, if it were not for the successive layers of deposited or stratified rocks of the lands upheaved into view from the depths of old ocean's sepulchre? And so, at this very point, the ancient seer and the modern sceptic agree; both say that the earth was formed out of water and by means of water (2 Peter iii. 5). But they differ as to the explanation. The ancient seer said, "The secret of Nature is God." The modern sceptic says, "The secret of Nature is Law." And yet both speak truly, for Truth is evermore unutterably large: God is the cause of Nature, and Law is God's means. 3. Beneficence of the arrangement. "God saw that it was good." And well might He delight in it. For a blessed thing this Divine distribution of lands and seas was. II. MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. The birth of individuality. 2. The birth of duty. Each man is in himself a little world. The individualization of each man is not so much for the man's own sake as for the sake of all men. This, then, is the stirring thought of the hour: Individualization for the sake of mankind. Go forth then, brother, inspired with the majestic thought that you are a personal unit—a man among men—individualized from the mass of humanity for the sake of humanity and humanity's King. Yes, happy the day, let me again say it, when God says to thee: "Let the waters gather themselves to one place, and let the dry land appear." Thrice happy the day when thou obeyest, looking upward to the opening heavens and outward to the broadening horizon. (*G. D. Boardman.*) *The third day*.—Up to this point the unquiet element, which is naturally uppermost in the creature, has prevailed everywhere. Light has come, and shown the waste; a heaven is formed within it; but nothing fixed or firm has yet appeared. Just as in the saint there is first light, and a heaven too within, while as yet he is all instability, with nothing firm or settled. But now the firm earth rises. The state desired by Paul,—"that we be no more tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, even Christ,"—here begins to be accomplished. Now the will, long buried and overwhelmed with tossing lusts, rises above them to become very fruitful; and the soul, once lost in passions, emerges from the deep, like "the earth which He hath founded for ever." There is yet more for us to mark in this emerging earth. Not only does it escape the floods: it comes up also into the expanse of heaven. That creature, so long buried, now mounts up to meet the skies, as though aspiring to touch and become a part of Heaven; while on its swelling bosom rest the sweet waters, the clouds, which embrace and kiss the hills. When the man by resurrection is freed from restless lusts; when he comes up from under the dominion of passions into a state of rest and peace; not only is he delivered from a load, but he also meets a purer world, an atmosphere of clear and high blessing; where even his hard rocks may be furrowed into channels for the rain; heaven almost touching earth, and earth heaven. Not without awful convulsions can such a change be wrought. The earth

must heave before the waters are gathered into one place. (See Psa. civ. 7, 8.) Many a soul shows rents and chasms like the steep mountains. Nevertheless, "the mountains bring peace, and the little hills righteousness." And this is effected on the third or resurrection day; for in creation, as elsewhere, the "third day" always speaks of resurrection. Then the earth brings forth fruit. Fruitfulness, hitherto delayed, at once follows the bounding of the waters. For, "being made free from sin, we have fruit unto righteousness, and the end everlasting life." The order of the produce is instructive; first the grass, then the herb, then the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind: as ever, the blade before the ear, the small before the great, from imperfection onwards to perfection. The first thing borne is "grass," the common emblem of the flesh. Is it asked how the risen creature can bring forth fruits, which are, like the goodness of the grass, of the flesh and carnal? Because for long the regenerate man is yet "carnal," and his fruits are in the flesh, though with sincere desires for God's glory. The development of Adam, as exhibited in the Word, not to say experience, gives proofs on proofs of this. The Corinthians, too, were "carnal," though with many spiritual gifts. But after "grass" comes "herb and tree," with "seed and fruit"; some to feed the hungry, some to cure the serpent's bite; some hid in a veil of leaves, or bound in shapeless husks; some exposing their treasures, as the lovely vine and olive; the one to cheer man's heart, the other to give the oil to sustain the light for God's candlestick. Such is the faithful soul, with many-coloured fruits, "as the smell of a field which the Lord blesses." The form of the fruit may vary; its increase may be less or more—some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold; for "the fruit of the Spirit may be love, or peace, or faith, or truth, or gentleness": but all to the praise of His grace, who bringeth forth fruit out of the earth, "fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ." Nor let us forget,—"whose seed is in itself, after his kind." God's fruits all multiply themselves: this is their constitution. (*A. Jukes.*) *Distribution of sea and land*:—By means of this distribution the waters are ever in motion, which preserves them and almost everything else from stagnancy and putrefaction. That which the circulation of the blood is to the animal frame, that the waters are to the world: were they to stop, all would stagnate and die. See how careful our heavenly Father was to build us a habitation before He gave us a being. Nor is this the only instance of the kind: our Redeemer has acted on the same principle, in going before us to prepare a place for us. (*A. Fuller.*)

Vers. 11-13. Let the earth bring forth grass.—*Vegetation*:—I. THAT IT IS THE RESULT OF A COMBINED INSTRUMENTALITY. 1. There was the Divine agency. It was the power of God that gave seed and life to the earth. For it is very certain that the earth could not have produced grass, and herb, and tree of itself. 2. There was the instrumentality of the earth. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass," &c. So when called by God the most barren instrumentalities become life-giving and verdant. When the Divine Being is about to enrich men, He gives them the power to help themselves. II. IT IS GERMINAL IN THE CONDITION OF ITS GROWTH. "Seed." Fertility never comes all at once. God does not give man blade of grass or tree in full growth, but the seeds from which they are to spring. Germs are a Divine gift. God does not give man a great enterprise, but the first hint of it. The cultivation of germs is the grandest employment in which men can be engaged. III. IT IS FRUITFUL IN THE PURPOSE OF ITS LIFE. "Yielding fruit." 1. Life must not always remain germinal. The seed must not always remain seed. It must expand, develop. The world is full of men who have great thoughts and enterprises in the germ, but they never come to perfection. The fruit must be—1. Abundant. 2. Rich. 3. Beautiful. 4. Refreshing. IV. IT IS DISTINCTIVE IN ITS SPECIES AND DEVELOPMENT. "Fruit after his kind." The growth will always be of the same kind as the seed. There may be variation in the direction and expression of the germinal life, but its original species is unchanged. This is true in the garden of the soul. Every seed produces fruit after its kind. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The grass*:—1. Consider the grass for (1) its beauty; (2) its utility; (3) the characteristic virtues of the grass of the fields: (a) its humility; (b) its cheerfulness; (c) as an emblem of human life. 2. Consider it, particularly, in the places where your dead are lying. What Golgothas would be our cemeteries did not the grass grow there more green and more abundant, if possible, than almost anywhere beside! (*Homiletic Review.*) *The beauty of the grass*:—What is there in it of beauty or of strength? Let Ruskin answer: "A very little strength, and a very little tallness, and a few delicate long lines meeting in a point—not a perfect point either, but blunt and unfinished, by

no means a creditable or apparently much-cared-for example of Nature's workmanship; made, as it seems, only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven; and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of its roots." That is all. "And yet," he adds, "think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes and good for food—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine—there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green."

Genesis of the plants.—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Panorama of the emerging plants. On all sides spring up, as though by magic, the floating algae, the circling lichens, the luxuriant mosses, the branching ferns, the waving grasses, the graceful palms, the kingly cedars, the iris-hued flowers. And a blessed vision it is: this grateful exchange of dull uniformity and barren nakedness for vegetable colours—for carpets of emerald, and tapestries of white and azure and crimson and orange and purple. Even the God of beauty Himself feels that it is good. 2. The birth of life. 3. The soil the matrix of the plant. 4. Fruit after its kind. Here the Sacred Chronicle virtually asserts the invariability of what we call "Species." 5. Ministry of vegetation. (1) Plants are the source of all our food: directly as in vegetable diet—*e.g.*, bread, which we call the "Staff of Life"; and indirectly, as in animal diet—these animals themselves having been fed on the vegetable world. Annihilate plants, and where is food? Annihilate food, and where is man? (2) Vegetation is the grand means of atmospheric purification. (3) The vegetable world is a never-ending source of æsthetic delight. The two great occasions and conditions of physical beauty are figure and colour. The plants, in their infinitely varied range from diatom to cedar, illustrate every conceivable line of figure, every conceivable hue of colour. Their ravishing song ranges through the whole scale of possible figures, through the whole gamut of possible hues. They are not only ministrants to a transient pleasure, they are also witnesses to an eternal beauty. II. MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. The plant is a beautiful emblem, or, rather, a prophetic type of man himself. 2. The birth of powers. (1) The parable of germination. (2) The parable of evolution. (3) The parable of fructification. This then is the lesson of the hour: The birth of powers to issue in heavenly fruitage. Be not content then with the mere sense of individuality and of duty, mechanically taking your allotted place with the grouping lands and seas (Gen. i. 9, 10); actually put forth in living exercise your latent powers. Yes, happy the day when the Lord of seeds and of souls says to thee: "Let the earth put forth shoots, and the fruit-tree yield its fruits!" Thrice happy the day when thou obeyest, thy life becoming arborescent, the leaves of thy tree spirally arranged so as to take in the most thou canst of God's air and sunshine, yielding the fruits of a Christian character. (G. D. Boardman.) *The vegetable creation*.—Notice the general parts and functions of trees and plants. I. THE ROOTS. Two important and special purposes. 1. To attach the plant or tree to the soil, and support it there in its proper position. 2. To select and draw suitable juices from the soil, for nourishment. II. THE LEAVES. The principal organ of every plant. The seed in which the plant originates, when carefully examined, is found to be composed of a leaf rolled tightly, and altered in tissue and contents, so as to suit its new requirements. The bud also consists of leaves folded in a peculiar manner, and covered with hardened scales to protect them from the winter cold. And the flowers, the glory of the vegetable world, are merely leaves arranged so as to protect the vital organs within them, and coloured so as to attract insects to scatter the fertilizing pollen, and to reflect or absorb the light and heat of the sun for ripening the seed. If we pursue our study of leaves still further, and contemplate their chemical functions, we shall find each a marvel and a mystery in itself. Every leaf is an individual, gifted with peculiar powers; its stomata and other organs constitute a complete laboratory; it absorbs air, and exhales moisture; it elects the carbon, and sends forth as useless the excess of oxygen, it extracts from the sun-beam its chlorophyl, and with it adorns itself in the charms of verdancy. In a word, it embodies in its thin and distended form one of the most wonderful examples of organic chemistry. It is at once full of science and full of poetry. III. THE FLOWERS. They are the most beautiful productions of the vegetable kingdom; and, as to the delicacy of their forms, the beauty of their colouring, and the sweetness of their odour, seem pre-eminently designed for the pleasure of man, for he alone of all the living tenants of the earth is capable of appreciating them. They also perform several important functions in connection with the reproduction of the

species. Flowers exhibit many powers and properties which the science of man has never been able to explain. Some will instantly close upon the slightest touch. Some will flutter as if in alarm, upon sudden exposure to intense light. Some seem possessed of limited powers of locomotion; a certain species of wild oats, when placed upon a table, will spontaneously move; pea-blossoms always turn their backs upon the wind; the heliotrope always faces the sun; the tulip opens its petals when the weather is fine, but closes them during rain and darkness. The pond-lily closes its pure white leaves at night, as it lies on its watery bed, but unfolds them again in the morning. On the other hand, some flowers open only at night; that splendid flower, the night-blooming cereus, is of this kind; it opens but once, and that in the night, for a few hours only, then wilts and dies without ever admitting the light of day into its bosom. Some open and shut at certain hours, and that so regularly as to indicate the time of day, like the sindrimal of Hindostan, which opens at four in the evening and closes at four in the morning. Dr. Good, in his "Book of Nature," describes a water-plant, *valisneria spiralis*, which, at a certain season, detaches itself from its stem, and, like a gallant suitor, sails complacently over the waters in pursuit of a mate, till he finds her. Other flowers there are, as the nepenthes, that will adroitly catch flies and devour them. Others again possess a most extraordinary luminous property; the nasturtium, if plucked during sunshine, and carried into a dark room, will there show itself by its own light; a plant that abounds in the jungles of Madura illuminates the ground to a distance all around; and many species of lichens, creeping along the roofs of caverns, lend to them an air of enchantment, by the soft and clear light they diffuse. Who can explain to us these phenomena of flowers? Who but must see that the hand and counsel of Infinite Wisdom are concerned in the production of these vegetable wonders! I add but one fact more respecting flowers, and that is, the power which each flower has to regulate for itself the heat of the sun. IV. THE SEEDS. 1. Look at the admirable contrivance of the vessels, or capsules, in which the various seeds are lodged and protected while they mature. These are so many, so diverse, and often so complicated in their forms and materials, that it would seem as if they had been adopted only for the sake of demonstrating the inexhaustible resources of the Divine invention. Some are invested in close tunics, some are surrounded with hard shells, some are elaborately folded in leaves, some are deposited in rows within parchment pods, some are in cases lined with softest velvet, some are wrapped in wool, some are held as in blown bladders, some are placed between hard scales, some are defended by pointed thorns, some are housed as beneath a roof, some are within slits made in the edge of the leaves, some are buried in the heart of the fruit, and some in various other manners. 2. The fecundity of plants, or their capacity for producing seeds, presents us with another remarkable fact. The common cereals often yield from sixty to a hundred fold. One castor oil plant will produce 1,500, one sun-flower 4,000, and one thistle 24,000 seeds in a single season. 3. Another interesting fact connected with seeds is the arrangement made for their dispersion. Sometimes the pericarp, or vessel containing the seed, opens elastically, as with a mechanical spring, and discharges the seeds contained in its cavity to a considerable distance. Some seeds, as those of the dandelion and thistle, are provided with a beautiful stellate down, which serves as wings, and by means of which they often travel many miles. Other seeds, as the burdock, are furnished with little hooks, by means of which they cling to men and beasts as they pass by, and are thus scattered far and wide. Birds, also, are important agents in this great work. Many of the heavier seeds, such as acorns, are gathered and buried by mice, squirrels, &c., of which, while part are consumed, many are left in the ground to germinate. Rains, and rivers, also, often carry seeds hundreds and even thousands of miles from where they were produced; and the ocean not unfrequently bears them to the shores of other continents, or wafts them upon the coral islands just risen from its bosom, and thus soon covers them with vegetation. 4. The seed having been dispersed and dropped in the soil, the next process to be noticed is its germination. To this certain conditions are necessary. A certain degree of heat must be had; at a temperature below freezing point, seed will not germinate, and if the temperature be up to, or very near, the boiling point of water, it will not germinate, but die. The most suitable temperature for each particular plant varies between these limits according to the nature of the plant. Again, if seeds have the necessary warmth and moisture, yet if exposed to bright light, they will not germinate; shade is always, absolute darkness sometimes, necessary for the success of the germinating process. If the seed

enjoys all the required conditions of shade, water, air, and heat, it will grow and flourish. When a seed, a grain of wheat, say, is cast into the ground, from one end of it issues a plumule, or tender sprout; from the other a number of fibrous threads; the plumule immediately tends upward, and works for the air and light, and becomes a plant; the fibres also at once struggle downwards, and become the roots. "Now, what is a little remarkable," says Paley, "the parts issuing from the seed take their respective directions, into whatever position the seed itself happens to be cast. If the seed be thrown into the wrongest possible position, that is, if the ends in the ground point the reverse of what they ought to do, everything, nevertheless, goes on right. The sprout, after being pushed out a little way, makes a bend and turns upwards; the fibres, on the contrary, after shooting at first upward, turn down." This fact is not more wonderful than it is important; for, how unprofitable would be the labours of the husbandman, if only the grains that happened to be right end up would prove productive, for scarce one seed out of a hundred would be found in this position. Or, how endless would be his toil, if he had with care to place each particular seed in the ground with plumule end up. But for the present wise and happy constitution of the seed, by which each part proceeds in its right direction, and to fulfil its appointed office, where would be our daily bread? How manifest both the wisdom and goodness of God in this thing.

5. The longevity of seeds, or the power which they possess for retaining the vital principle for lengthy periods of time, is another remarkable fact to be noticed here. This is an important provision, as it supplies a safeguard against the extinction of the species under unfavourable circumstances, which may often occur. "In the time of the Emperor Hadrian, a man died soon after he had eaten plentifully of raspberries. He was buried at Dorchester. About thirty years ago the remains of this man, together with coins of the Roman Emperor, were discovered in a coffin at the bottom of a barrow, thirty feet under the surface. The man had thus lain undisturbed for some one thousand seven hundred years. But the most curious circumstance connected with the case was, that the raspberry seeds were recovered from the stomach, and sown in the garden of the Horticultural Society, where they germinated and grew into healthy bushes." What a wondrous creation, then, have we in a grain of seed! What a mystery is its life, that can thus well nigh immortalize its tiny and delicate organism, preserving it uninjured and unchanged through the lapse of hundreds and thousands of years!

V. THE EDIBLE AND OTHER USEFUL PRODUCTIONS OF PLANTS is another subject that demands our grateful consideration. He might have made all these of the same, or nearly the same, taste; but so far from this was His Divine generosity, that we have almost an interminable variety of fragrance and flavour, of sweetness and acid, of mellowness and pungency: and all so wonderfully suited to gratify our taste, to stimulate our appetite, and to yield us every required and desirable nutriment in health and in sickness. Then, too, plants not only feed, but clothe us. (*H. W. Morris, D.D.*)

Reflections on the vegetable creation:—In vegetation we have the productions of Divine chemistry! Out of the same elements we here behold the utmost diversity of results. Ten thousand species of herbs, plants, and trees, springing from the same soil, watered by the same showers, surrounded by the same atmosphere, and warmed by the same sun—yet how different in their qualities! Some are acid and some are tasteless, some offering the richest nourishment and others the rankest poison, some are exhilarating and some stupefying, a few are as sweet as honey, and many as bitter as the waters of Marah, some secreting oil while others are exuding gum, some sending forth odours that delight and some that sicken and offend—yet all these are constituted of the same four or five primary elements, the diversity arising simply from the different proportions in which Infinite skill has combined them. And herein is chemistry which man, astonishing as his progress has been in this science, can neither imitate nor approach. Man, indeed, can take a plant and separate these its elements, and ascertain their exact proportions, but he can never recombine them so as to restore the plant. This is God's prerogative. "What a thought that was, when God thought of a tree!" exclaimed a philosopher. Yes, a tree, a single tree, originating in an atom seed, deriving its vitality from heaven, drawing its juices from the earth, feeding upon the air, eliciting its colouring from the sunbeam, and elaborating its several parts by the mysterious power of its own vitality—presents a concourse of contrivances and properties and functions such as would never have entered the mind of man, or perhaps of any other intelligence, had not God set it in living form before him. What conceptions, then, shall we form, and what sentiments entertain of that Mind, who, with unerring foresight,

contrived a thousand, yea a hundred thousand differing trees and plants—differing in their size from the invisible lichen of the naked rock to the expanded banian tree of India, which proffers beneath its shade ample room for an army—differing in form from the creeping vine to the cedar of Libanus—differing in their age and duration from the ephemeral “flower of the grass” to the mighty adonsonia, hoary with the mosses of more than twenty centuries—differing in their juices from the nourishing grape to the pohon upas in their deadly valleys—differing in their aspect from the serpent cactus to the stately pine—differing in their habitations from the climbing lianas of the Guinea forests to the conservæ of the silent pool—differing in the structure of their roots, in the form of their leaves, and in the texture of their stems—differing in their flowers, and seeds, and fruits—differing in the rapidity of their growth, and circulation, and decay—differing in their qualities for absorbing and reflecting the heat of the sun—and differing in a multitude of other particulars! In the vegetable kingdom we behold a diversity all but endless. In their creation, then, what countless ends to be secured. What an infinitude of influences, properties, and agencies to be determined. And what an infinitude, too, of weights, and measures, and proportions to be calculated. Yet in the Divine mind, as in a vast storehouse of glorious ideas and designs, the plans of all were perfect and complete ere ever the omnipotent word to clothe the earth with verdure had gone forth. In that plan nothing was forgotten, nothing overlooked. No unforeseen difficulty arose, no part of the Divine purpose failed, no tree or plant or blade of grass came short of its designed perfection. (*Ibid.*) *Lessons from leaves, flowers, and grass*:—We need not seek for rare or out-of-the-way productions [to gather lessons—every green thing that springs out of the ground is a preacher to us, if we would but listen to its voice. All the leaves of the forest join in one general murmur to repeat in our ears the prophet’s warning, “We all do fade as a leaf.” And as we are so prone to thrust this truth out of mind, as comes on every fading fall of the year, God spreads before us on plain and hillside a great parable, in which our own decay and death are pictorially represented in such a vivid and impressive manner, that he who runs may read, and he who reads must reflect and profit. With the leaves join the beauteous flowers, like whispering angels, to impress the same needful admonition upon the heart and mind of man. “As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.” And each flower along his path seems to look up and address him in language of its own, and say—

“Child of the dust, like me you spring,
A bright but evanescent thing;
Like me may be cut down to-day,
And cast a worthless weed away.”

The grass also has its speech. It spreads itself before us like a living allegory, in which we may see our image and our end. It says, “All flesh is grass; in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withered.” And when its beauties and benefits, and teachings all can avail man no more, the green grass reverently spreads itself as a robe over his slumbering form, and forsakes not even that upon which all others have turned their back—his grave—remaining there, in each bright blade, a perpetual type of a coming glorious resurrection! (*Ibid.*) *The growth of plants*:—The creation of vegetables is placed by Moses subsequent to the production of light and of the atmosphere; immediately after the waters had receded from the land, and just before the creation and arrangement of the solar system. This position of vegetables in the series of creation exactly answers the demands of our present knowledge. Instead of requiring the sun’s light to germinate, seeds and plants, in order to do so, must be sowed and placed in darkness before they begin to vegetate (solar light is unfriendly to first germination). A small heat and moisture first cause their living principle to begin its operations, but they cannot flower and fruit until they receive the solar beams; nor could they grow without light, air, and moisture. A portion of oxygen air is essential to vegetation. Hence the previous atmosphere, which contains in its composition that portion, was indispensable, as was also some water on the soil where they were to grow. This exact placing of the vegetable formation and first germination is another test of the authenticity of the Hebrew cosmogony, which random fiction could not have stood. (*S. Turner.*) *The miracle of reproduction*:—This was not a mere transformation; it was a new creation, a miracle, or rather sixty thousand miracles in one. A chemist can form rocks, and even precious

stones, by combining silicium, lime, carbon, &c., ; but could any chemist form a tree, a blade of grass, a bit of moss, or the smallest living plant? Look at the flowers, the trees, the seeds, the fruits, and all the wonders of vegetable life! Oh, what a collection of miracles! but the miracle of miracles is, that each has "its seed in itself." A watch, which is one of the most admirable works of man, is very inferior in its workmanship even to the smallest plant, which we can scarcely see without the help of a microscope; but what would you think of a watch which could produce watches, which in their turn could produce other watches, and so on from generation to generation, from age to age? (*Professor Gausson.*)

Plant life:—Have you ever thought what life is? for it was then that life appeared for the first time upon the earth. The air, the winds, and the tempests have no life; the sea, the dry land, the mountains, the valleys, the rocks, the volcanoes and their flowing lavas, have no life—a gas has no life. But a tree and a plant have life, although they have not thought or feeling. Consider how the plant is born and grows: it springs from its seed as the bird springs from the egg; it pierces the soil; it grows up; it is fed by the juices of the earth through the hundred mouths of its roots; it drinks through its leaves the air and the dew of heaven; and it faithfully gives out in return its delicious odours. We know that it even breathes—it inhales and exhales the air; it sleeps in the night, and is revived to new beauty and vigour in the day. A life-giving juice circulates through all its vessels, as the blood circulates in our veins. Every year it gives birth to numerous children, which resemble the mother plant, and live, and grow, and breathe, and bring forth other plants in their turn. (*Ibid.*)

An imitable work:—Scientific men such as Sir James Hall and others, have succeeded in imitating some of the natural rocks in their laboratories. By taking chalk, silicium, vegetable matter, and other things, and subjecting them to strong heat and powerful pressure, they have been able to manufacture, in small quantities, marble like that of our mountains, coal such as we burn in our fires, crystallized silicates like the granites of the Alps, and even a few small fragments of precious stones. But do you suppose that any chemist could succeed in making a living plant, even a blade of grass, a sprig of hyssop, a morsel of the humble moss that grows on the wall, a strawberry-plant, a blue-bell, or a field daisy? All the greatest triumphs of human art and skill have been lately collected in the Exhibitions of London and Paris; but if all the mechanics who made these, and all the learned men in the world were united, and if they were to work together for a thousand years, they could not form one living grain of corn, one seed of a living poppy, one seed of any kind, containing within it, infolded in the germ, ten thousand plants of corn, or one hundred thousand plants of poppies, proceeding from and succeeding each other from this time till the end of the world. (*Ibid.*)

Seed:—Have you ever considered how wonderful a thing the seed of a plant is? It is the miracle of miracles. God said, Let there be plants "yielding seed"; and it is further added, each one "after his kind." The great naturalist, Cuvier, thought that the germs of all past, present, and future generations of seeds were contained one within the other, as if packed in a succession of boxes. Other learned men have explained this mystery in a different way. Let them explain it as they will, the wonder remains the same, and we must still look upon the reproduction of the seed as a continual miracle. Consider first, their number. A noted botanist counted sixty thousand, then eighty thousand, and he supposed it possible that the number might even amount to one hundred thousand. Well, let me ask you, Have these one hundred thousand kinds of plants ever failed to bear the right seed? Have they ever deceived us? Has a seed of wheat ever yielded barley, or a seed of a poppy grown up into a sunflower? Has a sycamore-tree ever sprung from an acorn, or a beech-tree from a chestnut? A little bird may carry away the small seed of a sycamore in its beak to feed its nestlings, and on the way may drop it on the ground. The tiny seed may spring up and grow where it fell, unnoticed, and sixty years after it may become a magnificent tree, under which the flocks of the valleys and their shepherds may rest in the shade. Consider next the wonderful power of life and resurrection bestowed on the seeds of plants, so that they may be preserved from year to year, and even from century to century. Some years ago a vase hermetically sealed was found in a mummy-pit in Egypt, by the English traveller Wilkinson, who sent it to the British Museum. The librarian there having unfortunately broken it, discovered in it a few grains of wheat and one or two peas, old, wrinkled, and as hard as stone. The peas were planted carefully under glass on the 4th of June, 1844, and at the end of thirty days these old seeds were seen to spring up into new life. They had been

buried probably about three thousand years ago, perhaps in the time of Moses, and had slept all that long time, apparently dead, yet still living in the dust of the tomb. Lastly, consider the almost incredible fruitfulness of these marvellous seeds. I have heard it said that a very well-known traveller, who returned from America to Europe between two and three hundred years ago, having admired in the New World this beautiful tree, then unknown in Europe, had put two or three chestnuts in the pocket of his coat. After his arrival in Paris, having put on the same coat again, he found a single chestnut still remaining in the pocket, and he took a fancy to plant it in the court of his house. The following spring a young chestnut-tree appeared, which grew and flourished, and became the parent, not only of all the chestnuts in France, but of all the magnificent trees of this kind under which the people of France, Germany, and Italy assemble on their days of festival. These all sprang from the solitary chestnut brought from America in that traveller's pocket. But what do you think of the wonderful reproducing power of seeds, when I tell you that from a single poppy seed, not larger than a grain of gunpowder, there may spring in four years, poppies enough to cover all the habitable earth, that is to say, one-fourth of the surface of the globe, or about fifty million square miles? If each seed should produce as much as Ray calculates, I have reckoned it would amount in four years to a million of millions of millions of seed; which may be estimated at 660,000 bushels (or 82,500 quarters), and would be more than enough to cover the five continents of the earth. All this immense multitude of seeds might spring in so short a time from a single little seed, not nearly so large as a grain of oats. Now, let us try to calculate the productive power of a grain of corn. All historians tell us that in old times the harvests in Egypt and Syria returned a hundredfold for one, and in Babylonia two hundredfold for one. Well, suppose that I were to sow my grain in a soil as fertile as that of Egypt is said to have been in old times, my first harvest would be 100 grains; these 100 grains would produce 100 times as much for my second harvest, or 10,000 grains; my third harvest would be 100 times 10,000, or 1,000,000 grains; and my fourth, 100,000,000 grains. It has been reckoned that there are about 820,000 grains in a bushel. At this rate, my fourth harvest would yield about 122 bushels of grain; and four years after, it would be 100,000,000 as much, or 12,200,000,000 bushels, or 1,525,000,000 quarters. This is scarcely one-sixth less than twice the 900,000,000 quarters which we reckoned would be necessary to supply the whole human race for a year. Thus in eight years as much corn might spring from one seed as to supply all mankind with bread for more than a year and a half. Remark, also, my friends, that God has not given the reproductive power of plants to their seeds alone. The life of vegetables exists in many parts of them separately, and each of these parts alone, separated from all the others, can reproduce the whole plant. (*Ibid.*)

The first vegetable.—We come now to the consideration of the highest form of pure matter, unconnected with an immaterial principle; viz., that which is invested with organic power. Before the creation of the vegetable, the state of matter had been inorganic; but at the commandment of God, a portion of it became invested with altogether new properties and new powers. It assumed, at once, and in obedience to the will of Him that spake, that extraordinary form of existence, which we call organized structure; and became, in that change, subject to new forces, regulated by new laws. The great difference which strikes us at once, as existing between an inorganic and organic structure is, that in the former, each particle acts as it were separately, and for itself; and in the latter, each particle acts as a part of a whole, for a certain end to be brought about in the whole structure; but then this effect is the beautiful resultant of certain fixed though unknown laws of combination. Professor Faraday has divided the powers of matter into two great classes—*instant and waiting*. Gravitation, for instance, he calls *instant*, because its action is unceasing, under all circumstances. Electricity, on the other hand, he calls *waiting*, because it is only called forth under certain circumstances, and, so to speak, waits for them. 1. Organic powers are eminently *waiting forces*; they are manifested under certain circumstances, and so we find that a seed will remain for thousands of years without germinating, if deprived of the influences of heat and light. 2. Again: These powers seem to be *communicable*. As the particles of the inorganic world are drawn into the organic fabric, they become themselves organic; they receive a communication of power, and act as invested with it, until they are again thrown off. 3. These powers seem also to be *exhaustible*. I feel the extent of the difficulty that lies in this admission, and yet I must acknowledge that there does appear

to be a kind of exhaustion of power in an organized structure. We find that in a certain time, these powers cease to act, and the plant, according to common language, dies. This is the stronghold of those who believe the functions of the vegetable arise from, and are governed by, an immaterial principle. For, they say, upon the removal of this principle, the whole material frame becomes powerless, and the plant dies. The great answer to this is, that the whole organic fabric does not always lose its power, or as it is called die, at once, but very often, both in the plant and in the animal, one portion of it ceases to manifest organic power before the rest; and this fact overthrows the whole argument. I feel strongly inclined to believe that, after all, there is no real exhaustion of organic power, any more than there is of physical power, but that when, in the appointed time, the whole fabric of the plant (or animal) goes to decay, these powers lie dormant in the particles of matter, till, in the wondrous revolution of the wheel of natural providence, they became incorporated with organic structure again, and put forth their manifested actions. In fact, that organic powers are powers of circumstance and not of essence; they are always present in matter, but always waiting. They are, what an ancient writer called so long ago, "moveable powers"; and they are governed, ruled, and regulated by Him who first said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," &c. Let us now consider especially the words, "Whose seed is in itself." Of all the manifestations of power, there is none so wonderful as that of reproduction. Even when we come to the consideration of the material portion of the complex nature of the animal, although we shall find other forms of power, such as contractibility, as in the case of muscle; vibration, as in the case of the fibres of the brain, receiving the impressions of light and sound; yet shall we discover none more extraordinary than this of reproduction. And yet, strange and striking as this power is, when we reflect upon it, it is not perhaps more so than certain physical powers. It is almost as wonderful that matter should attract matter, as that matter should produce matter; for both actions are alike dependent on the Creator's will. Strictly and philosophically speaking, there is no further creation of matter in the case, but a gathering in of surrounding matter, to form the germ of the future plant. We know that the most complex structure of any plant or animal (man included) is but the elaboration of the simple cell: this cell draws from the world around the materials which compose other cells, and these new cells develop themselves into the different parts which compose their future fabric, root, leaves, buds, &c.; perhaps according to their different reception of the influences of heat, light, and electricity: but this is all wrapt in mystery. There is a limit to all the investigations of man, a point beyond which he cannot go; when, like one of old, he "looks up unto the heavens, and bewails his ignorance;" but the Christian, amidst all these wonders, has a sure resting-place whereon to stand, for he knows by whom all these things consist. "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power," is the true solution to all our difficulties; and if we rested on this there would not be that uneasiness which we so often feel in the pursuit of natural science. We are too apt to speak as if we thought that God having created the universe left it to itself. He is the governor of the material world, as He is of the spiritual world. God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit," &c.; "and it was so." (*The Protoplast.*) *All nature is emblematic*:—When the Incarnate Jehovah preached upon this earth that He had made, He took the whole of creation as His text. The waving corn in the fields through which He walked with His disciples, the wild flowers, the trees which overshadowed Him, all served as symbols of heavenly things. "Consider," He said, "the lilies of the field." While we walk in a world where beauty still lingers, for it is "though spoiled by sin, in ruin fair," we may read a lesson in every leaf, and bud, and blossom. If we are anxious and distrustful as to God's provision of our wants in this life, even the very herb of the field rebukes us, for God has clothed it; the wild flowers raise their heads, bright with His workmanship, and they speak to us, saying, "Hath God so decked us, and shall He not rather clothe you, O ye of little faith?" And then how many lessons do we learn from the sowing of the seed. Christ said, "Hear ye the parable of the sower." Have we heard it? Again, Christ said in another parable, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." It is just so with the servant of God, scattering the seed in preaching the word of life; it springs up, he knows not how; he obeys the command of God. Another lesson Christ drew from natural vegetation was given in these words: "The kingdom of

heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field : which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Christ cast the little seed of His Church into the world : neglected, despised, unnurtured, it sank into the ground, and man trod it under foot ; but when it is grown to its full height and established in its millennial glory upon earth, all nations shall flow into it,—“ the birds shall come and lodge in the branches thereof.” Once more, the Apostle Paul preaches from the same text in the book of creation, the resurrection from the dead. When we see the seed sown, and remember how unlike it is to the perfect fabric of the future plant, let us reflect that just so little will the sin-bearing, suffering, decaying body we now wear resemble that which shall be raised in perfect beauty. (*Ibid.*) *The law of food production* :—God has given to every seed and living plant the tendency to develop itself, or grow under certain conditions. These conditions are an adequate supply of moisture, heat, light, air, and the all-essential requisite of a suitable soil. This law operates mainly through the principle of capillary attraction. Every blade, leaf, or stalk has in it a number of very small tubes, each with a bore as small as a hair, which has the singular power of drawing up the sap from the soil into the plant or stalk, so making it grow. This sap when drawn up lengthens and enlarges the blade or stalk, and continues to do so from day to day until it reaches an ultimate point fixed by the Creator, when it issues in blossom and fruit. That point being reached, the process stops, when man steps in and gathers the fruit which God has provided for him. These tubes act like so many mouths, which are endowed with a sort of instinct for selecting from the soil such nourishment as suits the age or species of the plant or vegetable to which they belong. The sap itself consists of water mixed with saline, sulphurous, or oily materials, and is prepared in such a manner as to suit the various seeds that are put into the ground. I. THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS LAW in supplying food. 1. It gives continual freshness to our food. Had the food of the world been all provided on the day when God made men and the cattle, and the supply been made large enough to last till the end of the world, it must long ere this time have become corrupt. 2. It supplies abundance. Every seed is endowed with both a power of self-development and also a power of self-multiplication. 3. It secures variety of food. This is as important as abundance. Had there been only one species of food we should almost have died from having the same constantly served up at our tables. 4. It saves space on the world's surface. Had the whole supply of the world's food been provided on the first day the world itself could not have furnished accommodation. 5. This law secures a permanent supply of food to the end of time. 6. This law impressively teaches man's continual dependence on God. 7. Never does anything get out of order. There is nothing to repair, everything works with the most perfect order and regularity. 8. Far greater skill and beauty lie beneath the surface than upon it. This is the characteristic of all God's works as compared with man's. II. THE EXCELLENT WORKING of this law. 1. In the simplicity of its operation. 2. In its efficiency. 3. In its beautiful adaptations. Processes of the most consummate skill are set a-going in every part of nature in order to furnish man with food. Take the case of plants. The bark which covers them defends them from the extremes of heat and cold, and also opens up a free entrance for sap and air to reach them. The leaves which clothe them assist in bringing food from all parts within reach. They are furnished with the power of sucking nourishment for them ; they protect them in their tender state, and carry off by perspiration the redundant fluids which would otherwise stagnate and turn rancid. They are the lungs of the plant.

Vers. 14-19. Let there be lights in the firmament.—*The heavenly luminaries* :—I. THESE LIGHTS ARE ALL GOD'S SERVANTS. II. THE MISTAKES MAN'S EYE MAKES IN JUDGING THE WORKS OF GOD. We “limit the Holy One of Israel.” What a small world man's eye would make of God's creation! III. THE DEEPEST HUMILITY IS THE TRUEST WISDOM. The most difficult discovery for man to make in the world is to find out his own littleness. IV. UNCONSCIOUS BENEFITS ARE RENDERED BY ONE PART OF CREATION TO ANOTHER. Here are seen the wisdom, power, and goodness of the great Creator. Little do these distant stars know what benefits they confer on our small world. V. THE HIGH ESTIMATE WHICH GOD PUTS ON MAN. He ordains such glorious worlds to serve Him. VI. THE GREAT SIN OF IDOL-WORSHIP. (*J. P. Millar.*) *The heavenly bodies* :—I. THE HEAVENLY BODIES WERE CALLED INTO EXISTENCE BY GOD. 1. Their magnitude. 2. Variety. 3. Splendour. II. THE

PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE HEAVENLY BODIES ARE DESIGNED. 1. They were to be for lights. They are unrivalled, should be highly prized, faithfully used, carefully studied, and devotionally received. These lights were regnant. (1) Their rule is authoritative. (2) It is extensive. (3) It is alternate. (4) It is munificent. (5) It is benevolent. (6) It is welcome. A pattern for all monarchs. 2. They were made to divide the day from the night. Thus the heavenly bodies were not only intended to give light, but also to indicate and regulate the time of man, that he might be reminded of the mighty change, and rapid flight of life. But the recurrence of day and night also proclaim the need of exertion and repose; hence they call to work, as well as remind of the grave. 3. To be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. The moon by her four quarters, which last each a little more than seven days, measures for us the weeks and months. The sun, by his apparent path in the sky, measures our seasons and our years, whilst by his daily rotation through the heavens he measures the days and the hours; and this he does so correctly that the best watch-makers in Geneva regulate all their watches by his place at noon; and from the most ancient times men have measured from sun dials the regular movement of the shadow. It has been well said that the progress of a people in civilization may be estimated by their regard for time—their care in measuring and valuing it. Our time is a loan. We ought to use it as faithful stewards. III. A FEW DEDUCTIONS FROM THIS SUBJECT. 1. The greatness and majesty of God. How terrible must be the Creator of the sun. How tranquil must be that Being who has given light to the moon. One glance into the heavens is enough to overawe man with a sense of the Divine majesty. 2. The humility that should characterize the soul of man. "When I consider the heavens, the work of Thine hand," &c. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *Reflections on the sun*:—In the sun we have the most worthy emblem that the visible universe presents of Him, who, with the word of His power, kindled up its glories, and with the strength of His right hand established it in the heavens. And the analogies between the sun of nature and the Sun of Righteousness are both striking and instructive. 1. In the opening scene of the fourth day we have a fine image of the advent of the Redeemer of men. On that morning the sun burst forth in its unveiled glories, irradiating the new-made earth, and revealing upon its face scenes of loveliness and grandeur which could neither be seen nor known before. So arose the Sun of Righteousness upon the world of mankind, an object as wonderful and as new in His person, and character, and office, as the great orb of day when it first came forth to run the circuit of the heavens—pouring a flood of light from above upon benighted humanity, and opening up to them views of truth, happiness, and immortality, such as the world had never known or heard before; and, like the solar light, while revealing all else, remaining Himself a glorious mystery. 2. As the natural sun is the centre of the system of creation, so the Sun of Righteousness is the vital centre of revealed truth and religion. 3. As the sun shines by his own light, so the Son of God poured the light of truth upon men from the fountain of His own mind. The instructions He imparted were neither derived from tradition nor borrowed from philosophy. He was a self-luminous and Divine Orb, rising upon the darkness of the world, shedding new light, and revealing new truths to bewildered humanity. 4. As in the pure sunbeam we have combined all the colours of the rainbow in their due proportions, so in Christ we find all virtues and graces harmoniously blended in one perfect character. In Him we behold every principle, every affection, every impulse, in perfect equipoise. 5. As the sunlight, on whatever foulness or corruption it may fall, remains uncontaminated, so the Son of Man, amid all the temptations, guilt, and depravity of earth, continued pure and unspotted. 6. As the light of the sun is unlimited and inexhaustible, so also are the healing and saving beams of the Sun of Righteousness. 7. As the sun's law of gravitation extends over the whole solar system, so the law of love, proceeding from the Sun of Righteousness, extends its authority over the whole family of man. Gravitation exercises its dominion alike over the mightiest planet and the minutest asteroid; so the Divine law of love, with equal hand, imposes its obligations upon kings, and peasants, and beggars; its authority is no less binding in courts and cabinets than in churches and families, its voice is to be heeded no less by the diplomatist sent to foreign realms, than by the preacher who remains among his flock at home. To all it speaks alike, in the name and in the words of its Divine original, "Love one another, as I have loved you." (*H. W. Morris, D.D.*) *The great time-keeper*:—What are the benefits God intends to secure for us, by the arrangements here made? By this means, He—I. Compels men, as far as they

can be compelled, to reckon their time, or number their days aright. II. Calls us often to a reckoning with ourselves under the most impressive influences. III. Invites us to new purposes of future life. IV. Teaches us, in the most impressive manner possible, the value of time. V. Impresses upon us, as a truth of practical moment, that everything must be done in its time. VI. Reminds us both of our rapid transit here and immortality hereafter. VII. Teaches us that there is a changeless empire of being, which the established round of seasons and years, and the mechanical order of heaven itself suggests and confirms. (*H. Bushnell, D.D.*) *Light*.—I. ITS SPEED! Have you any idea of it? The mind becomes confused when we try to imagine it. For instance, whence, think you, came the bright rays which this very morning lighted up your room with their dazzling brightness? Ah! they had travelled very far before they reached you, even all the distance between the sun and the earth. If a man could take the same journey, travelling at the rate of ninety-five miles a day, he would take a million of days, or nearly three thousand years to do it. And yet, how long do you think those bright rays have been in travelling this morning from the sun to your window? Only eight minutes and thirteen seconds. II. But if you wonder at the speed of light, what will you say when you think of its ABUNDANCE? This is, if possible, still more wonderful. Who can even imagine the immense and immeasurable torrents of light which from age to age have gushed forth from the sun in every direction, constantly filling with their ceaseless waves the whole extent of planetary space? I do not speak thoughtlessly when I tell you of the ceaseless flow of these waves of light, for they gush forth from the sun by night as well as by day. Some young people fancy that when it is night with us, it is then night in the universe; but this is a childish fancy, for, on the contrary, there is perpetual day in the wide universe of space. III. ITS BRILLIANT COLOURS. The rays of light which come to us directly from the sun, are, you know, of a dazzling white. If you shut carefully all the shutters in your room, so as to make it perfectly dark, and if you allow a single ray of light to enter through a small hole, you will see it mark on the opposite wall a beautiful circle of white light. But do you know what would happen to this ray if you were to place before the hole a prism of finely polished glass? When the great Newton tried this experiment for the first time, he tells us that he started with joy. The sight that he saw, and that you would see, would be this: The prism would decompose and divide the beautiful white ray into seven rays, still more beautiful, of bright-coloured light, which would paint themselves each separately on the wall, in the following order: violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red. These brilliant-coloured rays, of which each white ray is made up, are reflected in various ways, according to the nature and composition of different bodies, and thus they give their varied and manifold tints to all objects in nature. (*Professor Gausсен.*) *The clock of time*.—It is beautiful to observe how the motions of the stars of heaven in their orbits are represented by the flowers of earth in their opening and closing, in their blossoming and fading. The clock of time has two faces: the one above, on which the hours are marked by the rising and setting of the orbs of heaven; the other below, on which the hours are marked by the blossoming and the fading, the opening and the closing of the flowers. The one exactly corresponds with the other. The movements of the living creatures depend upon the movements of the lifeless stars. The daisy follows with its golden eye the path of the sun through the sky, opens its blossom when he rises, and closes it when he sets. Thus should it be with our souls. There should be a similar harmony between them and the motions of the heavenly bodies which God has set in the firmament for signs to us. Our spiritual life should progress with their revolutions; should keep time with the music of the spheres; our thoughts should be widened with the process of the suns. This is the true astrology. And as the daisy follows the sun all day to the west with its open eye, and acknowledges no other light that falls upon it—lamplight, moonlight, or starlight—remaining closed under them all, except under the light of the sun; so should we follow the Sun of Righteousness whithersoever He goeth, and say with the Psalmist, "Whom have we in the heavens but Thee; and there is none upon the earth whom we desire besides Thee." (*H. Macmillan, D.D.*) *The clock of the universe*.—It was the will of God that man should be able to measure and reckon time, that he might learn its value and regulate its employment of it. He therefore placed in the heavens a magnificent and perfect clock, which tells the hours, the days, the weeks, the months, the seasons, and the years—a clock which no one ever winds up, but which yet goes constantly, and never goes wrong. The dial-plate of this clock is the blue vault of heaven o'er

our heads—a vault spangled with stars at night, brilliant with light by day—a vault whose edges, rounded like the edge of a watch, rest on the horizon of our mountains here at Geneva, while far out at sea the whole great dial-plate may be seen, the dome of the sky seeming to rest on the wide circle of the ocean. And what, think you, are the hands of this magnificent dial-plate? God has placed on it two, the greater and the lesser. Both are ever shining, both are ever moving. They are never either too early or too late. The greater is the great light which rules the day, and which, while it seems to turn above our heads from east to west across the celestial vault, rising each morning over the Alps, and setting each evening over the Jura, seems to move at the same time on the great dial-plate of the heavens in a contrary direction, that is to say, from the west to the east, or from the Jura towards the Alps, advancing every day the length of twice its own breadth. And the lesser hand of the clock is the lesser light which rules the night, which progresses also in the same direction with the sun, but twelve times faster, advancing each day from twenty-four to twenty-five times its own breadth, and thus turning round the dial-plate in a single month. Thus, for example, if you look this evening at the moon as she sets behind the Jura, and if you carefully observe what stars are hidden behind her disk, to-morrow you will see her again set behind the same mountain, but three-quarters of an hour later, because she has in the meantime moved towards the east twenty-four times her own breadth; and then she will cover stars much nearer the Alps, so that twenty-four moons might be placed in the sky between the place that she will occupy to-morrow and the one she occupies to-day. (*Prof. Gaussien.*)

No note of time in the dark:—When the famous Baron de Trenck came out of his dark dungeon in Magdeburg, where he could not distinguish night from day, and in which the King of Prussia had kept him imprisoned for ten years, he imagined that he had been in it for a much shorter period, because he had no means of marking how the time had passed, and he had seen no new events, and had had even few thoughts: his astonishment was extreme when he was told how many years had thus passed away like a painful dream. (*Ibid.*)

Time should be valued:—The savages of North America, after their fatiguing hunting parties, and warlike expeditions, pass whole weeks and months in amusement and repose, without once thinking that they are wasting or losing anything that is valuable. It has been well said that the progress of a people in civilization may be estimated by their regard for time—their care in measuring and valuing it. If that be true even of a half-savage people, how much more must it be true of a Christian nation! Ah, how much ought a Christian to value his time, if he means to be a faithful steward, since his hours belong not to himself, but to his gracious Master, who has redeemed him at so great a price; and since he knows that he must give an account of it at last. (*Ibid.*)

The moon, an emblem of the Church:—1. As the moon, though widely separated from the earth, is attached to it by the invisible bonds of gravitation, and ordained to travel with it in its appointed course round the sun—so the Church militant, though distinct from the world, is connected with it by many ties, and appointed to pursue her pilgrimage along with it to eternity. 2. As the moon receives all her natural light from the sun, so the Church receives all her spiritual light from the Sun of Righteousness. 3. As the moon has been appointed to reflect the light she receives upon the earth to relieve her darkness, to guide the lone mariner on the deep, to lead the belated traveller in his path, and to cheer the shepherd keeping watch over his flock by night—so the Church has been ordained to reflect her heavenly light for the guidance of benighted and bewildered humanity around her. The design of her establishment, like that of the moon, is to give light upon the earth. 4. As the moon remains not stationary in the heavens over some favoured spot, but according to the law of her creation, pursues her career around the globe to cheer and enlighten its every habitable region—so the Church has been organized and commanded to carry the light of the gospel into all the world, and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to every creature. 5. As the moon, while shining in her usual brightness, moves forward unnoticed, but when under an eclipse has the gaze and remarks of half the earth's population—so the Church while walking in light and love, enlists but little of the world's attention; but let her honour pass under a cloud, or her purity be tarnished by the misconduct of but a member, and the eyes of all are fixed upon her, and her failing repeated by every tongue. Let the Israel of God take heed to their ways. (*H. W. Morris, D.D.*)

God calling the luminaries into existence:—1. The call was omnipotent. Man could not have kindled the great lights of the universe. 2. The call was wise. The idea of the

midnight sky, as now beheld by us, could never have originated in a finite mind. The thought was above the mental life of seraphs. It was the outcome of an infinite intelligence. And nowhere throughout the external universe do we see the wisdom of God as in the complicated arrangement, continual motions, and yet easily working and harmony of the heavenly bodies. There is no confusion. They need no re-adjustment. 3. The call was benevolent. The sun is one of the most kindly gifts of God to the world; it makes the home of man a thing of beauty. Also the light of the moon is welcome to multitudes who have to wend their way by land or sea, amid the stillness of night, to some far-off destination. 4. The call was typical. The same Being who has placed so many lights in the heavens can also suspend within the firmament of the soul the lights of truth, hope, and immortality. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *God has placed the lights above us:—*1. As ornaments of His throne. 2. To show forth His majesty. 3. That they may the more conveniently give their light to all parts of the world. 4. To manifest that light comes from heaven, from the Father of lights. 5. The heavens are most agreeable to the nature of these lights. 6. By their moving above the world at so great a distance, they help to discover the vast circuit of the heavens. (*Ibid.*) *The heavenly bodies:—*1. Not to honour them as gods. 2. To honour God in and by them (*Psa. viii. 1; Tim. vi. 16; Isa. vi. 2.*) (*Ibid.*) *The place and use of creatures are assigned unto them by God:—*1. That He may manifest His sovereignty. 2. That He may establish a settled order amongst the creatures. 3. Let all men abide in their sphere and calling. (1) To testify their obedience to the will of God. (2) As God knows what is best for us. (3) As assured that God will prosper all who fulfil His purpose concerning them. (*Ibid.*) *The stars and the spiritual life:—*Not for secular purposes alone are the divisions of time marked out for us by the heavenly bodies; they have a still higher and more important purpose to serve in connection with our spiritual life. I. The lights which God hath set in the firmament BREAK UP THE MONOTONY OF LIFE. Life is not a continuous drudgery, a going on wearily in a perpetual straight line; but a constant ending and beginning. We do not see all the road of life before us; the bends of its days and months and years hide the future from our view, and allure us on with new hopes, until at last we come without fatigue to the end of the journey. II. The lights which God hath set in the firmament DIVIDE OUR LIFE INTO SEPARATE AND MANAGEABLE PORTIONS. Each day brings its own work, and its own rest. III. The lights which God hath set in the firmament ENABLE US TO REDEEM THE TIME; to retrieve the mis-spent past by the right improvement of the present. Each day is a miniature of the whole of life and of all the seasons of the year. Morning answers to spring; mid-day to summer; afternoon to autumn; evening to winter. We are children in the morning, with fresh feelings and hopes; grown-up men and women, with sober and sad experiences, at noon; aged persons, with whom the possibilities of life are over, in the afternoon and night. IV. The lights which God hath set in the firmament ENABLE US TO SET OUT ON A NEW COURSE FROM SOME MARKED AND MEMORABLE POINT. God is giving to us, with every new horizon of life, a sense of recovered freedom, separating us from past painful experiences, and enabling us to begin a new course of life on a higher plane. And with this division of time by the orbs of heaven—this arrangement of days and months and years, with their perpetually recurring new opportunities of living no more unto ourselves but unto God,—coincide the nature and design of the blessed gospel, whose unique peculiarity is, that it is the cancelling of debts that could never be paid, the assurance that our relations to God are entirely changed, and that all old things are passed away, and all things become new. It is this association that gives such importance to anniversaries, birthdays, and new year's days—seasons considered peculiarly auspicious for commencing life afresh, and which are generally taken advantage of to form new resolutions. (*H. Macmillan, D.D.*) *Lessons of the firmament:—*I. LET US LOOK AT THE SUN, AS AN EMBLEM OF GOD HIMSELF. The king of the hosts of heaven, the centre of revolving orbs, the source of light and heat. II. THE MOON, SHINING WITH BORROWED LIGHT, MAY REPRESENT THE CHURCH, which, like a city set on a hill, only reflects the light that falls on it. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines. III. THE STARS MAY REPRESENT CONSPICUOUS CHARACTERS. The brightest star and best is the Star of Bethlehem, which ushered in Christ. The star of the East is the daystar which marks our bright, guiding light, Jesus Christ. He is the centre of attraction to all. (*J. B. Smith, D.D.*) *The fourth day:—*The fourth day's work is "lights set in heaven": a mighty work more glorious far than the "light" upon the first day. Then the

light was undefined. Now lights are come; one with warmth; one cold but shining; each defined; the one direct, the other reflex; but both to rule and mightily affect, not the earth only, but even the wide waters: giving another check, too, to darkness, not only taking from it day, but invading and conquering it by the moon and stars in its own domain of night. And so after that the seas of lust are bounded, and the fruits of righteousness begin to grow and bud, a sun, a mighty light is kindled in our heaven,—Christ dwells there, God's eternal word and wisdom,—no longer undefined, but with mighty warmth and power, making the whole creation to bud and spring heavenward: while as a handmaid, another light, of faith, grows bright within,—our inward moon, truth received on testimony, the Church's light; for as men say, Christ is the sun, the Church the moon, so is faith our moon within to rule the night. Of these two, the lesser light must have appeared the first; for each day grew and was measured "from the evening to the morning"; just as faith, with borrowed light, in every soul still precedes the direct beams of this light or Word within. Now both shine to pour down light. Oft would darkness fall, if our moon of faith rose not to rule the night. Yet fair as she is, she but reminds us of present night, making us sigh for the day-star and the perfect day. These lights are "for signs and for seasons and for years," and "to rule over the day and over the night also." For "signs"—first, of what we are. We have thought this earth is fixed: but sun and moon show that we are but wanderers here. We have supposed ourselves the centre; that it is the sun that moves. The lights will teach us in due time that he is steadfast: it is we who journey on. Again, these lights are "for a sign" how we stand, and where we are; by our relative positions toward them showing us, if we will learn, our real situation. For the moon is new and feeble, when, between us and the sun, it trenches on his place, and sets at eventide. So is our faith: put in Christ's place, it must be weak: dark will be our night: we shall move on unilluminated. Not so when in her place, not in His, but over against Him, our moon of faith rises at even, as our Sun withdraws Himself. Now she trenches not upon Him; therefore she is full of light, making the midnight almost as the noon-day. Signs they are, too, to the man, when at length he walks upon the earth,—the image of God, which after fruits and lights is formed in us,—to guide him through the wastes within the creature, as he seeks to know its lengths and breadths that he may subdue it all. The lights are "for seasons" also; to give healthful alternations of cold and heat, and light and darkness. Sharp winters with their frosts, chill and deadness in our affections, and the hours of darkness which recur to dim our understandings, are not unmingled evil. Ceaseless summer would wear us out: therefore the lights are "for seasons," measuring out warmth and light as we can profit by it. So faith wanes and waxes, and Christ is seen and hid, each change making the creature learn its own dependence; forcing it to feel, that, though blessed, it is a creature, all whose springs of life and joy are not its own. These lights, too, are "to rule over the day and over the night." To rule the creature, much more to rule such gifts as the day, wrought by God Himself in it, as yet has been unknown. Even to bound the natural darkness hitherto has seemed high attainment. Now we learn that the precious gifts, which God vouchsafes, need ruling; an earnest this of that which comes more fully on the sixth day. A sun "to rule the day" leads to the man "to have dominion," set to rule, not the day only, but every creature. It is no slight step, when God's aim, hitherto unknown, is learnt; that in His work this gift is for this, that for the other purpose; when it is felt that the best gifts may be misused and wasted; that they need governing, and may and must be ruled. (*A. Jukes.*) *The heavenly bodies emblematic of the spiritual.*—It is interesting to notice the many applications made in Scripture of the heavenly bodies as emblems of the spiritual.

1. God is a Sun and Shield (Psa. lxxxiv. 11).
2. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. iv. 2); the Light of the world (John viii. 12); the Morning Star (Rev. ii. 16); the dispeller of the darkness (2 Sam. xxiii. 4).
3. The Church is fair as the moon (Song vi. 10); clear as the sun (Song vi. 10); the moon under her feet (Rev. xii. 1); crowned with stars (*ib.*); the saints are to shine as the stars (Dan. xii. 3); with different glories (1 Cor. xv. 41); as the sun in his might (Judg. v. 31); as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. xiii. 43).
4. Christ's ministers are likened to stars (Rev. i. 16–20).
5. Apostates are likened to wandering stars (Jude 13).
6. It was a star that lighted the wise men (Matt. ii. 2).
7. At the coming crisis of earth's history, all these heavenly orbs are to be shaken and darkened for a season (Mark xiii. 25).

(*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Lights:—I. THE LIGHTS OF ANGELS, OF MEN, AND OF ANIMALS.* The angels behold the face of God and watch His plans from age

to age. Compared with us, they live in the blaze of day: we have the lesser light of human reason, which relieves, but does not banish, the night. There are around us other conscious creatures, endowed with still feebler powers, who grope in the dim starlight of animal existence. God is the "Father of all lights." II. THE LIGHTS OF HEATHENISM, JUDAISM, AND CHRISTIANITY. What a glimmering starlight of religious knowledge is that of the heathen millions! How partial and imperfect was the knowledge that even the Jews possessed! At last "the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in His wings." The world has not exhausted, it has scarcely touched, the wealth of spiritual light and life in Him. III. THE LIGHTS OF CHILDHOOD, MANHOOD, AND THE HEAVENLY STATE. The faint gleam of light in childhood develops into the stronger light of manhood, but even that does not banish the night. "In Thy light we shall see light." (T. M. Herbert, M.A.)

Genesis of the luminaries:—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Twin triads of the creative week. This venerable creation archive evidently divides into two great eras, each era consisting of three days; each day of the first era having a corresponding day in the second era. Thus, to the chemical light of the first day correspond the sidereal lights of the fourth day. To the terrestrial individualization of the second day corresponds the vital individualization of the fifth day. To the genesis of the lands and of the plants on the third day corresponds the genesis of the mammals and of man on the sixth day. Thus, the first era of the triad was an era of prophecy; the second era of the triad an era of fulfilment. 2. The twofold difficulty. (1) "Was not light already existing?" The answer is easy. Light may exist independently of the sun. There is, e.g., the light of phosphorescence, the light of electricity, the light of incandescence, the light of chemism, atom clashing with atom, and discharging light at every collision. (2) "The earth," you remind me, "is a constituent part of the solar system; as such, it necessitates from the beginning the contemporaneous existence of the sun, to hold the solar system in balance, and to keep earth itself in its orbit; but if the sun was not created till the fourth day, what becomes of the astronomic teaching that earth has been from the beginning an integrant part of the solar system?" Again the answer is easy. Observe, first, that our passage does not assert that God created—that is to say, caused to come into existence for the first time—sun, moon, and stars, on the fourth day. All that our passage asserts in this matter is this: God on the fourth day for the first time caused sun, moon, and stars to become visible. Remember that light is not an essential, constituent part of the sun. For aught we know, the sun itself may be a dark body, as indeed the "solar spots" have led some astronomers to think. Moreover, surveying the sun as the centre of gravitation for the planetary system, the sun can fulfil its gravitating office equally well whether luminous or not. 3. Panorama of the emerging luminaries. There is still light on the newly-verdured mountain and mead. But it is a strange, weird light; perhaps like that of the zodiacal gleam, or the dying photosphere, or perhaps like the iris-hued, lambent shimmer of the northern aurora. Suddenly the goldening gateways of the East open, and, lo, a dazzling orb, henceforth the lord of day, strides forth from his cloud pavilion as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoices to run his course as a giant his race; upward and upward he royally mounts; downward and downward he royally bows: as he nears the goal of his resplendent march, lo, the blushing portals of the West open to receive him: and lo, again, his gentle consort, "pale empress of the night," sweeps forth in silver sheen, while around her planet and comet, Arcturus and Mazzaroth, Orion and Pleiades, hold glittering court. 4. Purpose of the luminaries. (1) To bring about alternations of light and darkness. Man, as at present constituted, must have recurrent periods of sleep. And that we may sleep and wake at healthful intervals, how mercifully the Framers of our bodies and Father of our spirits has divided the day from the night; at every sunset dropping the curtains of His evening, and so inviting to repose; at every sunrise lifting the curtains of His morning, and so inviting to labour! Ah, it is one of the perhaps inevitable regresses of civilization that it tends to reverse our Divine Father's method, bidding us close our shutters, that we may sleep during His sunshine, and light our little candles and gas-jets, that we may work during His night. (2) To be for signs, seasons, days, years. (3) To give light on the earth. II. MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. The luminaries are guides to Jesus Christ. The Creator has expressly bidden us accept His ordinances of the heavenly bodies as the pledge of His covenant of grace in the Divine Son (Jer. xxxi. 35, xxxiii. 20-26; Isa. lxxxix. 35-37). 2. Jesus Christ and His Church and His truths are the true

luminaries, shining in the true heavens. Jesus Christ Himself is the true Greater Light, ruling the day as the Sun of Righteousness, coming out of the chamber of His eternity as the King of the worlds, going forth from the ends of the heavens, circling unto the ends thereof, and nothing is hidden from His heat (Psa. xix. 5, 6). The Church of Jesus Christ—Immanuel's real, spiritual Church, the aggregate of saintly characters—is the true lesser light: ruling the night as the moon of His grace, shining because He shines upon her, silvering the pathway of this world's benighted travellers. The truths of Jesus Christ—the truths which He came to disclose—are the true stars of heaven, from age to age sparkling on His brow as His many-jewelled diadem. And Jesus Christ and His Church and His truths are the world's true regulators—serving for its signs and its seasons, its days and its years. Let me cite a single instance. Why do not the world's scholars still measure time from the Greek Olympiads? Why do not the world's kings still reckon their annals from the Year of Rome? Why do not the world's scientists date their era from some memorable transit or occultation? Ah, Jesus Christ and His Church and His truth are too much for them. And so they all, even the most infidel, bow in unconscious homage before the Babe of Bethlehem, reckoning their era from that manger-birth, dating their correspondence, their legislations, their discoveries, their exploits, with the august words: *Anno Domini*. Yes, Christianity is humanity's true meridian, dictating its measures of time and space, its calendars and eras, its latitudes and longitudes. All history, if we did but know it, is time's great ecliptic around the eternal Son of God. Happy the hour, brother, when the fourth day dawns on thy soul, and thou takest thy place in the moral heavens, henceforth to shine and rule as one of earth's luminaries!

2. A personal entreaty. Take heed, O friend, lest the day come when the stars, now fighting in their courses for thee, shall fight against thee (Judg. v. 20). In that coming day of sackcloth and crimsoned moon and falling stars, one thing shall survive the dissolving heavens and melting elements: It is the blood-bought Church of the living God. (*G. D. Boardman.*)

Time.—There are few words much oftener in our mouths than that short but most important word, time. In one sense, the thought of it seems to mingle itself with almost everything which we do. It is the long measure of our labour, expectation, and pain; it is the scanty measure of our rest and joy. Its shortness or its length are continually given as our reason for doing, or leaving undone, the various works which concern our station, our calling, our family, our souls. What present time is; which it is most difficult to conceive, if we try it by more exact thought than we commonly bestow on it; for even as we try to catch it, though but in idea, it slips by us. Subdivide our measure as we may, we never actually reach it. It was future, it is past; it is the meeting point of these two, and itself, it seems, is not. And so, again, whether there is really any future time; whether it can exist, except in our idea, before it is. Or whether there can be any past time; what that can be which is no more; whose track of light has vanished from us in the darkness; which is as a shadow that swept by us, and is gone. All this is full of wonder, and it may become, in many ways, most useful matter of reflection to those who can bear to look calmly into the depths of their being. It may lead us to remember how much of what is round us here is, after all, seeming and unreal, and so force us from our too ready commerce with visible shadows into communion with invisible realities. It may show us how continually we are mocked in the regions of the senses and the understanding, and so drive us for certainty and truth to the higher gifts of redeemed reason and fellowship with God. It may abate the pride of argument on spiritual things, and teach us to take more humbly what has been revealed. And this should give us higher notions of that eternity towards which we are ever drifting on. We are apt to think of it as being merely prolonged time. But the true idea of eternity is not prolonged time, but time abolished. To enter on eternity is to pass out of the succession of time into this everlasting present. And this suggests to us the two remarkable characters, which together make up the best account we can give of time. The one—how completely, except in its issue, it passes from us: the other—how entirely, in that issue, it ever abides with us. In itself how completely does it pass away. Past time, with all its expectations, pains, and pleasures, how it is gone from us! The pleasures and the pains of childhood, of youth, nay, even of the last year, where are they? Every action has tended more to strengthen the capricious tyranny of our self-will, or to bring us further under the blessed liberty of Christ's law. We are the sum of all this past time. It was the measure of our opportunities, of our

growth. We are the result of all these minutes. And if we thus look on past time, how, at this break in our lives, should we look on to the future? Surely with calm trust, and with resolutions of increased earnestness. Let our thanksgivings grow into the one, our humiliation change into the other. If time is the opportunity and measure of this growth, what a work have we to perform in it! How should we strive to store it full with deeds which may indeed abide! (*Bishop S. Wilberforce.*) *The sun*.—The sun is almost the heart and brain of the earth. It is the regulator of its motions, from the orbital movement in space, to the flow of its currents in the sea and air, the silent rise of vapours that fly with the winds to become the source of rivers over the land, and the still more profound action in the living growth of the plant and animal. It is no creator of life; but through its outflowing light, heat, and attraction, it keeps the whole world in living activity, doing vastly more than simply turning off days and seasons. Without the direct sunlight there may be growth, as many productions of the sea and shady grounds prove. But were the sun's face perpetually veiled, far the greater part of living beings would dwindle and die. Many chemical actions in the laboratory are suspended by excluding light; and in the exquisite chemistry of living beings this effect is everywhere marked: even the plants that happen to grow beneath the shade of a small tree or hedge in a garden evince, by their dwarfed size and unproductiveness, the power of the sun's rays, and the necessity of this orb to the organic period of the earth's history. (*Bib. Sacra.*) *God more glorious than the sun*.—We are told that the late Dr. Livingstone of America, and Louis Bonaparte, ex-king of Holland, happened once to be fellow-passengers, with many others, on board one of the North River steamboats. As the doctor was walking the deck in the morning, and gazing at the refulgence of the rising sun, which appeared to him unusually attractive, he passed near the distinguished stranger, and, stopping for a moment, accosted him thus: "How glorious, sir, is that object!" pointing gracefully with his hand to the sun. The ex-king assenting, he immediately added, "And how much more glorious, sir, must be its Maker, the Sun of Righteousness!" A gentleman who overheard this short incidental conversation, being acquainted with both personages, now introduced them to each other, and a few more remarks were interchanged. Shortly after, the doctor again turned to the ex-king, and, with that air of polished complaisance for which he was remarkable, invited him first, and then the rest of the company, to attend a morning prayer. It is scarcely necessary to add that the invitation was promptly complied with. *The luminaries*.—The use of these bodies is said to be not only for dividing the day from the night, but "for signs and seasons, and days and years." They ordinarily afford signs of weather to the husbandman; and prior to the discovery of the use of the loadstone, were of great importance to the mariner. They appear also on some extraordinary occasions to have been premonitory to the world. Previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, our Lord foretold that there should be "great earthquakes in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs from heaven." And it is said by Josephus, that a comet like a flaming sword was seen for a long time over that devoted city, a little before its destruction by the Romans. Heathen astrologers made gods of these creatures, and filled the minds of men with chimerical fears concerning them. Against these God warns His people; saying, "Be ye not dismayed at the signs of heaven." This, however, does not prove but that He may sometimes make use of them. Modern astronomers, by accounting for various phenomena, would deny their being signs of anything: but to avoid the superstitions of heathenism, there is no necessity for our running into atheism. The heavenly bodies are also said to be for seasons, as winter and summer, day and night. We have no other standard for the measuring of time. The grateful vicissitudes also which attend them are expressive of the goodness of God. If it were always day or night, summer or winter, our enjoyments would be unspeakably diminished. Well is it said at every pause, "And God saw that it was good!" David improved this subject to a religious purpose. He considered "day unto day as uttering speech, and night unto night as showing knowledge." Every night we retire we are reminded of death, and every morning we arise of the resurrection. In beholding the sun also, "which as a bridegroom cometh out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race," we see every day a glorious example of the steady and progressive "path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (*d. Fuller.*)

Vers. 20-23. Let the waters bring forth abundantly.—*Fish and fowl*.—I. THAT

LIFE IS THE IMMEDIATE CREATION OF GOD. 1. Life was not an education. 2. It was not the result of combination. 3. It was a miraculous gift. There are two words in this sentence that should be remembered, and joined together most closely, they are "God" and "life." This should be so in the soul of man, as God is the source of its true and higher life. If the Church were to remember the connection of these two great words, she would be much more powerful in her toil. Life was at first the miraculous gift of God. Its continuance is His gift. II. THAT LIFE IS VARIED IN ITS MANIFESTATION AND CAPABILITY. 1. Life is varied in its manifestations. There were created on this day both fish and fowl. Thus life is not a monotony. It assumes different forms. It grows in different directions. It has several kingdoms. It has numerous conditions of growth. 2. Life is varied in its capability. The fish swim in the water. The fowls fly in the air; the abilities and endowments of each are distinct and varied. Each takes a part in the great ministry of the universe. The whole in harmony is the joy of man. 3. Life is abundant and rich in its source. The waters brought forth abundantly. There was no lack of life-giving energy on the part of God. The world is crowded with life. The universe will not soon become a grave, for even in death there is life, hidden but effective to a new harvest. 4. Life is good in its design. III. THAT THE LOWER SPHERES OF LIFE ARE RICHLY ENDOWED WITH THE DIVINE BLESSING. 1. It was the blessing of increasing numbers. 2. It was the blessing of an extended occupation of the land and sea. 3. Let us always remember that the blessing of God rests upon the lower spheres of life. (J. S. Exell, M.A.) *Genesis of the animals*:—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Animals the issue of fifth and sixth days. 2. Panorama of the emerging animals. Lo! the nautilus spreads his sail, and the caterpillar winds his cocoon, and the spider weaves his web, and the salmon darts through the sea, and the lizard glides among the rocks, and the eagle soars the sky, and the lion roams the jungle, and the monkey chatters among the trees, and all animate creation waits the advent and lordship of man, God's inspiration and therefore God's image, God's image and therefore God's viceroy. 3. The animal succession a progress. (1) Animals of the water. (2) Animals of the air. (3) Animals of the land. (4) Man. And with this Mosaic account of the origin of life, ascending from plant, by way of animal, to man, the geological records substantially agree: first, plants and fishes of the Palæozoic period; secondly, birds and reptiles of the Mesozoic period; thirdly, mammals and man of the Neozoic period. 4. "After their kind." Almost like a prophetic caveat against the modern hypothesis of the mutability of species. 5. The Creator's blessing. The benediction of fertility. 6. The Divine delight. II. MORAL MEANING OF THE STORY. 1. Animals have "souls." What in man we call reason, in animals we call instinct. As that mysterious force which vitalizes and builds up the fabric of the human body is the same mysterious force which vitalizes and builds up the fabric of the animalcule, so that mysterious guide which teaches Newton how to establish the law of gravity, and Shakespeare how to write his "Hamlet," and Stephenson how to bridge the St. Lawrence, seems substantially to be the same mysterious guide which teaches the beaver how to build his dam, and the spider how to weave his web, and the ant how to dig his spiral home. The difference does not seem to be so much a difference in nature or kind, as in degree or intensity. As the diamond is the same substance with charcoal—only under superior crystalline figure—so reason seems to be substantially the same with instinct—only in an intensely organized state. One thing is common to man and animals: it is that mysterious principle or force which, in want of a better name, and in distinction from the term spirit, we call "soul." 2. Animals perhaps are immortal. I quote from that profound treatise by Louis Agassiz, entitled "Essay on Classification": "Most of the arguments of philosophy in favour of the immortality of man apply equally to the permanency of the immaterial principle in other living beings. May I not add that a future life in which man should be deprived of that great source of enjoyment and intellectual and moral improvement, which results from the contemplation of the harmonies of an organic world, would involve a lamentable loss? And may we not look to a spiritual concert of the combined worlds and all their inhabitants in presence of their Creator, as the highest conception of paradise?" (See Rom. viii. 19-23.) (G. D. Boardman.) *The prolific character of the life of the ocean*:—The finny tribes are specially prolific. The eggs of fish, or spawn, produce vast multitudes. The row of a codfish contains nine millions of eggs, of a flounder, about a million and a half, and of a mackerel, half a million. "The unchecked produce of one pair of herrings would in a very few years crowd the Atlantic."

So is it also with birds. The passenger pigeon of North America has been seen in flocks a mile broad, and taking four hours in passing, at the rate of a mile a minute, and was calculated to contain 250 millions of birds (Psa. civ. 24, 25). The microscope also shows there are beings with perfect organs of nutrition and locomotion, a million of which would not exceed in bulk one grain of sand, and eight millions of which might be compressed within a grain of mustard seed. Others are so small that 500 millions of them could live in a dish of water. There are even animalculæ so minute that a cubic inch could contain a million millions of them. (*Jacobus.*) *Shoals of animalculæ*:—Some few years ago a newspaper correspondent, writing from the Gulf of Siam, said: "We steamed forward at the rate of six or seven knots an hour, and a wonderful spectacle presented itself. Athwart the vessel, long white waves of light were seen rushing towards it, ever brighter and in swifter motion, till they seemed to flow together, and at length nothing could be seen on the water but a whirling white light. Looking steadfastly at it, the water, the air, and the horizon seemed blended in one; thick streamers of mist seemed to float by both sides of the ship with frantic speed. The appearances of colour resembled those which arise when one turns a black-and-white striped ball so quickly that the white stripes seem to run together. The spectacle lasted for five minutes, and was repeated once again for two minutes. No doubt it was caused by shoals of animalculæ in the water." *Resemblance between fishes and birds*:—I must tell you of a discovery made by a very dear friend whom I have lost, the excellent Dr. Prévost, a learned anatomist of Geneva. He often mentioned it to me as affording a remarkable testimony to the Word of God. It helps to explain the words of the 20th verse. We may perhaps wonder that two such apparently different kinds of creatures as fishes and birds should be classed together. Who among us would have thought of such an arrangement? But, dear children, scientific men have discovered, on examination, that there are very close resemblances between them in their anatomical structure and in some other things. Both spring from eggs; and while the one class—the birds—swim in the air with wings, the other—the fishes—fly in the water with fins. And besides these points of resemblance, the discovery made by Dr. Prévost, which astonished himself and interested the learned world very much, was this, that the globules of the blood of fishes and birds are seen to be the same, when closely examined, and do not at all resemble the globules of the blood of those animals which sprang from the earth on the sixth day. (*Prof. Gausson.*) *Some of the faculties and organs of fishes*:—Fishes appear to be endowed with the senses common to land animals. Those of touch and taste are supposed to be feeble, in general: though some are furnished with flexible feelers, or organs of touch. Their organs of smelling and hearing are more acute, and are in their structure happily adapted to the element in which they live. These latter senses have no external avenues, as in land animals; for immediate and perpetual contact with the dense element of water would soon prove ruinous to their delicate and sensitive nerves. Smelling is said to be the most acute of all their senses. The olfactory membrane and nerves in them are of remarkable extent; in a large shark they expand over a surface of no less than twelve or thirteen square feet. Hence, by this sense the finny tribes can discover their prey or their enemies at a great distance, and direct their course in the thickest darkness, and amid the most agitated waves. Possessing the foregoing faculties fishes are not without a degree of sagacity. They have been found even capable of instruction, and been taught to come when called by their names, and to assemble for their food at the sound of a whistle or bell. They are said to be among the most long-lived of all animals. The carp has been known to reach more than a hundred years of age. And Kirby relates that a pike was taken in 1754, at Kaiserslautern, which had a ring fastened to the gill covers, from which it appeared to have been put into the pond of that castle by order of Frederick II. in 1487—a period of two hundred and sixty-seven years. Fishes excel in strength, and seem to be capable of prolonged exertion without apparent fatigue. Even the feathered tribe, in this, must yield the palm to the finny race. The shark will out-travel the eagle, and the salmon will out-strip the swallow in speed. The thunny will dart with the rapidity of an arrow, and the herring will travel for days and weeks at the rate of sixteen miles an hour, without respite or repose. Sharks have been observed to follow and play around a ship through its whole voyage across the Atlantic; and the same fish, when harpooned, has been known to drag a vessel of heavy tonnage at a high speed against wind and tide. (*Ibid.*) *Fecundity of fishes*:—This "blessing" is to be regarded, not simply as a solemn word of

command, but the imparting of reproducing energies to the varied tribes of the deep. And to see how effective this blessing was, we need but look at the results which followed. Nothing can exceed that "abundance" brought forth. If we attempt to estimate the number of eggs in the roes of various kinds of fish, we may be able to form some faint conception of it. The roe of the cod-fish, according to Harmer's estimate, contains 3,686,000 eggs; of the flounder, 225,000; of the mackerel, 500,000; of the tench, 350,000; of the carp, 203,000; of the roach, 100,000; of the sole, nearly 100,000; of the pike, 50,000; of the herring, the perch, and the smelt, from 20,000 to 30,000. Other species are equally prolific. Such numbers present an idea of fecundity that is truly overwhelming. It must be observed, however, that a large proportion of the eggs deposited are destroyed in various ways; they are eagerly sought after by other fishes, by aquatic birds, and by reptiles, as food; and in the young state, they are pursued and devoured by larger ones of their own species, as well as by those of others. Still the numbers which arrive at maturity surpass all comprehension, as appears from the countless myriads of those that are of gregarious and migratory habits. Impelled and guided by that mysterious power we call instinct, fishes, at certain seasons, migrate and travel in immense droves to seek a suitable place and temperature for the reproduction of their species. Vast migrations take place from the oceans into all the rivers of the earth; the salmon and others often ascend large streams in great numbers for hundreds and even thousands of miles. Vaster yet by far are the migrations that occur in the ocean from one region to another. The migratory tribes of the sea are very numerous; of these, among the best known is the cod; at spawning time these fish proceed northward, and frequent the shallows of the ocean, such as the banks of Newfoundland, where they are found in infinite multitudes. The haddock resorts, in like manner, to northern coasts, and has been found in immense shoals of more than twenty miles long and three miles broad. The mackerel also is a migratory tribe; these winter in the Arctic and Antarctic oceans, from whence in the spring they emerge from their hiding places in innumerable myriads, and proceed to more genial seas to deposit their eggs. The thunny travels for the same end in numbers without number. But the most notable of all the migratory species are the herrings; these, like many others, pass the winter in high northern latitudes, and at different times through the summer, proceed southward in search of food, and to deposit their spawn. Some idea of their numbers may be formed from the vast quantities that are taken. Many years since, when the business was prosecuted on a more limited scale than at present, it was reported that on the coast of Norway no less than 20,000,000 were frequently taken at a single fishing; and that the average capture of the season exceeded 400,000,000. At Gottenberg, 700,000,000 were annually caught. Yet all these millions were but a fraction of the numbers taken by the English, Dutch, and other nations. But all that are taken by all nations put together, are no more missed from the countless hosts of the ocean than a drop out of the full bucket. Their shoals, says Kirby, consist of millions of myriads, and are many leagues in width, many fathoms in depth, and so dense that the fishes touch each other; and this stream continues to move at a rapid rate past any particular point nearly all summer. If, then, these single groups of a few species that happen to fall under the observation of man be thus numerous, or rather innumerable, it is obvious that the aggregate of all the orders, genera, and species, making up the whole population of the deep, must infinitely transcend all the powers of human enumeration! (*Ibid.*) *Birds*.—As in the beauteous creations of the vegetable world, and among the countless living tenants of the deep, so also among the birds of the air, we behold indubitable evidences and most impressive displays of the universal and constant agency of God. In all their doings and movements, the guiding finger of their Creator is clearly seen. Prior to all experience, and independent of all instruction, we see the little feathered tribes undertake and accomplish all the ingenious duties of their being; and accomplish them, too, with a certainty and perfection which no instruction could teach, and no experience improve. The sparrow performs and goes through with the whole process of building, laying, hatching, and rearing, as successfully the first time as the last. And whence is all this to the little bird of the air, if not from the omnipresent and infinite Spirit? Who or what leads the young female bird to prepare a nest, untaught and undirected, long before she has need of it? Who instructs each particular species in its own peculiar style of architecture? And when the first egg is brought forth, who teaches her what she must do with it? or that it is a

thing to be taken care of, that it must be laid and preserved in the nest? And the germ of future life being wrapped in the egg, who teaches its little owner that heat will develop and mature that germ? Who acquaints her with the fact that her own body possesses the precise kind and degree of warmth required? And what is it that holds her so constantly and so long upon the nest, amid light and darkness, storm and sunshine, without the least knowledge or idea as to what the result or fruit of all this toil and self-denial is to be? Here, then, are operations carried on, and effects produced, which must constrain every candid mind to recognize in them the invisible hand of God. Again, the migration of birds—how astonishing is all this! “The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming.” So fixed are the dates of departing and returning with many tribes of the feathered race that, “in certain eastern countries at the present day, almanacs are timed and bargains struck upon the data they supply.” Now, who informs them that the day is come for them to take their leave? or announces to them that the time has arrived for their return? Without science, without a map, without a compass, without a waymark, who acquaints them with the direction they are to take? or measures out for them the length of the journey they have to perform? Who enables them to pursue undeviatingly their course over pathless oceans, and through the trackless voids of the atmosphere, alike in the day time and in the night season, and to arrive exactly at the same spot from year to year? To whom shall we ascribe this extraordinary power—to God, or to the little bird? It must be either to the one, or to the other. It is obvious that the little bird does not possess either the reasoning powers, or the geographical acquaintance, or the meteorological knowledge, which would enable it either to plan or to carry out such astonishing enterprises. Indeed, could man thus, amid all storms and darkness, infallibly steer his voyages over the main, it would render superfluous the use of his compass and sextant, and enable him at once to dispense with his trigonometry and logarithms. Whatever name, then, we may give this mysterious power, and in whatever light we may regard these astonishing facts, correct and sound reasoning, as well as the Scripture, will lead us to the conviction and acknowledgment of the illustrious Newton, that all this is done through the immediate influence and guidance of Him, “in whom all live and move and have their being,” and without whom “not a sparrow falleth to the ground.” In the feathered population of our globe we also behold, not proofs only, but most interesting and delightful displays of the goodness of God. The very introduction of the winged race into the new-made world was, in itself, a demonstration of the benevolence of the Divine mind, as they constitute one of its most beautiful and lovely features. Birds are also living parables, and as such the Great Teacher often employed them. (*Ibid.*)

Insects.—On the fifth day were also produced the insect population of the new-made world, for these, as well as birds, must be included in the term winged thing. This department of animated nature presents to us a field of study all but illimitable, insects being by far the most numerous and diversified of all the living orders that occupy the dry land. Not less than 100,000 different species are already known, and many more doubtless remain to be discovered. A distinguished naturalist has made the statement, that there are probably six species of insects to every species of plants; this estimate, therefore, would make the entire number of insect species on the face of the globe considerably over half a million. The insect tribes are of all conceivable forms, habits, and instincts. (*Ibid.*)

Reflections on the insect creation.—Insects, like every other class of living creatures, have their place to occupy, and their office to fulfil in the Divine plan, and form an essential link in the great chain of animated nature. Small and insignificant as they appear, viewed singly, yet taken collectively, they make up armies far more potent and formidable than either Alexander, or Cæsar, or Bonaparte ever mustered; and these being everywhere dispersed, and daily and hourly at work in their several departments, they constitute an agency of great power, and no doubt of great good, in the economy of the world. We may not be able to determine how, or what, each particular species contributes to the benefit of the great whole; but we may be sure that their great variety of organs, and their wonderful instinctive capacities, have been bestowed upon them for ends worthy of the wisdom that produced them. The works of the Lord are perfect, and nothing has been made in vain. Insects are an ornament to the earth's scenery, and, no doubt, were designed by the munificent Creator to be objects of pleasurable observation and study to man. The insect creation teaches us that God is to be seen in the least as well as in the greatest

of His works. He is in all and through all. The guidance of His finger is to be traced as distinctly in the circles of the spider's web as in the orbits of the planets; and the operation of His hand is as plainly seen in the lustre of an insect's wing, as in the resplendent disk of the sun, which sheds light and life on surrounding globes. In the history of insects, we meet with the most beautiful illustration that all nature affords of the great and distinguishing doctrine of Christianity—the resurrection of the dead. (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 22, 23. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply.—*God's blessing abundant*:—At the close of this day the Lord does what He has not done on any of the other four days; He blesses that which He has created, and the object of His blessing is an abundant and perpetual increase. God is liberal; munificent in His donations both temporal and spiritual. Does He give joy? It is unspeakable joy. Does He give peace? It is a peace which passeth all understanding. Does He give pleasures? They are pleasures for evermore. Does He give glory? It is an exceeding eternal weight of glory. The close-handed and narrow-hearted Christian has not learned to be so in the school of the Master. All who are in His school, and who practice the lessons which they receive there, are open-handed and large-hearted. (*A. McAulane, D.D.*) *God's blessing upon the means of great importance*:—As in a course of physio, a diseased man is prescribed to boil certain medicinale herbs in running water, and then to drink a quantity of that water, and so is cured of his disease; and yet we know that it is not the water, but the decoction or infusion, which cureth the patient: so it is not the bread that nourisheth, nor the abundance of outward things which enricheth or contenteth, but the infusion of God's blessing, which is the staff of life, without which a man may starve for hunger with bread in his mouth, suffer the extremity of cold with good clothes on his back, and die like the children of Israel with the flesh of quails in his mouth. (*J. Spencer.*)

Vers. 24, 25. God made the beast of the earth.—*The animal creation*:—I. **THAT THE ANIMAL WORLD WAS CREATED BY GOD.** 1. We should regard the animal world with due appreciation. Man has too low an estimate of the animal world. We imagine that a tree has as much claim to our attention and regard as a horse. The latter has a spirit; is possessed of life; it is a nobler embodiment of Divine power; it is a nearer approach to the fulfilment of creation. 2. We should treat the animal world with humane consideration. Surely, we ought not to abuse anything on which God has bestowed a high degree of creative care, especially when it is intended for our welfare. II. **THAT THE ANIMAL WORLD WAS DESIGNED BY GOD FOR THE SERVICE OF MAN.** 1. *Useful for business.* How much of the business of man is carried on by the aid of animals. They afford nearly the only method of transit by road and street. The commercial enterprise of our villages and towns would receive a serious check if the services of the animal creation were removed. 2. *Needful for food.* Each answers a distinct purpose toward the life of man; from them we get our varied articles of food, and also of clothing. These animals were intended to be the food of man, to impart strength to his body, and energy to his life. To kill them is no sacrilege. Their death is their highest ministry, and we ought to receive it as such; not for the purpose of gluttony, but of health. Thus is our food the gift of God. III. **THAT THE ANIMAL WORLD WAS AN ADVANCE IN THE PURPOSE OF CREATION.** The chaos had been removed, and from it order and light had been evoked. The seas and the dry land had been made to appear. The sun, moon, and stars had been sent on their light-giving mission. The first touch of life had become visible in the occupants of the waters and the atmosphere, and now it breaks into larger expanse in the existence of the animal creation, awaiting only its final completion in the being of man. IV. **THAT THE ANIMAL WORLD WAS ENDOWED WITH THE POWER OF GROWTH AND CONTINUANCE, AND WAS GOOD IN THE EIGHT OF GOD.** 1. The growth and continuance of the animal world was insured. Each animal was to produce its own kind, so that it should not become extinct; neither could one species pass into another by the operation of any physical law. 2. The animal world was good in the sight of God. It was free from pain. The stronger did not oppress, and kill the weaker. The instinct of each animal was in harmony with the general good of the rest. But animals have shared the fate of man, the shadow of sin rests upon them; hence their confusion and disorder, their pain, and the many problems they present to the moral philosopher. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The animals of the earth as forerunners of man*:—1. The

first signs and pictures of human life. 2. Its most intimate assistants. 3. Its first conditions. (*J. P. Lange, D.D.*) *Reflections on the domestic animals*:—In domestic animals we recognize a very marked token of the paternal kindness of the Creator. Their value and importance to man cannot well be estimated. How much do they add to his strength in toil, to his ease and speed in travelling, and to his sustenance and gratification in food. Even the dog proffers to us a serious and profitable lesson. "Man," said the poet Burns, "is the god of the dog. He knows no other, he can understand no other. And see how he worships him. With what reverence he crouches at his feet, with what love he fawns upon him, with what dependence he looks up to him, and with what cheerful alacrity he obeys him! His whole soul is wrapped up in his god; all the powers and faculties of his nature are devoted to his service, and these powers and faculties are ennobled by the intercourse. Divines tell us that it ought to be just so with the Christian; but does not the dog often put the Christian to shame?" The ox, also, is to us a living parable. As he slowly wends his way from the field of toil, at noon, or evening, toward home, how affecting the remonstrance his moving figure is made to utter—"The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, My people do not consider." And when he bows his submissive neck to receive the yoke and go forth to his labour again, how gracious the invitation symbolized by the willing act—"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." The sheep, likewise, is a sacred emblem. Were this animal to repeat all the various truths committed by the Spirit to its symbolism, it would preach to us a new lesson with every change of situation in which we beheld it—following after the shepherd—enclosed in the fold—scattered on the mountain—lying down in green pastures—straying among wolves—borne on the shepherd's shoulder—bound before the shearer—separating from the goats—in these various circumstances, sheep read to us the most solemn and important truths of the gospel of the Son of God. And the lamb—this is the central symbol of the Christian system. This innocent and gentle creature is pre-eminently the type of Him who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, the Lamb of God that was slain to take away the sins of the world, in whose blood the redeemed of heaven have washed their robes and made them white. The horse also is a chosen figure of inspiration. In the Book of Revelation—that wonderful portion of the sacred volume—the King of kings, and Lord of lords, is represented as riding on a white horse; and the armies of heaven as following Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, to witness His victory over all the enemies of truth and righteousness, and to participate in the final triumphs of His grace. Such is the deeply interesting event, such the glorious consummation, of which the horse stands for ever a symbol and a remembrancer before his rider. How wise the arrangement that has thus embodied Divine truth in living forms, that ever move before our view. How kind and gracious in God our Father thus to constitute "sheep and oxen" to be unto us as priests and prophets, holding forth the Word of life, and, though they see not the vision themselves, symbolizing the glorious things of Christ and of heaven, to inspire us with the comfort of the most blessed hope. (*H. W. Morris, D.D.*) *Beasts, or wild animals*:—The term beast in the history of this day, as has already been stated, is employed to designate wild animals, in contradistinction from the tame, included under the word cattle. Although these are not designed so immediately or so eminently for the service of man as domestic animals, yet many, if not most of them, contribute in one way or another to his welfare—some as game for his sustenance, some by their hides and fur for his clothing, and all as subjects of interesting and profitable study. It is stated in the Holy Scriptures concerning the various branches of the human family, that "God before appointed the bounds of their respective habitations"; this is equally true of the different tribes of animals. Wise design and kind adaptation stand forth conspicuously in the arrangement which has assigned to them their several localities. The hairless elephant, rhinoceros, and tapir are obviously made for the heat and luxuriance of the Torrid Zone; and it is there they are found. The camel and the dromedary have been fashioned and constituted with specific adaptations for the parched and sandy deserts of the tropics; and here, accordingly, they have been located. Advancing to the more temperate regions, we still find all creatures, both domestic and wild, admirably fitted to occupy the zone given to them for their inheritance. And as we proceed northward, we discover given to the various animals hardihood of constitution, together with warmth of covering, increasing with the increasing rigour of the

climate, till we pass within the Arctic circle, and reach the polar bears. Voyagers in those latitudes tell us that these animals disport in the regions of ice, and revel in an intensity of cold, which, to man with every contrivance of art for protection, is almost past endurance, and produces in him diseases which shortly terminate his existence—that they sit for hours like statues upon icebergs, where, if we were to take up our position for one half-hour, we should become statues indeed, and be frozen into the lasting rigidity of death—that they slide in frolic down slopes of snows, which if we were to touch with our bare hand, would instantly, like fire, destroy its vitality. Who that contemplates these shaggy creatures of the pole, so constituted as to find a congenial home amid eternal ice and snow, and to take their frolicsome pastime amid the bleak and dismal horrors of an arctic night, but must confess that every creature, by Divine appointment and adaptation, is suited for its place, and that every place is fitted for its given occupants? (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 26, 27. **Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.**—*The creation of man.*—I. THAT THE CREATION OF MAN WAS PRECEDED BY A DIVINE CONSULTATION. 1. This consultation was Divine. Held by the Three Persons of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, who were one in the creative work. 2. This consultation was solemn. Man, unlike the rest of creation, is a being endowed with mind and volition, capable even of rebellion against his Creator. There must be a pause before such a being is made. The project must be considered. The probable issue must be calculated. His relation to heaven and earth must be contemplated. 3. This consultation was happy. The Divine Being had not yet given out, in the creative work, the highest thought of His mind; He had not yet found outlet for the larger sympathies of His heart in the universe He had just made and welcomed into being. The light could not utter all His beneficence. The waters could not articulate all His power. The stars did but whisper His name. The being of man is vocal with God, as is no other created object. He is a revelation of his Maker in a very high degree. In him the Divine thought and sympathy found welcome outlet. The creation of man was also happy in its bearing toward the external universe. The world is finished. It is almost silent. There is only the voice of the animal creation to break its stillness. But man steps forth into the desolate home. He can sing a hymn—he can offer a prayer—he can commune with God—he can occupy the tenantless house. Hence the council that contemplated his creation would be happy. II. THAT MAN WAS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. Man was originally God-like, within certain limitations. In what respect was man created after the image of God? 1. In respect to his intelligence. God is the Supreme Mind. He is the Infinite Intelligence. Man is like Him in that he also is gifted with mind and intelligence; he is capable of thought. 2. In respect to his moral nature. Man is made after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. He was made with a benevolent disposition, with happy and prayerful spirit, and with a longing desire to promote the general good of the universe; in these respects he was like God, who is infinitely pure, Divinely happy in His life, and in deep sympathy with all who are within the circle of His Being. 3. In respect to his dominion. God is the Supreme Ruler of all things in heaven and in earth. Both angels and men are His subjects. Material Nature is part of His realm, and is under His authority. In this respect, man is made in the image of God. He is the king of this world. The brute creation is subject to his sway. Material forces are largely under his command. 4. In respect to his immortality. God is eternal. Man partakes of the Divine immortality. Man, having commenced the race of being, will run toward a goal he can never reach. God, angels, and men are the only immortalities of which we are cognizant. What an awful thing is life. 5. In respect to the power of creatorship. Man has, within certain limits, the power of creatorship. He can design new patterns of work. III. THAT THE CREATION OF MAN IN THE DIVINE IMAGE IS A FACT WELL ATTESTED. "So God created man in His own image" (verse 27). This perfection of primeval manhood is not the fanciful creation of artistic genius—it is not the dream of poetic imagination—it is not the figment of a speculative philosophy; but it is the calm statement of Scripture. 1. It is attested by the intention and statement of the Creator. It was the intention of God to make man after His own image, and the workman generally follows out the motive with which he commences his toil. And we have the statement of Scripture that He did so in this instance. True, the image was soon marred and broken, which could not have been the case had it not previously existed. How glorious must man have been in his original condition. 2. It is attested by the

very fall of man. How wonderful are the capabilities of even our fallen manhood. The splendid ruins are proof that once they were a magnificent edifice. What achievements are made by the intellect of man—what loving sympathies are given out from his heart—what prayers arise from his soul—of what noble activities is he capable; these are tokens of fallen greatness, for the being of the most splendid manhood is but the rubbish of an Adam. Man must have been made in the image of God, or the grandeur of his moral ruin is inexplicable. Learn: 1. The dignity of man's nature. 2. The greatness of man's fall. 3. The glory of man's recovery by Christ. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *What is the image of God in which man was created?*—I. NEGATIVELY. Let us see wherein the image of God in man does not consist. Some, for instance, the Socinians, maintain that it consists in that power and dominion that God gave Adam over the creatures. True, man was vouchsafed God's immediate deputy upon earth, the viceroy of the creation. But that this power and dominion is not adequately and completely the image of God is clear from two considerations. 1. Then he that had most power and dominion would have most of God's image, and consequently Nimrod had more of it than Noah, Saul than Samuel, Cæsar than Christ—which is a blasphemous paradox. 2. Self-denial and humility will make us unlike. II. POSITIVELY. Let us see wherein the image of God in man does consist. It is that universal rectitude of all the faculties of the soul—by which they stand, act, and dispose their respective offices and operations, which will be more fully set forth by taking a distinct survey of it in the several faculties belonging to the soul; in the understanding, in the will, in the passions or affections. 1. In the understanding. At its first creation it was sublime, clear, and inspiring. It was the leading faculty. There is as much difference between the clear representations of the understanding then, and the obscure discoveries that it makes now, as there is between the prospect of landscape from a casement, and from a keyhole. This image was apparent—(1) In the understanding speculative. (2) In the practical understanding. 2. In the will. The will of man in the state of innocence had an entire freedom to accept or not the temptation. The will then was ductile and pliant to all the motions of right reason. It is in the nature of the will to follow a superior guide—to be drawn by the intellect. But then it was subordinate, not enslaved; not as a servant to a master, but as a queen to her king, who both acknowledges her subjection and yet retains her majesty. 3. In the passion. Love. Now this affection, in the state of innocence, was happily pitched upon its right object; it flamed up in direct fervours of devotion to God, and in collateral emissions of charity to its neighbour. Hatred. It was then like aloes—bitter, but wholesome. Anger. Joy. Sorrow. Hope. Fear. The use of this point—that man was created in the image of God—might be various; but it shall be twofold. (1) To remind us of the irreparable loss we have sustained by sin. (2) To teach us the excellency of the Christian religion. (*R. South, D.D.*) *The Divine image in man:*—It is not too much to say that redemption, with all its graces and all its glories, finds its explanation and its reason in creation. He who thought it worth while to create, foreseeing consequences, can be believed, if He says so, to have thought it worth while to rescue and to renew. Nay, there is in this redemption a sort of antecedent fitness, inasmuch as it exculpates the act of creation from the charge of short-sightedness or of mistake. "Let us make man in our image," created anew in Jesus Christ, "after the image of Him that created him." Notice three respects in which the Divine image has been traced in the human. I. "God is Spirit," was our Lord's saying to the Samaritan. Man is spirit also. This it is which makes him capable of intercourse and communion with God Himself. SPIRITUALITY thus becomes the very differentia of humanity. The man who declares that the spiritual is not, or is not for him, may well fancy himself developed out of lower organisms by a process which leaves him still generically one of them; for he has parted altogether from the great strength and life of his race. II. Spirituality is the first Divine likeness. We will make SYMPATHY the second. Fellow-suffering is not necessarily sympathy. On the other hand, sympathy may be where fellow-suffering is not. Love is sympathy, and God is love. Sympathy is an attribute of Deity. When God made man in His own likeness, He made him thereby capable of sympathy. Spirituality without sympathy might conceivably be a cold and spiritless grace; it might lift us above earth, but it would not brighten earth itself. III. The third feature is that which we call INFLUENCE; the other two are conditions of it. Influence is by name and essence the gentle flowing in of one nature and one personality into another, which touches the spring of will and makes the volition of one the volition of the

other. It is indeed a worse than heathenish negation of the power and activity of God, the source of all, if we debar Him alone from the exercise of that spiritual influence upon the understanding, the conscience, and the heart of mankind, which we find to be all but resistless in the hands of those who possess it by His leave. (*Dean Vaughan.*)

Man in God's image.—The small can represent the great. Is not the sun reflected in the hues of the smallest flower, and in the greenness of the finest blade of grass? Yet that sun is distant from our earth ninety-five millions of miles, and is larger than our earth one hundred thousand times. I. IN WHAT THE IMAGE OF GOD UPON MAN CONSISTS. 1. In the possession of moral powers and susceptibilities. 2. In the pure and righteous state of his whole nature. 3. In his relative position toward other terrestrial creatures. II. GREAT BLESSEDNESS WAS INVOLVED IN THE POSSESSION OF GOD'S IMAGE. 1. In the possession of the Divine image human nature had within itself a mirror of God. 2. It led to fellowship with God. 3. It was a mirror of God to other creatures. 4. It was a mirror in which God saw Himself. In this was involved—(1) Supreme good to man himself.

(2) High satisfaction and glory to God. Reflections: 1. How sadly changed is human nature. 2. How elevated is the Christian. 3. How blessed is God. (*S. Martin.*)

The image of God in man.—In man two widely different elements are blended, of which only the one could be moulded in the image of God. God is a Spirit: but man is material as well as spiritual. God "breathed into (man's) nostrils the breath of life": but He had previously "formed (him) of the dust of the ground." Man therefore is like a coin which bears the image of the monarch: when we would describe the features of that royal likeness, we take no thought of the earthly material of the metal on which it is impressed. 1. In the first place, then, man bears God's image, because God gave him a freewill, by the force of which gift he is entrusted with individual responsibility, and exercises a sort of delegated power. This freewill was made separate from that of God, or the gift would not have been complete. But it was never meant to be independent of that of God, or the gift to a creature would have been fatal; as indeed man made it, when he started aside into the rebellion of a self-seeking and isolated will. God is the great First Cause. 2. But what are the next features of God's image, in addition to this gift of will? It might resemble mere force committed to some powerful but lawless body, which could move without the help of sense or sight. Thus the madman, for instance, retains will with its full originating power. But it impels him blindly and irrationally; it may impel him to do himself an injury, or to injure those whom he once loved most dearly. And this would be an instance of will without light. Or again, the thoroughly abandoned man, who is given over to a sort of moral madness, he too retains the power of will; but it has lost all moral guidance; it no longer obeys the laws of rectitude; it has become, by the loss of that guidance, more dangerous, because more mischievous, than even the mightiest of the powers of nature. And this would be an instance of will without law. To complete our notion of God's image, therefore, we must add to the power of will the law of conscience. Whatsoever is right is our bounden duty, which the strict harmony of our nature enjoins; whatsoever is wrong must be firmly shunned, as a contradiction to that nature, as a new discord in the place of harmony, as a new dishonour to the image of God. 3. But in the third place; it is not sufficient to have added the law of conscience, unless we add the light of reason too. For we could imagine a creature, possessing something like both will and conscience, who might nevertheless be far less richly endowed than man. The will of such a being might be unenlightened: the conscience might be no more than a sort of stolid sensation of mindless and unreasoning fear. The gift of intellect, then, is a third essential feature in our nature; and a third trace of the image of God. Our first parents had dominion, for God "endued them with strength by themselves, and made them according to His image, and put the fear of man upon all flesh, and gave him dominion over beasts and fowls." They had intelligence, for "counsel, and a tongue, and eyes, ears, and a heart gave He them to understand." They had intercourse with God, for "He made an everlasting covenant with them, and showed them His judgments." Now I need scarcely point out how precisely and accurately this threefold division corresponds with what we had reached through an altogether different process. It was as an image of God's will that man possessed dominion: as an image of God's mind that he was capable of knowledge: as an image of God's moral nature, that he was admitted to intercourse with God. (*Archdeacon Hannah.*)

The creation of man in the Divine image.—I. WHAT BELONGS TO THE IMAGE OF GOD, OR TO THE UPRIGHTNESS IN WHICH MAN IS HERE

SAID TO BE CREATED? The principal question here to be considered is, whether the expressions in the text relate to the nature or to the character of man. Perfection of original constitution is one thing; perfection of action and of moral character is a different thing. Now we understand the expressions in our text to be employed with exclusive reference to the nature of man, to the essential being and constitution of his powers. We suppose the meaning to be, that God created man with certain spiritual faculties, which are an image or likeness of what exists in the Maker Himself. 1. We include here, first, reason, or the intellectual powers by which knowledge is acquired. 2. Intimately connected with these intellectual faculties, is the power of feeling moral obligation and of recognizing moral law; and we therefore name this as a second thing embraced in the Divine image, which belongs to man by creation. If the first is an image of the Divine knowledge, this is an image of the Divine holiness. 3. Still another part of the image of God in the soul is the power of free will, or the faculty of determining our actions, and so forming our character. This constitutes the executive power in man, or that by which he gives being and direction to his actions. 4. We may further include in the Divine image in man the power of exercising certain affections. There are decisive indications in nature, and most emphatic declarations in Scripture, that God is compassionate, and loves His creatures. We are, therefore, justified in regarding the feelings of which we are capable of love to God, and of love and piety towards other persons, as still another part of the image of God in the soul.

II. WE INQUIRE WHETHER THE LANGUAGE OF OUR TEXT OUGHT TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF OUR FIRST PARENTS MERELY, OR OF MANKIND IN GENERAL? We think it applies essentially (though possibly with some modification in respect to the original constitution in the descendants of Adam) to all human beings. Much which we have already said has, in fact, assumed this view; but we shall here state the reasons of it more fully. 1. The passage in Genesis is most naturally viewed as relating to the human nature generally, which then began its existence in Adam and Eve. 2. The Scriptures in several places speak of men generally as made in the image and likeness of God (See Gen. ix. 6; James iii. 9). 3. We conclude with a few brief remarks. 1. The discussion through which we have passed enables us to see the ground on which Paul could say of the Gentile nations, who have no written revelation, that they are a law unto themselves. Endowed with spiritual faculties which enable them to determine for themselves the main substance of their duty. Made in image of God; so moral and accountable beings. 2. We see also that natural religion, or the religion which develops itself out of the conscience, must be the foundation of the religion of revelation. 3. All men need much and careful instruction. (*D. N. Sheldon, D.D.*)

*Our ancestors:—*I. **WHEN** did God make man? 1. After He had created the world. 2. After He had enlightened the world. 3. After He had furnished and beautified the world. II. **HOW** did God make man? 1. Consultation amongst the Persons of the Godhead. 2. Process. 3. Breath of life. III. **WHAT** did God make man? 1. A creature comely and beautiful in his outward appearance. 2. Dignified in his soul. 3. Princely in his office. 4. Probationary in his circumstance. Concluding reflections: 1. How happy must have been the state of man in Paradise! 2. How keenly would they feel the effects of the fall! 3. How visibly do we see the effects of the fall in our world! 4. How thankful ought we to be for the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ! (*Benson Bailey.*)

*The image of God:—*I. **IN WHAT RESPECTS** GOD CREATED MAN AFTER HIS IMAGE. 1. After His natural image. (1) A spiritual being. (2) Free. (3) Immortal. 2. After His political image. Man is God's representative on earth. 3. After His moral image. This consists in knowledge, holiness, righteousness, and happiness resulting therefrom (Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24). II. **WHETHER** MAN HAS LOST THIS IMAGE OF GOD, IN WHICH HE WAS CREATED; AND, IF SO, HOW FAR, AND BY WHAT MEANS HE HAS LOST IT. III. **WHETHER** MAN MAY, AND MUST RECOVER THIS IMAGE OF GOD; HOW FAR, AND BY WHAT MEANS. 1. Man may certainly recover the moral image of God. His ignorance as to spiritual and Divine things, his unreasonableness and folly, may be removed, and he may be enlightened with knowledge and wisdom. As to the necessity of thus recovering the Divine image. Without this we do not learn Christ aright; the gospel and grace of God do not answer their end upon us, nor are we Christians (Eph. iv. 21); without this we do not, cannot glorify God, but dishonour Him (Rom. ii. 23-26); without this, we cannot be happy here, we cannot be admitted into heaven (Heb. xii. 14; Matt. v. 8; 1 John iii. 3; Rev. vii. 14, xix. 8; Matt. xxii. 11; 2 Cor. v. 3). In order to recover this lovely image of God, we must look at it, as Eve looked at the fruit (2 Cor. iii. 18);

we must long for it, must hunger and thirst after it (Matt. v. 6); we must exercise faith in Christ (Acts xxvi. 18), and in the promises (2 Pet. i. 4); and thus approach the tree of life, and pluck, and eat its fruit; we must pray for the Spirit (Tit. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27; 2 Cor. iii. 18); we must read the word, hear, meditate, &c. (John viii. 31, 32; xvii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 22, 23; James i. 18); we must use self-denial, and mortification (Rom. viii. 13; Gal. v. 16), and watchfulness (1 Pet. v. 8; Rev. xvi. 15). (*J. Benson.*)

Man's creation and empire.—I. **MAN CREATED: THE GODLIKE CREATURE.** We are justified in emphasizing man's entrance into the world as a creation. In the first chapter of Genesis a distinct word is used to denote three separate beginnings: first, when matter was created; second, when animal life was created; third, when man was created. Man only approaches the animal when he is under the control of the spirit that tempted him at the fall. Man is, however, connected with the earth and the animal. The added mental and spiritual endowments consummated the likeness of God upon the earth. When Christ came into the world it was in the same image. II. **THE EMPIRE AND THE GRANARIES FOR MAN.** That kingship which came to man from his likeness to God he has kept as he has retained the Divine image. Single-handed man was not equal to a contest with the monsters that filled the deep. The beasts that roamed the primeval forests could not be conquered, even by the giants who were on the earth in those days, by sheer strength of arm. The sea, the winds, the creeping, flying, browsing mammoths have always been man's master, save as he used mind and heart to secure his dominion. What, then, makes man the master? Mind, reason, judgment, like God's. III. **THE UNFINISHED DAY.** Of each preceding evening and morning God said: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day," but no such record has come to us respecting the seventh day. This is the Scripture: "And on the seventh day God finished the work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." We are still in that day. (*W. R. Campbell.*)

The Divine in man.—The heathen, recognizing in their own way the spiritual in man, tried to bridge over the chasm between it and the earthly by making God more human. The way of revelation on the contrary is to make man more godlike, to tell of the Divine idea yet to be realized in his nature. Nor have we far to go to find some of the traces of this Divine in human nature. 1. We are told that God is just and pure and holy. What is the meaning of these words? Speak to the deaf man of hearing, or the blind of light, he knows not what you mean. And so to talk of God as good and just and pure implies that there is goodness, justice, purity, within the mind of man. 2. We find in man the sense of the infinite: just as truly as God is boundless is the soul of man boundless; there is something boundless, infinite, in the sense of justice, in the sense of truth, in the power of self sacrifice. 3. In man's creative power there is a resemblance to God. He has filled the world with his creations. It is his special privilege to subdue the powers of nature to himself. He has turned the forces of nature against herself; commanding the winds to help him in braving the sea. And marvellous as is man's rule over external, dead nature, more marvellous still is his rule over animated nature. To see the trained falcon strike down the quarry at the feet of his master, and come back, when God's free heaven is before him; to see the hound use his speed in the service of his master, to take a prey not to be given to himself; to see the camel of the desert carrying man through his own home: all these show the creative power of man, and his resemblance to God the Creator. (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*)

Wherein can the image of God, in a finite creature, consist? To this question some answer, that the image of God consisted in the superiority of man's physical faculties, in the admirable conformation of his body. This answer is unworthy of our text and God. Is God a material being? Has He a body, in the image of which He could create man? Others, on hearing the question, answer, that the image of God in man consisted in the dominion which was given him over all created beings. But can this be the whole of God's image? Others, again, reply to our question, that the image of God consisted in the faculty of the understanding with which man is endowed, and which so eminently distinguishes him from all other creatures. This answer is less remote from the truth, but it is incomplete. In the fifth chapter of Genesis we find the two words, image and likeness, employed in a manner calculated to make us understand their meaning in our text. There it is said, that "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." Now is it not evident, that these words ascribe to Seth all the qualities, physical, intellectual, and moral, which his father possessed? And

can we, without doing violence to the grammar itself, restrain the meaning of these expressions in our text to a certain superiority by which man is distinguished? We think, then, that we are authorized to extend these words to all that which constitutes the character of God, with all the restrictions which the finite nature of man requires. Man resembled his Creator with regard to his intellectual and moral qualities. Doubtless there are, in God, incommunicable perfections which belong to His eternal essence; and, indeed, it is for having arrogated to himself these august perfections, that man unhappily excavated an abys of woe beneath his feet. But there are in God moral perfections which He communicates to His creatures, endowed with an understanding to know, and a heart to love. In this sense, man was a reflection, feeble, no doubt, and finite, of the Divinity Himself. He was, St. Paul tells us, created in "righteousness and true holiness." But that we might be able still better to distinguish the traits of this image, God has not contented Himself with merely giving us an exact description of them in the words which we have just considered. Read the Gospels; there is developed before our eyes the life of one whom the Bible calls the second Adam, one who is designated the image of God, the express image of the person of God, the image of the invisible God. What Divine traits does that image bear! What a reflection of the Divine perfections! What wisdom! What love! What devotion! What holiness! There, my brethren, we clearly behold the being made "after God in righteousness and true holiness," of which the apostle speaks. Now see how the image of God in man develops itself in the idea of the inspired apostle, and in the manifestation of the Son of God on earth. We too, place some traits of this image in the understanding. Not, indeed, in the understanding which requires to be "renewed in knowledge," because it has forgotten the things which are above, and has lost the knowledge of the name of its heavenly Father; but in the clear and enlightened understanding of the first man, created after the image of God; a spiritual understanding, the reflection of the supreme intelligence, capable of rising to God, of seeking God, of adoring God in His works, and in all His moral perfections; an understanding without error and without darkness, possessing a full knowledge of the author of its being, and all the means of continually making new progress in that knowledge by experience. Now to know God is life eternal; it is the perfection of the understanding; it is the image of God. We do not, however, mean to represent man, created in the image of God, notwithstanding the superiority of his understanding, as a savant, in the ordinary meaning of that word, nor as a philosopher, or metaphysician: it was not by the way of reasoning that he arrived at the knowledge of things; he had no need of such a process. The superiority, even of his understanding, consisted, perhaps, chiefly in its simplicity, its ignorance of what is false, its inexperience of evil, in that practical ingenuousness, which constitutes the charm of the unsophisticated character of a child, a character which Jesus commands us to acquire anew. Always disposed to learn, never presuming upon itself, plying those around it with questions, listening to their answers with an entire confidence—such is the child in the arms of its father, such was Adam before his God, who condescended to instruct him, and whose word was never called in doubt. The Scripture confirms us in the idea, that this was indeed an admirable feature of God's image, when it tells us, that "God made man upright, but that (afterwards, alas!) they sought out many inventions (reasonings)" (Eccles. vii. 29). The Apostle Paul also countenances this opinion, when, in his tendersolicitude for the Christians at Corinth, who were exposed to the sophistry of a false philosophy, he writes to them, with an evident allusion to the seduction of our first parents, "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Finally, Jesus Christ also establishes it, when, showing us, in this humble and noble simplicity, this child-like candour, full of openness and confidence, characteristic feature of the children of His kingdom, He addresses to His still presumptuous disciples this solemn declaration: "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." This feature of character leads us to another, which is inseparable from it. This simplicity in the mind supposes or produces simplicity in the heart. When an individual is straightforward in thought, he is straightforward in his actions. Hence, when the Bible tells us that "God made man upright," it employs a word which, in the original language, means straightness, as, for example, of a way or a line; and to be upright, is to follow, without deviation, this way, or this line. Now, man created after the image of God, followed

without effort, as by instinct, this way of uprightness. This feature, so beautiful and so noble, is reproduced in the new man, which, according to the apostle, is "created after God in righteousness," that is, in uprightness of mind and of heart. Finally, let us not forget (and this consideration includes all that remains for us to say on the image of God in man), that this being, "created after God in righteousness and true holiness," bore in him a heart capable of loving. And what is the feature of His glorious perfections, that God takes the greatest pleasure in engraving upon His creature, if it be not His love? Is not God love? And shall not he, who bears impressed upon his whole being the image of God, who places his glory in being loved, be capable of loving? Yes, lively, deep, powerful affections filled the heart of the first man, since, even to this day, these affections exercise so great an influence over us, and are often, without our knowing it, the real motives of our actions. But in Adam these affections were pure, as his whole being, they partook of that "true holiness" which constitutes the image of God. To man, still innocent, to love God was life. But love is an all-powerful principle of activity, devotedness, and energy. In the first man it must have been the motive of his devotion to God, the mysterious bond of his intimate communion with Him, the sure guarantee of his filial obedience, the ineffable charm which made him find in that obedience all his happiness. So sweet is devotedness to that which we love! Ah! that servile obedience which makes us tremble before the law, because the commandment came forth with thunders from the smoking summits of Sinai, was unknown in Eden; that tardy, imperfect obedience, which costs our selfish, grovelling hearts so much, was unknown; it was unknown, because that same love reigned there, which makes the seraph find his happiness in flying at the will of Him who pours life and felicity over him in an unceasing stream. Thus, the understanding of man, always enlightened in the will of God, who spake to His creature as a man speaks to his friend; and the heart of man, which loving that sovereign will above all things, made him find liberty in perfect submission and happiness in ready obedience; so that, in him, thought, will, and affection, all united in one holy harmony, to the glory of Him that had "created him in righteousness and true holiness." (*L. Bonnet.*) *Man created in the image of God*:—I. To inquire wherein this "image of God" consisted. II. To suggest some useful inferences from the inquiry. 1. In the first place, then, we may venture to affirm that man's resemblance to his Maker did not, as some have strangely imagined, consist in the form or structure of his body, though "fearfully and wonderfully made," and reflecting, as it does in an eminent degree the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. For with what propriety can body said to be "the image" of spirit? (1) His understanding—the ruling faculty—was made capable of clearly discerning what is really good, of accurately discriminating between right and wrong, of ascertaining correctly, and as it were intuitively, the boundaries of good and evil; the former as consisting in conformity to the Divine will, the latter in deviation from that will. Doubtless Adam possessed, in his original state, a perfect knowledge of his Maker; that is, a knowledge morally perfect—perfect in kind, though in degree necessarily imperfect, as must ever be the knowledge which a finite being possesses of one that is infinite. His understanding was free from error, his judgment from corrupt bias. (2) And as his intellect perceived, so his will approved and chose, that which was good. His will implicitly followed the dictates of his understanding; cleaving to, and taking complacency in, all that his judgment saw to be right; rejecting and shunning all which is pronounced to be wrong. The affections also, and appetites, and the subordinate movements and inclinations of the soul, were regulated and controlled according to this standard. There was no war between the decisions of the judgment and the inclinations of the will. (3) That the image of God in the soul of man consisted, primarily at least, in the right state of the understanding and will, as it regards moral excellence, will appear further by what is said by St. Paul respecting the new man, or that new nature which in regeneration is imparted to the soul. The "new man," he tells us, in one passage of his Epistles, is "created after God"—i.e., after the likeness of God—"in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24). In another passage he says that it is "renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10). Knowledge, then, and holiness—knowledge not speculative but practical, holiness not relative but real; the one illuminating the mind, the other governing the heart—constituted, in the apostle's view, that "image of God" in which our text declares that He created man. From all these considerations we may infer that the image of God in which Adam was

created consisted in an understanding prepared to imbibe true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affections regulated according to Divine reason and moral truth. From such a state of mind, godliness, in its internal exercises and outward expressions—righteousness, truth, benevolence, purity, and an exact regulation and government of every appetite and passion—must necessarily result, and every duty to God and man be constantly and delightfully performed. The same disposition would ensure belief of every truth which God should afterwards reveal, obedience to every precept which He should enjoin, a cordial acceptance of every proposal which He should make, and admiration of every discovery of the Divine glory at any time vouchsafed. Nor let this be deemed an uninteresting or unimportant subject of consideration. The contrary will, I trust, appear if we proceed—2. To suggest some practical inferences from the inquiry which has been made. (1) We may learn hence the worth of the soul. Of what other of the works of God is it said, that they were created “after His own image”? Has God put such honour upon our souls, and shall we cover them with dishonour? You employ a great deal of time and thought about your bodies, which were made of dust, and will quickly return to dust; but of your souls, your immortal souls, formed of heavenly materials, and moulded after the Divine likeness, you take scarcely any thought at all. Accidents and dangers, sicknesses and diseases that befall the body, are carefully guarded against and carefully remedied; whilst the moral disorders of the soul, the certain danger to which it is exposed from the wrath of God and the bitter pains of eternal death, are forgotten, made light of. (2) But, further, we are led to consider, from the subject before us, the true end of our being, and the perfection of our nature. Why did God form us after His own image, in knowledge and holiness? Doubtless that we might be capable of knowing, loving, and serving Him; that we might adore His perfections, obey His will, glorify His holy name. This was Adam’s highest dignity before he fell in the earthly paradise. And this, we have reason to believe, will constitute the happiness of the redeemed in the paradise above. Suffer me then to ask, my brethren, are you mindful of the end for which you were created? Do you count the knowledge of God, and conformity to Him, your highest good, and seek your truest happiness in His favour? (3) Again—let the subject we have been considering remind us how awful are the effects of sin; and how low we are fallen in consequence of sin. What marred the honour and dignity of our first estate? Sin. What defaced and obscured the lineaments of the Divine image in our souls? Sin. What cut us off from that blissful communion with the Father of spirits—the source of perfection and fountain of light—in which our highest happiness originally commenced? Sin. Sin is the separation of the soul from God, as death is that of the body from the soul. (4) And this leads me to remark in the last place, the absolute necessity of an entire change of nature, if we wish to go to heaven when we die. The image of God, which sin has effaced, must be restored before we can be admitted into His presence above. (*Archdeacon Hodson, M.A.*) *The antiquity of man historically considered*:—I. The problem of the antiquity of man has to the historian two stages. In the first, it is a matter wholly within the sphere of historical investigation, and capable of being determined, if not with precision, at any rate within chronological limits that are not very wide, *i.e.*, that do not exceed a space of two or three centuries. In the further or second stage, it is only partially a historical problem; it has to be decided by an appeal to considerations which lie outside the true domain of the historian, and are to a large extent speculative; nor can any attempt be made to determine it otherwise than with great vagueness, and within very wide limits—limits that are to be measured not so much by centuries as by millennia. The two stages which are here spoken of correspond to two phrases which are in ordinary use—“Historic man” and “Prehistoric man.” In pursuing the present inquiry, we shall, first of all, examine the question, to what length of time history proper goes back—first, how many centuries or millennia do the contemporary written records of historic man indicate or prove his existence upon the earth? The result is, that for the “Old Empire” we must allow a term of about seven centuries or seven centuries and a half; whence it follows that we must assign for the commencement of Egyptian monarchy about the year B.C. 2500, or from that to B.C. 2650. This is the furthest date to which “history proper” can be said, even probably, to extend. It is capable of some curtailment, owing to the uncertainty which attaches to the real length of the earlier dynasties, but such curtailment could not be very considerable. The history of man may then be traced from

authentic sources a little beyond the middle of the third millennium before our era. It is true and safe to say that man has existed in communities under settled government for about four thousand five hundred years; but it would not be safe to say that he had existed in the condition which makes history possible for any longer term. II. What is the probable age of "prehistoric man"? for how long a time is it reasonable to suppose that mankind existed on the earth before states and governments grew up, before writing was invented, and such a condition of the arts arrived at as we find prevailing in the time when history begins, *e.g.*, in Egypt at the Pyramid period, about B.C. 2600, and in Babylonia about two centuries later. Professor Owen is of opinion that the space of "seven thousand years is but a brief period to be allotted to the earliest civilized and governed community"—that of Egypt; nay, he holds that such a period of "incubation," as he postulates, is so far from extravagant that it is "more likely to prove inadequate" for the production of the civilization in question. This is equivalent to saying that we must allow two thousand five hundred years for the gradual progress of man from his primitive condition to that whereto he has attained when the Pyramid kings bear sway in the Nile valley. Other writers have proposed a still longer term, as ten thousand, fifteen thousand, or even twenty thousand years. Now, here it must be observed, in the first place, that no estimate can be formed which deserves to be accounted anything but the merest conjecture, until it has been determined what the primitive condition of man was. To calculate the time occupied upon a journey, we must know the point from which the traveller set out. Was, then, the primitive condition of man, as seems to be supposed by Professor Owen, savagery, or was it a condition very far removed from that of the savage? "The primeval savage" is a familiar term in modern literature; but there is no evidence that the primeval savage ever existed. Rather, all the evidence looks the other way. "The mythical traditions of almost all nations place at the beginnings of human history a time of happiness, perfection, a 'golden age,' which has no features of savagery or barbarism, but many of civilization and refinement." The sacred records, venerated alike by Jews and Christians, depict antediluvian man as from the first "tilling the ground," "building cities," "smelting metals," and "making musical instruments." Babylonian documents of an early date tell, similarly, of art and literature having preceded the great Deluge, and having survived it. The explorers who have dug deep into the Mesopotamian mounds, and ransacked the tombs of Egypt, have come upon no certain traces of savage man in those regions, which a widespread tradition makes the cradle of the human race. So far from savagery being the primitive condition of man, it is rather to be viewed as a corruption and a degradation, the result of adverse circumstances during a long period of time, crushing man down, and effacing the Divine image wherein he was created. Had savagery been the primitive condition of man, it is scarcely conceivable that he could have ever emerged from it. Savages, left to themselves, continue savages, show no signs of progression, stagnate, or even deteriorate. There is no historical evidence of savages having ever civilized themselves, no instance on record of their having ever been raised out of their miserable condition by any other means than by contact with a civilized race. The torch of civilization is handed on from age to age, from race to race. If it were once to be extinguished, there is great doubt whether it could ever be re-lighted. Doubtless, there are degrees in civilization. Arts progress. No very high degree of perfection in any one art was ever reached *per saltum*. An "advanced civilization"—a high amount of excellence in several arts—implies an antecedent period during which these arts were cultivated, improvements made, perfection gradually attained. If we estimate very highly the civilization of the Pyramid period in Egypt, if we regard the statuary of the time as equalling that of Chantrey, if we view the great pyramid as an embodiment of profound cosmical and astronomical science, or even as an absolute marvel of perfect engineering construction, we shall be inclined to enlarge the antecedent period required by the art displayed, and to reckon it, not so much by centuries, as by millennia. But if we take a lower view, as do most of those familiar with the subject—if we see in the statuary much that is coarse and rude, in the general design of the pyramid a somewhat clumsy and inartistic attempt to impress by mere bulk, in the measurements of its various parts and the angles of its passages adaptations more or less skilful to convenience, and even in the "discharging chambers" and the "ventilating shafts" nothing very astonishing, we shall be content with a shorter term, and regard the supposed need of millennia

as an absurdity. There is in truth but one thing which the Egyptians of the Pyramid period could really do surprisingly well; and that was to cut and polish hard stone. They must have had excellent saws, and have worked them with great skill, so as to produce perfectly flat surfaces of large dimensions. And they must have possessed the means of polishing extremely hard material, such as granite, syenite, and diorite. But in other respects their skill was not very great. Their quarrying, transport, and raising into place of enormous blocks of stone is paralleled by the Celtic builders of Stonehenge, who are not generally regarded as a very advanced people. Their alignment of their sloping galleries at the best angle for moving a sarcophagus along them may have been the result of "rule of thumb." Their exact emplacement of their pyramids so as to face the cardinal points needed only a single determination of the sun's place when the shadow which a gnomon cast was lowest. Primitive man, then, if we regard him as made in the image of God—clever, thoughtful, intelligent, from the first, quick to invent tools and to improve them, early acquainted with fire and not slow to discover its uses, and placed in a warm and fruitful region, where life was supported with ease—would, it appears to the present writer, not improbably have reached such a degree of civilization as that found to exist in Egypt about a.c. 2600, within five hundred or, at the utmost, a thousand years. There is no need, on account of the early civilization of Egypt, much less on account of any other, to extend the "prehistoric period" beyond this term. Mere rudeness of workmanship and low condition of life generally is sometimes adduced as an evidence of enormous antiquity; and the discoveries made in cairns, and caves, and lake-beds, and kjökkenmöddings are brought forward to prove that man must have a past of enormous duration. But it seems to be forgotten that as great a rudeness and as slow a savagism as any which the spade has ever turned up still exists upon the earth in various places, as among the Australian aborigines, the bushmen of South Africa, the Ostiaks and Samoyedes of Northern Asia, and the Weddars of Ceylon. The savagery of a race is thus no proof of its antiquity. As the Andaman and Wedda barbarisms are contemporary with the existing civilization of Western Europe, so the palæolithic period of that region may have been contemporary with the highest Egyptian refinement. Another line of argument sometimes pursued in support of the theory of man's extreme antiquity, which is of a semi-historic character, bases itself upon the diversities of human speech. There are, it is said, four thousand languages upon the earth, all of them varieties, which have been produced from a single parent stock—must it not have taken ten, fifteen, twenty millennia to have developed them? Now here, in the first place, exception may be taken to the statement that "all languages have been produced from a single parent stock," since, if the confusion of tongues at Babel be a fact, as allowed by the greatest of living comparative philologists, several distinct stocks may at that time have been created. Nor has inductive science done more as yet than indicate a possible unity of origin to all languages, leaving the fact in the highest degree doubtful. But, waiving these objections, and supposing a primitive language from which all others have been derived, and further accepting the unproved statement, that there are four thousand different forms of speech, there is, we conceive, no difficulty in supposing that they have all been developed within the space of five thousand years. The supposition does not require even so much as the development of one new language each year. Now, it is one of the best attested facts of linguistic science, that new languages are being formed continually. Nomadic races without a literature, especially those who have abundant leisure, make a plaything of their language, and are continually changing its vocabulary. "If the work of agglutination has once commenced," says Professor Max Müller, "and there is nothing like literature or science to keep it within limits, two villages, separated only for a few generations, will become mutually unintelligible." Brown, the American missionary, tells us of some tribes of Red Indians who left their native village to settle in another valley, that they became unintelligible to their forefathers in two or three generations. Moffatt says that in South Africa the bulk of the men and women of the desert tribes often quit their homes for long periods, leaving their children to the care of two or three infirm old people. "The infant progeny, some of whom are beginning to lisp, while others can just master a whole sentence, and those still further advanced, romping together through the livelong day, become habituated to a language of their own. The more voluble condescend to the less precocious, and thus from this infant Babel proceeds a dialect of a host of mongrel words and phrases, joined together without

rule, and in the course of one generation the entire character of the language is changed." Castren found the Mongolian dialects entering into a new phase of grammatical life, and declared that "while the literary language of the race had no terminations for the persons of the verb, that characteristic feature of Turanian speech had lately broken out in the spoken dialects of the Buriatic and the Tungusic idioms near Njestschinsk in Siberia." Some of the recent missionaries in Central America, who compiled a dictionary of all the words they could lay hold of with great care, returning to the same tribe after the lapse of only ten years, "found that their dictionary had become antiquated and useless." When men were chiefly nomadic, and were without a literature, living, moreover, in small separate communities, linguistic change must have proceeded with marvellous rapidity, and each year have seen, not one new language formed, but several. The linguistic argument sometimes takes a different shape. Experience, we are told, furnishes us with a measure of the growth of language, by which the great antiquity of the human race may be well nigh demonstrated. It took above a thousand years for the Romance languages—French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Wallachian, and Roumansch, or the language of the Grisons—to be developed out of Latin. Must it not have taken ten times as long to develop Latin and its sister tongues—Greek, German, Celtic, Lithuanian, Slavonic, Zend, Sanskrit—out of their mother speech? Nor was that mother speech itself the first form of language. Side by side with it, when it was a spoken tongue, must have existed at least two other forms of early speech, one the parent of the dialects called Semitic—Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Phœnician, Assyro-Babylonian, &c.—the other bearing the same relation to the dialects of the nomad races scattered over Central and Northern Asia—the Tungusic, Mongolic, Turkic, Samoyedic, and Finnic—which are all "radii from a common centre," and form a well-established linguistic family. But these three mighty streams, which we may watch rolling on through centuries, if not millennia, distinct and separate one from another, are not wholly unconnected. If we trace them back as far as the records of the past allow, we shall find that "before they disappear from our sight in the far distance, they clearly show a convergence towards one common source." Widely different, therefore, as they are, both in grammar and vocabulary, they too must have had a common parent, have been developed out of a still earlier language, which stood to them in the relation that Latin bears to Italian, Spanish, and French. But in what a length of time? If the daughter languages of the Latin were only developed in the space of a thousand years, and Latin, with its sister tongues, required ten or twenty times as long to be developed out of the primitive Aryan speech, how much longer a time must have been needed for the formation from one common stock of the primitive Aryan, the primitive Semitic, and the primitive Turanian types! When from reasoning of this kind—regarded as valid—the conclusion is deduced, that "twenty-one thousand years is a very probable term for the development of human language in the shortest line," we can only feel surprise at the moderation of the reasoner. But the reasoning is invalid on several grounds. (a) The supposed induction is made from a single instance—the case of Latin and its daughter tongues. To prove the point, several cases parallel to that of Latin should have been adduced. (b) The time which it took for Latin to develop into Italian, Spanish, Wallachian, &c., assumed to be known, is not known. No one can say when Italian was first spoken. All that we know is, when it came to be a literary language. The fact seems to be that the Gauls and Spaniards, even the provincial Italians, learnt Latin imperfectly from the first, clipped it of its grammatical forms, corrupted its vocabulary, introduced phonetic changes consonant with their own habits and organs of speech. Languages nearer to Spanish and Italian than to classical Latin were probably spoken generally in Spain and Italy, while Latin was still the language of the capital and of polite society. (c) Linguistic development is not, in fact, equal in equal times. On the contrary, there are periods when changes are slow and gradual, while there are others when they take place with extraordinary rapidity. English altered between Chaucer and Shakespeare very greatly more than it has changed between Shakespeare and the present day. Changes are greatest and most rapid before there is a literature; consequently, in the early stages of a language's life. And they are facilitated by the absence of intercourse and isolation of tribe from tribe, which is the natural condition of mankind before states have been formed and governments set up. In the infancy of man linguistic change must almost certainly have progressed at a rate very much beyond that at which it has moved within the period to which history

reaches back. It is as impossible, therefore, to measure the age of language by the period—supposing it known—which a given change occupied, as it would be to determine the age of a tree by the rate of growth noted at a particular time in a particular branch. The diversities of physical type have also been viewed as indicating a vast antiquity for man, more especially when taken in connection with supposed proof that the diversities were as great four thousand years ago as they are now. The main argument here is one with which history has nothing to do. It is for physiologists, not for historians, to determine how long it would take to develop the various types of humanity from a single stock. But the other point is an historical one, and requires to be considered here. Now, it is decidedly not true to say that all, or anything like all, the existing diversities of physical type can be traced back for four thousand years, or shown to have existed at the date of B.C. 2100. The early Egyptian remains indicate, at the most, five physical types—those of the Egyptians themselves, the Cushites or Ethiopians, the Nashi or negroes, the Tahennu or Lybians, and the Amu or Asiatics. The Egyptians are represented as of a red-brown colour, but their women as nearly white. They have Caucasian features, except that their lips are unduly thick. The Ethiopians have features not dissimilar, but are prognathous and much darker than the Egyptians, sometimes absolutely black. The negroes are always black, with crisp, curly hair, snub noses, and out-turned lips; but they are not represented until about B.C. 1500. The Tahennu or Lybians of the North African coast have features not unlike the Egyptians themselves, but are fair-skinned, with blue eyes and lightish hair. The Amu have features like those of the Assyrians and Jews: they vary in colour, being sometimes reddish, sometimes yellow, and having hair which is sometimes light, sometimes dark. The diversities are thus considerable, but they are far from equalling those which now exist. And it may be suspected that each type is exaggerated. As there cannot have been the difference of colour between the Egyptian men and the Egyptian women which the monuments represent, so it is to be supposed that in the other cases the artists intensified the actual differences. The Ethiopian was represented darker than he was, the Lybian lighter; the negro was given crisper and bushier hair, a snubber nose, and thicker lips. Art, in its infancy, marks differences by caricaturing them. We must not argue from caricatures, as if they had been photographs. We are not obliged, then, to relegate the entire development of existing physical types to the prehistoric period, and on that account to give it, as has been proposed, a vast enlargement. History shows us five types only as belonging to its first period. The rest may have been developed subsequently. III. Further, there are a certain number of positive arguments which may be adduced in favour of the “juvenility” of man, or, in other words, of his not having existed upon the earth for a much longer period than that of which we have historical evidence. As, first, the population of the earth. Considering the tendency of mankind to “increase and multiply,” so that, according to Mr. Malthus, population would, excepting for artificial hindrances, double itself every twenty-five years, it is sufficiently astonishing that the human race has not, in the space of five thousand years, exceeded greatly the actual number, which is estimated commonly at a thousand millions of souls. The doubling process would produce a thousand millions from a single pair in less than eight centuries. No doubt, “hindrances” of one kind or another would early make themselves felt. Is it conceivable that, if man had occupied the earth for the “one hundred or two hundred thousand years” of some writers, or even for the “twenty-one thousand” of others, he would not by this time have multiplied far beyond the actual numbers of the present day? Secondly, does not the fact that there are no architectural remains dating back further than the third millennium before Christ indicate, if not prove the (comparatively) recent origin of man? Man is as naturally a building animal as the beaver. He needs protection from sun and rain, from heat and cold, from storm and tempest. How is it that Egypt and Babylonia do not show us pyramids and temple towers in all the various stages of decay, reaching back further and further into the night of ages, but start, as it were, with works that we can date, such as the pyramids of Ghizeh and the *ziggurat* of Uruk at Mugheir? Why has Greece no building more ancient than the treasury of Atreus, Italy nothing that can be dated further back than the flourishing period of Etruria (B.C. 700–500)? Surely, if the earth has been peopled for a hundred thousand, or even twenty thousand years, man should have set his mark upon it more than five thousand years ago. Again, if man is of the antiquity supposed, how is it that there are still so many waste places upon the earth? What vast tracts are there,

both in North and South America, which continue to this day untouched primeval forests? IV. The results arrived at seem to be that, while history carries back the existence of the human race for a space of four thousand five hundred years, or to about B.C. 2600, a prehistoric period is needed for the production of the state of things found to be then existing, which cannot be fairly estimated at much less than a millennium. If the Flood is placed about B.C. 3600, there will be ample time for the production of such a state of society and such a condition of the arts as we find to have existed in Egypt a thousand years later, as well as for the changes of physical type and language which are noted by the ethnologist. The geologist may add on two thousand years more for the interval between the Deluge and the Creation, and may perhaps find room therein for his "palæolithic" and his "neolithic" periods. (*G. Rawlinson, M.A.*) *The Jewish and the Christian thought of man*.—I. THE JEWISH CONCEPTION OF MAN. It involved—1. A similarity of nature to that of God Himself. 2. Likeness of character to the Divine. 3. A share in Divine authority. 4. Divine interest and attention. 5. Privilege of approach to the Most High. 6. A sense of man's degradation and misery through sin. The same heart that swelled with loftiest hope and noblest aspiration, as it felt that God was its Father and its King, was the heart that filled with tremor and shame, as it saw the heinousness of its guilt and the depth of its declension. II. THE DISTINCTIVELY CHRISTIAN VIEW. What has Christ added to our thought about ourselves? 1. He has led us to take the highest view of our spiritual nature. A treasure of absolutely inestimable worth. 2. He has drawn aside the veil from the future, and made that long life and that large world our own. 3. He has taught us to think of ourselves as sinners who may have a full restoration to their high estate. (*W. Clarkson, B.A.*) *The creation of man*.—I. SOME GENERAL CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH THE CREATION OF MAN. There is something striking—1. In the manner of his creation. 2. In the period of his creation. 3. The exalted scale in the rank of beings in which he was placed. 4. The perfect happiness he possessed. II. THE EXPRESS IMAGE IN WHICH MAN WAS CREATED. "The image of God." 1. The image of His spirituality. 2. The image of His perfections. 3. The image of His holiness. 4. The image of His dominion. 5. The image of His immortality. "A living soul." Application: 1. Let us remember with gratitude to God the dignity He conferred upon us in creation. "What is man," &c. (*Psa. viii.*) 2. Let us shed tears of sorrow over the fallen, ruined state of man. 3. Man is still a precious creature, amid all the ruin sin has produced. 4. In redemption, we are exalted to dignity, happiness, and salvation. 5. Let us seek the restoration of the Divine image on our souls; for without this, without holiness, no man can see the Lord. (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *The Divine image in man*.—I. LET US INQUIRE, IN WHAT DID THE DIVINE IMAGE CONSIST? 1. In immortality. 2. Intelligence. 3. Righteousness. 4. Blessedness. II. NOTICE THE PAINFUL TRUTH THAT THE DIVINE IMAGE HAS BEEN DEFACED IN MAN. 1. This is seen in the body of man. Disease; death. 2. It is seen more painfully in his soul. God will not dwell in the heart which cherishes sin. III. THE PROVISION MADE FOR RESTORING THE DIVINE IMAGE TO MAN. Christ, the second Adam. (*The Evangelical Preacher.*) *Man created in the Divine image*.—I. THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN. Man has sometimes been called a microcosm, a little world, a sort of epitome of the universe. The expression is not without meaning; for in man unite and meet the two great elements of creation, mind and matter; the visible and the invisible; the body, which clothes the brute, and the spirit, which belongs to angels. Now, it is a law and property of this outward part, that it should perish and decay; whilst it is the privilege and designation of this inward part, that it should be renewed and strengthened day by day. And this we shall see, as we examine this immaterial part of man's nature more closely. Take, for example, the operation of the thinking principle. Although we often think to a very bad purpose, yet in our hours of waking and consciousness we always do think. The mind is an ocean of thought, and, like the ocean, is never still. It may have its calm thoughts, and its tumultuous thoughts, and its overwhelming thoughts; but it never knows a state of perfect rest and inaction. Of no material or visible thing could this be affirmed. No one expects to find amongst the undiscovered properties of matter the power of thought. Again: we see this with regard to the freedom of moral agency which we possess; the power we have to follow out our own moral choice and determination. Man was formed first for duty, and then for happiness; but without this liberty of action he could not have fulfilled the designation of his being in either of these respects. I must

be capable of choosing my own actions, and must be capable of determining the objects towards which they shall be directed, or I could never become the subject either of praise or of blame. I should be "serving not God, but necessity." II. IN SO CREATING MAN, GOD HAD RESPECT TO CERTAIN MORAL RESEMBLANCES OF HIMSELF. 1. Man's created bias was towards purity and holiness. 2. Man was created in a condition of perfect happiness. He had a mind to know God, and affections prompting to communion with Him. 3. And then, once more, we cannot doubt that man is declared to be made in the image of God, because he was endowed by his Maker with perpetuity of being, clothed with the attribute of endless life, placed under circumstances wherein, if he had continued upright, ample provision was made for his spiritual sustentation, until, having completed the cycle of his earthly progressions, he should be conveyed, like Enoch, in invisible silence, or like Elijah, on his chariot of fire, or like the ascending Saviour, in His beautiful garments of light and cloud, to the mansions of glory and immortality. For there was the "tree of life in the midst of the garden." He was permitted to partake of that; it was to be his sacrament, his sacramental food, the pledge of immortal being, the nourishment of that spiritual nature which he had with the breath of God. Thus man's chief resemblance to his Maker consisted in the fact, that he was endowed with a living soul—something which was incapable of death or annihilation. He had an eternity of future given to him, coeval with the being of God Himself. (*D. Moore, M.A.*)

Genesis of man:—I. THE CREATION ARCHIVE TWOFOLD (Gen. i. 26-31; ii. 5-22). II. PANORAMA OF EMERGENT MAN. III. MAN, GOD'S IMAGE. 1. Jesus Christ the image of God. He becomes this in and by the fact of His Incarnation. In Ecce Homo is Ecce Deus. 2. Man the image of Jesus Christ. In the order of time, the Son of God made Himself like to man; in the order of purpose, the Son of God made man like to Himself. It was an august illustration of His own saying when incarnate: "The first shall be last, and the last first" (Matt. xx. 16). Do you ask in what respect man was made in the image of Christ? Evidently, I answer, in substantially the same respects in which Christ became the image of God. Thus: in respect to a spiritual nature: When Jehovah God had formed the man of dust of the ground, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. The language, of course, is figurative. Nevertheless it must mean something. What, then, does this inbreathing by the Creator mean, if not the mysterious communication of Himself—the eternal Air or Spirit—into man? As Christ, surveyed man-wise, was born of the Spirit in Nazareth, so man, made in His image, after His likeness, was born of the Spirit in Eden. Again: a spiritual nature necessarily involves personality; and personality, at least finite, as necessarily involves what I have called secular attributes, e.g., attributes of sensation, cognition, passion, action, &c. All these belonged to Christ; and through these He declared and interpreted the Father, being in very truth the Word of God, or Deity in articulation. And the Word has existed from the beginning, being the God-Said of the creative week. In man's potencies of whatever kind—moral, intellectual, emotional, æsthetic—whatever power or virtue or grace there may be—in all this we behold an image of the Lord from heaven. Once more: personality cannot, at least in this world, exist apart from embodiment, or some kind of incarnation, which shall be to it for sphere and vehicle and instrument. Some kind of body is needed which, by its avenues and organs, shall awaken, disclose, and perfect character. And as Christ's body vehicled and organed His Personality, and so enabled Him to manifest the fullness of the Godhead which dwelt in Him body-wise, so man's body was made in the image of Christ's, even that body which in His eternal fore-knowledge was eternally His. This, then, was the image in which man was created, the image of Christ's human Personality, or Christ's spirit and soul and body. Man is the image of Christ and Christ is the image of God; that is to say: Man is the image of the image of God, or God's image as seen in secondary reflection. IV. MAN GOD'S INSPIRATION (Gen. ii. 7). On his body side he sprang from dust: on his soul side he sprang up with the animals: on his spirit side he sprang from God. Thus, in his very beginning, in the original make-up of him, man was a religious being. Coming into existence as God's inbreathing, man was, in the very fact of being Divinely inbreathed, God's Son and image. Well, then, might man's first home be an Eden—type of heaven, and his first day God's seventh day—even the Creator's Sabbath. V. THE PRIMAL COMMISSION. 1. Man's authority over nature. It was man's original commission, humanity's primal charter. And history is the story of the execution of the commission, civilization the unfolding of the privileges of the charter. Wherever civilized man has gone, there he has been gaining dominion

over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the earth, ay, subduing earth itself. See, *e.g.*, how he makes the fish feed him, and the sheep clothe him, and the horse draw him, and the ox plough for him, and the fowl of the air furnish him with quills to write his philosophies and his epics. Again: see man's supremacy over the face of Nature; see, *e.g.*, how he dikes out the ocean, as in Holland; and opens up harbours, as at Port Said; and digs canals, as at Suez; and explodes submarine reefs, as in East River; and builds roads, as over St. Gothard; and spans rivers, as the St. Lawrence; and stretches railways, as from Atlantic to Pacific; see how he reclaims mountain-slopes and heaths and jungles and deserts and pestilential swamps, bringing about interchanges of vegetable and animal life, and even mitigating climates, so that here, at least, man may be said to be the creator of circumstances rather than their creature. Again: see man's supremacy over the forces and resources of Nature; see how he subsidizes its mineral substances, turning its sands into lenses, its clay into endless blocks of brick, its granite into stalwart abutments, its iron into countless shapes for countless purposes, its gems into diadems; see how he subsidizes its vegetable products, making its grains feed him, its cottons clothe him, its forests house him, its coals warm him. See how he subsidizes the mechanical powers of nature, making its levers lift his loads, its wheels and axles weigh his anchors, its pulleys raise his weights, its inclined planes move his blocks, its wedges split his ledges, its screws propel his ships. See how he subsidizes the natural forces, making the air waft his crafts, the water run his mills, the heat move his engines, the electricity bear his messages, turning the very gravitation into a force of buoyancy. 2. But in whose name shall man administer the mighty domain? In his own name, or in another's? In another's most surely, even in the name of Him in whose image he is made. The Son of God alone is King, and man is but His viceroy; viceroy because His inspiration and image. Man holds the estate of earth in fief; his only right the right of usufruct. VI. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS. 1. Jesus Christ the archetypal Man. Jesus the form, mankind the figure. See Rom. viii. 29; Col. i. 15; Rev. iii. 14. 2. Man's incomparable dignity. His starting-point is the Eternal, Infinite One. A genuine coin, stamped in effigy of Kaiser or President, is worth what it represents. Man, stamped in the effigy of the King of kings and Lord of lords, is worth, let me dare to say it, what he represents, even Deity. Little lower than the angels, little lower than Elohim, did Elohim make him (Psa. viii. 5). All this explains why this earth, cosmically so tiny, morally is so vast. Jesus Christ came not to save the worthless. He came to save Divine imageship: that is to say, all Godlike potentialities. He came to save Divine imageship itself. 3. Imageship the die of race unity. May it ever be ours to recognize lovingly every human being, whether Caucasian or Mongolian, as a member of mankind, and so our kinsman! When all men do this, mankind will not only be the same as humanity; mankind will also have humanity. 4. We see the secret of man's coming triumph: it is imageship. Jesus Christ is the image of God; as such, He is the Lord of all. Mankind is Christ's image lost. The Church is Christ's image restored: as such, she, like her image, is lord of all. All things are hers; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are hers; and she is Christ's, and Christ is God's (1 Cor. iii. 21-23). 5. Would you know how to be restored in the image of God? Then gaze on the character of Him who is the brightness from His Father's glory, and the express image of His Person. Enter into the fellowship of that character. Be everlastingly closeted with Him in the kinships and intimacies of a perfect friendship. Lovingly study every feature of that beaming Image (2 Cor. iii. 18). Thus gazing, and thus changed, it matters little what our earthly fate be, whether renown or obscurity, wealth or poverty, long life or early death. Enough that on the resurrection morn we shall perceive that as we had borne the image of the earthly, even of the first man Adam, so henceforth we shall bear the image of the heavenly, even of the Second Man, the Lord from heaven (1 Cor. xv. 47-49). (*G. D. Boardman.*) *The image of God.*—I. GOD'S DECREE. God consults with Himself. Complex nature of Deity. II. MAN'S DIGNITY. Nearer to God's own nature than other animals. A moral being. III. MAN'S DOMINION. Lessons: 1. Our position of dignity should strengthen our sense of duty. 2. Our relationship to God should encourage us to noble aims. 3. In Jesus Christ man is restored to the image of God and to the hope of a high and blessed destiny. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *The vastness of man.*—"Let Us make man in Our image." Such is man's height, and depth, and breadth, and mystery. He has not come from one

principle or distinction of the Divine nature, but out of all principles. Man is the image of the whole Deity. There is in him a sanctuary for the Father, for the Son, and for the Holy Ghost. (*J. Pulsford.*) *The making of man:*—There is surely no bolder sentence in all human speech. It takes an infinite liberty with God! It is blasphemy if it is not truth. We have been accustomed to look at the statement so much from the human point that we have forgotten how deeply the Divine character itself is implicated. To tell us that all the signboards in Italy were painted by Raphael is simply to dishonour and bitterly humiliate the great artist. We should resent the suggestion that Beethoven or Handel is the author of all the noise that passes under the name of music. Yet we say, God made man. Here is the distinct assurance that God created man in His own image and likeness; in the image of God created He him. This is enough to ruin any Bible. This is enough to dethrone God. Within narrow limits any man would be justified in saying, If man is made in the image of God, I will not worship a God who bears such an image. There would be some logic in this curt reasoning, supposing the whole case to be on the surface and to be within measurable points. So God exists to our imagination under the inexpressible disadvantage of being represented by ourselves. When we wonder about Him we revert to our own constitution. When we pray to Him we feel as if engaged in some mysterious process of self-consultation. When we reason about Him the foot of the ladder of our reasoning stands squarely on the base of our own nature. Yet, so to say, how otherwise could we get at God? Without some sort of incarnation we could have no starting-point. We should be hopelessly aiming to seize the horizon or to hear messages from worlds where our language is not known. So we are driven back upon ourselves—not ourselves as outwardly seen and publicly interpreted, but our inner selves, the very secret and mystery of our soul's reality. Ay; we are now nearing the point. We have not been talking about the right "man" at all. The "man" is within the man; the "man" is not any one man; the "man" is Humanity. God is no more the man we know than the man himself is the body we see. Now we come where words are of little use, and where the literal mind will stumble as in the dark. Truly we are now passing the gates of a sanctuary, and the silence is most eloquent. We have never seen man; he has been seen only by his Maker! As to spirit and temper and action, we are bankrupts and criminals. But the sinner is greater than the sin. We cannot see him; but God sees him; yes, and God loves him in all the shame and ruin. This is the mystery of grace. This is the pity out of which came blood, redemption, forgiveness, and all the power and glory of the gospel. We cannot think of God having made man without also thinking of the responsibility which is created by that solemn act. God accepts the responsibility of His own administration. Righteousness at the heart of things, and righteousness which will yet vindicate itself, is a conviction which we cannot surrender. It is indeed a solemn fact that we were no parties to our own creation. We are not responsible for our own existence. Let us carefully and steadily fasten the mind upon this astounding fact. God made us, yet we disobey Him; God made us, yet we grieve Him; God made us, yet we are not godly. How is that? There is no answer to the question in mere argument. For my part I simply wait. I begin to feel that, without the power of sinning, I could not be a man. As for the rest, I hide myself in Christ. Strange, too, as it may appear, I enjoy the weird charm of life's great mystery, as a traveller might enjoy a road full of sudden turnings and possible surprises, preferring such a road to the weary, straight line, miles long, and white with hot dust. I have room enough to pray in. I have room enough to suffer in. By-and-by I shall have large space, and day without night to work in. We have yet to die; that we have never done. We have to cross the river—the cold, black, sullen river. Wait for that, and let us talk on the other side. Keep many a question standing over for heaven's eternal sunshine. If we would see God's conception of man, we must look upon the face of His Son—Him of whom He said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." That is man; that is the ideal humanity. It is useless to look in any other direction for God's purpose and thought. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *God makes man near to Himself:*—Earthly sovereigns perpetuate and multiply distinctions between themselves and their subjects. In Great Britain the monarch is removed from the rank of the people by princes of the blood royal, dukes, marquises, earls, barons, viscounts, baronets, knights, esquires; and outward appearances, especially on public occasions, are so regulated, as to impress the people with their own

distance; while an audience with the sovereign, or any correspondence or intercourse is, except to the favoured few, a thing impossible. All this may be necessary and even useful, where the ruling power is but earthly and human. In bold contrast with this political policy is the conduct of the supreme Sovereign—God. The King of kings formed His first earthly subjects with affinities between them and Himself most near and intimate. (*S. Martin.*) *Fellowship with God*:—The possession of the image of God led to fellowship with God. It was a means of knowing God, and a power to love God. Looking into themselves they saw God, and looking out of and beyond themselves they saw God. They were drawn to God by cords of love, and enjoyed with God the communion of mind and heart. God was in all their thoughts. God sat enthroned over all their feelings. He was to them the first, and He the last. God spake, they listened, understood, and believed. God wrought, they saw and rejoiced in His works. They spake to God, and knew that God heard and understood. They laboured and knew that God had pleasure in their doings. They walked with God—yea, dwelt in God, and God in them. Separation from their Creator they knew not. Clouds and darkness were never about Him. The light of love was always in His countenance. A filial character was given by likeness to God to the entire religion of our first parents. Their notion of Deity was the idea of a father—their feelings toward God were those of children—and their service to God was that of a son and of a daughter. The inward moulded the outward. Without doubt the very body sympathized with the spirit. Remorse did not turn their moisture into the drought of summer. Jealousy did not mock and feed upon their flesh. Sorrow did not cause their bones to wax old. Grief did not furrow the cheek, or blanch the hair. Shame brought not confusion on the face. There was no inward fire to consume—no worm to gnaw and devour. A glowing conscience, a joyful heart, and a peaceful mind, were marrow to the bones, health to the flesh, and beauty to the countenance. (*Ibid.*) *God manifests Himself through man*:—By reason of His complacency in His own nature, God desires to manifest Himself—to express and to make known His own being—to develope His own character of life. God is also disposed to hold fellowship with His spiritual universe. Had He preferred solitude, He could have dwelt alone in His own eternity, or have created merely those material forms which, like a sea of glass, should have reflected His nature in the cold distance of an unconscious and inanimate likeness. But willing to hold fellowship with His creatures, determining to make Himself visible, and delighting in His own nature with infinite complacency—He made man in His own image. This reflection of Himself was pleasant to God. He rejoiced in this work. He looked upon what He had made, and to Him it seemed good. He ceased to create when He had made man, and entered on His sabbath satisfied with this master-work of His hand. His own blessedness was increased because livingly reflected. As the artist rejoices when his metal, or marble, or canvas expresses his ideal—as the poet leaps with pleasure when his metaphor and rhythm breathe the inspiration of his heart—as the father glows with gladness to behold in his first-born boy his own features—so God delighted in the image of Himself in man. Distance from God! Distance! Where was distance then? As the shadow to the form—as the fruit to the tree-bough—as the recent-born to the mother—man in God's image was to God. (*Ibid.*) *The Divine image a thought experimentally useful*:—And of what special importance is this subject to you—Christians? It is profitable for doctrine, and it is profitable for reproof—it rebukes that self-conceit, that vanity, that pride, that self-importance which not a few Christians exhibit. How can men think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, when they remember that their characteristic should be the image of God! It is profitable for correction—it may correct the grovelling of the willingly ignorant, and of the worldly, and of the fleshly, and of the low-minded; it may correct the false ambition of such as make money, and earth's honour their goal—it may correct the self-complacency of the self-righteous, and the error of those who hold that man has not fallen. And it is profitable for instruction in righteousness; it saith, Make not orthodoxy your goal, neither benevolent activity, but make a nature renewed by the Holy Ghost the mark of the prize of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (*Ibid.*) *Man a creation, not an evolution*:—The theory holds that, in the struggle for existence, the varieties best adapted to their surroundings succeed in maintaining and reproducing themselves, while the rest die out. Thus, by gradual change and improvement of lower into higher forms of life, man has been evolved. We grant that Darwin has disclosed one of the important features of God's method. We

deny that natural selection furnishes a sufficient explanation of the history of life, and that for the following reasons: 1. It gives no account of the origin of substance, nor of the origin of variations. Darwinism simply says that "round stones will roll down hill further than flat ones" (Gray, "Natural Science and Religion"). It accounts for the selection, not for the creation, of forms. 2. Some of the most important forms appear suddenly in the geological record, without connecting links to unite them with the past. The first fishes are the Ganoid, large in size and advanced in type. There are no intermediate gradations between the ape and man. 3. There are certain facts which mere heredity cannot explain, such for example as the origin of the working-bee from the queen and the drone, neither of which produces honey. The working-bee, moreover, does not transmit the honey-making instinct to its posterity; for it is sterile and childless. If man had descended from the conscienceless brute, we should expect him, when degraded, to revert to his primitive type. On the contrary, he does not revert to the brute, but dies out instead. 4. The theory can give no explanation of beauty in the lowest forms of life, such as molluscs and diatoms. Darwin grants that this beauty must be of use to its possessor, in order to be consistent with its origination through natural selection. But no such use has yet been shown; for the creatures which possess the beauty often live in the dark, or have no eyes to see. So, too, the large brain of the savage is beyond his needs, and is inconsistent with the principle of natural selection which teaches that no organ can permanently attain a size unrequired by its needs and its environment. See Wallace, "Natural Selection," 338-360. 5. No species is yet known to have been produced either by artificial or by natural selection. In other words, selection implies intelligence and will, and therefore cannot be exclusively natural.

1. UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE. 1. The Scriptures teach that the whole human race is descended from a single pair. 2. This truth lies at the foundation of Paul's doctrine of the organic unity of mankind in the first transgression, and of the provision of salvation for the race in Christ. 3. This descent of humanity from a single pair also constitutes the ground of man's obligation of natural brotherhood to every member of the race. The Scripture statements are corroborated by considerations drawn from history and science. Three arguments may be briefly mentioned: 1. The argument from history. So far as the history of nations and tribes in both hemispheres can be traced, the evidence points to a common origin and ancestry in central Asia. 2. The argument from language. Comparative philology points to a common origin of all the more important languages, and furnishes no evidence that the less important are not also so derived. 3. The argument from psychology. The existence, among all families of mankind, of common mental and moral characteristics, as evinced in common maxims, tendencies, and capacities, in the prevalence of similar traditions, and in the universal applicability of one philosophy and religion, is most easily explained upon the theory of a common origin. 4. The argument from physiology. (1) It is the common judgment of comparative physiologists that man constitutes but a single species. The differences which exist between the various families of mankind are to be regarded as varieties of this species. In proof of these statements we urge—(a) The numberless intermediate gradations which connect the so-called races with each other. (b) The essential identity of all races in cranial, osteological, and dental characteristics. (c) The fertility of unions between individuals of the most diverse types, and the continuous fertility of the offspring of such unions. (2) Unity of species is presumptive evidence of unity of origin. Oneness of origin furnishes the simplest explanation of specific uniformity, if indeed the very conception of species does not imply the repetition and reproduction of a primordial type-idea expressed at its creation upon an individual empowered to transmit this type-idea to its successors. (*A. H. Strong, D.D.*) *The creation of man:*—I. MAN WAS THE LAST OF GOD'S WORKS. 1. He was not made to be in anywise a helper to God in creation. There is nothing that we see around us, or behold above us, or that we trample on with our feet, that was created by us. The most insignificant insect that crawls, the meanest among herbs, had their first origin from the Almighty. 2. But, again, as the order of the universe shows clearly to us that we had no share either in the formation or design of anything that we see, so does it lead us to grateful reflections upon God's goodness and wisdom in our creation. He did not place our first parents in a void, empty, and unfurnished dwelling, but He garnished the heavens with light, and clothed the earth with beauty, ere He introduced into it that creature who should dress and keep it, and be allowed to have dominion over every

living thing. II. THE PECULIAR DELIBERATION WITH WHICH GOD APPLIED HIMSELF TO THIS HIS NOBLER WORK. "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." Whence this altered form of expression? What other view can we take of it, than that it is a token of man's greater dignity and higher worth? Should it not excite us to soar above our fallen state—to rise superior to the ruin in which we find ourselves involved—to recollect the glory of our first creation, and the honour which was put upon us in this deliberate purpose and counsel of the several persons of the blessed Trinity in our creation. III. MAN WAS CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE, AFTER HIS LIKENESS. Let us, in concluding the subject, consider what practical improvement may be derived from it. Is God our Maker, and shall we not worship and adore Him? Again, ought not the image of God in man to be prized above all beside? The body decays and moulders into dust: the spirit is indestructible. Whence is it that this dying body exercises our chief care and thought, while the immortal spirit is neglected and forgotten? Shall the tongue be allowed to utter lies, seeing that it is given us by the God of truth? Shall we curse man, that is made after the image and likeness of God? Again, are we distinguished from the beasts that perish by the noble gift of reason, and understanding, and conscience, and shall we allow the members of the body to usurp a wretched dominion over us? (*H. J. Hastings, M.A.*) *Man created in God's image*:—1. Whatever may be the difficulties this text of ours presents to expositors and divines, the main fact it embodies and sets forth is so clearly expressed as to exclude the possibility of a difference of opinion respecting it. And this fact is none other than that our first parents were created by God, and this in His image and likeness. This plain statement of Holy Writ, that man has been created, is nevertheless considered by many scientists of our days as being utterly erroneous and untenable. 2. It must have been a most solemn moment in the history of creation when, at the close of it, God undertook to create man, who was to complete and crown His marvellous six days' work. What this world would have been without man we can easily picture to ourselves when we read the descriptions by explorers and travellers of those parts of our globe never inhabited or cultivated by man. We know that without man's care and attention many things in nature would have gradually disappeared, others again would not have developed to such a state of perfection as they have attained to. Besides this, nature without man, who combines in himself the material and spiritual, the natural and supernatural, and thus forms a reasonable and necessary link between nature and its Creator, would have lacked a high and noble aim worthy of the great Creator. 3. God created man in His image, after His likeness. (*A. Fürst, D.D.*) *Love in the creation of man*:—In man animal organization is carried to its highest. That which in the quadruped is a comparatively insignificant member becomes in man the hand, so wonderful in its powers, so infinitely versatile in its applications. That tongue, which the rest of animal creation possess, but which the highest among them use only for inarticulate signals, becomes in him the organ of articulate speech, so marvellous in its construction, and its uses. And of the same rich bestowal of the best of God's gifts of life and life's benefits on man, many other examples might be, and have been given. But it is not in man as the highest form of organized animal life that we are to seek for exemplification of the declaration in my text. His erect form, his expressive eye, his much-working hand—his majesty in the one sex, and beauty in the other—these may excite our admiration, and lead us to praise Him who made us; but in none of these do we find the image of God. God is without body, parts, or passions. He is above and independent of all organized matter: it sprang from the counsel of His will, it is an instrument to show forth His love and praise, but it is not, and cannot be, in His image. But let us advance higher. God bestowed on man, as on the tribes beneath him, a conscious animal soul. And here let me remind you that I follow, as I always wish to do, that Scriptural account and division of man, according to which the soul, the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ of the New Testament, is that thinking and feeling and prompting part of him, which he possesses in common with the brutes that perish; and which I will call for clearness, his animal soul. Now here again, though he possesses it in common with them, God has given it, in him, a wonderfully higher degree of capability and power. The merely sentient capacities of the animal soul in the most degraded of men are immeasurably above those of the animal soul in the most exalted of brutes,—however he may be surpassed by them in the acuteness of the bodily senses. And again, in speaking of man, we cannot do up with these animal faculties. To the brute, they are all. It is obvious, then,

that we must not look for God's image in man in this his animal soul, because this is confessedly not his highest part; because it is informed and ennobled by something above it; moreover, because it is naturally bound to the organization of his material body. And this point is an important one to be borne in remembrance. It is not in our mental capacities, nor in any part of our sentient being, that we can trace our likeness to God; whenever we speak of any or of all of these in the treatment of this subject, we must look beyond them, and beyond the aggregate of them, for that of which we are in search. What, then, is that part of man at which we have been pointing in these last sentences? that soul of his soul, that ennobler of his faculties, that whose acknowledged dignity raises him far above the animal tribes, with whom he shares the other parts of his being? Let us examine his position, as matter of fact. By what is he distinguished from all other animals, in our common speech and every-day thought? Shall we not all say that it is by this—that whereas we regard each animal as merely a portion of animated matter, ready to drop back again into inanimate matter, the moment its organization is broken down—we do not thus regard ourselves or our fellow men, but designate every one of them as a person, a term which cannot be used of any mere animal? And is it not also true, that to this personality we attach the idea of continuous responsibility—of abiding praise or blame? To what is this personality owing? Not to the body, however perfect its organization; not to the animal soul, however wonderful its faculties; but to the highest part of man—his spirit. And here it is that we must look for man's relation to God. God is a Spirit; and He has breathed into man a spirit, in nature and attributes related to Himself: which spirit rules and informs, and takes up into itself, and ennoble, as we have seen, his animal soul. This spirit is wonderfully bound up with the soul and the body. The three make up the man in his present corporeal state—but the spirit alone carries the personality and responsibility of the man. The body, with its organization and sentient faculties, is only a tent wherein the spirit dwells; itself is independent of its habitation, and capable of existing without it. The spirit of man makes the essential distinction between him and the lower animals. His spirit, his divine part, that whereby he can rise to and lay hold of God, was made in the image of God. And this leads us to the second division of our inquiry, How was man's spirit created in the image of God? What ideas must we attach to these words, "the image of God"? To this question but one answer can be given, and that in simple and well-known words. God is love: this is all we know of His essential character. He who is Love, made man, man's spirit, after His own image. That is, He made man's spirit, love—even as He is love. In this consisted the perfection of man as he came from the hands of His Creator—that his whole spirit was filled with love. Now what did this imply? clearly, a conscious spirit; for love is the state of a knowing, feeling, conscious being. What more? as clearly a spirit conscious of God; knowing Him who loved it, and loving Him in return. Faith is the organ by which the spirit reaches forth to God. We never can repeat or remember too often, that faith is "appropriating belief"; not belief in the existence of God as a bare fact, distant and inoperative, but belief in Him as our God—the God who loves us—the God who seeks our good—the God to whom we owe ourselves—the God who is our portion and our exceeding great reward. And it is essential to faith, that we should not, speaking strictly, know all this—not have hold of every particular detail of it—not master the subject, as men say; this would not be faith, but knowledge. We are masters of that which we know; but we are servants of that which we believe. And therefore man, created in the image of God, loving God, dependent on God, tending upwards to God, is created in a state of faith. By this faith his love was generated—by believing God as his God—by unlimited trust of His love, and uninterrupted return of that love. And O what does not this description imply, that is holy, and tending to elevate and bless man? "Love," says the apostle, "is the bond of perfectness"; and the same command of our Lord, which we read in one place of the Gospel, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"; in another runs, "Be ye merciful," i.e. loving, "even as your Father is merciful." One remark more. On this image of God depends the immortality of man's spirit; not on its own nature, as some have dreamed. As it had a beginning, so it might have an end. It can only be immortal by being united to Him who liveth forever. God's love called into being those who were in its own image, kindred to itself, bound to itself by love; how can we conceive that love annihilating again such kindred objects of its own good pleasure? And this immortality is not

removed by sin: for it lies at the root of the race—is its essential attribute, not an accident of its being. (*Dean Alford.*) *The state of innocence:*—The name of Adam suggests to us at once the estate from which the human race has fallen, the cause of that fall, the vast forfeit that one man made to God; and naturally awakens in our own minds questions as to our lost inheritance. Would Adam have died if he had never fallen? If he had lived, would he have continued in paradise, or been translated into heaven? What was his condition in paradise? Was it one of probation and of interior sufferings dependent on such a state, or was it one of entire freedom from all such trial? And lastly (and this is most important in such probation), was Adam indued with a supernatural power, or did he simply depend on the gifts of his original creation? To these four questions I will append one brief inquiry in addition. Had our first parents a claim to eternal happiness by the right of their original creation, or in virtue of some covenant made with them by God? 1. With regard then to the first of the above questions, a very slight examination of Holy Scripture will assure us that Adam would not have died in an unfallen state. As is always the case in the direct intercourse of God with His creature, a covenant was made between the two, the terms of which were clearly defined. “Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”; and the woman, in stating the terms of the covenant, says, “God hath saith, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” Now these propositions clearly involve the power of inversion, and imply that, in the event of their not eating the forbidden fruit, they shall live and not die; that is, their death was simply and only dependent on breach of the covenant. The same point is clearly ascertained by a comparison of 1 Cor. xv. and Rom. v., both with the separate parts of each and one with another. 2. I will now approach the second branch of the subject, namely, the question, whether Adam would have remained, had he not fallen, an inhabitant of paradise; or been translated into the immediate presence of God in heaven. There seem to be four especial reasons, amongst many others, for concluding that the latter would have been the case; for, in the first place, it is apparent that in the case of all covenants, such as those which God made with man, there is a punishment annexed to the breach of the terms of such covenant, and a reward annexed to their fulfilment; and inasmuch as this punishment would involve a worse condition for the fallen party than the one which he occupied at the period of the ratification of the covenant; so, on the other hand, a superior condition is the reward of the fulfilment of those terms. Now the fall of Adam at once brought upon him the loss of paradise, that is, the inferior condition; and, by parity of reasoning, had he not fallen but endured his probation, it would have secured to him translation to heaven itself, or a superior condition. But I pass on to the second reason on which I base my belief that Adam would have been eventually translated to heaven. He was clearly possessed of the perfect power of self-will; he had vast and manifold opportunities of exercising it; he was placed in the immediate presence of a piercing temptation; he daily passed the tree of knowledge on his visit to the tree of life. So acute was that temptation, that in spite of the continual presence of Jehovah, of the purity of the nature hitherto innocent, of the innate image of God, he exercised that power of free will, and he fell. For what could all of the powers have been given him? and why should he have been placed in such a position, unless some great attainment beyond what he at that moment enjoyed was to be placed within his grasp? To imagine otherwise would be inconsistent with the whole analogy of God’s providence. But, thirdly, I spoke above of the external support which was continually necessary from the Divine Being for the preservation of Adam’s natural life; a state of continued exertion is unnatural to the Deity; a state of repose is His true condition; consequently we cannot imagine but that the first Adam was eventually to have been placed in a position in which continued life was natural to him. Even the daily visit of the Almighty to the garden of Eden implied a transitory, and not a permanent condition. But, fourthly, though the fact of sinning involved death to the natural body, it by no means follows that the absence of sin leaves that natural body in the same condition, but rather we should expect it would tend to elevate it, as much as the fall into sin depressed it. 3. I will now pass on to the third head, the moral condition of our first parents in Eden. There is a popular impression, not unfrequently given children and ignorant persons, that our first parents were in a state of entire freedom from any kind of suffering. Now the presence of an object highly desirable to the eye and the mind, while the

moral agent is fully possessed of the power of free-will and yet under a strong bias towards a different direction from that desire, in itself implies a condition of very considerable mental suffering, and in this condition clearly our first parents were placed, for we are distinctly told that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was in the first place highly desirable to the eye; and secondly, to the mind, inasmuch as it imparted the keenest knowledge of right and wrong; consequently no misapprehension could be greater than that our first parents were without probation, and all its attending trials; nay more, we are bound to consider how intense must have been the desire after knowledge, a thing in itself so innocent and elevated, in so sublime a creature as Adam was, fresh from the hands of the Creator, and having as yet no bias in favour of wickedness; besides which, some exquisite external beauty seems to have arrayed the tree of knowledge, which made it the more fascinating to Adam and Eve, as we gather from the terms that it was desirable to the eye. From all this it is clear Adam was in a state of very keen probation. 4. With what power did Adam approach the scene of his temptation? Was it with the original power of his creation or some supernatural gift of the Spirit? Surely with the latter. (*E. Monro, M.A.*) *Proofs of the Divine in man*:—To this day no fact in natural history remains more conspicuous than the strong contrast betwixt man and every other animal, in their relations to nature—particularly in their power to master and utilize the forces of nature. Once man appears upon the globe, no matter how he came there, he reacts upon his environment in a way that is possible to no other organism. In popular language, he is not the mere "creature of circumstances" in the same sense in which that may be affirmed of other creatures. To a large and growing degree, he makes his own world—modifying, conquering, counteracting, utilizing the forces of nature, with its living productions, to his own ends. This process, which the venerable book before us calls "subduing" the earth, and which it regards as a special task assigned to our human family, is due to two faculties peculiar to man. The first is the power to store up his observations upon nature and compare them, until by degrees the laws according to which her forces operate come to be understood: the result of this power is science. Next, is the power to recombine matter in fresh combinations so as to utilize the forces of nature for new ends of his own: the results of this we term the Mechanical Arts. Neither of these two faculties exists in any other animal, save in the most rudimentary form. These two in combination have given birth to human civilization. Man enlarges his power from day to day, while the very ball on which he is a pigmy resident seems to contract itself in his grasp. Space and time are nearly annihilated; seas almost cease to divide; the engineer alters even the face of the land; matter becomes less and less our enemy, more and more our minister. By science and by art, we are entering upon a veritable "dominion" over this globe which God has given us to possess, and a crown is set upon man's head of "glory and honour." I do not pause to insist upon the strange foresight exhibited in these ancient words, or how strangely the destiny of our race which was thus foreshadowed in the dim dawn of history has come to be fulfilled in our time. Let me rather ask you to notice how revelation at its outset is not content to recognize this mastery of man over the rest of nature as his pre-eminent function—it undertakes already to explain it. It assigns a reason for it. It finds that reason in the constitution of human nature itself, viz., in man's dual nature, and especially in his resemblance on one side of his two-fold being to his Creator. "God made man in His own likeness." Now, to do justice to this theory, accounting for man's supremacy and power over nature, we must bear in mind that when it assigns to man a dual origin it is in order to correspond with the dual constitution which he possesses. In the picturesque and poetic style of primitive thinkers, man came in part from the "dust of the ground," and in part from "the breath of God." In other words, he is on one side of his being a mundane product, fashioned, or, more probably evolved, out of material nature, under the operation of the same biological laws which account for the origin of other species on the globe; but on another side he is something more than that, a spiritual being possessed of a different order of life from that which we find in other species, a life which natural evolution fails to account for. The truth of that statement depends on facts which lie outside the sphere of biology as one of the physical sciences—lie in the region of metaphysics and of religion. They must justify themselves to other observation than that of the five senses. Nay, we may go further and say: So long as there remains a class of facts in human consciousness, of whose origin biology can give no account—facts, for

example, like the sense of duty, the instinct of worship, the feeling of responsibility, the desire to pray, or the yearning after immortality—so long as it only scientific to postulate like Scripture a second origin for man's nature. The dual constitution of this exceptional creature, so long as it cannot be resolved into unity, calls for a dual cause to account for it. If the breath of the beast, and of the animal life in man too, goeth downward, "returning to the earth as it was," shall not the spirit of man go upward, "returning to God who gave it"? So much as man possesses in common with the brutes, comes from "the dust of the ground"—that physical science will explain to us. So much as separates man from the brutes and makes him a scientific, inventive, responsible, and religious animal—this demands another explanation. Can we find a better than the old one—"God breathed into man the breath of life," or "God created man in His own image"? I do not claim this scriptural theory of man's spiritual origin as a result of the modern science of anthropology. On the contrary, I believe it to be a revelation. At the same time, the facts seem to call for some such extra-physical cause; and so far, nothing equally good even as a working hypothesis has been discovered. The spiritual nature of man is a fact, as I have said, both of metaphysics and of religion; and neither metaphysics nor religion has yet been swallowed up (like the magicians' rods) by physical science. It was not along the road of metaphysical speculation, however, that the Hebrews reached the great fact that man is a spiritual being akin to his Creator. That road was travelled by the Greek mind. St. Paul found in Greek poetry traces of the same truth; and Greek poetry had learned it from Greek philosophy. That "we are the offspring of Zeus" was the result of observing human nature on its intellectual and ethical side rather than on its religious. But the Hebrews were not a speculative, they were pre-eminently a religious, people: and when they said, man is akin to Jehovah and wears His likeness, they meant that they were profoundly conscious through their own religious experience of having much in common with a personal God. It was by their devotional instincts, first and chiefly, and by the spiritual fellowship they were conscious of enjoying with the Living Object of their worship, that the great Hebrews, like Moses, David, Isaiah, or Paul, realized man's kinship with the Eternal, in spite of those obvious ties which link him as an organism to brute life upon the globe. Unquestionably this is, if one can attain it, the surest demonstration of all. The religious man who, in his worship and in the inward cries of his experience, finds that he can fling himself forth upon the unseen, and, in the darkness, where sense avails no longer, can touch One who is a real person like himself—can exchange with that awful invisible One personal confidences and affections, can ask and receive, can love and be loved, can lean and be upheld; he knows with certainty that he is born of God and akin to God. To be conscious from day to day of an interior life, utterly apart from that of sensation, to which life God forms the ever-present conditioning environment, just as nature surrounds and conditions my animal life—this is to be as sure that God is, and that my spirit is kindred with His, as I am sure that nature is, and that my organism corresponds to it. No one who actually leads this supersensuous life of personal intercourse with God will ask or care for any lower proof that man's spirit wears God's likeness. But although the religious experience of mankind be the leading proof that we are made in a Divine likeness, it is far from being the only one. From man religious I fall back on man scientific, and inquire if even his achievements do not imply that he is akin to his Maker. Could man be the student and master of nature that he is, were he not in some real sense intellectually akin to nature's Maker? Does not the dominion which he is come to wield through science over physical forces argue in favour of that anthropology of Genesis which says, God's own breath is in him. The great masters of science tell us that they experience a very keen intellectual delight in tracing out the hidden unity of forces and of the laws of force by which this vast complex world is reduced to simplicity. It is not from the observation of isolated facts that this intellectual pleasure springs. It arises when the observer becomes aware of something more than a crowd of isolated facts. Of what more? Of some relationship binding facts together—binding together whole classes of facts; as, for example, of an identical force at work in widely sundered departments of being, or of correlated forces; of a type-form running through large families of organisms, underlying their diversities; of universal laws creating cosmical order amid such a multiplicity of details. The studious mind becomes aware of an ordering, designing Mind. The thought with which God began to work leaps up anew for the first time after all these inter-

vening cycles of dead material change, leaps up in a kindred mind. The dead world knew not what its Maker meant, as change succeeded change, and race was evolved out of race, and cycle followed cycle; but I know. Across it all, we two understand each other—He, and I His child. Is not science a witness to the likeness of God in the mind of man? But I cannot dwell on this, for I should like to suggest in a word how the Divine image in man further reveals itself when, from being a student of nature, he goes on to be its imitator. The arts are, one and all of them, so many imitations of nature, that is, of the Divine working upon matter. For example, we discover the dynamical laws of matter, and at once set about imitating their natural applications in our mechanics. We discover the laws of chemical affinity and combination; and we set about bringing into existence such combinations as we require, or resolving compounds into their elements, at our pleasure. We discover the laws of electrical force, and straightway we proceed to utilize it as a motor or a light. In short, we have no sooner learnt His method from the Author of nature (which is the task of science) than we try to copy it and become ourselves workers, makers, builders, designers, modellers, just like Himself, only on our own reduced and petty scale. Thus our artificial products, like our science, bears witness to the ancient word: "There is a Spirit in man; and the breath of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Here, therefore, I return to the point from which I set out. Along this twofold road, of science, which traces out the thoughts of God; and of art, which imitates His working in obedience to known laws, man fulfils his destined function according to the ancient oracle of Genesis. He "subdues the earth" and wins dominion over it. He is the solitary creature on earth who even attempts such a function. He is fitted for it by his exceptional nearness to, and likeness to, the Creator. He can be the student and the copyist of God's works, because he was made in the image of God. Just in proportion as he realizes this godlike lordship over the globe, with its dead and living contents—a lordship based on his deciphering and sharing the Creator's thoughts—in that proportion does he approach the lofty position which Scripture assigns to him, and in which Scripture recognizes his crown of glory and honour. But "we see not yet all things put under him." During the long ages past it has been merely a faint shadow of royalty man has enjoyed. In the main, natural forces have mastered him. So they do still over a great portion of the earth. Science and art in this late age of man certainly seem to sweep rapidly to their goal, winning and recording year by year victories such as were never seen before. Notwithstanding, men are still far from satisfied, and complain that the physical ills of life and of society are far from overcome—all things far from being put under man's feet. What is to be the future condition of humanity, its final condition, in relation to nature? Is its lordship to grow much more perfect than we see it? Shall nature ever yield up all her secrets, or stoop to serve our welfare with all her forces? I know nothing that pretends to answer such inquiries save Christianity. And her answer is: We see Jesus, sole and perfect type of man's likeness to God, Representative and Forerunner of humanity redeemed; and Him we see already exalted to an ideal height of mastery over nature, crowned with the ancient royalty promised to our race, Head over all, with the world beneath His feet. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*) *Care for the body*:—If one should send me from abroad a richly carved and precious statue, and the careless drayman who tipped it upon the sidewalk before my door should give it such a blow that one of the boards of the box should be wrenched off, I should be frightened lest the hurt had penetrated further, and wounded it within. But if, taking off the remaining boards and the swathing-bands of straw or cotton, the statue should come out fair and unharmed, I should not mind the box, but should cast it carelessly into the street. Now, every man has committed to him a statue, moulded by the oldest Master, of the image of God; and he who is only solicitous for outward things, who is striving to protect merely the body from injuries and reverses, is letting the statue go rolling away into the gutter, while he is picking up the fragments, and lamenting the ruin of the box. (*H. W. Beecher*) *Man made in the image of God*:—1. It is the only basis of revelation. 2. It is a rational basis of the Incarnation. 3. A rational basis for the doctrine of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. 4. The foundation of those glorious hopes that are set before us in the New Testament. (*M. Gibson, D.D.*) *The defaced image*:—But as the image of a sovereign is effaced from old coins; or as the original expression is lost from the old figure-head on the exposed building; or as "decay's effacing fingers" soon destroy all beauty from the dead body; so sin speedily and effectually spoiled, or

obliterated, the moral image of God from the soul of man. At Bournemouth I lately noticed some stunted, misshapen shrubs, which were neither useful nor ornamental, and which were a degenerate growth of the fine trees abounding in that neighbourhood, or of the yet finer forests of fir in Norway. So what a contrast there is between the lowest and the highest trees of men around us; and between the highest types now and what man was at first. (*H. R. Burton.*) *Man in God's kingdom*.—The king of Prussia, while visiting a village in his land, was welcomed by the school-children of the place. After their speaker had made a speech for them he thanked them. Then taking an orange from a plate, he asked: "To what kingdom does this belong?" "The vegetable kingdom, sire," replied a little girl. The king took a gold coin from his pocket and, holding it up, asked: "And to what kingdom does this belong?" "To the mineral kingdom," said the girl. "And to what kingdom do I belong, then?" asked the king. The little girl coloured deeply, for she did not like to say, "the animal kingdom," as she thought she would, lest his majesty should be offended. Just then it flashed into her mind that "God made man in His own image," and looking up with a brightening eye, she said, "To God's kingdom, sire." The king was deeply moved. A tear stood in his eye. He placed his hand on the child's head and said, most devoutly, "God grant that I may be accounted worthy of that kingdom!"

Ver. 28. *Have dominion.*—*Man's dominion over the lower animals*.—I. THIS DOMINION GOD HAS MADE TO ARISE FROM THAT MENTAL SUPERIORITY WHICH CONSTITUTES MAN'S DISTINCTION AND GLORY. 1. The power of man is in his mind. 2. The benefit and extent of man's dominion is made to depend on the moral as well as the intellectual nature with which he was originally endowed. 3. As God has thus fitted man, by his superior nature, for dominion; so, on the other hand, He has given to the inferior animals a corresponding disposition to acknowledge man's superiority. 4. Thus the comfort of man is evidently promoted when this dominion is wisely and justly exercised, according to the original design of the Creator. "The hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered: the lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are for the price of the field." But the dominion of man when justly exercised, is a mean of comfort also to the animals who are connected with him. Living in our society and neighbourhood, they become the objects of our care. Attached to our persons and homes, they feel pleasure in our service. They thus partake of our provision, and enjoy the advantage of our foresight. II. THE MANNER IN WHICH OUR DOMINION OVER THE INFERIOR ANIMALS OUGHT TO BE EXERCISED. A right to rule is not a right to tyrannize; and a right to service extends only to such duties as are consistent with the powers of the servants, and with the place which is assigned to them. All power is of God, and can only be lawfully exercised when exercised according to His designs. That likeness to God in which we were originally created, should remind us that justice, and goodness, and mercy, are the chief distinctions after which we should aspire; and that our dominion was designed, like that of Him who designed it, to be exercised with wisdom, rectitude, and compassion. The consideration of our dominion, and the services by which those who are subjected to our power, in such numberless ways, minister to our comforts, only enforces on us more strongly the duty of providing for their comfort, and preserving them from injury. And is it not the very essence of benevolence to desire and to promote the happiness of every being within the sphere of our influence? (*S. McGill, D.D.*) *The Divine blessing*.—Every loving father wishes his children well. The Divine Father wishes the first human pair well, for such is the import of the words "He blessed them." We can say, too, without any hesitancy, that He wishes every member of the human family well, both for time and eternity. Those who are not blessed, and there are thousands, ought not to ascribe this to God, but to themselves. (*A. McAulane, D.D.*)

Vers. 29, 30. *To you it shall be for meat.*—*The universe God's gift to man*.—I. THE GIFT. 1. Extensive. 2. Valuable. 3. Increasing. Every day becoming better known and more thoroughly appreciated. All the gifts of God are productive; time unfolds their measure, discloses their meaning, and demonstrates their value. II. THE PURPOSE. 1. To evince love. One of the great objects of creation was to manifest the love of God to the human race, which was shortly to be brought into existence. The light, the sun, the stars, and the creation of man; all these were

the love-tokens of God. These were designed, not to display His creative power—His wisdom, but His desire for the happiness of man. 2. To teach truth. The world is a great school. It is well supplied with teachers. It will teach an attentive student great lessons. All the Divine gifts are instructive. 3. To sustain life. God created man without means, but it was not His will to preserve him without; hence He tells him where he is to seek his food. We must make use of such creatures as God has designed for the preservation of our life. God has provided for the preservation of all life. Let us learn to trust God for the necessities of life in times of adversity. Men who have the greatest possessions in the world must receive their daily food from the hand of God. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *Dependence on God*:—I. LET EVERY ONE DEPEND UPON GOD FOR THE NECESSARIES OF LIFE. 1. Asking them by prayer. 2. Acknowledging our own beggary. 3. Trusting Him by faith. 4. Remembering His promise. 5. Obedient to His will. II. LET US SERVE HIM FAITHFULLY AT WHOSE TABLE WE ARE FED. 1. Else we are ungrateful. 2. Else we deserve famine. All the provisions that God allows man for food are drawn out of the earth. The homeliness of the provision on which God intended man to feed. (*Ibid.*) *Let no man be discontented with mean fare*:—1. It is as good as the body it nourishes. 2. It is better than we deserve. 3. It is more than we are able to procure for ourselves. 4. It is more profitable for health. 5. It is free from the temptation to excess. God gives us not all our provisions at once, but a daily supply of them. (1) To manifest His Fatherly care. (2) To make us dependent on Him. (3) To exercise our faith. (4) To teach economy. God makes provision for all the creatures He hath made. Man was not only a good creature but a blessed one. (*Ibid.*) *Food*:—1. It exerts an influence on the disposition of man. A hungry man always feels the risings of cruelty, however they may be conquered by nobler principles. When you think of the cruelty of an Indian you should always think of his famished condition. 2. It indicates the civilized condition of man. You are told that a people are a wheat-eating people. Of course they must raise it; they must have the plough and the ploughshare; they must command iron, or, at least, some bard metal; they must understand the process of mining and smelting; they must have fields and fences; they must have foresight to sow and patience to wait for a crop; and, finally, they must be protected by law, for no one will lend the labour who is not assured of protection. 3. It contributes to extensive social changes. The introduction of sugar, for example, has changed the whole face of society. It was found to be one of the purest and least cloying sweets ever discovered. It was handed from the Arabs to the Spaniards; it was cultivated first in the Madeira Islands; then it was given to all the European nations; was raised in the West Indies on an immense scale. Then came rum, brandy, and all the alcoholic drinks, slavery and all its consequences, until now it is a debated problem whether the sweet cane was a blessing or a curse. At any rate this single article of food, so unimportant and neglected in its origin, changed the whole face of society. 4. It indicates the general refinement of the mind. Nay, we are instructed not to be totally indifferent to the kind of food, for discrimination here is connected with other discrimination, and indicates improvement in the taste. We will not take advantage of Dr. Johnson's remark, who held that he who did not mind his dinner would scarcely mind anything else. Suffice it to say, that taste in food and taste in dress, science, and literature, always go together. He that feeds grossly will judge grossly. 5. It is essential in order to the higher pursuits of life. Take away from the astronomer his food, and he will soon cease to lift his telescope to the stars. The saint, the martyr, the moralist, and the poet, all pursue their sublime occupations through the vigour and animation of the body. In a word, as the sweetest blossom on the highest tree, though it seems to be fed by the very air which it decorates, is nourished by the dirt and manure around the roots of the tree, so the sublimest mind is supplied by the food of the body. (*Bib. Sacra.*) *Man's proper food*:—Remark here, that when God assigned to man, while still innocent, his proper food, he gave him only the fruits of the field; and it was not till after the earth had been twice cursed because of sin that he was permitted to eat the flesh of animals. "Upon this point also," says M. de Rougemont, in his interesting "History of the Earth,"—"upon this point, as well as others, science has arrived, by long, circuitous ways, and painful study, at the very same truths which are plainly revealed to us in Genesis." "It is a question," says M. Flourens, "which has much perplexed physiologists, and which they have not yet been able to determine, what was the natural and primitive food of man. Now, thanks to comparative anatomy, it is very easy to see that man was originally neither herbivorous nor carnivorous, but

frugivorous." It was not till after the curse had been brought on the earth by sin that man began to feed on the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. Before he sinned he had a dominion over the creatures, which he lost in a great measure, and which he only keeps in a degree by force and violence; but at first they did not flee from him, and he did not eat them. Doubtless, before man sinned, the productions of the earth were richer and better than they are now, and offered a much greater variety of food and nourishment to man. But at the fall the nature of the soil and of its vegetable productions must have been in some way altered. Probably God greatly reduced the number of food-producing plants, and the earth brought forth instead those bearing useless thorns, and even some whose fruits or juices cause death. (*Prof. Gaussen.*) *The miracle of nourishment*:—Perhaps it may appear to you a very natural thing that corn, strawberries, cherries, grapes, figs, dates, peaches, pineapples, and all the various and delicious fruits of our orchards and of other climates, should feed and nourish you; but think of the miracle which must be wrought in your body—in your stomach, your lungs, your heart, your veins, your glands, your arteries, and all the various parts within you—before these fruits, or any other food that you eat, can be prepared in your stomach, changed into a kind of milky substance, and conveyed in your veins, and passed with your blood through one of the ventricles of your heart, and thence into your lungs, to be burned and purified there, and return again as perfect blood into the other ventricle, and thence be driven by a rapid movement into your arteries, and to the very extremities of your body, in order that it may reproduce, without your interference, your skin, your flesh, your bones, your nerves, your nails, and the thousands and thousands of the hairs of your head. It is a miracle wrought by God, that any kind of food, whether leaves, seeds, fruits, or bread should serve as food and nourishment to me at all; it is a mystery and a wonder how it is changed into a part of my body, so as to make it grow, repair it, and renew its waste; and therefore it was a work of almighty power when God appointed man's food, and said of the trees and plants, "To you it shall be for meat." What is bread? It is a paste composed of ground corn, water, and salt, baked after it has begun to ferment. But how does it happen that the corn and the salt should nourish me? Corn, we are told, is composed of carbon and the two gases which form water. Now, how can carbon or charcoal nourish me? Try to eat a bit of charcoal, and you will find it like taking a mouthful of sand. Think how wonderfully these substances, of which corn is composed, must be transformed by Divine power to produce the corn, and then still further changed to become a part of our bodies. Then salt is composed of two substances which separately would hurt me, and yet combined they are wholesome, and help to cause the corn and other things to nourish me. If I were to take two phials, one filled with sodium and the other with hydrochloric acid, and if I were to mix them in a glass, they would combine and form salt at the bottom of the glass; and yet, separately, each of these phials would contain a destructive poison. If I were to swallow the hydrochloric acid, it would burn my stomach; and if I were to pour it into the palm of my hand and hold it there, it would soon burn a hole right through my hand; and yet this dreadful poison, when combined with sodium, forms salt, which is so wholesome and so necessary for our health. (*Ibid.*) *Nature productive*:—The botanist Ray tells us that he counted 2,000 grains of maize on a single plant of maize sprung from one seed, 4,000 seeds on one plant of sunflower, 32,000 seeds on a single poppy plant, and 36,000 seeds on one plant of tobacco. Pliny tells us that a Roman governor in Africa sent to the Emperor Augustus a single plant of corn with 340 stems, bearing 340 ears—that is to say, at least 60,000 grains of corn had been produced from a single seed. In modern times, 12,780 grains have been produced by a single grain of the famous corn of Smyrna. In eight years, as much corn might spring from one seed as to supply all mankind with bread for a year and a half. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 31. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.—*Creation very good*:—I. WHY was it very good? 1. It was the offspring of infinite wisdom and power and love. 2. Because guided into existence by Jesus. 3. Because there was no evil in it. 4. Because it was like God. II. WHAT was very good? Everything which He had made. III. How are they very good? In themselves—in their purposes—in their arrangements. IV. Is EVERYTHING VERY GOOD STILL? God is fetching very good things out of the apparent frustration of His plan. He is restoring what is now very bad to be very good. (*J. Bolton.*) *The good creation*:—No one can prove to us that God made the world; but faith,

which is stronger than all arguments, makes us certain of it. 1. All which God has made is good, as He is, and, therefore, if anything in the world seems to be bad, one of two things must be true of it. (1) Either it is not bad, though it seems so to us, and God will bring good out of it in His own good time; or (2) if the thing is really bad, then God did not make it. It must be a disease, a mistake, a failure of man's making, or of some person's making, but not of God's making. For all that He has made He sees eternally, and, behold, it is very good. 2. God created each of us good in His own mind, else He would not have created us at all. Why does God's thought of us, God's purpose about us, seem to have failed? We do not know, and we need not know. Whatever sin we inherited from Adam, God looks on us now, not as we are in Adam, but as we are in Christ. God looks not on the old corrupt nature which we inherited from Adam, but on the new and good grace which God has meant for us from all eternity, which Christ has given us now.

III. That which is good in us God has made; He will take care of what He has made, for He loves it. All which is bad in us God has not made, and therefore He will destroy it; for He hates all that He has not made, and will not suffer it in His world. Before all worlds, from eternity itself, God said, "Let Us make man in Our likeness," and nothing can hinder God's word but the man himself. If a man loves his fallen nature better than the noble, just, loving grace of God, and gives himself willingly up to the likeness of the beasts that perish, then only can God's purpose towards him become of none effect. (*C. Kingsley, M.A.*) *God in nature; or, spring lessons*:—I. GLIMPSSES OF THE DIVINE NATURE. 1. The ceaseless and infinite energy of God. 2. The blessedness and beauty of God. II. LESSONS CONCERNING HUMAN LIFE. It is an old, but true comparison of this life to the seasons of the year. Spring has always suggested the refreshing, promising, transient, and changeable nature of life's early days. But notice, especially, the improveability of life. Spring, the cultivating season. Conditional. Spring neglected, autumn shows barren fields. Precarious. Buds, &c. may be blighted. Need for watching, &c. III. SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING HUMAN DESTINY. In spring "all things become new." To be "young again" has been the dream of all ages. The distinct proof of immortal youth beyond the grave is given only by Christ—"The First-begotten of the dead." (*J. Foster, B.A.*) *God's approbation of His works*:—I. THE NATURAL TRUTHS ASSERTED. 1. The true origin of all things. 2. The original perfection of all things. (1) Very good, as being well adapted to answer its particular intention. (2) Very good, as being well calculated to promote the glory of its Maker. (3) Very good, as being conducive to the perfection and welfare of the whole. 3. God's approbation of His works. II. THE MORAL TRUTHS SUGGESTED. 1. Seeing that God had done for man the utmost that his case admitted, both as respected himself, and as respected the world around him, the blessings of which were given him richly to enjoy, it follows that man was under the greatest obligations possible, in his then present circumstances. 2. Sin is at once the vilest injustice and the basest ingratitude imaginable (*Isa. i. 2; Mal. i. 6*). 3. A continuance in sin is the most daring imprudence. According to that constitution of things which was "very good," holiness and happiness went together. Sin, by violating that constitution, "brought death into the world with all our woe." 4. Reformation is well-pleasing to God. He approved of things in their original state. He is unchangeable. 5. The text suggests a lesson of humility. "How is the gold become dim!" the Divine image effaced! Humility becomes every rational creature, on account of its debt and its dependence. 6. The text furnishes ground of hope and encouragement. It proclaims the goodness of Him with whom we have to do; and therefore encourages us to hope in His mercy. Let us remember, however, that it is to the gospel we are indebted for improving hope into assurance (*Rom. viii. 32*). (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *God's approbation of His works*:—Let us consider—I. The natural truths asserted by our text. Among these are—1. The true origin of all things—"God saw everything that He had made." 2. The original perfection of all things—"very good," "very good," as being—(1) Well adapted to answer their particular intention. (2) Conducive to the perfection of the whole. (3) Well calculated to promote the Creator's glory. 3. God's approbation of His work. He saw it very good. II. The moral truths suggested. 1. Gratitude. 2. Hatred of sin. 3. The discontinuing of all evil. 4. Reformation and return to virtue. 5. Humility. 6. A ground of hope and encouragement. *Everything in species made perfect at one and the same time in the creation*:—All artists, in what they do, have their second thoughts (and those usually are the best); as, for

example, a watchmaker sets upon a piece of work (it being the first time that ever men were wont to carry a pass-time in their pockets), but, having better considered of it, he makes another, and a third, some oval, some round, some square, every one adding lustre and perfection to the first invention, whereas, heretofore, they were rather like warming-pans, to weary us, than warning-pieces, to admonish us how the time passed. The like may be said of the famous art of printing, painting, and the like, all of them outdoing the first copies they were set to go by. But it was not so with God in the creation of the several species of nature; He made them all perfect, *simul et semel*, at one and the same time, everything *pondere et mensura*, so just, so proportionate in the parts, such an elementary harmony, such a symmetry in the bodies of animals, such a correspondency of vegetals, that nothing is defective, neither can anything be added to the perfection thereof. (J. Spencer.)

The love of beauty: in nature.—In these most simple and mysterious words we are plainly told that in the beginning the Creator of this world delighted in the beauty of its outward form. He approved it not only as fit for the material development which He had designed for it, fit for the ages of change, the course of history which should be enacted on it: but also as outwardly delightful. He saw His work, and, behold, to sight it was very good. Apart from all the uses it would serve, its outward aspect was in harmony with a certain Divine law: and for this Almighty God judged that it was very good. If men would only look frankly at the first chapter of Genesis, without either timidity or injustice, it would surely seem very strange to find this simple and complete anticipation of a thought which, though it has been astir in the world for many centuries, has only in the last few years received its due emphasis and its logical force. I mean the thought that our delight in the visible beauty of this world can only be explained by the belief that the world has in some way been made to give us this delight by a Being who Himself knows what beauty is: and that the beauty of Nature is a real communication made to us concerning the mind and will that is behind Nature. . . . We have then a right to say that the quality or character which can thus speak and appeal to our spirit must have been engendered in this visible world by a spiritual Being able and willing to enter into communion with us, and knowing what would affect and raise our thoughts. When we receive and read a letter, we are sure it has come from some one who knew our language and could write it. When we listen to a beautiful piece of music we are sure that the composer had either a theoretic or at least a practical acquaintance with the laws and the effects of harmony. And when at the sight of a great landscape, rich and quiet in the chaste glory of the autumn, or glad with the bright promise, the fearless freedom of the spring, our whole heart is filled with happiness, and every sense seems touched with something of a pleasure that was meant for it, and all words are utterly too poor to praise the sight—then surely, by as good an argument, we must say that, through whatever ways and means, the world received its outward aspect by the will of some being who knew the law and truth of beauty. It does not matter, so far as this inference is concerned, how the result has been attained, or how many ages and thousands of secondary causes are traced between the beginning of the work and its present aspect: it is beautiful now: it now speaks to us in a language which our spirits understand: and, however long ago, and in whatever way, only a spiritual being could have taught it so to speak. Whatever creation means, the world was created by One who could delight in beauty: whenever its Author looked out upon His work He must have seen that it was very good. . . . Lastly, but above all, if we are to receive from the visible beauty of the world all that it can reveal to us concerning Him who made and praised it, we must draw near to it with watchful obedience to His own condition for so great a blessing: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." It was nobly said by the founder of inductive science, that for entrance into the kingdom of knowledge as for entrance into the kingdom of heaven, men must become as little children. They must draw near with free and humble hearts if they are to enter into the mysteries of natural science: they must not dictate to Nature, or assert themselves in her presence: they must come to her with affectionate attention to wait upon her self-revealing. (F. Paget, D.D.)

Admiration of completed work.—"The Lord rejoices in His works." What a wonderful sentence that is! That man must have been inspired when he said that God rested from His labours, and looked upon His works, and pronounced them good. Of all joys, that is the grandest and sublimest, to review one's own work and pronounce it good. There is no passage in English much more beautiful than that

which describes the author of that great work on "Falling Rome" (Gibbon) when he had just come to the conclusion of his task. Walking there under the trees of Lausanne, he, like a true artist, drew back and admired his finished work. And he was right. For there are times when a man may look upon his work, and say, "That is genius!" When Swift was beginning to doat, he took down from a shelf one of his own works, and exclaimed, "What a genius I must have had when I did that!" (*G. Dawson.*) *Perfection of nature*:—I have seen the back of a splendid painting, and there, on the dusty canvas, were blotches and daubs of colour—the experiments of the painter's brush. There is nothing answering to that in the works of God! I have seen the end of a piece of costly velvet; and though man had in it fairly imitated the bloom of the fruit and the velvet of the flowers, there was a common, unwrought, worthless selvage—a coarse, unsightly selvage. There is no selvage in the works of God! (*H. Wonnacott.*) *A pretty world*:—I once, writes Joaquin Miller, strolled through a miserable Mexican village. The shadows were creeping over the cabins, where women came and went in silence, and men sat smoking at the cabin doors, while children played in swarms by the water. The air was like a breath of God, and all nature seemed as sacred as rest to a weary man. A black, bent, old negro woman, all patches from head to foot, frosty-headed and half blind, came crooning forth with a broken pot tied together, in which she had planted a flower to grow by her door. I stopped, watched her set it down and arrange it; and then, not wishing to stare rudely at this bent old creature, I said—"Good evening, auntie; it's a fine evening." She slowly straightened up, looked at me, looked away at the fading sunlight on the hills, and said softly, "Oh, it's a pretty world, massa!" The old woman was a poetess—a prophetess. She had a soul to see the beauty, the poetry about her. "Oh, it's a pretty world, massa!" She had no other form of expression, but that was enough. Hers was the password to nature. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold it was very good."

CHAPTER II.

VER. 1.—Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.—*The completed creation*:—I. THE CREATION WAS A GRADUAL PROCESS. The reasons might be—(1) To show that God's works were not the offspring of hasty impulse, but planned from everlasting, and executed with minute and lingering care; (2) To discover the variety of methods which a God infinitely rich in resources can employ in effecting His great purposes. II. THE CREATIVE PROCESS AT LAST CAME TO A POINT IN MAN. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *Lessons from the Mosaic account of creation*:—1. That the universe as it exists now is different from the universe as it existed once. 2. That the creation of the world was not the work of many gods, but of One. 3. That it was a Person that effected this vast work, and not some law of the universe gradually educating all things from a power that was inherent in matter. 4. Respecting the character of the Creator, the Israelite was taught that He had formed all things good. 5. The Israelite was taught also the divinity of order: that it is the law of man's existence; that the unregulated or unruly heart is like the ship with an insubordinate crew which is wrecked on the ocean; that order is to pervade the church, to rule the state, to regulate the family, to influence man's personal happiness, his affections, his desires. 6. The Israelite was taught also this: that it was gradation that regulated God's creation, to be traced not only in this that the more perfect forms of life were created last, but also in the fact that more work was done at the close than at the beginning of the creative period. And this is true of every work which will stand the test of time. It must not be hastily done, but thoughtfully planned and carried out with steady and increasing energy. God who works for eternity lays His foundations deep, He does not extemporize. It matters not whether it be in things great or small: quick, mere outside work is done for time; meant for show, it falls speedily to nothing, there is in it nothing belonging to eternity. If then a man would follow God, he must be content to toil and toil to the last. 7. Once more, the principle of the providence of the Almighty emerges from the history of the creation. We read of

man's creation and the creation of the beasts. The vegetables He did not create till the earth was dry; the animals not till the vegetables were prepared for their sustenance; and man not till the kingdom was put in order which man should rule. Now this is what we call providence in God, foresight or prudence in man. Thus we see how a mere earthly virtue may in another sense be a spiritual excellence, and it is the duty of man to rise into this higher view. (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*)

The second account of creation:—This is, observe, a second account, not a continuation of the first. Yet let us not suppose for one moment that these are two separate accounts thrown together with no object. They are manifestly linked together, each is supplemental to the other. In the first, we have these spiritual truths—the unity of God, His personality, His order: in the second, His dealings with nature and with the mind of man. God gives man law, and annexes to his obedience and disobedience reward and punishment. We make three remarks on this second account. 1. The first is with reference to the reason given for man's creation, that there was a man wanted to till the ground. We should not have said that of man. We should have held another view, and looked upon ourselves as the rulers of this world for whom all things were created, were it not for this verse which teaches us the truth. In the order of creation man is the highest; but the object for which man is created is that he should, like all the rest, minister to the advance of all things. That is our position here; we are here to do the world's work. 2. The next thing we have to observe is the unity of the human race. All that we are told in the first account is that God, in the beginning, created them male and female. All that we are told in the second is that He placed Adam and Eve in paradise. Theologically, the unity of the human race is of great importance. Between the highest and the lowest animals there is an everlasting difference, but none between the highest and lowest men; and it is only as this is realized that we can ever feel the existence of our common humanity in Jesus Christ. 3. The next thing to observe is this, that we have here a hint respecting immortality. It must have struck every attentive reader of the Scriptures, that in the Old Testament there is so little allusion to futurity. We are told, in a phrase that declares the dignity of man's nature, that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And when the mind of the Israelite began to brood on this he would remember that there was also a sad, dark intimation, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," apparently a denial of immortality. But then there were aspirations in the soul that never could be quenched; and this yearning aspiration would bring him back again to ask: "Dust is not all; the breath of God, what has become of that?" (*Ibid.*) *Creation:*—First, God says, I made all these earthly treasures which you see; value them for My sake, and do not misuse them. A child on its birthday finds a present on its plate at breakfast-time. Who could have put it there? Presently, the father says, "I put it there, my child: it is my gift to you." Has not that gift, however small it be, a value over and above its intrinsic worth as bought in a shop? And still more, if the father says, "I did not buy it, I made it for you myself." Let us all so regard God's gifts to us! Secondly, God says, I made you: I made that wonderful body of yours out of the material elements, the "dust of the ground," and I breathed into it that "living soul" which makes the body alive. So says Gen. ii. 7. But look also at chap. i. 26. There God seems to say, I did more than this: I made you in My image, like Myself; are you like Me? No, indeed, we are not; but then comes in the new creation in Christ Jesus. Christ is "the image of the invisible God," and He took our human nature. If we yield ourselves to Him, He will make us "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4), and hereafter "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (*E. Stock.*) *Theology of creation:*—I. THAT CREATION IS AN EXPRESSION OF GOD'S MIND. It is the embodiment of an idea; the form of a thought. Theology says that creation had a beginning, and that it began at the bidding of God. II. THAT CREATION, BEING AN EXPRESSION OF GOD'S MIND, MAY FORM THE BASIS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF GOD'S PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER. If we see something of the artist in his work, we may see something of the Creator in creation. 1. The works of God proclaim His eternal and incommunicable sovereignty. Man cannot approach the dignity of having himself created anything. He is an inquirer, a speculator, a calculator, a talker—but not a creator. He can reckon the velocity of light, and the speed of a few stars. He can go out for a day to geologize and botanize; but all the while a secret has mocked him, and an inscrutable power has defied the strength of his arm. The theologian says, that secret is God—that power is Omnipotence. 2. There is more than sovereignty, there is beneficence.

"Thou openest Thine hand ; they are filled with good." "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." This is a step downwards, yet a step upwards. Over all is the dread sovereignty of God—that sovereignty stoops to us in love to save our life, to spread our table and to dry our tears ; it comes down, yet in the very condescension of its majesty it adds a new ray to its lustre. The theologian says, This is God's care ; this is the love of the Father ; this bounty is an expression of the heart of God. It is not a freak of what is called nature ; it is not a sunny chance ; it is a purpose, a sign of love, a direct gift from God's own heart. III. THAT GOD'S WORD IS ITS OWN SECURITY FOR FULFILMENT. God said, Let there be—and there was. "He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and it stood fast." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made ; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." This is the word which alone can ultimately prevail. This is of infinite importance—(1) As the hope of righteousness ; (2) As the inevitable doom of wickedness. IV. THAT THE WORD WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF NATURE ACCOUNTS ALSO FOR THE EXISTENCE OF MAN. "Know ye not that the Lord He is God ? It is He that made us, and not we ourselves." "O Lord, Thou art our Father ; we are the clay, and Thou our potter ; and we are the work of Thy hand." "Have we not all one Father ? hath not one God created us ?" "We are the offspring of God" : "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." See what a great system of unity is hereby established. He who made the sun made me ! V. ALL THINGS CONTROLLED BY THE CREATOR. VI. ALL THINGS JUDGED BY THE CREATOR. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The work of creation*.—I. We are to consider WHAT THINGS GOD DID CREATE IN THE PERIOD OF SIX DAYS. II. THAT THOSE THINGS, WHICH WERE CREATED AT THAT ONE PERIOD OF TIME, COMPRISED, OR INCLUDED ALL THINGS THAT EVER WERE CREATED. 1. There is reason to think that when God began to create, He would not rest, until He had completely finished His whole work of creation. This Moses represents Him to have done in the text. 2. All the works of God must compose but one whole, or perfect system. This we may safely conclude from the perfect wisdom of God. He could not consistently begin, or continue to operate, before He had formed a wise and benevolent design to be answered by creation. 3. Those things which we know God did create in six days, compose a whole, or form a complete system. The lower heaven is intimately connected with the earth. The sun, the moon, the stars, the firmament, the atmosphere, the heat, the cold, the clouds and the rain, were all made for the service and benefit of mankind ; and are so necessary, that they could not subsist without the kindly influence of these things, which belong to the lower heaven. And it is no less evident that there is a constituted connection between the inhabitants of the upper heaven and the inhabitants of this lower world. 4. Those things which were created in six days, not only form a whole, or system, but the most perfect system conceivable. All the parts, taken together, appear to be completely suited to answer the highest and best possible end that God could propose to answer by creation. 5. It appears from the process of the great day, that angels and men are the only rational creatures who will then be called to give an account of their conduct. Improvement : 1. It appears from what has been said, that the enemies of Divine revelation have no just ground to object against the Bible because it does not give a true and full account of the work of creation. 2. If angels and men are all the intelligent beings that God created in six days, then there is no reason to think that this world, after the day of judgment, will be a place of residence for either the happy or miserable part of mankind. 3. If God acted systematically in the work of creation, and formed every individual in connection with and in relation to the whole, then we may justly conclude that He always acts systematically in governing the world. 4. If God created all things at once, and as one whole connected system, then He can remove all the darkness which now rests, or ever has rested, on His providence. It is only to bring all His intelligent creatures together, and show them their relations to and connection with each other ; and that will discover the various reasons of His conduct towards every individual, and convince them all that He has been holy, wise, and just, in all the dispensations of His providence and grace. When they see the same reasons that He saw for His conduct, it will carry irresistible evidence to every created being, that He has treated him perfectly right. 5. If God created all things at once, to answer a certain great and good purpose, then that day will be a glorious day, when this purpose shall be completely accomplished. And it will be completely accomplished at the end of the world. So that the end of the world will be a far more glorious day than the day of creation. 6.

If the end of the world will exhibit such a blaze of perfect light, then we may be sure that it will fix all intelligent creatures in their final and unalterable state. Those who are happy in the light of the last day, must necessarily be happy for ever; and those who are unhappy in that light, must be unhappy and completely miserable for ever. (*N. Emmons, D.D.*) *The form of the record of creation:*—The first narrative commences, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth": and then follows the detail of God's work through the six days of creation, concluding with His rest on the Sabbath of the seventh. This carries us to the third verse of the second chapter. But with the fourth verse we make a new commencement. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created": words which appear to refer solely to what follows them, and to contain no recognition of the narrative which has just preceded. This second account traverses a new and more deeply interesting field, as far as the end of the fourth chapter. But with the fifth chapter again we seem to encounter a third commencement: "This is the book of the generations of Adam"; a clause which is followed up, after a very brief summary of creation containing no direct allusion to the fall, by the genealogy of the earliest line of Patriarchs. 1. The first chapter, as contrasted with the others, relates especially to the physical aspect of creation. It deals more with powers than with persons: more with the establishment of law, than with the gift of will. 2. But the second narrative at once enters on the moral record. Man is now charged with personal duties, and holds individual relations to the Personal Jehovah. There is a moral law, a moral probation, a punishment which it would need a moral principle to understand. While man's dominion is defined and explained, as the beasts are summoned to their master to receive their names, yet he is taught that he must obey as well as rule: that if he is higher than the brute creation, there is a law, again, which is higher than himself; which he cannot break without descending from his sovereignty, and submitting to the forfeiture of death. And then follows the minute history of his fatal trial, fall, expulsion from Eden. To this division belongs the whole fourth chapter, which does but lead us from that point of expulsion, through the original quarrel between Abel and Cain, up to the actual establishment of a Church, and the consequent establishment, by exclusion, of an ungodly world, when men began to call upon the name of Jehovah, and so again to recognize a personal God. 3. Then this scene also closes. It had unveiled relations which exist upon this world no longer. It had spoken of higher communion, and of purer glory, than the fallen mind can maintain, or than the eyes of the fallen can behold. Adam now stands only as the highest term in these our mortal genealogies. There is no further notice of the innocence which he had lost; of that open intercourse with God which he had forfeited; of the mode in which sin had found an entrance into this world; of the establishment of a Church, as defining and completing the separation, between those who were satisfied with their evil, and those who were struggling to recover their good. And this is the account of creation, which especially connects it with our present history. (1) The object of revelation is to deal with man's moral and religious, but not with his material interests. It is obvious, therefore, that the physical account of creation must come first, though it was not necessary that we should be told more about it than would be sufficient to mark man's precise place in the creation, of which he forms so prominent a part. This, and no more than this, is the duty discharged by the first of these narratives. Next, the necessity of explaining how man fell, that is, how God's image came to be defaced, how man's eye came to be darkened, and his will corrupted, governs the arrangement of the second narrative. This is pursued simply to its natural completion; and then it gives place to the record of succeeding history. No order could be more perfect, none could more accurately follow out the very course which a clear view of the needs of the narrative would have led us to anticipate, than the precise order in which these chapters are arranged. (2) The same is evident if we regard the subject from the other side. God's revelations of Himself have always been gradual. Ever since the fall this has been the law of His communications. We can trace it throughout the sacred records, through every point in which the Old Testament furnished any type or prophecy or symbol which had to wait for its explanation in the New. Now the Divine names which are used in these chapters furnish the strongest confirmation of the account which I have given, and of the propriety of the order on which the record proceeds. In the first narrative, the Creator describes Himself only as Elohim, that is, God. We can conceive that He might even here have been spoken of as Jehovah. He

bears that name in other parts of Scripture in reference to this very act of creation: and the nearest name, when we know it, must surely be applicable even to His grandest operations. But the name of power, rather than the name of individuality, seems to have been intentionally chosen, for the very same reason that placed first the merely physical narrative of creation, and thus gradually introduced us to the moral attributes of God. In the next section, in perfect conformity with what might have been looked for, we read of Jehovah, the Lord: or rather we find the compound expression, Jehovah Elohim, the Lord God. The Personal Jehovah appears to us, with all His moral attributes, as soon as the personal Adam is disclosed. But that man may no more doubt His power than His goodness, the name of creation is retained, in combination with this nearer and more personal name. (*Archdeacon Hannah.*)

Observations:—IT MUST BE OUR CARE TO OBSERVE, NOT ONLY WHAT GOD WORKS, BUT WITHAL HOW HE DISPOSETH, AND ORDERETH THAT WHICH HE HATH WROUGHT. 1. Because the excellency and perfection of every work is in the end whereunto it is directed and applied. 2. Because the wisdom of God is most discovered in the ordering and disposing of His works, as His power is most seen in creating of them: as usually the workman's skill is more commended in the use of an instrument than in the making and framing of it. II. THE CREATURES THAT GOD HATH MADE ARE TO BE LOOKED ON AS AN ARMY ARRAYED IN AN EXCELLENT AND WELL COMPOSED ORDER. 1. Let all men carefully search into the order, mutual correspondence, and scope, whereunto all the ways of God, in the administration of the creatures, tend. (1) Judging of His works, in and by them, not apart, but laid all together. (2) Looking to, and waiting for, the end of the work which He hath in hand, as we are advised to do (*Psa. xxvii. 37*). 2. Tremble before that God, and trust in Him that hath power in His hand to command all the creatures in heaven and earth, and to arm them at His pleasure for the defence of those that fear Him, and against such as hate Him. III. GOD PERFECTETH AND FULLY FINISHETH EVERY WORK THAT HE TAKES IN HAND. 1. In their measure, which is proportioned to the end, whereunto they were appointed. 2. And in their time, for they are brought to perfection by degrees, as David professeth of the framing of His own body (*Psa. cxxxix. 16*). (1) Let us in imitation of God, work till we bring things to perfection; as Naomi assures Ruth that Boaz would do (*Ruth iii. 18*). Especially in the works that more immediately concern God's honour and our own salvation; not contenting ourselves with laying the foundation, but labouring to go on to perfection (*Heb. vi. 1*). Adding still one grace to another (*2 Peter i. 5*), and growing strong in every grace, that we may perfect holiness (*2 Cor. vii. 1*). And abounding in every good work (*Heb. xiii. 21*). Lest we prove like the foolish builder (*Luke xiv. 30*), or the ostrich (*Isa. xxxix. 14, 15*). (2) Let it be a means to strengthen our hearts, in the assurance of the perfecting the work—(a) Of sanctification. God, according to His promises, will not leave purging us till He have made us without spot or wrinkle (*Eph. v. 17-20*). (b) Of our salvation (*Phil. i. 6*). He that suffered for us, till all was finished (*Job xix. 30*), will not leave till He have brought us into the full possession of the glory which He hath purchased for us. (*J. White, M.A.*) *The completed creation:*—God now proclaims the completion of His creation-work. It was no mere sketch or outline: it was no half-finished plan: it was a "finished" work. A goodly and glorious work! Not merely on account of what we see and touch in it, but on account of what we cannot see or touch. For creation is full of secrets. Science, in these last days, has extracted not a few, but how many remain secrets still! What a multitude of hidden wonders does each part of creation contain! Outwardly, how marvellous for the order, beauty, utility of all its parts; inwardly, how much more marvellous for the secret springs of life, motion, order, health, fruitfulness, and power! Each part, how wondrous in itself, as perfect in its kind; yet no less wondrous, as wrapping up within itself the seeds of ten thousand other creations, as perfect, hereafter to spring from them! God proclaims the perfection of His works, not as man does, in vainglory, but that He may fix our eye on their excellency, and let us know that He, the Former of them, is fully satisfied, and that His work is now ready for its various functions and uses. The great machine is completed, and now about to begin its operations. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

Vers. 2, 3. He rested on the seventh day.—*The Divine Sabbath:*—I. THE DIVINE COMPLETION OF HIS CREATIVE WORK. No further creations. II. THE DIVINE CONTEMPLATION OF HIS CREATIVE WORK. Everything complete. Everything in subordination. Everything ready for the higher and more glorious

exercise of the Divine activity in providence and grace. All prepared for the kingdom of probation, by which the last created of the world was to be tried, disciplined, and perfected. We may learn here—1. Evil has no natural place in the universe. 2. Matter is not necessarily hostile to God. The Bible, in this picture of Divine contemplation, cuts away the ground from certain forms of false religion and philosophy. Divine life is not the destruction of matter, nor the rising out of the region of the sensuous; but so restoring the harmony, that God may again look upon the world, and say it is "very good." 3. The present condition of things, so changed from that which God first looked upon, must be the result of some catastrophe. III. THE DIVINE REST AFTER HIS CREATIVE WORK. The rest began when the work was done. The contemplation was a part of the Sabbath blessedness. The Sabbath: 1. It was a season of rest. It does not imply that there was weariness, but cessation from creative activity. 2. The rest was blessed by God. As He saw His work good, so He saw His rest good. 3. There was an appointment of a similar blessed rest for His creatures. "He sanctified the seventh day." It is not for us to discuss the relations of God to labour and repose. The fact may be beyond our comprehension. It has lessons for us: 1. There is a place and time for rest. 2. The condition on which rest may be claimed is that men work. 3. This rest should be happy. Much of the modern idea of a Sabbath is not that which God would say was blessed. The Sabbath is not a time of gloom. 4. This rest should be religious. 5. This rest is unlimited to any particular portion of the race. (*Homilist*.) *Sabbath rest*:—An allegory lies in this history. Every week has its Sabbath, and every Sabbath is to be a parenthesis between two weeks' work. From the beginning of the world, a seventh of time was set apart for rest. The rest of the Sabbath must be (1) real, (2) worthy, (3) complete. It must be refreshment to body, mind, and soul; and it must not infringe upon the rest of others. The rest of a holy peace must be combined with the loving energies of an active body and an earnest mind. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*) *The original Sabbath*:—I. THAT THE WORK OF CREATION WAS COMPLETED ON THE SIXTH DAY. God could have done His creative work in a moment. Why, then, did He take six days? (1) To show that His work is the result of a deliberate purpose. (2) That His work might be instructive to others. II. THAT THE SEVENTH DAY WAS THE FIRST SABBATH. (1) Divine rest. (2) Divine benediction. (3) Divine hallowing. (*A. McAuslane, D.D.*) *The Sabbath*:—1. A memorial of past labour. 2. A pillar of testimony to God as Creator. 3. A proclamation of rest. 4. A type of coming rest. (*H. Bonar*.) *The Sabbath sanctified*:—I. THE FACT STATED. God blessed, &c. II. THE REASON ASSIGNED. He rested, &c. III. THE END IN VIEW. (*W. Borrowes, M.A.*) *The Christian Sabbath*:—Paradise, with its calm, its purity, and its beauty, is gone; but the Sabbath has not with Paradise passed away. It has accompanied man in his sorrows, as it accompanied him in his joys. I. THE CONSECRATION OF THE SABBATH. Fenced off by God as His own peculiar property. "Holiness to the Lord" is written upon it by the finger of our Creator. And the consecration of the Sabbath must be for such purposes as these. 1. Primarily and pre-eminently, for the consideration of the wondrous work of creation; that man, the intelligent creature, may behold, in the glorious workmanship of God, traces of the Divine power, and wisdom, and love, and that he may render to his Creator the homage that is due to Him. 2. It was further consecrated for services fitted to increase the holiness of man while he remained in innocency, and to restore fallen man to the holiness which he had lost. It was intended, therefore, for man not less than for God. II. THE PERPETUITY OF THE SABBATH. Instituted long before Judaism, long before Abraham's time even; therefore, of perpetual obligation. God has appointed a holy rest for His people in every age, and though the day may be changed, yet the institution remains the same. III. THE BLESSINGS OF THE SABBATH. 1. God designed it as a blessing to man. 2. God annexed a special blessing to the day. (*H. Stowell, M.A.*) *The Sabbath*:—That the Sabbath was originally a Divine institution, nobody can doubt. It originated with God: and now God has either abrogated the Sabbath, or He has not. If God has not abrogated the Sabbath, the matter is quite clear: it comes commended to us with all that Divine authority itself can rest upon. But if God has abrogated the Sabbath, I ask, who is the man that would dare to reinstitute it? I. THE OBLIGATION OF THE SABBATH. First, I say that the fourth commandment is absolutely obligatory on Christian men. If not, one or other of these alternatives must be adopted: either the whole of the ten commandments are abrogated and abolished, or the fourth is an exception out of the ten. There is no escape from one or other of these

alternatives. But now suppose for a moment, for argument's sake, you were to allow that the fourth commandment, as far as it is found in the Mosaic economy, is abrogated. What then? Is the law of the Sabbath destroyed? Now, here is the proper argument for the Sabbath. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made." What has that to do with the Mosaic economy? Why, here is the institution of the Sabbath more than two thousand years before the Mosaic economy is introduced! Suppose you allow all the Mosaic law to be abrogated, here stands the original institution. And if any man says, "But that refers to Eden," I grant it. Was it abolished when our first parents were cast out of Eden? Then I will give you a proof for once to the contrary, in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, the twenty-third and twenty-ninth verses. Listen to these words. "And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord; bake that which ye will bake," and so forth. Again, in the twenty-ninth verse: "See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath." This is the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. How did they come to have the Sabbath day here? You know the law was not given till some considerable time after this: yet here you have the observance of the Sabbath, not based on the ten commandments at all—it is before they are uttered: here you have God recognizing the same thing. But now notice another remarkable fact. Why does the fourth commandment begin with the word, "Remember"? There is not another of the commandments that begins with the word "Remember." They are all positive institutions at that very time. But here is the fourth commandment notably commencing with the word "Remember." Why? Because it was an original institution, and the word points back to that. Another very remarkable fact in regard to the institution of the Sabbath, so far as it is connected with the Mosaic economy, is, that God institutes it in connection with the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, at the fourteenth verse, it is said—"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," and so on. Now observe. "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore"—I beseech you to notice this—"therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." You observe, that the reason why God commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath there is because they were brought out of the land of Egypt; but when God gave the fourth commandment in connection with the ten from Sinai, evidently intending it to have a general application, He makes no mention of this particular deliverance, but merely states the reason we find in the second chapter of Genesis—because God had rested Himself on the seventh day. So that if we admit, as I will do, that there was a peculiarity in the reason for the institution of the Sabbath in connection with the Israelites, yet God marks a distinction between that peculiarity and the general application in the passages I have referred to: giving as the peculiarity in their case the deliverance from Egypt, but in the other case giving as a reason that He Himself rested from His work, that the institution might be known to be applicable to all men. One further proof let us for a moment notice. The object of the Sabbath—let us see what that involves. There is a twofold object alluded to in my text—with reference to God, and with reference to man. First, with reference to God. God rested on the seventh day, in commemoration of the finishing of His work. Now, whatever that may involve, I suppose it will be admitted that it is applicable to all men, and that it does not apply to the Jews or to one age only. If God thought fit to commemorate the fact of His resting from His labours by setting apart one day in seven, you and I are as much concerned in it as the Israelite was. But this will be still further enforced, when we come to consider the reason for which the Sabbath was instituted with reference to man. This was a twofold reason. It was in order to his physical rest, and in order to his spiritual profit; the one subservient to the other. His physical rest: is not that equally necessary at all times? What gave rise to this reason for the institution of the Sabbath? On what ground was it necessary that there should be one day in seven set apart? I tell you: the law of rest was based on the law of labour. That was true in Eden. In Eden man was to till the ground; and even in Eden, in his unfallen state, there was a day of rest appointed. If that was true in man's perfect state, before his physical ability became deteriorated and broken down through sin, as it has been, how much more is it necessary in his fallen state! Again, let me ask this: If it was needful to

Israel that they should have a day of rest, on the ground of the physical system being liable to exhaustion, and on the ground of the law of labour not being remitted, will any man pretend to argue that the law of rest shall be abolished and abrogated while the law of labour still remains? Or again: look at the spiritual purpose of the Sabbath. It is instituted in order to give man an opportunity—by resting from labour and the ordinary transactions of secular concerns, to have an opportunity of cultivating a holy and heavenly taste, and becoming fit for heaven. Now, I ask this question: Do your secular avocations, the cares and anxieties with which you are conversant every day, produce the same general results that they did in Israel's days, or do they not? Do you find, or do you not find, when you go about your ordinary business six days in the week, that you have immense difficulty to keep your hearts and affections separated from these things, and give them to God? Do you find that you could afford to be without one day in the week, on which to meet in God's house, and have an opportunity of reading your Bible and meditating at home, feeling it to be so easy in your worldly vocation to separate your hearts for communion with Him? It is monstrous to suppose such a thing. But again. That the Sabbath is an eternal Sabbath is clear from this: that in the Hebrews the apostle says, "There remaineth a rest." I need not tell you that the word there translated "rest" is "Sabbath"—"There remaineth a rest," a Sabbath "for the people of God." "A Sabbath!" What is the present Sabbath? What was the original Sabbath? Without controversy, a type of the coming Sabbath. "There remaineth a Sabbath." And yet God gave a Sabbath from the beginning! The Sabbath God gave was of course a type of the eternal Sabbath. Now, do you conceive that Israel should enjoy the type of the heavenly Sabbath, and yet that you and I, who live so much nearer to the time of the end, and are supposed to be, by virtue of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost and a knowledge of Christ, so much more holy in heart, are not to enjoy that type? But a type is in force till it is fulfilled. When will that type be done away? Never, unquestionably, till it resolves itself into the eternal Sabbath.

II. THE MODE OF OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH. If God has given us the Sabbath, and we are to keep it on the Lord's day, every right-minded man will ask, How are we to keep it? Now, it is very remarkable and important, that in the passages where God teaches us how the Sabbath-day is to be kept, He deals with the subject as a general subject. It is not spoken of in the passages I will refer to in reference to any peculiarities connected with Judaism; but there are such declarations and instructions as would be applicable to all men, and all Christian men, to the end of time. There is the fourth commandment and the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. The fourth commandment we know. Here is the passage I quote from the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah: at the thirteenth verse—"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 honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." If you take the fourth commandment in connection with that verse, you will find that you have instruction as to the spiritual and physical obligation of the Lord's day. The fourth commandment instructs us in regard to our rest from all labour; this passage instructs us in regard to the object for which that physical rest is to be enjoyed, as subservient to our spiritual advantage. (C. Molyneux, M.A.)

The blessed day.—I. THE OBLIGATION OF THE SABBATH. 1. The Sabbath was made for man in Paradise. 2. The Sabbath was revived in the wilderness. 3. The Sabbath was established by an express commandment. 4. The Sabbath was confirmed by the practice of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. The change of day, from the seventh to the first of the week, makes no alteration in the proportion of our time which God has "sanctified" and "blessed." 5. The Sabbath has been observed by the Church of Christ in general. II. THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SABBATH. A "blessed" day. 1. Its temporal advantages. (1) The course of toil is for a while suspended. (2) The mind and body are invigorated for fresh exertion. (3) Sabbath observance has the reward of prosperity ordinarily attached to it. 2. Its spiritual advantages. (1) Finished redemption is then celebrated. (2) The means of grace are enjoyed. (3) The heavenly rest is anticipated. (W. Conway, M.A.)

Institution and end of the Sabbath.—I. WHO WAS IT INSTITUTED THE SABBATH? God. It sets forth the Divine complacency—how He looked back on the work He had finished, and how He was refreshed with the contemplation of it. And this gives us the true idea of the first Sabbath, when the Lord rested from

His work; He set it apart, that His creatures might rest also, that they might be taken from the work to the worker, from the gift to the Giver, from the creation to the Creator. II. THE CONTINUATION OF THE INSTITUTION (Exodus xx.). Though the appointing one day out of seven was a moral command, yet it was also positive: it was arranged in the garden of Eden before Satan tempted man to fall. Therefore it had its truth, not in Mount Sinai, not because Moses gave it, but from the living God Himself. And there it stands at an amazing distance from all ceremonies and all shadows. It sets forth a great truth, I allow—our rest in Jesus: but the setting apart a day of rest was no shadow; it was God's claim on His people. "Your bodies are Mine, your souls are Mine, and you shall give what you owe to Me." III. THE GREAT END AND OBJECT OF THE SABBATH (Heb. iv. 11). Just as the Creator did rest from His work, and did command His creatures to rest as He rested, giving themselves up to the contemplation of Himself: so in the Christian Sabbath we are led by Eternal Spirit to seek our rest, and to find our rest, in the Lord Jesus Christ. IV. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THAT OBEDIENCE WHICH OUGHT TO BE GIVEN TO IT BY CHRISTIANS? Let him beware of Jewish legality, of the spirit of bondage—of that principle which, while it seemeth as if it honoured God in strictness, strains at a gnat and swallows a camel. You and I, to obey one single principle aright, must have a right principle. It is in vain the command comes to us: it can work on us by authority and by terror: but we must have a higher principle to influence the inner man. The nature of the obedience is at once unfolded in the nature of the institution. Whatever has a tendency to promote my entering into that rest, to promote my spiritual acquaintance with that rest, enters of necessity into the consideration of the Christian Sabbath. Whatever has a tendency to hinder it, whatever has a tendency to prevent it, whatever has a tendency to chain me down to this earth, is to be avoided by a Christian man. (*J. H. Evans, M.A.*) *Genesis of the Sabbath*:—I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE. 1. Cessation of the creative process. 2. The Creator's resting. 3. Sanctification of the Sabbath day. (1) Seven the Scriptural number (Gen. vii. 2-4, viii. 8-12, xix. 18-28, xli.; Num. xxiii. 1, 2; Lev. xxiii.; Josh. vi.; 2 Kings v. 9; Dan. iv.; Isa. xxx. 26; Matt. xviii. 22; Acts vi. (2) The seventh day sanctified. Seventh day of the creative week still continues. Although thousands of years have swept by since God ended His work of creation, it is still His Sabbath, or rest-day. Works of necessity—i.e., works of providence and mercy—He still carries on: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). But creation is not a work of necessity. That work He ended at the close of the far-off sixth day, and ever since has rested. II. CHRIST'S DOCTRINE OF THE SABBATH. 1. Man himself is the basis of the Sabbath. (1) Man needs the Sabbath for his secular nature. (2) Man needs the Sabbath for his religious nature. A day of conscious, formal, stately acknowledgment of the Divine supremacy. A day on which to dismiss worldly cares, and look through unobstructed vistas into the opening heavens. An English gentleman was once inspecting a house in Newcastle, with a view of buying it. The landlord, after having shown him the premises, took him to an upper window, and remarked: "You can see Durham Cathedral from this window on Sundays." "How is this?" asked the visitor. "Because on Sundays there is no smoke from the factory chimneys." Ah, man must have a day in which he can retire to some solitude, where his spirit—

"With her best nurse, Contemplation,
May plume her feathers, and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired."

2. Man greater than the Sabbath. Man, as God's son and image and representative, is the end, and the Sabbath, like every other "ordinance," is a means. An immortal being, outliving institutions, economies, æons—capable of carrying a heaven within him—God's own image and son: man is more sacred than ordinances. Jesus Christ did not die for ordinances: Jesus Christ died for man. The Sabbath is sacred, not in itself, but because man is sacred. Hence the Sabbath is his servant—not his master. He is the Lord of the Sabbath. And in accordance with this principle Jesus Christ Himself ever acted. 3. The true method of keeping the Sabbath. Being made for man, the Sabbath must be used religiously: for the capacity for religion is man's chief definition. The Sabbath must be kept in homage of God, in the study of His Word and character and will,

in the spirit of worship, private and public. But full unfolding of man's spiritual nature is possible only in the sphere of edification, or society-building. The Sabbath summons man to conjugate life in a new mood and tense; but still in the active voice. And here the Son of Man is our Teacher and blessed Model. How many of His healings and works of mercy were wrought on the Sabbath day! And what is man's office in this fallen, sorrowful world, but a ministry of healing? And healing, or edification, is the highest form of worship. Nothing can take the place of it. 4. Objections. (1) "This view of the Sabbath allows too much liberty." My answer is twofold. First: there are two ways of treating men, either as infants, incapable of guiding themselves, or as men, capable of reasoning, and so of self-guidance. The first was the Mosaic way, the Church being a minor, under tutors and governors, and the law being a letter, graven on tablets of stone: the second is the Christly way, the Church having come into the possession of the privileges of majority, and the law being a spirit, graven on tablets of heart (Gal. iv. 1-7; 2 Cor. iii. 3). But, secondly: Liberty is itself responsibility. The slave cannot understand, in any thorough, just sense, the meaning of the august word Responsibility; none but the freeman can understand it. And just because the New Testament gives me liberty in the matter of the Sabbath, I am bound to be more conscientious about it than was the Old Testament Jew. It is easier to be a Hebrew than a Christian. (2) But I hear a second objection: "Your view of the Sabbath is dangerous: men will pervert it, perhaps to their own perdition." Of course they may. It is one of the prerogatives of truth to be perverted. III. THE CHANGE FROM SATURDAY TO SUNDAY. Here is a venerable, sacred institution—hallowed by the Creator's own example in Eden, solemnly enjoined amid the thunders of Sinai, distinctly set apart as one of the chief signs that Israel was God's chosen, covenanted people, majestically buttressed by loftiest promises in case of observance, and by direst threats in case of non-observance, freighted with the solemn weight of fifteen centuries of sacred associations and scrupulous observance—suddenly falling into disuse, and presently supplanted by another day, which to this year of grace has held its own amid the throes of eighteen centuries. How, then, will you account for this stupendous revolution? It is a fair question for the philosophical historian to ask. And the philosophical historian knows the answer. Jesus the Nazarene had been crucified. All through the seventh day or Hebrew Sabbath He had lain in Joseph's tomb. In that tomb, amid solitude and darkness and grave-clothes, He had grappled in mortal duel with the king of death, and had thrown him, and shivered his sceptre. At the close of that awful Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week (Matt. xxviii. 1), He had risen triumphant from the dead. And by and in the very fact of that triumphant rising, He had henceforth and for evermore emblazoned the first day of the week as His own royal, supernal day, even time's first, true Sabbath. IV. JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF IS OUR SABBATH, alike its origin, its meaning, and its end. In fact the final cause of the Sabbath is to sabbatize each day and make all life sacramental. And Jesus Christ being our true Sabbath, Jesus Christ is also our true rest—even the spirit's everlasting Eden. (*G. D. Boardman.*) *Need of the Sabbath:*—Man needs the Sabbath—i.e., one day of rest after six days of toil—for his secular nature, alike bodily and mental. The testimony of physicians, physiologists, political economists, managers of industrial establishments, &c., is emphatic on this point. Let me cite some instances. Dr. John William Draper, the eminent physicist and author, writes as follows: "Out of the numberless blessings conferred on our race by the Church, the physiologist may be permitted to select one for remark, which, in an eminent manner, has conducted to our physical and moral well-being. It is the institution of the Sabbath. . . . No man can for any length of time pursue one avocation or one train of thought without mental, and therefore bodily, injury—nay, without insanity. The constitution of the brain is such that it must have its time of repose. Periodicity is stamped upon it. Nor is it enough that it is awake and in action by day, and in the silence of night obtains rest and repair; that same periodicity, which belongs to it as a whole, belongs to all its constituent parts. One portion of it cannot be called into incessant activity without the risk of injury. Its different regions, devoted to different functions, must have their separate times of rest. The excitement of one part must be coincident with a pause in the action of another. It is not possible for mental equilibrium to be maintained with one idea, or one monotonous mode of life. . . . Thus a kind providence so overrules events that it matters not in what station we may be, wealthy or poor, intellectual or lowly, a refuge is always at hand; and the

mind, worn out with one thing, turns to another, and its physical excitement is followed by physical repose." Lord Macaulay, in his speech before the House of Commons on the Ten Hours' Bill, spoke thus: "The natural difference between Campania and Spitzbergen is trifling when compared with the difference between a country inhabited by men full of mental and bodily vigour, and a country inhabited by men sunk in bodily and mental decrepitude. Therefore it is we are not poorer, but richer, because we have, through many ages, rested from our labours one day in seven. That day is not lost. While industry is suspended, while the plough lies in the furrow, while the Exchange is silent, while no smoke ascends from the factory, a process is going on quite as important to the wealth of nations as any process which is performed on more busy days. Man, the machine of machines—the machine compared with which all the contrivances of the Watts and the Arkwrights are worthless—is repairing and winding up, so that he returns to his labours on the Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirits, with renewed corporeal vigour." (*Ibid.*)

The Sabbath:—I. THE PRIMAL SABBATH. God's Sabbath. The end of the mysterious periods of God's creative operations, is the beginning of a new age in which all creation is intended to glorify God and be happy.

II. THE PERIODICAL SABBATH. Made for man. A sign of God's care for man; and a memorial of the holy rest which man should seek to obtain.

III. THE PERFECT SABBATH. The future rest in heaven. Unending joy and refreshment. Perfectly holy, perfectly happy; all things "very good." (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*)

*The Sabbath is for rest:—*A week filled up with selfishness, and the Sabbath stuffed full of religious exercises, will make a good Pharisee but a poor Christian. There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week. Now, God's altar stands from Sunday to Sunday, and the seventh day is no more for religion than any other. It is for rest. The whole seven are for religion, and one of them for rest. (*H. W. Beecher.*)

*The excellency of the Sabbath:—*What the fire is amongst the elements, the eagle among the fowls, the whale among the fishes, the lion amongst the beasts, gold among the metals, and wheat amongst other grain, the same is the Lord's day above other days of the week, differing as much from the rest as doth that wax to which a king's great seal is put from ordinary wax, or that silver upon which the king's arms and image are stamped from silver unrefined, or in bullion; it is a day, the most holy festival in relation to the initiation of the world and man's regeneration, the queen and princess of days, a royal day, a day that shines amongst other days as doth the dominical letter, clad in scarlet, among the other letters in the calendar; or, as the sun imparts light to all the other stars, so doth this day, bearing the name of Sunday, afford both light and life to all the other days of the week. (*J. Spencer.*)

The first Sabbath:—I. SABBATH REST. Sabbath rest is not merely a rest from sin, though it includes that: we are not merely required to lay aside things that are sinful to keep this Sabbath, for God rested, and He could do only good. It is not only a rest from labour, though it includes it: for God rested, and He knew no labour—commanding, and it was done. It is a rest from work. God rested from all His work. Even then those things which are lawful and pleasant work on week-days, causing no labour and involving no sin, are to be put aside on the Sabbath, that we may rest unto God. This rest is a rest from care. You well know, that with all your desire to let the morrow take thought for the things of itself, the necessity of providing for the creature's wants will give a care and anxiety to your mind. Well, on the Sabbath you are privileged to put this all away, and to let everything remain in abeyance, leaving all in Christ's hands, while you enjoy present rest in Him. This rest is, or ought to be, a rest of body and mind, as well as of soul. Lastly, above all, this rest is a rest in the Lord. It is an everlasting satisfaction in what He has done for you; and what He means to do with you. It is to go in with David to sit before the Lord; it is to lie down in green pastures, by the waters of comfort; it is to hide in the secret places of the stairs; it is to enter that chariot whose pillars are of silver, and whose bottom is of gold, and whose curtains are of purple, and which is paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem; it is to drink that new wine which goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.

II. SABBATH OCCUPATION. It may seem a strange transition to pass from the thought of Sabbath rest to that of Sabbath occupation; but the rest of saints is not an idle rest, it is not a rest which excludes the idea of employment or of service. Even in the description of the eternal and heavenly Jerusalem we have the words, "His servants shall serve Him," as well as, "They shall see His face"; and how much more then shall the Sabbath of earth be spent in doing the will of God! Sabbath

rest is found in beholding the face of God. Sabbath occupation is found in serving Him. All Sabbath occupation is lawful which does not break in upon and disturb Sabbath rest. If the employment in which we engage does not hinder, but rather promotes our enjoyment of that spirit-rest which I have already spoken of, then may we be sure we are right in pursuing it. 1. First, then, as a lawful Sabbath occupation I would put self-study, for there is something in the quiet and leisure of the day of rest which seems peculiarly to favour it. God hath said, "Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still"; and he who is in the Spirit on the Lord's day will find it good and right so to do. 2. Next in order as a Sabbath occupation I would mention Bible study. I do not by that expression mean Bible reading, but that earnest, patient investigation of the Divine Word which requires time, and thought, and prayer. 3. As another Sabbath occupation I would name creation study. God has in so wonderful a manner linked together the visible and the invisible, the tangible with the things that cannot be touched, that we cannot go forth in our glorious world without seeing traced on almost every object the hieroglyphics which tell of the higher mysteries of an inner life. Those who are instructed in the emblematic glory of the things which are can walk with Christ amidst creation's beauties, and understand His parables. To them He speaketh still of the sower and the seed; the tares and the wheat; the lilies of the field, in their more than royal glory: and many a precious lesson is taught them, as they study the manner in which God is daily bringing about those results which preserve the frame of nature in its order and beauty. 4. I would next suggest as a fitting occupation for the Lord's day the ministration of good. 5. As another Sabbath occupation, I would mention, writing on sacred subjects: it may be original composition or otherwise. 6. Another precious Sabbath occupation will be found in Christian converse. 7. Christian correspondence. 8. Sacred music. Blessed, beautiful gift! which God has preserved to this disordered and disrupted world—the harmony of sound. David, in Scripture times, and Luther in more modern days, are instances of those who have appreciated its powers. There is something peculiarly soothing and healing (if I may use the latter word) in the effect of the higher cast of music upon the mind; it will sometimes bring tears to eyes whose fount has long been dried. And on the Sabbath day I know no more blessed relief to the mind, when it has been kept in a high state of tension for many hours engaged in earnest thought and study, than that which is afforded by the strains of sacred song. III. SABBATH WORSHIP. In spirit and in truth we must worship that God, who is a Spirit, with our whole understanding, and soul, and strength; with our lamps burning and our armour bright, as a peculiar people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood we must do Him service. (*The Protoplast.*) *A world without a Sabbath*:—A world without a Sabbath would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garden. It is the joyous day of the whole week. (*H. W. Beecher.*) *The Sabbath not to be effaced*:—The original distinction, made by God Himself, and founded both upon His nature and ours, between working and resting, must be kept in mind; and we must not attempt to confound these, or suppose that, provided we try to glorify God in everything, it matters little whether we set the two different things distinctly before us; viz., the glory which we are to give Him in working and the glory which we are to give Him in resting. In trying to make every day a Sabbath we are doing what we can to efface this Divine distinction. And can it be effaced without sin, without injury to the soul, without harm both to the Church and to the world, both to Jew and Gentile? It cannot; for thus God does not get the glory which He desires. He does not get the separate glories of which we have been speaking, but a mere human compound of both—vague, indefinite, diluted—something that neither glorifies Him nor benefits His saints, nor bears witness to the world. Those who deny the authority of the Sabbath now must undertake to prove the following things:—1. That the Decalogue or Law is no longer binding; or at least that one out of the ten commandments is no longer binding. 2. That Christ came to diminish our store of blessings during the present dispensation; that He has narrowed instead of enlarged our privileges. 3. If they shrink from this, then they must maintain that the Sabbath is not a blessing; that it is an unwholesome, unnatural, intolerable restraint; a weariness, a bondage, a curse. 4. That the Sabbath was a Jewish institution exclusively, and therefore fell when Judaism fell. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The Divine rest*:—There are some who can see in this description nothing higher than the ignoble image of a weary Creator reposing after His

fatigues; as if the God of this chapter were like the Olympian deities, or the Baal whose slumbers provoked the mockery of the Tishbite. Nor is the "rest" of God intended to suggest that the Creator has ceased to create; that He has constructed the world as a self-acting machine, and now commits it to its course. A far nobler thought, a religious and not a scientific conception underlies the image.

1. It marks a stage in the process of creation. The earth is rendered habitable. Every portion of the creation has been pronounced good in itself; now the whole is regarded by God with satisfaction. "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." God "rested from all His work which He had made."

2. The image of God's rest emphasizes the relation of man to the terrestrial creation. We rest when our purpose is complete. The plan of God was wrought out when man was formed.

3. There is a rest for the affections as well as for the purposes; a repose of the heart as well as of the planning intellect and the active will. A father who expects his children home, and prepares for their reception, does not rest until he sees them; in his welcome of them there is repose. It is not that he will have nothing more to do, that he abates his labour for them or relaxes his care. His heart is full of tranquillity; the excitement of preparation has given way to peace.

4. And yet once more—consider to what a history this creation legend is the introduction. The narrative only pauses a moment; and then begins a story of sin and chastisement, of strife and shame and struggle. It is the prologue of a long drama of passion, weariness, and woe. (*A. Mackennal, D.D.*)

Institution of Sabbath:—I. THE DIRECT REASONS why we believe the Sabbath to have been instituted at the time when the sacred narrative begins. The transactions of the seventh day immediately follow those of the sixth, precisely as those of the sixth follow the fifth—the history is chronological, unbroken, complete. This is the reason each day's work comes in order. These were the transactions of the seventh day, which come as directly in succession after the preceding as any of the other days. The plain literal common-sense interpretation of the history of the Scripture is indispensable to faith. But in the present case we have yet further reasons. The distribution of the work of creation into its parts would be deprived of its object and end, if the institution of the Sabbath were expunged. For why this distribution but to mark to man the proportion of time allotted him for his usual labour, and the proportion to be assigned to religious exercises? Again, where is the example in Scripture of any instituted commemoration not beginning from the time of its appointment? One is ashamed to urge more arguments in such a case—but what meaning, I ask, had Moses in his reference to six days' labour and a seventh day's Sabbath, as matters familiarly known, at the time of the miraculous fall of manna before the giving of the law, if there had not been a preceding institution? Or what is intended by the citation of the very language of my text in the fourth commandment, if the reason there assigned had not really reposed on facts—"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth."

II. THE JUST INFERENCES to be drawn from them as to the glory and dignity of the Sabbath.

1. We learn from them, first, its essential necessity to man as man.

2. Consider, further, that it was the first command given by God to Adam, as soon as ever the work of creation was finished. Man never was without a Sabbath.

3. Observe, further, that this command was not merely made known to man, in some of those ways in which his Maker afterwards communicated His will, but it was placed, as it were, on the footing of creation itself. By the Almighty Hand all nature might have been called into being in an instant. The distribution of the work over six days, followed by the repose on the seventh, was to infix this grand principle in the mind of every human being, that after six days' labour one day of religious rest should follow.

4. We learn also from this order of creation that man was made, not for constant and unrelieved employment or for earthly pursuits chiefly, but for labour with intervals of repose, and in subordination to the glory of his God; man was formed not for seven days' toil, but for six—man was formed not for secular and terrestrial pursuits merely, but for the high purpose of honouring God, meditating on His works, and preparing for the enjoyment of Him for ever.

III. Let us next show that THERE ARE TRACES OF THE OBSERVATION OF A WEEKLY REST DURING THE PATRIARCHAL AGES. The very first act of Divine worship after the Fall affords indications of a day of religion. Cain and Abel brought their offerings "in process of time," as the common reading has it, but literally, and as it is in the margin, "at the end of the days." Thus we have in the sacred narrative, the priest, altar, matter of sacrifice, motive, atonement made and accepted, and appointed time—indications these entirely consistent

with the supposition of a previous sabbatical institution, and indeed proceeding upon it—for that is the meaning of the expression, “at the end of the days.” But one division of days had been yet mentioned, and that was of the days of the week, the Sabbath being the last or seventh day—we may, therefore, reasonably suppose that holy season to be here termed “the end of the days.” Again, we read that “men,” in the days of Seth (two hundred years, perhaps, after Abel’s sacrifice), “began to call upon the name of the Lord,” or, “to call themselves by the name of the Lord”; and four hundred years later, that “Enoch walked with God”—terms of large import, and which, when illustrated by the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, where the faith of the patriarchs in the Divine order of creation is so extolled, are, to say the least, entirely consistent with the observation of a day of religious worship. We come to the flood. Sixteen centuries have elapsed since the institution of the weekly rest. And now we find the reckoning by weeks familiarly referred to as the ordinary division of time. The Lord said unto Noah, “Yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth.” And again, “It came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.” These passages occur in the seventh chapter. Nothing can be more certain than that the return of seven days brought something peculiar with it; and we judge it probable, from the institution of the Sabbath, that that peculiarity was the day of sacred rest. Accordingly after the flood, the tradition of that division of time spread over all the eastern world—Assyrians, Egyptians, Indians, Arabians, Persians, unite with the Israelites in retaining vestiges of it. In the earliest remains of the heathen writers, Hesiod, Homer, Callimachus—the sanctity of the seventh day is referred to as a matter of notoriety. Philo, the Jew, declares that there was no nation under heaven where the opinion had not reached. But we come to the history of Abraham. Here it is deserving notice, as we pass, that the rite of circumcision was to be performed after the lapse of seven days from the birth; but the commendation of Abraham’s example, “That he commanded his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment,” implies that there was a way prescribed by the Almighty, and certain observances in which consisted justice and judgment, amongst which the Sabbath was probably the chief. But in the more full declaration afterwards made concerning him to Isaac; “That Abraham obeyed His voice, and kept His charge, His commandments, His statutes, and His laws”; the terms employed are so various as to be by no means naturally interpreted of the ordinances of circumcision and sacrifice only, but to include, as much as if it were named, the charge and law of the Sabbath. We come to Jacob; and few, I think, can doubt that when he uttered the devout exclamation, “This is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven”; and then vowed that the “stone should be God’s house”—he alluded to what was customary with the pious patriarchs, the worship of God in a stated place, and on a stated time—the Sabbath; without which a house of God would be a term of little meaning; but with which it would indeed be the pledge and anticipation of heaven. Even Laban seems to have had the notion of a weekly division of time; “Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also.” But I will not dwell on more particulars. The numerous, the almost perpetual notices of places, of altars, of sacrifices, of the worship of God, of solemn titles given to particular spots, all confirm the supposition, which is the only reasonable one, that the sabbatical institution was not unknown to the patriarchs. We may notice the case of holy Job, as confirming this, who, remote as was the place of his abode, more than once reminds us of “a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord.” IV. THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SABBATH WAS REVIVED AND RE-ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MOISAICAL ECONOMY, proves that it was a previous institution, which had never been entirely lost; and therefore confirms all we stated of its origin in Paradise and its continuance during the patriarchal ages. 1. Let us, then, first, in applying this part of our subject, observe, the extreme violence which is done to the Christian faith, when any important fact in the Scriptures, such as the institution of the Sabbath in Paradise, is attempted to be explained away by the fancy of man. 2. Yes, come with me before we close this discourse and let us adore and praise the Almighty Father of all for the distinct glories shed upon the day of religious repose. Come and praise Him for condescending to imprint its first enactment, and the reasons on which it is grounded, on the six days’ creative wonders. Come, glorify your God and Father. He bids you rest, but it is after His own example. He bids you labour, but it is after His pattern. Imitate the Supreme Architect. Work in the order in which He worked, cease when He was pleased to

cense. Let the day of religion, after each six days' toil, be to you a blessed and a sanctified season. Plead the promise attached to the Sabbath: it is blessed of God, it is sanctified of God, it is hallowed of God. Implore forgiveness of your past neglect. Let no Sabbath henceforth leave you without having sought the blessing promised and performed the duties to which it is dedicated. Let your devout meditation on the glories of creation swell the choir of your Maker's praise. Join "the sons of God" in their joys and songs at the birth of the universe. (*D. Wilson, M.A.*) *The Lord's day, or Christian Sabbath*:—1. Delight in the Lord's day as a high privilege bestowed upon you: make it the matter of your holy joy. 2. Dispose of your earthly affairs wisely in the foregoing week, so that if possible you may not have the Lord's day, which is a day of rest and worship, invaded and intrenched upon by the cares and business of this world. 3. Think of the promises which are made to those who with a religious care serve and worship God upon His appointed day. 4. Whatsoever spiritual advantages or improvements you obtain on God's own day, take care that you do not lose them again amidst the labours or the pleasures of the following week. 5. Take notice what relish and satisfaction you find in the duties or services of the Lord's day, and let that be a test whereby you may judge of the sanctification of your souls and your preparation for heaven. 6. Let every Lord's day, every Christian Sabbath, lead your meditations, your faith, and hope onward to the eternal rest in heaven. (*Isaac Watts, D.D.*) *The Sabbath*:—I. ITS ORIGIN. Days and nights, lunar months, and solar years, are natural divisions of time; and may be easily supposed or accounted for, by the diurnal revolution of the earth, the appearance of the moon, and the annual course of the sun; but weeks of seven days cannot have the shadow of a reason assigned for their observance, except on the ground of the primeval institution of the Sabbath on the seventh day of the creation, and handed down by tradition to all parts of the world. II. ITS PERPETUITY. 1. It was enjoined upon Adam, as the federal head and common parent of all mankind, and not given to Abraham, as the father of the Jewish nation. 2. It was introduced and enforced in the decalogue as a moral precept, and not a mere ceremonial institution. 3. The same, and even stronger reasons, may be assigned for the perpetuity of the Sabbath, than those expressed as the design of its original appointment. There is the same God to adore; there are the same works to contemplate; and we are the same dependent creatures as were our first parents, with this great disadvantage on our parts, that we are ever prone to forget the Almighty, and require more means to keep us in remembrance of the Lord than ever Adam needed in primeval innocence. 4. When the Gentiles were brought into the Church of Christ by the preaching of the gospel, their observance of the Sabbath is mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, as positive proof of their conversion to God (chap. lvi. 6, 8). By this they testified their faith, affection, and obedience, in the great cause which they had espoused; they thus observed the command, exalted the goodness, and magnified the grace of that Supreme Being, whose name they were destined to profess and to honour in the world. 5. The last book of the inspired volume emphatically terms it, "the Lord's day." III. ITS SCRIPTURAL OBSERVANCE. 1. A complete cessation of our secular employments. 2. Holy meditation of the Divine Being and works. 3. Fervent prayer. 4. A close attention to the Word of God. 5. Public worship. CONCLUSION: 1. Regard the Sabbath as a merciful appointment. 2. Lament the abuse of the Sabbath amongst us. 3. Observe the day thus blessed and sanctified. (*Thomas Wood.*) *The Sabbath*:—I. THE WORSHIP OF GOD OUGHT TO BE MAN'S FIRST AND CHIEF CARE. II. GOD MAKES GREAT ACCOUNT OF THE SANCTIFYING OF HIS SABBATHS. 1. As serving for a public and notorious badge of our profession (Ezek. xx. 12). 2. An especial means of preserving and increasing of religion, being, as it were, the mart-day for the soul, wherein we have commerce in a sort wholly with God in spiritual things, tendering unto Him, and pouring out before Him the affections of our souls in prayers and praises; and God pouring out grace and comfort upon our spirits in the use of His holy ordinances. III. THE SABBATH DAY SANCTIFIED AS IT OUGHT IS A DAY OF BLESSINGS. IV. THE SABBATH IS A DAY OF REST CONSECRATED BY GOD HIMSELF, AND SET APART FROM A COMMON TO A HOLY USE. V. THE LAW GIVEN BY GOD FOR THE OBSERVATION OF THE SABBATH DAY IS A LAW UNIVERSAL AND PERPETUAL. VI. MEDITATION ON GOD'S WORKS, THAT OUR HEARTS MAY BE RAISED UP TO A HOLY REJOICING IN HIM, IS, AND OUGHT TO BE, A CHRISTIAN'S CHIEF EXERCISE FOR THE RIGHT SANCTIFYING OF THE SABBATH DAY. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Intellectual gain of Sunday rest*:—Wilberforce accounts, in part at least, for the suicide of Castlereagh,

Romilly, and Whitbread, by the absence of the Sabbath rest. Lord Hatherley, who rose to be Lord High Chancellor of England, testified, at a public meeting in Westminster, that many lawyers who were in the habit of Sunday study or practice of law have failed in mind and body—not a few of them becoming inmates of lunatic asylums; and that, within his experience, the successful and long-living lawyers are those who, like himself and Lords Cairns and Selborne, have always remembered the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. If you wish to get the full good of your mind, you will give it the rest which its Creator indicates; you will give it sleep; you will give it the Sabbath. The mind is not an artesian well, but a land spring. The supply is limited. If you pump continually, the water will grow turbid; and if, after it grows turbid, you continue still to work it, you will not increase the quantity, and you will spoil the pump. There is a difference of intellectual activity, but the most powerful mind is a land-spring after all; and those who wish to preserve their thoughts fresh, pure, and pellucid, will put on the Sabbath padlock. In the subsequent clearness of their views, in the calmness of their judgment, and in the free and copious flow of ideas, they find their speedy recompense. *The Sabbath—the weekly summer*.—It is the chief time for gathering knowledge to last you through the following week, just as summer is the chief season for gathering food to last you through the following twelvemonth. (*A. W. Hare.*) *Never-ending Sabbaths*.—Yes, it was the beautiful remark of an aged Christian, a poor widow, when asked by her minister, as she stood lingering in the porch of the church, “What have you been thinking of so deeply?”—“I have been thinking, sir, oh! that my Sabbaths would never end.” Happy state of mind! How natural the transition from the Sabbath that ends, to the Sabbath that never ends; from the Sabbath whose sun so soon sets, to the Sabbath of that city which “hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof,” and which hath “no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” There will be no more temple there, for it will be all one temple—a temple where they rest not day nor night, crying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.” God has annexed this blessing to His day, that in proportion as we love to enter into its blessed services, breathe its holy atmosphere, do we feel assured that heaven is ours, and that we are heaven’s, and that our Sabbaths are as blessed steps by which we rise higher and higher till we reach a Sabbath whose sun shall never set. (*H. Stowell, M.A.*) *Sabbath the perfection of creation*.—In “Bereshith Rabbah,” a Rabbinical commentary of the second century, it is beautifully said, “What is the institution of the Sabbath like? A king erected a marriage canopy, which he ornamented and beautified. When it was completed there was but one thing wanting, and that was the bride. Thus likewise, the creation of the world completed, its perfection required nothing but the Sabbath.”

Ver. 4. *These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth.—The primeval condition of the earth, and of man as a sentient, spiritual, and social being*.—I. The economy of the kingdom of inanimate nature, or of the vegetable world, was fitted at once to maintain the sovereignty of God, and to provide for the welfare of man; viewing man as a compound being, having both body and soul (vers. 5-7). Three things, it is here implied, are ordinarily necessary to the growth of plants and herbs—soil, climate, and culture. The vital energy of the earth itself, in which all various seeds are lodged, is the first element (ver. 5). The influence of rain and dew from heaven comes next (ver. 6). And lastly, there must be superadded the labour of the hand of man (ver. 7 compared with ver. 5). This is the law of nature, or rather of nature’s God. II. The moral world also—the spiritual kingdom was rightly adjusted. 1. Man, as a sentient being, was placed in an earthly paradise (vers. 8-15). 2. As a rational and religious being, he was subjected to a Divine law (vers. 16, 17). 3. As a social or companionable being, he was furnished with human fellowship (vers. 18-25). (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Observations*.—I. HE THAT GIVES THINGS THEIR BEING MAY DISPOSE AND ORDER THEM AS HE WILL. II. WHENSOEVER WE MENTION AND REMEMBER THE BEING OF THE CREATURES, WE OUGHT WITHAL TO SET BEFORE US AND REMEMBER HIM THAT MADE THEM. (*J. White, M.A.*) *A new section of creation-history*.—A new section of creation-history now begins, and the fourth verse is the title or heading: “The following are the details of what took place when God created heaven and earth.” The fifth is intended to state that all that was done was entirely God’s doing, without the help of second causes, without the refreshment of rain, without the aid of man.

There had been no power in action hitherto but God's alone. His hand, directly and alone, had done all that was done, in making plants and herbs to grow. The soil was not of itself productive; no previous seed existed; there was no former growth to spring up again. All was the finger of God. He is the sole Creator. Second causes, as they are called, are His creations: they owe their being, their influence to Him. The operations of nature, as men speak, are but the actings of the invisible God. God is in everything. Not as the Pantheist would have it, a part of everything, so that nature is God; but a personal Being, in everything, yet distinct from everything; filling, quickening, guiding creation in all its parts, yet no more the same with it than the pilot is with the vessel he steers, or the painter with the canvas on which he flings all the hues of earth and heaven. Let us beware of this subtle delusion of the evil one, the confounding of the creature with the Creator; of God, "the King eternal, immortal, and invisible," with the hills, and plains, and forests, and flowers which He has made. To deify nature seems one of the special errors of the last days. And no wonder; for if nature be deified, then man is deified too. Man becomes God, and nature is the throne on which he sits. Let us not lose sight of God in nature. Let not that which is the manifestation of His glory be turned by us into an obscuration of Himself. Let us look straight to the living God. Not nature, but God; not providence, but God; not the law, but the Lawgiver; not the voice, but the Speaker; not the instrument and its wide melodies, but the Master who formed the lyre, and whose hands are drawing the music out of its wondrous chords! (*H. Bonâr, D.D.*) *In Eden and out*:—The heading of this passage might not be inappropriate as the title of all the rest of the Bible. We have had the origin in the first chapter, and all the rest of the Bible gives the development—the development of the heavens and the earth, until at last, after all the changes of time are over, we shall witness the inauguration of "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." In the meantime we shall limit our view to the little book of Generations, with its sad record of fall and failure, gilded, however, with a gleam of hope at the close. I. First, then, there is a different name for God introduced here. All through the Genesis it has been, "God said," "God made," "God created." Now it is invariably, "Jehovah God" (Lord God in our version). And this is the only continuous passage in the Bible where the combination is used. How is this explained? Very easily. In the apocalypse of the Genesis, God makes Himself known simply as Creator. Sin has not yet entered, and so the idea of salvation has no place. In this passage sin is coming in, and along with it the promise of salvation. Now the name Jehovah is always connected with the idea of salvation. It is the covenant name. It is the name which indicates God's special relation to His people, as their Saviour and Redeemer. But lest any one should suppose from the change of name that there is any change in the person; lest any one suppose that He who is to redeem us from sin and death, is a different being from Him who created the heavens and the earth, the two names are now combined—Jehovah God. The combination is retained throughout the entire narrative of the Fall to make the identification sure. Thereafter either name is used by itself without danger of error. II. Look next at the way in which Nature is spoken of here. When you look at it aright, you find there is no repetition. Nature in the Genesis is universal nature. God created all things. But here, nature comes in, as it has to do immediately with Adam. Now see the effect of this. It at once removes difficulties, which many speak of as of great magnitude. In the first place it is not the whole earth that is now spoken of, but a very limited district. Our attention is narrowed down to Eden, and the environs of Eden, a limited district in a particular part of the earth. Hence the difficulty about there not being rain in the district ("earth") disappears. Again, it is not the vegetable kingdom as a whole that is referred to in the fifth verse, but only the agricultural and horticultural products. The words "plant," "field," and "grew" (ver. 5) are new words, not found in the creation record. In Gen. i. the vegetable kingdom as a whole was spoken of. Now, it is simply the cereals and garden herbs, and things of that sort; and here, instead of coming into collision with the previous narrative, we have something that corresponds with what botanists tell us, that field and garden products are sharply distinguished in the history of nature, from the old flora of the geological epochs. In the same way it is not the whole animal kingdom that is referred to in verse nineteen, but only the domestic animals, those with which man was to be especially associated, and to which he was very much more intimately related than to the wild beasts of the field. It may be easy to make this narrative look ridiculous, by

bringing the wild beasts in array before Adam, as if any companionship with them were conceivable. But when we bear in mind that reference is made here to the domestic animals, there is nothing at all inappropriate in noticing, that while there is a certain degree of companionship possible between man and some of those animals, as the horse and dog, yet none of these was the companion he needed.

III. Passing now from nature to man, we find again a marked difference. In Gen. i. we are told, "God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him." And here: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground" (ii. 7). Some people tell us there is a contradiction here. Is there any contradiction? Are not both of them true? Is there not something that tells you that there is more than dust in your composition? When you hear the statement that "God made man in His own image," is there not a response awakened in you—something in you that rises up and says, It is true? On the other hand, we know that man's body is formed of the dust of the earth. We find it to be true in a more literal sense than was formerly supposed, now that chemistry discloses the fact that the same elements enter into the composition of man's body, as are found by analysis in the "dust of the ground." And not only are both these statements true, but each is appropriate in its place. In the first account, when man's place in universal nature was to be set forth—man as he issued from his Maker's hand—was it not appropriate that his higher nature should occupy the foreground? His lower relations are not entirely out of sight even there, for he is introduced along with a whole group of animals created on the sixth day. But while his connection with them is suggested, that to which emphasis is given in the Genesis is his relation to his Maker. But now that we are going to hear about his fall, about his shame and degradation, is it not appropriate that the lower rather than the higher part of his nature should be brought into the foreground, inasmuch as it is there that the danger lies? It was to that part of his nature that the temptation was addressed; and so we read here, "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Yet here too there is a hint of his higher nature, for it is added, "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," or as we have it in another passage, "The inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding." In this connection it is worth while to notice the use of the words "created" and "formed." "God created man in His own image." So far as man's spiritual and immortal nature was concerned it was a new creation. On the other hand, "God formed man out of the dust of the ground." We are not told He created man's body out of nothing. We are told, and the sciences of to-day confirm it, that it was formed out of existing materials. Then, in relation to woman, there is the same appropriateness in the two narratives. In the former her relations to God are prominent: "God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him; male and female created He them"—man in His image; woman in His image. In the latter, it is not the relation of woman to her Maker that is brought forward, but the relation of woman to her husband. Hence the specific reference to her organic connection with her husband. And now, is there anything irrational in the idea that woman should be formed out of man? Is there anything more mysterious or inconceivable in the formation of woman out of man, than in the original formation of man out of dust? Let us conceive of our origin in any way we choose, it is full of mystery. Though there may be mystery connected with what is said in the Bible, there will be just as much mystery connected with any other account you try to give of it. (J. M. Gibson, D.D.)

Ver. 5. Every plant of the field.—*The leaf*.—One of the most beautiful scientific generalizations was the result, not of the patient, persevering researches of the naturalist, but of the dreamy reverie of a poet. On the meditative mind of Goethe on one occasion dawned the bright idea, that the flower of a plant is not, as is commonly supposed, an added or separate organ, but only the highest development, or rather transformation of its leaves—that all the parts of a plant, from the seed to the blossom, are mere modifications of a leaf. This one idea has done more to lift the veil of mystery from nature, and to interpret the plans and purposes of the Creator, than all the previous labours of botanists. It shows us order in the midst of confusion; simplicity in the midst of apparently inextricable complexity; unity of plan amid endless diversity of form. Thoreau, watching the leafy expansions of frost-vegetation on the window-pane and on the blades of grass, declared that "the Maker of this earth but patented a leaf." He traced the leaf-pattern throughout all the kingdoms of Nature. He saw it in the brilliant feathers of birds; in

the lustrous wings of insects; in the pearly scales of fishes; in the blue-veined palm of the human hand; and in the ivory shell of the human ear. The earth itself, according to him, is but a vast leaf veined with silver rivers and streams, with irregularities of surface formed by mountains and valleys, and varied tints of green in forest and field, and great bright spaces of sea and lake. This, however, is a mere transcendental idea when thus applied to all the departments of nature; it is scientific truth only when confined to the vegetable kingdom. But the unity of which it speaks may be traced everywhere. All the recent discoveries of science, both as regards the forms and the forces of matter, have an obvious tendency to simplify greatly the scheme of nature, and reduce its phenomena to the operation of a few simple laws; and in this respect they have a profound theological significance. Amid these brilliant generalizations, we cannot stop short until we have reached the highest and sublimest generalization, and nature has led us by such great altar-steps up to nature's God. The theory of the leaf, as lying at the basis of the vegetable kingdom, requires more particular explanation. All plants are produced from seeds or buds; the one free, the other attached; the one spreading the plant geographically, the other increasing its individual size. Carefully examined, the seed, or starting-point in the life of a plant, is composed of a leaf rolled tight, and altered in tissue and contents, so as to suit its new requirements. The real character of a seed may be seen in the germination of a bean, when the two leaves of which it is composed appear in the fleshy lobes or cotyledons which first rise above ground, and afford nourishment to the embryo. The bud, or epitome of the plant, which is physiologically co-ordinate with the seed, is also found to consist of leaves folded in a peculiar manner, and covered with tough leathery scales to protect them from the winter's cold; and in spring it evolves the stem, leaves, and fruit—in short, every structure which comes of the seed. Further, all the appendages borne on the stem—such as scales, leaves, bracts, flowers, and fruit—are modifications of this one common type. Flowers the glory of the vegetable world, are merely leaves, arranged so as to protect the vital organs within them, and coloured so as to attract insects to scatter the fertilizing pollen, and to reflect or absorb the light and heat of the sun for ripening the seed. Stamens and pistils may be converted by the skill of the gardener into petals, and the blossoms so produced are called double, and are, therefore, necessarily barren. The wild rose, for example, has only a single corolla; but when cultivated in rich soil, its numerous yellow stamens are changed into the red leaves of the full-blown cabbage rose. That all the parts of the flower, the calyx, corolla, stamens, and pistils, are modified leaves, is proved by the fact that it is by no means uncommon for a plant to produce leaves instead of them. We come next to the fruit, which, in all its astonishing varieties of texture, colour, and shape, is also a modified leaf; and it is one of the most interesting studies in natural history to trace the correspondence between the different parts of structures so greatly altered and the original type. In the peach, for instance, the stone is the upper skin of a leaf hardened so as to protect the kernel or seed; the pulp is the cellular tissue of a leaf expanded and endowed with nutritive properties for the sustenance of the embryo plant; and the beautiful downy skin on the outside is the lower cuticle of the leaf with a sun-bloom upon it, the hollow line on one side of the fruit marking the union between the two edges of the leaf. So also in the apple the parchment-like core is the upper surface of the leaf, and the flesh is the cellular tissue greatly swollen; in the orange, the juicy lips enclosing the seeds are the different sections of the leaf developed in an extraordinary manner; while through the transparent skin of the ripe gooseberry, we see the ramifications of the leaf-veins, conclusively proving its origin. In all the parts and organs of the plant then, from the seed to the fruit, we have found that the leaf is the type or pattern after which they have been constructed; and those modifications of structure, colour, and composition, which they exhibit, are for special purposes in the economy of the plant in the first place, and ultimately for necessary services to the animal creation, and even to man himself, to whom the sweetness of the fruit and the beauty of the flower must have had reference in the gracious intentions of Him who created them both. On the leaf itself may be read, as unmistakeably as on a printed page, its morphological significance. As the architect draws on a chart the plan of a building, so the Divine Artist has engraved on the leaf the plan of the organism, of which it is the only essential typical appendage. Each leaf in shape and formation may be regarded as a miniature picture, a model of the whole plant on which it grows. The outline of a tree in full summer foliage may be seen

represented in the outline of any one of its leaves; the uniform cellular tissue which composes the flat surface of the leaf being equivalent to the round irregular mass of the foliage. In fact, the green cells which clothe the veins of the leaf, and fill up all its interspaces, may be regarded as the analogues of the green leaves which clothe the branches of the tree; and although the leaf be in one plane, there are many trees, such as the beech, whose foliage, when looked at from a certain point of view, is also seen to be in one plane. Tall pyramidal trees have narrow leaves, as we see in the needles of the pine; while wide-spreading trees, on the other hand, have broad leaves, as may be observed in those of the elm or sycamore. In every case the correspondence between the shape of the individual leaf and the whole mass of the foliage is remarkably exact, even in the minutest particulars, and cannot fail to strike with wonder every one who notices it for the first time. Examining the leaf more carefully, we find that the fibrous veins which ramify over its surface bear a close resemblance to the ramification of the trunk and branches of the parent tree; they are both given off at the same angles, and are so precisely alike in their complexity or simplicity, that from a single leaf we can predicate with the utmost certainty the appearance of the whole tree from which it fell, just as the skilful anatomist can construct in imagination, from a single bone or tooth, the whole animal organism of which it formed a part. In connection with this general typical character of the leaf may be viewed its particular typical significance, as representing the three great classes into which the vegetable kingdom has been divided. That it is possible to determine from the leaf alone, or even from the smallest fragment of it, what position to assign to any given plant in our systems of classification, is surely owing to the fact that the plan of the leaf is the basis upon which all vegetation, as a distinct kind of life, has been constructed. There is no end to the diversity of shape which leaves display; almost every species of plant having a different kind of leaf. But it almost never occurs to us to ask ourselves the object of this variation of shape. We regard it as a thing of course, or refer it to that boundless variety which characterises all the works of nature, in accommodation, we proudly but foolishly suppose, to man's hatred of uniformity. But observation and reflection will convince us that there is a special reason for it; that the shapes of leaves are not capricious or accidental, but formed according to an invariable law, the council of His will with "whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning." In the first place there is a morphological reason for it. The shape of leaves depends upon the distribution of the veins, and the distribution of the veins upon the mode of branching in the plant, and the mode of branching in the plant to its typical character as an exogens or endogens, and its typical character brings us back again to the leaf. When the leaf is simple, the branching of the stem and the blossoms is simple; and when the leaf is compound, all the parts of the plant are also compound. But besides this morphological reason for the immense variety of leaf-shapes, there are also teleological and geographical reasons. Leaves are adapted not only to the typical character of the whole plant, but also to the character of the situation in which it grows. They are, moreover, exactly constructed to shade and shelter, or freely expose to the light and air, the plants on which they are found, and to transmit the dews and rains which fall upon them to the young absorbing roots. He who studies attentively and reverently the numerous wonderful modifications in shape and structure which the typical leaf undergoes, to suit the varied circumstances of plants, will be brought by this study, more closely than by anything out of the Bible, into the personal presence of Him who said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." I have often had a train of reflections of the most profitable kind awakened in my mind by simply looking at the common water ranunculus, whose white flowers cover the surface of many of our quiet rivulets in June, and observing that the leaves floating on the top of the water were round and broad, whereas the lower ones, immersed in the stream, were divided into a vast number of linear segments, so as not to impede the current or be torn by its force. Even in gazing on the common gorse or whin of our hill-sides—a plant, apart from the golden glory with which the summer halos it, not very attractive to the lover of beauty—I have been often struck with the same adaptation to the tempestuous currents of the air, in its sharp needle-like leaves and stems—a proof of God's care over the homeliest thing, giving more honour to that which lacked it. But feelings of greater interest still will be excited by the more wonderful adaptations which we see in the tropical plants growing in our conservatories. The mimosa, peculiarly exposed to injury, sensitively drooping its leaves at the slightest touch;

the pitcher-plant, holding up its leaf-goblets filled with water to refresh it in the thirsty desert; the leaf of the Venus' fly-trap of North America, closing together on its prey by turning on its mid-rib as on a hinge; the leaf of the cactus growing on the dry plateaus of Mexico, fleshy and juicy, and having no evaporating pores in its skin, so that the moisture imbibed by the root is retained; the gigantic leaf of the royal water-lily of South America, furnished on the under-side with outstanding veins of great depth, acting as so many supporting ribs: these and a thousand other instances almost equally remarkable, that might be alluded to, attract the most careless eye, and in their strange variations from the typical form, disclose abundant proof of beneficent design. The colours as well as the shapes of leaves are wonderfully diversified, though green is the prevailing hue, and every varied shade of that colour, from the darkest to the lightest tint, is exhibited—and very beautifully, for instance, in the verdure of spring; yet the whole chromatic scale may be seen illustrated in the foliage of plants. Indeed, where it is possible to see specimens of the whole vegetable kingdom growing together, an autumnal forest would not exhibit greater varieties of coloured foliage. In some plants the leaves are as beautiful as the flowers of other plants: and these are now cultivated and grouped with great effect in our conservatories. A greenhouse full of beautifully-foliaged plants, is as attractive as one stocked with gay blossoms. It is a remarkable circumstance, that when the leaves are dressed in bright crimson, or golden, or silvery splendours, the flowers are almost invariably sombre in hue, and insignificant in form and size. What purposes such beautiful leaves may serve in the economy of vegetation, we cannot in every case find out satisfactorily. It may be to absorb or reflect the light and heat of the sun in a peculiar way, or to guard the vital organs from injury by diverting attention from them. In orchids and other plants, the blossoms are gorgeously coloured and peculiarly shaped, in order to attract insects, without whose agency the species could not be fertilized or propagated. But in plants where the foliage is large and beautiful, and the flower minute and sombre, it seems as if Nature wished to conceal her vital processes, lest they should be frustrated or injured by animals. Probably, also, the same law of compensation may be illustrated in the case of coloured leaves, as in the irregular corolla of flowers, where the odd petal has a different and much brighter colour, as in the common pansy. Do not these curious plants, that among their leaves of light have no need of flowers, resemble those rare human plants, that develop all the beauties of mind and character at an exceptionally early age, and rapidly ripen for the tomb? They do not live to bring forth the flowers and the fruit of life's vigorous prime; and therefore God converts their foliage into flowers, crowns the initial stage with the glories of the final, and makes their very leaves beautiful. By the transfiguration of His grace, by the light that never was on sea or land, He adorns even their tender years with all the loveliness which in other cases comes only with full maturity. (*H. Macmillan, LL.D.*) **There was not a man to till the ground.—The earth without a man:—I. THE WORLD'S INDEPENDENCY OF MAN.** The terraqueous globe, embosomed in those wonderful heavens, and filled with every species of vegetable and animal life, existed before man appeared. 1. The world can do without him. The heavens would be as bright, the earth as beautiful, the waves of the ocean as sublime, the song of the birds as sweet; were man no more. 2. He cannot do without the world. He needs its bright skies, and flowing rivers, and productive soil, &c. He is the most dependent of all creatures. **II. THE WORLD'S INCOMPLETENESS WITHOUT MAN.** Without man the world would be a school without a pupil, a theatre without a spectator, a mansion without a resident, a temple without a worshipper. Learn from this subject—1. The lesson of adoring gratitude to the Creator. Adore Him for the fact, the capabilities, and the sphere of your existence. 2. The lesson of profound humility. The world can do without thee, my brother; has done without thee; and will do without thee. **III. THE WORLD'S CLAIM UPON MAN.** "The earth He hath given to the children of men." The nature of this gift proclaims the obligation of the receiver. 1. The world is filled with material treasures; develop and use them. 2. The world is fertile with moral lessons; interpret and apply them. 3. The world is filled with the presence of God; walk reverently. (*Homilist.*) **Observations:—I. EVERY HERB AND PLANT UPON THE EARTH IS GOD'S CREATURE.** **II. NOT ONLY THE MERCIES OF GOD IN GENERAL, BUT EVERY PARTICULAR BLESSING MUST BE TAKEN NOTICE OF AS COMING FROM GOD.** **III. THAT WHICH IS BROUGHT TO PASS WITHOUT ORDINARY MEANS, MUST NEEDS BE WROUGHT BY THE HAND AND POWER OF GOD HIMSELF.** **IV. THERE CAN BE NO RAIN ON THE EARTH UNLESS GOD SEND IT.** **V. IT IS BY RAIN FROM HEAVEN THAT ALL THE HERBS**

AND PLANTS ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH DO GROW AND ARE NOURISHED. VI. THOUGH GOD BE PLEASED TO MAKE USE OF MAN'S LABOUR IN PRODUCING AND CHERISHING THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH, YET HE CAN INCREASE AND PRESERVE THEM WITHOUT IT. VII. THOUGH THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE EARTH COME ONLY BY GOD'S BLESSING, YET THE LABOUR OF MAN IS REQUIRED AS THE ORDINARY MEANS TO FURTHER IT. (*J. White.*) *Observations*.—I. GOD WANTS NO VARIETY OF MEANS TO EFFECT WHATSOEVER HE WILL. II. GOD CAN, AND MANY TIMES DOETH, BRING THINGS TO PASS WITHOUT ANY MEANS AT ALL. III. GOD'S POWER IN EFFECTING ALL THINGS IS NEVER CLEARLY DISCOVERED UNTIL ALL MEANS BE REMOVED. IV. EVERY CREATURE OUGHT IN AN ESPECIAL MANNER TO BE USEFUL UNTO THAT FROM WHENCE IT IS PRODUCED. (*Ibid.*) *A gardener wanted*.—Here begins that great system of Divine and human co-operation which is still in progress. There were trees, plants, herbs, and flowers, but a gardener was wanted to get out of the earth everything that the earth could yield. By planting, and trans-planting, and re-planting, you may turn a coarse tree into a rare botanical specimen,—you may refine it by development. So man got something for his own pains, and became a sort of secondary creator! This was also too much for him. He began to think that he had done nearly everything himself, quite forgetting who gave him the germs, the tools, the skill, and the time. It is so easy for you junior partners in old city firms to think that the "house" would have been nowhere if you had not gone into partnership! But really and truly, odd as it may seem, there was a "house" before you took it up and glorified it. What a chance had man in beginning life as a gardener! Beginning life in the open sunny air, without even a hothouse to try his temper! Surely he ought to have done something better than he did. The air was pure, the climate was bright, the soil was kindly: you had but to "tickle it with a spade and it laughed in flowers." And a river in the grounds! Woe to those who have their water far to fetch! But here in the garden is the stream, so broad that at the moment it is liberated from the sacred place it divides itself into four evangelists, carrying everywhere the odours of Eden and the offer of kindly help. Surely, then, man was well housed to begin with. He did not begin life as a beggar. He farmed his own God-given land, without disease, or disability, or taxation to fret him; yet what did he make of the fruitful inheritance? Did the roots turn to poison in his mouth, and the flowers hang their heads in shame when his shadow fell on them? We shall see. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Ver. 7. *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.*—*The humility and dignity of man*.—"The Lord God formed man," &c. I. THEN MAN OUGHT NOT TO INDULGE A SPIRIT OF PRIDE. II. THEN MAN OUGHT NOT TO INDULGE A SPIRIT OF HOSTILITY TO GOD. Shall we contend with our Maker, the finite with the infinite? III. THEN MAN SHOULD REMEMBER HIS MORTALITY. "Unto dust shalt thou return." (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The dust*.—1. The emblem of frailty (*Psa. cix. 14*). 2. The emblem of nothingness (*Gen. xviii. 27*). 3. The emblem of defilement (*Isa. lii. 2*). 4. The emblem of humiliation (*Lam. iii. 29*; *Job xlii. 6*). 5. The emblem of mourning (*Josh. vii. 6*). (6) The emblem of mortality (*Eccles. iii. 20*; *xii. 7*). (*H. Bonar.*) *Man's body formed of dust*.—Man hath received from God not only an excellent fabric and composure of body, but, if you consider it, the very matter of which the body is composed is far more excellent than dust or earth. Take a piece of earth, a handful of dust, and compare them with the flesh of man; that flesh is earth indeed, but that flesh is far better than mere earth. This shows the power of the Creator infinitely exceeding the power of a creature. A goldsmith can make you a goodly jewel, but you must give him gold and precious stones of which to make it; he can put the matter into a better form, but he cannot make the matter better. The engraver can make a curious statue, exactly limbed and proportioned to the life, out of a rough piece, but the matter must be the same as put into his hands: if you give him marble, it will be a marble statue; he cannot mend the matter. Man's work often exceeds his matter; but man's work cannot make the matter exceed itself. If the body, then, be but clay and hath a foundation of dust, do not bestow too much cost upon the clay and the dust. In an over-cared body there ever dwells a neglected soul. We usually laugh at children, when they are making houses of clay. They whose care is over-active for the body are but children of a greater stature, and show they have as much more folly in their hearts than they. There is no child like to the old child. (*J. Caryl.*) *Organization of the body*.—God made the human body, and it is by far the most exquisite and wonderful organization which has come to us from the Divine hand. It is a study for one's whole life. If an undevout astronomer is mad, an undevout

physiologist is still madder. The stomach that prepares the body's support; the vessels that distribute the supply; the arteries that take up the food and send it round; the lungs that aerate the all-nourishing blood; that muscle-engine which, without fireman or engineer, stands night and day pumping and driving a wholesome stream with vital irrigation through all the system, that unites and harmonises the whole band of organs; the brain, that dwells in the dome high above, like a true royalty; these, with their various and wonderful functions are not to be lightly spoken of, or irreverently held. (*H. W. Beecher.*) *Observations*:—I. THE SUBSTANCE OF MAN'S BODY IS EXCEEDING BASE AND VILE. II. HOW BASE SOEVER THE MATTER OF MAN'S BODY IS, YET GOD HATH FRAMED IT INTO A CURIOUS AND EXCELLENT PIECE OF WORK. III. THE SOUL OF MAN BY WHICH HE LIVES, COMES IMMEDIATELY FROM GOD HIMSELF. 1. Let our souls seek unto Him, who gave them, and serve Him, as we are directed (1 Cor. vi. 20). (1) Praising Him with all that is within us (*Psa. ciii. 1*). (2) Submitting all the abilities of our souls to be guided by His Spirit, that we may be led by it and walk in it. (3) And labouring with all our endeavours to lay hold on heavenly things, whence we had our original, forgetting the things that are here below (*Col. iii. 1*). 2. Lay hold on this as a ground of special comfort; that which God hath given more immediately, He will certainly most carefully preserve and provide for, as it appears He hath done, by redeeming the soul from hell, and purging it from sin by the blood of His own Son, and adorning it with the graces of His Spirit, and reserving it hereafter to enjoy His presence, and there to be satisfied with His image. IV. THE LIFE OF MAN CONSISTING IN THE UNION OF THE SOUL WITH THE BODY, HATH BUT A VERY WEAK FOUNDATION. V. THE LIFE OF MAN IS ONLY BY HIS SOUL. VI. THERE IS NONE WORTHY THE NAME OF A LIVING SOUL, BUT HE ONLY THAT LIVES BY A REASONABLE SOUL. (*J. White.*) *Humbling origin of body*:—This is most humbling. It was not formed of heavenly matter, as the radiant sun, or the sparkling stars, nor the most precious jewels. Gold and silver were not melted down, nor were sparkling diamonds made use of, but God formed it of the vile dust which is trodden under foot. (*J. Flavel.*) *Constituents of the human body*:—Out of the ordinary elements of the material world is that body made, and into those elements it is resolved again. With all its beauties of form and expression, with all its marvels of structure and of function, there is nothing whatever in it except some few of the elementary substances which are common in the atmosphere and the soil. The three commonest gases, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, with carbon, and with sulphur, are the foundation stones. In slightly different proportions, these elements constitute the primordial combination of matter which is the abode of life. In the finished structure there appear, besides, lime, potash, and a little iron, sodium, and phosphorus. These are the constituents of the human body—of these in different combinations—and, so far as we know, nothing else. (*Duke of Argyll's "Unity of Nature."*) It is because of the composition of our body that the animals and plants around us are capable of ministering to our support, that the common air is to us the very breath of life, and that herbs and minerals in abundance have either poisoning properties or healing virtue. (*Ibid.*) *The breath of life*.—*Respiration*:—Breathing, according to the physiologists, is a genuine burning, and consumes organic substance in us, as fire does in our stoves. It takes the same oxygen from the air, combines it with the same elements, with the same evolution of heat, and gives off the same products in our breath as in smoke. Respiration is a real fire. Still, may we not find under this destructive process some beneficent spiritual law? We ought to, for it is also a most vital process. "Breath of life," the Bible calls it, in a phrase I take for text; and life seems more closely connected with breath than with anything else, beginning on earth with it, ever depending on it, ever advancing with its increase. So the lesson of respiration seems to be that destruction does not destroy, that consuming does not kill, that oven burning brings life. This is the lesson I wish to illustrate. But respiration is not limited to animals. It begins in a much lower and rises into a much higher field. I. We notice it in the VEGETABLE world. For even plants, besides that taking of food for growth, take true breath to burn out their growth. We are wont to speak of Moses' burning bush as a miracle unique in nature. But botanists say that every bush on earth is burning. Through its every living cell that fiery oxygen works all summer. In autumn, too, the colours come from oxidation of the chlorophyll, so that Whittier put good science in his poem when he called "yon maple wood the burning bush." And in certain processes the breath and fire become active enough to show their heat. Such is the case in sprouting seeds. Such is the case in flowers. In the sight of chemistry,

flowers are all fires; and one great genus is well named phlox—flame. There was fact enough in Hafiz's fancy that roses were the flames of a burning bush; and botany adds that every blooming plant is another, whether blazing in the cardinal flower or only smoking in the gray grass-blossoms. And, just as in that bush of old story, this burning does not harm. Rather, it is so helpful that the plant dies without it as surely as a man without air, and quickly, too. And not only does it not consume the life, but with still greater miracle creates new. Out of that burning seed it brings a new plant. It brings new energies, too. In each cell the fire creates force, just as in the boiler of a boat; and, as a result, the cilia of some algae lash the water like oars, the diatom moves across the field of the microscope like a propeller across the lake, and the beautiful volvox goes rolling through the water like the wheel of a steamer. And out of that warmer fire in the flower how many new creations come! One is beauty. The leaves are refined to softer petals and grow radiant with gold and purple, and proclaim to us that spiritual law that the highest beauty is reached only through the burning out of our substance. The same process brings sweetness, too—oxidizes starch to sugar, and loads the flower with honey and perfume. It even brings something like love; and the corolla becomes a real marriage bower, and stamen and pistil join in the genuine wedding, and give themselves for each other and their offspring. And so the flower is consumed only to rise again from its ashes, and extend its life to distant lands and ages. II. But we see this law clearer in its revelation in the *ANIMAL* world. Here breath is more active, and grows evermore so through the rising animal scale. And this deeper breathing always means faster burning. Analysis shows, for instance, that the breath of an average healthy man consumes carbon at the rate of one hundred and seventy pounds a year—literally burns up within him every month the substance of over a bushel of charcoal. With this increasing fire comes increasing warmth. And here, too, the fire does not consume. It does, indeed, waste our substance, so that the animal, unlike the tree, soon gets his growth. Some poor-lunged creatures are said to lengthen as long as they live, like an elm; but better breathers burn up their accumulations, and men and birds keep but little body. Nor do they keep even that; but it is continually consumed—several times during our lives, the doctor says: muscles, nerves, lungs, heart, brain, bones, and all. But this consumption is always restored, and does not harm us in the least. Rather, it is just the thing that keeps us alive. If we were not thus perpetually destroyed, we should get sick, and die; and the only way we can keep alive and well is by being annihilated every few years. And the curious thing to notice is that this destructive process is just the one which cannot be suspended at all. Other functions may be stopped for a season, even the nutritive ones. The really important thing is burning up. When the fire goes out, we die; but so long as it is consuming us we thrive. Such is the paradox and first principle of this mysterious thing called life. Burning saves and increases it. Increases all its energies, too. The faster this breath burns, the greater the activity. Such a breath of life is this fire in the animal world. III. But this breath rises to a third stage in *HUMAN ARTS*. For man breathes more largely than with lungs; and, learning how to burn that carbon anywhere, he adds to nature's slow fire within him a much faster one without. So he heats his hut and home; and, instead of having to migrate like an animal, he brings Florida to his own fireside, and makes the tropics anywhere to order. And, learning how to make this artificial breathing faster and fire fiercer, he gains new forces that far outdo those of animals. Instead of crawling through the country, like that quadruped, he makes this fire carry him and all his family and furniture further and faster. Instead of flying fifty miles for his breakfast, like a bird, he sits still like a lord and orders it, beefsteak from Texas, rolls from Dakota, an orange from Italy, and coffee from Asia. And, by this breath under a boiler, he gets them brought so easily that Mr. Atkinson says a good mechanic in Massachusetts can get his whole year's meat and flour fetched from beyond the Mississippi for one day's work; and Sir Lyon Playfair said this summer that a ton of freight can be carried on land a mile by two ounces of carbon, and on water two miles by a little cube of coal that would pass through a ring the size of a shilling. Nor does man stop with moving nature's products, but works better by this same principle. In his manufactures and his varied arts, he learns to consume not merely a little in the form of food, like an animal, but enormously in other forms—not only acorns, but oaks; not only fruits, but whole forests; not only a few acres, but long ages of them condensed in coal; and not only coal and other organic products, but ores and rocks and the original elements themselves. Human art becomes a boundless burning,

destroying about everything on earth. Yet this burning, too, only helps. It turns the forests into force, and the whole carboniferous era into energy—turns ores and everything into something better. It consumes only to create. Indeed, strictly speaking, it does not consume at all. Not an atom of carbon or anything else has ever been destroyed. Burning only sets it free from old forms to enter into life again: and nature is always waiting to start it into life, and is all the summer turning our smoke and ashes back into new trees and corn. IV. But above these material fields we trace the same principle through a fourth phase, in SPIRITUAL LIFE. Thought is a breathing, ever inhaling fresh truth, which consumes old ideas in society, just as oxygen does old cells in the body. Indeed, those arts we have just noticed have all come from this mental breathing. How many established opinions had to be consumed to bring that ease of travel! Once, even science argued that no steamer could ever cross the Atlantic; and there was a time when everybody knew that steam could not carry anything on land, either. The first modern who suggested such a thing is said to have been shnt up in the Bicêtre for it as a lunatic. Afterward, the Englishman who first advocated passenger railways was called by the *Quarterly Review*, "beneath our contempt," while the wise old *Edinburgh Review* said, "Put him in a strait-jacket." So many and so firmly established ideas have been consumed this century in this mere matter of travel. And this is only an illustration of the consumption of old theories that has been going on through the arts and sciences and philosophies and all fields. Yet here, too, it has consumed only to create, and been in still higher degree the "breath of life." It has aided all those arts and sciences. It has advanced society, too—just as breathing has advanced the animal kingdom—and has brought to mankind a progress about as great as from mollusks to mammals. It has burned out social wrongs only to bring rights. What an advance history shows, from savages eating each other to modern society feeding its hungry and founding hospitals and charities of a hundred kinds! What an advance in morality, even since the praised days of our pious ancestors last century, when Parton says the best Christian in New England saw nothing wrong in buying negroes for rum and selling them for West India molasses to make rum to buy more! What a moral progress from even the boasted Bible days—when David could slay a man to steal his wife, and still be revered as most sacred Psalmist; and Solomon, with a whole regiment of wives, could be sainted for wisdom and thought worthy to make the longest prayer in the Bible—to-day, when such saints would be thought hardly so fit for writing sacred poetry as for working in the penitentiary! For religion, too, has felt the effects of this spiritual breathing, and been advancing by it. Here, too, ancient ideas have been burning out to bring better; and Samuel's Jehovah, ordering innocent men to be slain like mice, gave way to Isaiah's God of justice and Jesus' of love. Here, too, the burning has been a very "breath of life"; and religion ought to have learned ere this to breathe fearlessly, and let its old forms be consumed as fast as they will. All that is really alive and worth living, in our beliefs and bodies alike, will not be harmed. Only the effete and hurtful will be burned out, and will bring new warmth and life in the process, and be replaced by better. Let religion, then, breathe away, and continue to enlarge its lungs and elevate its life. But breath brings its best lessons to private life. It rebukes our greed, and bids us burn out our gains generously. Gain is good, but must be followed by giving, as eating by breathing, if we would rise above vegetables. Indeed, our gains have to be given away, to get the good of them. Miserliness is very near to misery, as even etymology teaches. The wise preacher advocated foreign missionary contributions, since, he said, if they were of no help to the heathen, they greatly helped the Christian contributors at home; and giving does enrich the giver, whether it does any one else or not. Beneficence is the bank that pays the best interest on deposits, and pays back in better coin than was put in; and our proverbs have well declared that the best way to keep what we get is by giving it away to some good cause. But this truth of external possessions is still truer of ourselves. They, too, must be given away in order to be kept, or even to be found at first. "The life of life is when for another we're living," says a poet; and another tells of one to whom love was the first waking,—"The past was a sleep, and her life began." Love, whether of a person or a cause, is indeed the highest form of the breath of life. It consumes as nothing else can, wastes with self-sacrifice and sorrows, yet only to lift to larger life, to bless with new powers and higher happiness. Selfishness is as fatal to the soul as holding the breath to the body; and burning ourselves out in sacrifice for something is the only

way to keep the heart warm and the soul alive. (*H. M. Simmons.*) *The human spirit*:—Upon the bodily side man stands among the animals as the noblest of them; but he has another side by which he holds communion with God and invisible things. He has a spirit as well as a body—a spirit not like that “spirit of the beast which goeth downward to the earth,” having but an attraction to the things of sense, and that an unreflecting attraction; the spirit of the sons of man is one “which is ascending” (*Eccles. iii. 21*). The spirit is in us the element of self-consciousness and freedom. By it we see our true relation to the things of sense, and are able to claim affinities above them. It is a gift from God (*Eccles. xii. 7*), and unless it be unfairly tampered with, it must by its very constitution “ascend,” and aspire after God and what is Godlike. In it is the seat of the higher, the only true, free will, as opposed to the random animal impulses of the flesh. There lies the power of conscience, by which we are able to judge our own actions, comparing them with what we see to be the right standard, and condemning ourselves when we have allowed the true will to be mastered by the inferior appetite. Such a spirit is not, and cannot be (so far as we can understand), a product of natural evolution, but comes direct from the hand of God. Man is thus a dual being, living at one in two worlds, not two separate lives, but one life in the two. The spirit lives in the body, and acts through it and makes it its vehicle. The meeting-point of spirit and body appears to lie in the soul. (*Canon Mason.*) *Life—its nature, discipline, and results*:—There are two ways in which we are accustomed to estimate the relative importance of events—one by considering what they are in themselves; and the other by considering what they are in their consequences. Viewed in either of these aspects, the event referred to in the text is by far the most important that ever occurred in our world. The creation of the heavens and the earth, with all their various appendages, is not to be compared with it. In the one case only matter was created and arranged under fixed laws; in the other mind was created, intelligent, immortal mind, made in the image of God, in dignity a little lower than the angels, commencing its fight for eternity. And then the consequences of that event, how surpassing all finite comprehension! From that moment commenced the history of the human race; from that moment began to flow the great stream of human life, which, now for six thousand years, has been deepening and surging onward, pouring itself into the ocean of eternity. That living soul, into which God first breathed the breath of life, is still alive; and so are all the countless myriads of souls which in successive generations He has brought into being; all are still alive and will live for ever. What, then, is life, that mysterious principle which was enkindled within us by the Creator when we began to be, and which makes us living souls? This question, viewed in its physiological aspect, I shall not attempt to answer, as I find the ablest writers on the subject are entirely undecided in respect to it, or rather they are decided that we cannot know what life is in itself, or in its essence. We know some of the conditions on which it depends; some of the laws which govern it, and the phenomena which it exhibits; but what the vital principle, what life is, we seem not to have the means of knowing. There are various kinds of life which belong to different orders of being, and which are characterized by distinct qualities. There is vegetable life, and a portion of this belongs to the human being in common with plants and trees. There is animal life, and this we have in common with birds and beasts that live and move around us. And there is intellectual or spiritual life, and this we are wont to regard as belonging exclusively to the soul, and which makes us, in the sense of our text, living immortal souls. It is of life in this last sense that I am now to speak; not of life as simple animal existence, nor of life as a mere period of continuance on earth; but of life in the soul, viewed as the source of consciousness, thought, desires, purposes, and acts, all tending to develop and form character, and fit the subject for blessedness or woe in the future world. In this view we can know what life is, what are the means of its development, and how it may be so nurtured and trained on earth that it shall conduct us to everlasting life in heaven. I remark, then—I. Life is *INEXHAUSTIBLE*; it has no end. The principle on which it depends, whatever it be, is beyond the reach of man or angel, or any other being, but God who made us living souls. The life of the body can be destroyed, for it depends on a material organization; and this may be so deranged and disturbed in its functions, that the life which depends upon it shall cease to be. But the life of the soul is independent of matter. It is not the result of any material mechanism, or of any nice adjustment of particles of matter, as of nerves and other finer portions of the body. It has its

seat in the inner spirit; in that thinking, intelligent, conscious principle, which we call the soul, and which the Bible assures us, as does sound philosophy, survives the dissolution of the body and is to live for ever. The vital spark is kindled; it must burn on for ever. Have you ever asked what and where you shall be ten thousand years hence? II. Life is DISCIPLINARY. By which I mean that in the present world we are subjected to various influences, adapted and designed to exercise the vital principle within us; to elicit and draw forth its powers, and thus form and fix its character for a future state of being. All the ills we endure and the blessings we enjoy; the sicknesses, disappointments, sorrows, that come upon us, together with the various blessings and privileges of our condition—all are to be regarded as disciplinary. They are the means appointed by Providence to wake up and call into action the living principle within us; to make us, as it were, conscious of life and ever solicitous to be found in an attitude to be rightly affected by all the various influences that act upon us. Now, this view of life as disciplinary, is of the greatest practical importance. It changes the whole aspect and bearing of things around us. It sheds light upon a thousand facts and occurrences which would otherwise be entirely mysterious. It gives a new and significant view of the dealings of Providence with us in this world, and attaches a meaning and an importance to the events of every day, which they would not otherwise possess. III. Life is PROBATIONARY. By this is meant, we are now living and acting with reference to a future state of retribution. We are not only subjected to discipline and training in this world, but results are to follow in the world to come. The life that now is, is preparatory to a life in the state beyond the grave; and the life we are to live hereafter is to receive its character and destiny from the life we are now living on the earth. Every word and every act is a seed for eternity, and daily, as our time on earth is hastening to its close, we are laying up treasures of immortal joy in heaven, or preparing for ourselves a cup of woe in the world of despair. I may add, in this connection, that life passed by us in this state of discipline and probation, acquires of necessity a fixed and permanent character. Neutrality is here impossible. As no one can destroy the vital principle which the Creator has implanted in his bosom, so no one can stop its feeling, thinking, acting. IV. It might perhaps seem commonplace and trite to say THAT LIFE, VIEWED AS A PERIOD OF CONTINUANCE ON EARTH, IS ENCOMPASSED WITH INNUMERABLE ILLS, AND IS EXCEEDINGLY UNSATISFYING, AS WELL AS VERY SHORT AND UNCERTAIN. Yet these are facts which lose none of their importance by their triteness, and they demand to be seriously considered by us, if we would form a just estimate of life, and train it, in a right manner, for a future state of being. Why is it, that life, in the present state, is so unsatisfying, so subject to changes, disappointments, and trials? One great reason is to make us realize that this is not our home, not the place of our rest, but of our discipline and training, the place of our tarrying for a night as strangers, and then pass on to our future abode. 1. How infinitely we are indebted to our Lord Jesus Christ for marking out to us the way, and furnishing us with the means whereby our life may be rendered immortally blessed. 2. Our subject teaches us how we may make a long life even of a short one. Life, in its proper sense, is not mere existence. A stone has existence. It is not mere animation; for a tree has animation, and so has an oyster and an ox. But neither has life understanding by life, the vital principle of a living intelligent soul. Nor has such a soul life, any further than its living energies are brought out in action, and its existence is filled up with thought, and feeling, and with deeds and fruits of useful living. Life, says Fuller, is to be measured by action, not by time; a man may die old at thirty, and young at eighty; the one lives after death, the other perished before he died. 3. Our subject is fitted to show us how serious and how important to us are the daily events of life—the influences which act upon us in the various circles in which we are called to move. These are the instrumental means employed by Providence for our discipline and training; the development of our life, the formation of our character, the fixing of our state in eternity. 4. Life in respect to each of us is every day becoming more and more serious and impressive in its responsibilities and prospects. It is so, because its powers are being more fully developed, and its character more and more permanently fixed. It is so, because the period of discipline and probation is fast drawing to a close, and results are thrown forward to greet us on our entering into eternity with welcomes of joy or signals of woe. It is so, in fine, because every day we live bears us nearer and still nearer to that awful point in our history, a point unknown to us, when the

great work of preparation for eternity will be ended, and we shall each one take our place among the redeemed in glory, heirs of immortal life, or with the lost in despair, children of wrath. With what serious concern, then, does it become every one of us to review our past course in life and inquire, whither it has been conducting us; for what state we have been preparing, during the time we have spent on earth. (*J. Hames, D.D.*) *The wondrous constitution of man*:—I. THAT THE CREATION OF MAN PRESENTS US WITH THE MOST COMPLEX AND MYSTERIOUS NATURE IN THE UNIVERSE OF GOD. Man is a link between the material and the spiritual—the visible and the invisible—the temporal and the eternal. His is a compound nature. And to obtain a sufficiently enlarged view of that nature, we must reduce it to its primary elements. The creation of matter we resolve into the will and power of God. That which was created could not be eternal. It is a result—an effect. On the mode of this creation we touch not. How “things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”—in other words, how something was produced out of nothing, we can never hope to comprehend. But matter once brought into existence, almost equally marvellous is its organization into distinct living forms. Man was formed of the dust of the ground. Through what process of refinement the different particles which compose the human body passed previous to their combination and union we know not. But this process perfected, each atom was so arranged and disposed, and placed under such laws of affinity and mutual action, as to bring out that great unity, to which we give the name of—body. Every part was contrived with the most exquisite skill, and wrought into the most curious texture. Nothing can be conceived which would surpass the workmanship and elegance of this fabric. It sets forth pre-eminently the Divine art—the art of God in fitting up a structure including within itself so many miracles. Of the nature of the soul we are wholly ignorant. What was the emanation which came forth from the creating Spirit, and which raised man from a mere material and sensitive existence into a spiritual, intelligent, and immortal being, it is vain to conjecture. We can speak only of the properties of mind. It is not material; but something added to matter, and so essentially spiritual as to be distinct from matter and separable. It is also essentially vital. The body lives, and so long as the soul inhabits it, it will continue to live. But it does not so live that it must always live, which is the case with mind; and of which we cannot conceive but as of a vital, living thing. It has begun to exist, and it cannot cease to exist. Yet it is not enough that man should become a living soul, and that his life should run out into immortality. To subserve the great end of his creation he must have intelligence. With the breath of life came the power of thought. Nor is this all. A being endowed with mind, and to whose thoughts there is no limit—who by a single effort can grasp the past, the present, and the future—the whole universe—and if there be any limit to the universe, more than the universe itself—could not be left without the freedom of choice. To thought we must add volition. This freedom of will rendered him capable at once of duty and of happiness. Without liberty to choose his course of action, he would have been laid under no obligation; while the filling up of imposed obligation was followed by corresponding joy and felicity. The power to choose involved the power to act. Having made his election, nothing interfered to prevent him carrying his purposes into execution. He who gave him a self-determining power, gave him at the same time dominion over every inward operation and every outward action. This vital, thinking, self-active, and self-controlling spirit, admits of no decay. Whatever may be the changes incident to matter, mind remains the same. The only method by which this vital spirit could be reduced would be by an act of annihilation. Annihilation! It enters not into the government of God. We believe in the immortality of the soul. This is but the dawn of its existence. It will survive death, and hold on its course when that of nature is ended. There is another and perhaps the most striking peculiarity to notice in the creation of man. We refer to the mysterious union of this living soul with the corporeal frame, so close and intimate, that these two thus united are absolutely necessary to make up the one compound being—Man. Neither would of itself be sufficient. The body might be perfect in every part and property, but without the vital spirit it would be an inert mass, or at the best a mere animal nature. The soul might be endowed with every possible attribute and excellence, but denied “an earthly house” in which to reside, it would rise to the rank and order of angelic existence. And yet close as is the union between these two there is no confounding of their nature. The body does not so absorb the spirit as by incorporation to

make it part of itself. Nor is the soul so linked to the body that it cannot exist and act separately from it. Mysterious is the bond of union; but the two natures are perfectly distinct. II. THAT THE NATURE WITH WHICH MAN WAS CREATED IS SUSCEPTIBLE OF THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS, ACTIVITY, AND ENJOYMENT. This nature touches on the extremes of the universe—matter and mind. We cannot go lower; and higher we cannot ascend. On the one hand, we are allied to the dust of the ground; on the other, we are united to the one uncreated and eternal Spirit! When God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul, He designed that this soul should be held in contact with universal spirit. Its properties and powers eminently qualify it for such association and union. And with spiritual existences it is for ever to live and act. Let us rise into those regions of light where are countless thousands of the redeemed. In what close affinity are they with the first-born sons of God. They occupy no lower ground. They exhibit no inferior nature. Angels in all their ascending orders acknowledge them as their compeers—their equals. To them even the seraphim give place before the throne. God takes them nearer to Himself. In His presence they dwell. Of His glory they partake. With Him they commune. This perfects our idea of the soul's relation; and proclaims the original design of the Eternal in the creation of man. In making him a living soul, He raised him to the highest possible relation in the universe. In taking him into closer union with Himself, He gave him the pre-eminence over every other species of created existence. This relation involves corresponding service. Where there is life there is motion. If the soul be essentially vital, it must be essentially active, and this activity will be in the degree of the life. In assigning to man this high relation, and endowing him with this unending activity, it is without controversy that the Creator had in view the most benevolent design. Endowed with the faculty of thought, here was a field over which he might travel with ever-rising interest, and enlarged discovery. But man was alone. There was no one to share his thoughts or partake his joys. The mighty God at once let Himself down to the necessities of His creature. In the cool of each day He appeared in the garden and communed with our first father. The thoughts and lessons which man had gathered from contemplation, he was taught and encouraged to express to his Creator, while his heart throbbed high with gratitude and love. Pure in the last recesses of his mind, and filled with the sublimest conceptions of his Maker and his God, his was no vulgar enjoyment. In the nearest attitude to the great Spirit of life, he was invited to the most intimate and familiar communion. It was no deputed representative of the Godhead with whom he enjoyed fellowship. He walked with God. His desires ran out infinitely beyond all that is created and finite. Unlimited in extent, and existing with the existence of mind itself, they must terminate on infinite fulness. III. THAT THE LAW UNDER WHICH MAN WAS ORIGINALLY PLACED WAS ONE OF INFINITE RIGHTeousNESS AND GOODNESS. A state of trial is one of the conditions of all created existence. Give to the creature whatever freedom we may—let him be ever so conscious of his own subjective independence as a free agent—it was not possible that he should be ignorant of the fact that there is one Supreme Will, to which every other will must be subordinate. The moment that he lost sight of this primordial truth, he was in danger of entrenching on the Divine prerogative, and of losing both his life and his happiness. While due regard was had to the freedom of his will, yet everything within him and around him was calling up the fact of his dependence. This dependence was the condition of his being; but the law to which he was called to conform involved nothing above his capacity or power of fulfilling. It made probation easy. He might have stood, and thus maintained his original rectitude. Continual integrity was not more impossible than moral failure. As the subject of inward righteousness, he was simply called to conform to the law of his being. (*R. Ferguson, LL.D.*) Man became a living soul.—*Man's higher nature*:—I. THEN MAN IS SOMETHING MORE THAN PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION. Man is not merely dust, nor merely body; he is also a living soul. His bodily organization is not the seat of thought, emotion, volition, and immortality; these are evoked by the inspiration of the Almighty. From this text we learn that the soul of man was not generated with, but that it was subsequently inbreathed by God into his body. We cannot admit the teaching of some, that the soul of man is a part of God; this is little better than blasphemy. It is only a Divine gift. The gift is priceless. It is responsible. II. THEN MAN SHOULD CULTIVATE A MORAL CHARACTER, PURSUE EMPLOYMENTS, AND ANTICIPATE A DESTINY COMMENSURATE WITH THIS DIVINE INSPIRATION. Men gifted with immortal souls should endeavour to bring

them into harmony with their Author and Giver, to make them pure as He is pure, and benevolent as He is benevolent; they should never be degraded by sin. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Life in man*:—Rowland Hill once conversed with a celebrated sculptor, who had been hewing out a block of marble to represent that great patriot, Lord Chatham. "There," said the sculptor, "is not that a fine form?" "Now, sir," said Mr. Hill, "can you put life into it? else, with all its beauty, it is still but a block of marble." God put life into His creation, and man became a living soul. Christ puts new life into dead men. (*Bishop Harvey Goodwin.*) *The soul and its 'capacities'*:—I. First, among the properties of the soul, consider ITS CAPACITY OF ENJOYMENT AND ITS CAPACITY OF SUFFERING. I could appeal on this point to the experience of every one who has lived but a few years in this fallen world: few have done so who cannot bear inward witness of what the soul is capable of suffering. How acute is the sense of disappointed hope; how sad the anticipation of expected evil: how bitter the feeling of desire, long indulged, and still deferred, making the heart sick: how intense are the pangs of sorrow; how intolerable the agony of remorse! I will only remind you that God, who in His justice remembers mercy, seldom dispenses in this world unmixed suffering. To the wicked, even, there is commonly some hope of relief, which mitigates the sense of suffering; to the righteous there is always an alleviation. Think, then, what must be the weight of unmitigated suffering, aggravated by the assurance that it must endure for ever. In proportion to the capacity of suffering in the soul is also its capacity of enjoyment. We have some knowledge of this likewise. We can conceive the joy by which the heart of Jacob was elated when his sons "told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggons." We can conceive the feelings of David when he found himself seated upon the throne of Israel, and the promise made unto his children after him, and the natural satisfaction arising from greatness and prosperity was enhanced by the spiritual gratification of the consciousness of Divine favour. How intense again must have been the delight of the aged Simeon when the sight which he had been so long expecting was granted to him, and it was revealed to him that the child which his parents were now presenting in the temple was indeed the promised Saviour. But as in this preparatory world, sorrow comes attended with mitigation, so there is always some draw-back to our joy. Even if the joy itself were perfect, there is fear it would be short-lived; and He that gave may see fit to take away. There will be no such diminution of the eternal enjoyment prepared for the righteous in His heavenly kingdom: nothing to disturb the happiness of those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. II. Consider another capacity of the soul—ITS CAPACITY OF GOODNESS AND OF WICKEDNESS. I speak, you will observe, not of any goodness which it naturally has, but of that of which it is capable. The natural imagination of man's heart is evil, and that continually, since he fell from the innocence in which he was created. The soul, however, which was created in the image of God, and which has lost that likeness, is capable of having that image restored. It is capable of much which our reason tells us is good in itself, and which Scripture tells us is pleasing in the sight of God. How beautiful is the conduct of Abraham, as recorded in Genesis xiii., when the land in which they were dwelling grew too strait for himself and his nephew Lot, and it became needful that they should separate. How admirable is the affection of Moses towards the Israelites, and the disinterestedness with which he entreats God to spare them. Look at the piety of Daniel, who, though he knew the writing was issued which should condemn him before an earthly tribunal, yet, "his window being opened in his chamber before Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and he prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Once more, admire the spirit of the martyr Stephen, who returned blessing for cursing, and kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." The soul, then, is capable of goodness; the fruits of the Spirit may grow upon it, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness. There is less need of proving that it is capable of wickedness; for "from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adultery, murder, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemy; and these defile the soul"; they have defiled it ever since the time that Adam transgressed the command of God, and brought sin into the world. What envy, hatred, and malice were in the heart of Cain, when he rose up against his brother Abel and slew him; or of Esau, who "bated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him": "And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father

are at hand ; then will I slay my brother Jacob." Look at the history of Pharaoh, one while entreating and repenting, and promising obedience, and then repenting of his repentance, and defying the power of God. Or take the case of Judas, daily hearing the word of righteousness—words such as never man spake, doctrines at which the people were astonished—yet not subdued, not converted, cherishing a secret sin, indulging covetousness, and appropriating to his own use what was designed for the poor. III. Let me now proceed to remind you, in the third place, THAT BETWEEN THIS WICKEDNESS AND MISERY, AS ALSO BETWEEN GOODNESS AND HAPPINESS, GOD HAS APPOINTED AN INSEPARABLE CONNECTION. "The righteous shall go into life eternal ; into that world where is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore" ; and where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away ; but the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." We do not stop to enter into the question of what is meant by this "second death" : whether it speaks of actual material fire, or whether the fire be figurative, it expresses the greatest imaginable misery. But this we know, that the unrestrained wickedness of the unrenewed heart leads on to misery in the way of natural consequence : it needs not the idea of material fire to form an addition to bodily anguish. The souls of the wicked, as well as of the good, are immortal ; separated, indeed, into their respective folds, as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats, but still continuing immortal. (*Bishop Sumner.*) *The soul of man* :—I. THE WORTH AND EXCELLENCE OF THE SOUL. Taught by—1. Our own experience. It combines, compares, and reasons on all subjects (*Psa. civ.*, and *Job xxxviii.*). 2. By observation. 3. By Scripture. (1) In the account it gives of the origin of the soul, (2) of its redemption, (3) its regeneration, and (4) its everlasting portion. II. THE WISDOM OF CARING FOR ITS SALVATION. (*Alexander Shanks.*) *Man's soul* :—1. Its nature and property. "Nephesh," to breathe or respire. Not that the breath is the soul, but it denotes the manner of its infusion, and the means of its continuation. It is spiritual in essence. The Chaldee renders it a sparkling soul. Speech only belongs to man. 2. Its descent and original. It is not a result from matter, but from the inspiration of God (*John iii. 6*). Man's spirit comes from the Father of spirits. 3. Its manner of infusion into the body. By the same breath which gave it. Augustine says, "It is created in the infusion, and it is infused in the creation." 4. The bond that unites the soul with the body. The breath of his nostrils. It is a mystery to see heaven and earth united in one person ; dust and immortal spirit clasping each other with tender love. What a noble guest to take up residence within mean walls of flesh and blood ! That union comes in with the breath of the nostrils, and so soon as that breath departs, it departs also. All the rich elixirs and condiments in the world will not avail to make it stay one minute longer after the breath departs. One puff of breath will carry away the wisest, holiest, and best soul that ever inhabited a human body (*Psa. civ. 19 ; Job xvii. 1*). (*John Flavel.*) *On the origin, nature, and dignity of man* :—It is said that above the door of the celebrated temple of Apollo at Delphi there was a Greek inscription, the whole of which consisted in a simple monosyllable of two letters signifying THOU ART, which is not only a proper, but a peculiar title of God, because He alone is being, the ever-existing One, and is derived from the Hebrew name Jehovah ; but it had nothing to do with the heathen god, for I am persuaded that the evil one was there worshipped under the name of Apollo. His ambition was to be like the Most High, and therefore he assumed God's name ; but he was a murderer from the beginning, and also a thief and a robber. It is also said, that on the same temple this often-repeated admonition was written, "Know thyself," which, being connected with the preceding, reminded man of his frail and mortal nature. But without Divine revelation man could never have been in possession of these Divine truths. Hence we learn the wonderful condescension of God. After the Lord for His own pleasure called man into existence, He revealed Himself to him. I. Concerning THE ORIGIN OF MAN, various and absurd opinions have been put forth by men, who presume to be wiser than the inspired writers. Some have asserted, but devoid of all reason, that men have existed from eternity, or existed by an infinite succession of beings ; and others have as absurdly asserted, that the first man and woman, or several pairs, sprang into being from some spontaneous action of the earth, or chance combination of the natural elements, independent of any adequate power or designing cause. But this is opposed to the clearest deductions of reason, and involves impossibilities.

Now, although men generally admit the absurdity of the notion that man has existed from eternity, and that he came into being by the spontaneous action of the earth or elements, independent of a designing cause, yet many assert that God in the beginning created a plurality of pairs, from whence arises the great difference in complexion and form which distinguishes the several races of mankind. This idea seems very plausible; but those who are most competent to pronounce an opinion on comparative anatomy have declared that the whole race of mankind has sprung from one original pair—one man and one woman, and on physiological grounds agree with the Mosaic account. II. HIS NATURE, AND THE REASON OF HIS NAME. Formed of dust; therefore suitably called Adam or earth. III. We shall now consider THE DIGNITY, MORAL EXCELLENCE, AND IMMORTALITY OF MAN, as he came out of the hands of God. 1. In the creation of matter, and bringing it into a harmony of spheres, the fiat of the Almighty was sufficient. He merely said, "Let there be light," and light was, as a necessary consequence; but in the creation of man it was otherwise. The Holy Ones reasoned together, which indicates the dignity and moral excellence of the being about to be called into existence. That Divine consultation was significant of the God-like nature of man. 2. But one of the chief features in man, as he came out of his Creator's hand (if anything can be chief where all is perfect), was, that he derived immediately from God the breath of life; for God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and he became a living, or, as some of the Hebrew paraphrasts have it, a rational, soul. His spirit partook of the immortality of its Divine author, and was destined to live for ever; and therefore the tree of life was placed in the midst of the garden, the virtue of which was such, that if he partook thereof, he would live for ever. (*A. Jones.*)

The life of living soul:—1. We are, as to the outward man, mere dust of the ground. Is not this plain enough from experience? Does not the food that maintains our bodies come directly from plants, or indirectly from them, through the beasts that feed upon them? And do not those plants draw all their support from the ground? 2. We have in this living body passions and affections common with the brute creation. And too many act as if they had nothing more, as if they had only to exercise their brutal appetites, eat and drink, and tyrannize over the poor brute creation, as its merciless kings, and then like them to die. How many have passed through this world from the womb to the grave, with no higher exercise of their faculties, and with a much more brutal one of their appetites, than a dog or an elephant? 3. But we are living souls. God has given unto us reason and not instinct, free agency and not mere necessity. We are rational, and therefore accountable beings. We are servants of a heavenly Master, sons of a heavenly Father, to whom we have to render faithful service and affectionate obedience. We have a reckoning to render of the manner in which we have employed our bodies, our appetites, our faculties. (*R. W. Evans, B.D.*)

Excellency of the soul of man:—When God Almighty had in six days made that common dial of the world, the light; that storehouse of His justice and His mercy, the firmament; that ferry of the world, the sea; man's work-house, the earth; chariots of light, the sun and moon; the airy choristers, the fowls; and man's servants, the beasts; yet had He one more excellent piece to be made, and that was man, a microcosm, even an abstract of the whole, to whom, having fashioned a body, proceeding by degrees of perfection, He lastly created a soul. And as the family of Matri was singled out of the tribe of Benjamin, and Saul out of the family of Matri, being higher than the rest by the shoulders upwards, so is the soul singled out from the other creatures, far surpassing them all in excellency, whether we consider the efficient cause of its creation, Elohim, the blessed Trinity, being then in consultation; or the material cause, a *quinta essentia*, noble and Divine substance, more excellent than the heavens; or the cause formal, made after the image of God Himself; or, lastly, the cause final, that it might be the temple of God and the habitation of His blessed Spirit. (*J. Spencer.*)

A living soul in man:—About forty-five years ago a funeral was passing through the streets of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It was the burial procession of John Hall Mason, the son of the eminent Dr. Mason, President of Dickinson College, one of the most powerful and eloquent preachers in America. The son was distinguished for his piety and talents, and his death had cast a gloom over many hearts. Many gathered to the funeral, from far and near, and especially young men. After the services at the house had been performed, and the pall-bearers had taken up the bier, a great concourse obstructed the entrance, and great confusion and noise ensued. The bereaved doctor, observing the difficulty, and following closely the pall-bearers, exclaimed in solemn sepulchral tones: "Tread

lightly, young men! tread lightly! You bear the temple of the Holy Ghost." These sentiments, as though indited by the Holy Spirit, acted like an electric shock; the crowd fell back and made the passage way clear. Through the influence of these words a most powerful revival of religion sprung up, and swept through the college, and extended over the town. *Men to set a high value upon their souls*:—When Praxiteles, a cunning painter, had promised unto Phryne one of the choicest pieces in his shop, she, not knowing which was the best, began to think upon some plot whereby to make him to discover his judgment which of them was the piece indeed, and suborned one of his servants to tell his master (being then in the market, selling his pictures) that his house was on fire and a great part of it burnt down to the ground. Praxiteles, hearing this, presently demanded of his servant if the "Satyr and Cupid" were safe, whereby Phryne, standing by, discovered which was the best picture in the shop. And shall a silly painter set so high an esteem upon a poor, base picture, the slubbered (imperfect) work of his own hands, and shall not we much more value the soul, that is of an immortal being, the most precious piece that ever God made, the perfect pattern and image of Himself. Let riches, honour, and all go, if nothing but this escape the fire, it is sufficient. (*J. Spencer.*) *Man has a soul*:—Some time ago the Rev. James Armstrong preached at Harmony, near the Wabash, when a doctor of that place, a professed Deist, called on his associates to accompany him while he attacked the Methodists, as he said. At first he asked Mr. Armstrong if he followed preaching to save souls. He answered in the affirmative. He then asked Mr. Armstrong if he ever saw a soul. "No." If he ever heard a soul. "No." If he ever tasted a soul. "No." If he ever smelled a soul. "No." If he ever felt a soul. "Yes, thank God!" said Mr. Armstrong. "Well," said the doctor, "there are four of the five senses against one that there is a soul." Mr. Armstrong then asked the gentleman if he was a doctor of medicine; and he also answered in the affirmative. He then asked the doctor if he ever saw a pain. "No." If he ever heard a pain. "No." If he ever tasted a pain. "No." If he ever smelled a pain. "No." If he ever felt a pain. "Yes," Mr. Armstrong then said, "There are also four senses against one to evidence that there is a pain; yet, sir, you know that there is a pain, and I know there is a soul." The doctor appeared confounded, and walked off. (*Whitecross.*)

Vers. 8-14. **The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden.**—*The garden of Eden*:—I. IN THIS GARDEN PROVISION WAS MADE FOR THE HAPPINESS OF MAN. 1. The garden was beautiful. 2. The garden was fruitful. 3. The garden was well watered. II. IN THIS GARDEN PROVISION WAS MADE FOR THE DAILY OCCUPATION OF MAN. 1. Work is the law of man's being. (1) Man's work should be practical. (2) Man's work should be healthful. (3) Man's work should be taken as from God. This will dignify work, and inspire the worker. A man who lets God put him to his trade, is likely to be successful. 2. Work is the benediction of man's being. Work makes men happy. Indolence is misery. Work is the truest blessing we have. It occupies our time. It keeps from mischief. It supplies our temporal wants. It enriches society. It wins the approval of God. III. IN THIS GARDEN PROVISION WAS MADE FOR THE SPIRITUAL OBEDIENCE OF MAN. 1. God gave man a command to obey. 2. God annexed a penalty in the case of disobedience. (1) The penalty was clearly made known. (2) It was certain in its infliction. (3) It was terrible in its result. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The two paradises*:—I. Compare the PLACES. The second is superior to the first. 1. In respect to its elements. What was dust in the first paradise was gold in the second. 2. Of its extent. The first paradise was the corner of a small planet; the second is a universe of glory in which nations dwell, and whose limits angels know not. 3. Of its beauty. II. Compare the INHABITANTS of the two paradises. The inhabitants of the second are superior to those of the first. 1. In physical nature. 2. In employment. The employment of heaven will relate to beings rather than to things. The sphere of activity will be more amongst souls than flowers. Will call into exercise loftier faculties; will tend more to the glory of God. 3. In rank. 4. In freedom. 5. In security. Adam was liable to temptation and evil. In the second paradise is immunity from peril. 6. In vision of God. In the first paradise God walked amid the trees of the garden. Adam realizes the over-shadowing Presence. The inhabitants of the second paradise shall enjoy that Presence more perfectly. (1) Vision brighter. (2) Constant. (*Pulpit Analyst.*) *Man's life in Eden*:—1. Our first parents are discovered in a state of innocence, beauty, and blessedness,

which is broken up utterly by the transgression of the Divine command. (1) To Eden, as the first condition of human existence, all hearts bear witness. Two hymns are babbled by the echoes of the ages—"the good days of old," "the good days to come." They are the work-songs of humanity; the memory of a better, and the hope of a better, nerve and cheer mankind. That memory, Genesis explains; that hope, the Apocalypse assures. (2) We shall err greatly if we treat Adam's history in Eden as nothing more than a fabled picture of the experience of man; rather is it the root out of which your experience and mine has grown, and in virtue of which they are other than they would have been had they come fresh from the hand of God. We recognize the law of headship which God has established in humanity, whereby Adam, by his own act, has placed his race in new and sadder relations to Nature and to the Lord. (3) The origin of evil may still remain a mystery, but this history of Eden stands between it and God. Eden is God's work, the image of His thought; and man's spirit joyfully accepts the history, and uses it as a weapon against haunting doubts about the origin of evil. (4) The sin of Adam is substantially the history of every attempt of self-will to counterwork the will of God. Every sin is a seeking for a good outside the region which, in the light of God, we know to be given us as our own. II. This narrative presents to us the Father seeking the sinful child with blended righteousness and tenderness, assuring him of help to bear the burden which righteousness had imposed on transgression, and of redemption out of the spiritual death, which was the fruit of sin. III. God not only, fatherlike, made wise disposition for the correction of His child, but He cast in with His child's lot of toil and suffering His own sympathy and hope; He made Himself a partaker in man's new experience of pain, and, that He might destroy sin, linked the sufferer by a great promise to Himself. (*J. B. Brown, B.A.*) *The garden of Eden*.—I. A SCENE OF BEAUTY. II. A SPHERE OF WORK. III. AN ABODE OF INNOCENCE. IV. A HOME OF HAPPINESS. V. A PLACE OF PROBATION. 1. Man in his original condition was immortal. 2. Man's immortality was suspended on his personal obedience. 3. Adam acted in the garden as a public person, or as the representative of the race. (*Anon.*) *Adam in Eden*.—The text teaches several things concerning God. I. HIS POWER. 1. Physical. The might involved in the creation and maintenance of the universe. As much power displayed in preservation of universe as in its creation. 2. Intellectual. The thought and intelligence involved in the works of nature; the unity of design, harmony of motion, and proportion of parts visible everywhere, from the majesty of revolving worlds to the structure and polish of an insect's wing, all attest the work and power of a boundless intelligence. II. HIS WISDOM. 1. We see God's wisdom here in the order of events. (1) He planted a garden. (2) There He put the man. Every man has his own God-appointed work. 2. In providing so bountifully for the wants of man, both present and future. (1) Present. In causing all manner of fruits and vegetables to spring out of the earth, and in stocking the earth, air, and water with creatures for man's food and happiness. (2) Future. In filling the bowels of the earth with those priceless treasures which He saw would be required, in order to man's highest civilization and well-being. III. HIS GOODNESS. 1. In providing a home for man. 2. God's goodness is also seen in the size of Adam's home. "A garden." Why not something larger? God's idea of human vocation is not distribution, but concentration. Not farming a township, but tilling a garden. No man can be a gardener, a doctor, a lawyer, a banker, and a preacher, and succeed in either. 3. In putting him in possession of his new home. "There He put the man." I am pleased to find this statement, especially as Adam got into trouble so soon afterwards. If the Lord had only pointed out the garden, and left Adam to find it, he might have doubted, after the Fall, whether he had not gotten into the wrong place, and whether such a calamity could have befallen him in a God-selected residence. Learn, here, that however clearly we may be able to trace the Divine hand in bringing us into any position or calling, we may there yield to the tempter, and fall. That God can build no Eden this side the gates of glory which man cannot curse and wither, by listening to the suggestions of the devil. 4. In providing a wife for Adam. "Brought her unto him." The composition of the first divinely ordained home was husband and wife. (*T. Kelly.*) *Genesis of Eden*.—I. THE TOPOGRAPHICAL PROBLEM. All that we can determine at present is this: Eden lay to the east of the venerable witness of creation's panorama, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Tigris and the Euphrates. And history strikingly confirms the chronicle of the hoary witness. Those confessedly competent to discuss such questions agree that

the cradle of mankind is to be looked for somewhere in the country of the Euphrates. Civilization has generally, with comparatively unimportant exceptions, moved from east to west. Who knows but that we, the latest born of the nations, with the Continental railways and Pacific steamships in our grasp, are God's chosen instruments in carrying the glad tidings ever and ever westward, till, having crossed China, we reach again the cradle of humanity, and reinaugurate the lost paradise on the very spot where our inspired Seer caught glimpse of the tree of life? The truth, however, is, the exact site of Eden will probably never be discovered—at least, till the day when the voice of Him who was wont to walk in the garden in the evening breeze (Gen. iii. 8) is again heard on earth. II. And now let us attend to some of THE LESSONS OF THE STORY. 1. And, first, the birth of industry. Jehovah God took the man He had formed, and put him in the Garden of Eden, to till it, and to keep it. (1) Work is man's normal condition. Man must work for (a) the soul's sake; (b) his own sake; (c) God's sake. (2) Pursue your calling with enthusiasm. 2. The birth of language. (1) Wonderfulness of language. (2) The first words nouns. (3) Our words are judges. 3. The birth of immortality. "The tree of life." 4. The birth of probation. 5. The Eden of the soul. 6. The heavenly Eden. (*G. D. Boardman.*) *Paradise held; or, man's innocency*.—I. ADAM'S HOME. A pleasant, fruitful garden. Beautiful flowers; green meadows; rivers and brooks; woods and coppices. II. ADAM'S WORK. Twofold; to till and to keep the garden—work and watchfulness. Something to call out vigilance as well as diligence. III. ADAM'S WIFE. Loving companionship and mutual help. How glad Adam must have been! LESSONS: The teacher can point out how this picture of the first man and woman reminds us of—(1) God's providential rule (He places us where we are; He orders our circumstances. City or country; this land or that. He gives us a position to occupy). (2) God's moral law (i.e., our duty of obedience to God). (3) Man's family and social position on earth (i.e., our relative duties, one to another—for the relation of husband and wife leads to that of parent and child, brother and sister, and so on. Only sin brings in discord and division). (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *Love of flowers a relic of life in Eden*.—Waking up to conscious existence in the midst of a garden, it would seem as if man had not entirely forgotten the wonderful vision on which his eyes then opened. At least, there is no passion more general than the admiration of beautiful flowers. They kindle the rapture of infancy, and it is touching to see how over the first kingcups or daisies its tiny hand closes more eagerly than hereafter it will grasp silver coins or golden. The solitary blossom lights a lamp of quiet gladness in the poor man's chamber, and in the palace of the prince, the marble of Canova and the canvas of Raffaele are dimmed by the lordly exotic with its calyx of flame or its petals of snow. With these companions of our departed innocence we plait the bridal wreath, and, scattered on the coffin, or planted on the grave, there seems a hope of resurrection in their smile, a sympathy in their gentle decay. And whilst to the dullest gaze they speak a lively oracle, in their empyrean bloom and unearthly fragrance the pensive fancy recognizes some mysterious memory, and asks,—

"Have we been all at fault? Are we the sons
Of pilgrim sires who left their lovelier land?
And do we call inhospitable climes
By names they brought from home?"

(*Dr. J. Hamilton.*)

The charms of a river.—A river has special charms for me—always arriving, always departing; softening the landscape, and completing the circle of the firmament; rich with manifold reflections, and eloquent with the sad yet soothing minor in which all Nature speaks in her gentlest moods. I love to tarry by the riverside, to look, to listen, to wonder, and to feel the pleasant unrest of constant expectation. Standing by a river, one seems to be on the edge of another world—life, motion, music—signs that tell of speed, gliding and darting, that look as if activity had solved the mystery of industrious repose; breaking bubbles that hint at something of incompleteness and disappointment; occasional floodings and rushings that tell of power under control,—all are seen in that flowing world. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Man's life in Paradise*.—I. THE FIRST INSTITUTION FOR PARADISE, AND FOR MAN IN PARADISE, WAS A SABBATH DAY. Man, not yet fallen, needed the Sabbath to keep him to God—and all too little, as the event showed. Better to

wait in Paradise with God and the Sabbath, than go to find a lower happiness elsewhere. II. GOD, WHO TOLD MAN HOW TO SPEND THE SEVENTH DAY, TOLD HIM HOW TO SPEND THE OTHER SIX ALSO. One of the happinesses of paradise was employment—not idleness. And God Himself chose for Adam his occupation. He has done so also for each of us. In the garden where God puts you He will find you work; some flowers to rear and cultivate; some human minds to which you may do good; some plantations of Divine grace which you may dress and water, and so be fellow-worker with Him who gives the increase. III. GOD PLACED MAN UNDER A LAW IN PARADISE. For our own sake, for our own true happiness, God would have us keep Him in our thoughts. The yielding up our own will to His has greater sweetness to the taste than pleasing ourselves ever had. IV. GOD, THE AUTHOR OF ALL OUR HAPPINESS, IS THE IMMEDIATE FOUNDER OF DOMESTIC LIFE. Observe what exceeding honour He has put on the institution of marriage, making it one of the two original appointments which came immediately from Himself when He made our race. CONCLUSION: All these fair features are types or emblems of heavenly things. The Sabbath is a type of the heavenly rest; the employments, of the employments of heaven, and its peaceful industry; the law, of the law which the angels keep, happy in that their every thought and act is according to the motions of God's good Spirit; and the marriage tie, of the spiritual union betwixt Christ and His Church. The picture of Paradise shall be reproduced in perfectness—in heaven. It should be seen, even here and now, in Christian families. (*C. P. Eden, M.A.*) *Man's residence*:—1. The Lord of it, God Himself, who planted it with His own hand. 2. The nature or kind of it; it was a garden. 3. The situation of it; it lay eastward. 4. The furniture or store of the garden. (1) In general; it was furnished with all sorts of plants both for use and delights. (2) In particular; it had in it two trees appointed to a spiritual use. 5. The commodious situation of the garden, both for fruitfulness and delight, by the benefit of the river that issued out of it. 6. The assigning over of the garden to the man. (1) Of the place, for them to dwell in. (2) Of the fruits, to feed on. (*J. White.*) *The two paradises*:—We read of two paradises—one is described to us at the beginning of the Bible, and the other at the end of it (Rev. xxii. 1-5). The descriptions cannot be perused without leading the thoughts into a comparison and contrast of the one paradise with the other. I. THE RIVERS. A river is a beautiful object. A river of clear water winding through a garden, meandering among flowers and trees, presents to the eye a lovely scene. And then, besides the beauty of a river or stream in itself, which may be called its direct contribution of beauty—much of the remaining attractions of the garden through which it passes is to be ascribed to it. The flowers and the trees are quickened and refreshed by it. Through its aid the flowers assume their fair and gorgeous array, and the trees spread out their noble arms, and are covered with foliage and fruit. There was a river in the paradise of Eden. The benignant Creator did not leave the primeval home of man without the advantage and the ornament of a river. In the future paradise there is also a river. It is not behind the paradise of the past in this respect. Two things are to be noted concerning this river—the water of it, and the source of it. The water is pronounced to be “water of life, clear as crystal.” We cannot be at a loss, with the Bible in our hands, for the interpretation of this. “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God” (Psa. xlv. 4). What can that be but Jehovah's love and faithfulness, which are always the consolation of the Church in times of trial and danger? “He leadeth me beside the still waters” (Psa. xxiii. 2). “Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of Thy pleasures” (Psa. xxxvi. 8). “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. xii. 3). The water of life is no other than the joys, and privileges, and blessings of that life eternal, which is the appointed portion of the redeemed. It corresponds to the new wine which Christ and His people drink together in the kingdom of God. And it is a river of water of life, because, as the flow of a river goes on continually, so shall there never be an end of the celestial happiness. The river, also, is pure, and clear as crystal, because the future state will be a state of unmixed felicity, and a state of glory without a cloud. The river proceeds “out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” In the throne of God and of the Lamb it has its source. The throne of God and of the Lamb. A single throne is meant, which is occupied by God and the Lamb. The lesson is, that the joys and blessings of the future paradise are to be traced, in the first place, to the sovereign love of God; and, in the second place, to the redeeming work of Christ. The river proceeds out of the Father's throne. The whole life, and grace, and

glory, which the Church ever arrives at, must be traced back through the far-reaching depths of eternity, and are connected with, and spring out of, that which was done in the beginning, when God, in the greatness, the freeness, and the sovereignty of His love, pronounced the decree of salvation. The throne of the Lamb alone could not have originated this river. The Lamb's throne, by itself, originates nothing. The spring and first fountain of all our blessings, and of that river which shall gladden the paradise of God, is in the Father's throne. But the throne, whence it comes, is not to be viewed as the Father's throne merely. It is the throne of God and of the Lamb. Without that work of the Son, which the name of the Lamb suggests, and on account of which the Lamb has a seat on the Father's throne—without what is done by Him as the second Man, the Servant of the Father, and our covenant-head, neither grace nor glory could be ours. His death has made openings for its egress; and from His hands, and His feet, and His side, come the joyful waters that flow in the river of paradise. II. THE TREES. The paradise of Eden was adorned and enriched with trees—"every tree," we are told, "that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." The beautiful trees and the noble stream together must have made an exquisite scene. And two trees there were, that stood in the midst of the garden (Gen. ii. 9; iii. 3), and excelled all the rest. They were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These were sacramental trees, as their names denote. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a sign and seal of the condition of God's covenant, and the tree of life was a sign and seal of its reward. The first paradise was remarkable for its trees. It had wonderful trees. The new paradise is not behind. It has many stately and fruitful trees. There are trees of righteousness without number, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. And there is, besides, one matchless tree, that is in the midst of that paradise of God (Rev. ii. 7). There is the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. With its river of the water of life, and its tree of life, the paradise, on which the Church's hope is fixed, is, indeed, a paradise of life. We need not say that the tree of life is Christ. He is the goodly tree in the midst of the garden. His Word, His gospel, His ordinances, are the means which the Holy Spirit employs on earth for quickening, regenerating, and sanctifying the people; and the enjoyment of Him is the chief ingredient, and the very essence, of the heavenly felicity. III. THE CURSE. Of the second paradise, it is emphatically said, "There shall be no more curse." The words, no doubt, have reference, in the way of contrast, to the state of things here and now, and are designed to intimate that the curse, which lies on the present creation, shall not be prolonged and carried onward from this state to that. "There shall be no more curse." The curse is here, but it shall not be there. There was curse in the first paradise. There was curse in it the moment its peaceful and happy bowers were invaded by the devil. The being on whom God's curse alights is himself, in a sense, a curse. For this reason, even Christ, when He bore the curse as our substitute, is said to have been made a curse. There was curse in the garden of Eden, for there was sin in it. Not, indeed, at first. Man was blameless and holy for a season. But sin there was at last, and probably soon. And sin came not alone. Sin, by necessary consequence, brought the curse. There was curse in the garden of Eden; for there was shame, and there was slavish fear. When the privileged pair fell, they must have fig-leaves to cover them; and they must hide among the trees from the presence of the Lord. There was curse in the garden of Eden; for there was death in it. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And die that day they did. The life of God went out of them. And there was curse in the garden of Eden: there was a curse which was spoken by the mouth of the Lord. The garden had been the scene where words of blessing and grace were wont to be uttered by the Creator, and where the holy affections of those whom He had made in His image found vent in glad songs of adoration and praise, accompanied, it may be, by a chorus of angels. But sin changed it all. It is gone—that paradise—gone for ever. Let us not, however, despair. There is another paradise. He who planted the first has planted a second. He has planted a second, which is better than the first; and concerning which He has declared, that "there shall be no more curse." "There shall be no more curse." This implies that there shall be no more devil—no more Satanic intrusions. "There shall be no more curse." The words imply that, in the second paradise, there shall be no more sin. As the heirs of glory appear within its precincts, they are found, one and all, to be perfectly sanctified. And

they will never fall again. The crown of righteousness will never drop from their heads. Never again will they break God's law, transgress His holy covenant, or be guilty of an act of distrust or rebellion. "There shall be no more curse." The declaration implies that God shall no more pronounce any curse. It has been impossible for Him, hitherto, as the moral ruler of a sinful world, to dispense with the use of the curse. "There shall be no more curse"; and so there shall not be another expulsion from paradise. IV. THE GENERAL STATE OF THE INHABITANTS. 1. The state of man was, in the old paradise, and will be in the new, a state of honourable service. 2. The state of man, in the garden of Eden, was a state of enjoyment and privilege. But the second paradise, also, will have enjoyment and privilege. It will have such enjoyment and privilege as to afford no occasion of regret for what has been lost. The old men, who had seen the temple of Solomon, wept when they thought how inferior must be the temple that was to succeed it. The contrast between the first and the second paradise will draw no such tears from our original progenitors. They shall have the richest social delights. They shall dwell together, the incorporated members of a family, having God the Father as their Father, God the Son as their Brother, and the Spirit of love resting on them all. They shall see God. 3. The pristine state of man was a state of power and glory. He was a king. The earth was His kingdom; the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth, were His subjects. Believers will be kings. They are kings already by right. They are kings, who are not yet of age, and who must wait a little for the actual commencement of their reign. A kingdom is prepared for them. They shall be greater kings than Adam was, and have a wider and more illustrious dominion. Their kingdom shall be immoveable and undecaying. They shall be enthroned with Christ. They shall be crowned with righteousness and glory. And "they shall reign for ever and ever." (*Andrew Gray.*) *The garden of Eden.*—When we think of paradise, we think of it as the seat of delight. The name Eden authorizes us so to do. It signifies pleasure: and the idea of pleasure is inseparable from that of a garden, where man still seeks after lost happiness, and where, perhaps, a good man finds the nearest resemblance of it, which this world affords. The culture of a garden, as it was the first employment of man, so it is that to which the most eminent persons in different ages have retired, from the camp and the cabinet, to pass the interval between a life of action and a removal hence. When old Diocletian was invited from his retreat, to resume the purple which he had laid down some years before—"Ah," said he, "could you but see those fruits and herbs of mine own raising at Salona, you would never talk to me of empire!" An accomplished statesman of our own country, who spent the latter part of his life in this manner, hath so well described the advantages of it, that it would be injustice to communicate his ideas in any other words but his own. "No other sort of abode," says he, "seems to contribute so much, both to the tranquillity of mind and indolence of body. The sweetness of the air, the pleasantness of the smell, the verdure of the plants, the cleanness and lightness of food, the exercise of working or walking; but, above all, the exemption from care and solicitude, seem equally to favour and improve both contemplation and health, the enjoyment of sense and imagination, and thereby the quiet and ease both of body and mind. A garden has been the inclination of kings, and the choice of philosophers; the common favourite of public and private men; the pleasure of the greatest, and the care of the meanest; an employment and a possession, for which no man is too high, nor too low. If we believe the Scriptures," concludes he, "we must allow that God Almighty esteemed the life of man in a garden the happiest He could give him, or else He would not have placed Adam in that of Eden. The garden of Eden had, doubtless, all the perfection it could receive from the hands of Him who ordained it to be the mansion of His favourite creature. We may reasonably presume it to have been the earth in miniature, and to have contained specimens of all natural productions, as they appeared, without blemish, in an unfallen world; and these disposed in admirable order, for the purposes intended. And it may be observed, that when, in after times, the penmen of the Scriptures have occasion to describe any remarkable degree of fertility and beauty, of grandeur and magnificence, they refer us to the garden of Eden (see Gen. xiii. 10; Joel ii. 3; Ezek. xxxi. 3, &c.). Traditions and traces of this original garden seem to have gone forth into all the earth, though, as an elegant writer justly observes, "they must be expected to have grown fainter and fainter in every transfusion from one people to another. The Romans probably derived their notion of it, expressed in the

gardens of Flora, from the Greeks, among whom this idea seems to have been shadowed out under the stories of the gardens of Alcinous. In Africa they had the gardens of the Hesperides, and in the East those of Adonis. The term of *Horti Adonides* was used by the ancients to signify gardens of pleasure, which answers strangely to the very name of paradise, or the garden of Eden." In the writings of the poets, who have lavished all the powers of genius and the charms of verse upon the subject, these and the like counterfeit or secondary paradises, the copies of the true, will live and bloom, so long as the world itself shall endure. It hath been already suggested, that a garden is calculated no less for the improvement of the mind, than for the exercise of the body; and we cannot doubt but that peculiar care would be taken of that most important end in the disposition of the garden of Eden. Our first father differed from his descendants in this particular, that he was not to attain the use of his understanding by a gradual process from infancy, but came into being in full stature and vigour, of mind as well as body. He found creation likewise in its prime. It was morning with man and the world. As man was made for the contemplation of God here, and for the enjoyment of him hereafter, we cannot imagine that his knowledge would terminate on earth, though it took its rise there. Like the patriarch's ladder, its foot was on earth, but its top, doubtless, reached to heaven. By it the mind ascended from the creatures to the Creator, and descended from the Creator to the creatures. It was the golden chain which connected matter and spirit, preserving a communication between the two worlds. That God had revealed and made Himself known to Adam, appears from the circumstances related, namely, that He took him, and put him into the garden of Eden; that He conversed with him, and communicated a law, to be by him observed; that He caused the creatures to come before him, and brought Eve to him. If there was, at the beginning, this familiar intercourse between Jehovah and Adam, and He vouchsafed to converse with him, as He afterward did with Moses, "as a man converseth with his friend," there can be no reasonable doubt but that He instructed him, as far as was necessary, in the knowledge of his Maker, of his own spiritual and immortal part, of the adversary he had to encounter, of the consequences to which disobedience would subject him, and of those invisible glories, a participation of which was to be the reward of his obedience. Whenever the garden of Eden is mentioned in the Scriptures, it is called "the garden of God," or "the garden of the Lord"—expressions which denote some peculiar designation of it to sacred purposes, some appropriation to God and His service, as is confessedly the case with many similar phrases; such as "house of God, altar of God, man of God," and the like; all implying, that the persons and things spoken of were consecrated to Him, and set apart for a religious use. When it is said, "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it," the words undoubtedly direct us to conceive of it as a place for the exercise of the body. The powers of the body and the faculties of the mind might be set to work at the same time, by the same objects. And it is well known that the words here used do as frequently denote mental as corporeal operations; and, under the idea of dressing and keeping the sacred garden, may fairly imply the cultivation and observation of such religious truths, as were pointed out by the external signs and sacraments, which paradise contained. When the prophets have occasion to foretell the great and marvellous change to be effected in the moral world, under the evangelical dispensation, they frequently borrow their ideas and expressions from the history of that garden, in which innocence and felicity once dwelt together, and which they represent as again springing up and blooming in the wilderness (see Isa. li. 3; xli. 17; xxxv. 1). At the time appointed, these predictions received their accomplishment. Men "saw the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." By the death and resurrection of the Redeemer, lost paradise was regained; and its inestimable blessings, wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, are now to be found and enjoyed in the Christian Church. But as men are still men, and not angels, those blessings are still represented and conveyed by sacramental symbols, analogous to the original ones in Eden. From the sacred font flows the water of life, to purify, to refresh, to comfort; "a river goes out of Eden, to water the garden," and to "baptize all nations"; while the eucharist answers to the fruit of the tree of life: at the holy table, we may now "put forth our hands, and take, and eat, and live for ever." Let us go one step farther, and consider the state of things in the heavenly kingdom of our Lord. There, it is true, all figures and shadows, symbols and sacraments, shall be no more; because faith will there be lost

in vision, and we shall "know even as we are known." (*Bishop Horne.*) *Legends of Paradise among ancient nations*:—Paradise is no exclusive feature of the earliest history of the Hebrews; most of the ancient nations have similar narratives about a happy abode, which care does not approach, and which echoes with the sounds of the purest bliss. The Greeks believed, that at an immense distance, beyond the pillars of Hercules, on the borders of the earth, were the islands of the blessed, the elysium, abounding in every charm of life, and the garden of the Hesperides, with their golden apples, guarded by an ever-watchful serpent (Ladon). But still more analogous is the legend of the Hindoos, that in the sacred mountain Meru, which is perpetually clothed in the golden rays of the sun, and whose lofty summit reaches into heaven, no sinful man can exist; that it is guarded by dreadful dragons; that it is adorned with many celestial plants and trees, and is watered by four rivers, which thence separate, and flow to the four chief directions. Equally striking is the resemblance to the belief of the Persians, who suppose, that a region of bliss and delight, the town Eriene Vedsho or *Heden*, more beautiful than the whole rest of the world, traversed by a mighty river, was the original abode of the first men before they were tempted by Ahriman, in the shape of a serpent, to partake of the wonderful fruit of the forbidden tree Hom. And the books of the Chinese describe a garden near the gate of heaven where a perpetual zephir breathes; it is irrigated by abundant springs, the noblest of which is the "fountain of life"; and abounds in delightful trees, one of which bears fruits which have the power of preserving and prolonging the existence of man. (*M. M. Kalisch.*) *The Eden of the soul*:—To every human being, not less than to Adam, God has given a garden to till and to keep: it is the garden within him. Alas! this garden of the soul is no longer an Eden. An enemy hath come and sown tares (Matt. xiii. 25). Instead of the fir-tree has come up the thorn, and instead of the myrtle-tree has come up the brier (Isa. lv. 13). Nevertheless, the capacity of paradise still lies latent within us all. Like seeds which have for ages lain buried beneath the soil of our primeval forests, there lie deep down in the subsoil of our moral natures the germs of giant spirit powers and experiences. Fallen as we are, we are capable of being redeemed, reinstated in the range of conscious sonship to the everlasting Father. In fact, this capacity for redemption is, on its human side, the basis of the possibility of Christ's salvation. The Son of God came not to crush, but to save; not to destroy, but to restore; not to annihilate, but to transfigure. And when we let Him have His way in our hearts; when we let Him drive the ploughshare of His Spirit's conviction, uprooting tares and thorns and all baleful weeds; when we let Him sow the good seed of the kingdom, which is the Word of God; when we let Him quicken it with the warmth of His breath, and water it with the dews of His grace, and hue it with the sunshine of His beauty: then does paradise lost become paradise found; then is brought to pass—oh, how gloriously!—the saying of the poet-prophet (Isa. xxxv. 1). (*G. D. Boardman.*) *The first garden*:—I. Situation of paradise that man lost, unknown. Landmarks obliterated by the Deluge. It may be sought, and found in every part of the world. "Thy presence makes my paradise," &c. 2. God planted the first garden; our flowers are lineal descendants of Eden's bright blossoms, as we are of the "grand old gardener"—Adam. Let the colours and perfumes of summer call that garden to mind. 3. Cultivate flowers of holiness, and fruits of godliness; possess the Rose of Sharon and the true Vine, and paradise will be regained. (*J. C. Gray.*) *Adam in Eden*:—I. THE FIRST MAN. Adam. "Of the earth, earthy." His happiness (i. 28). His moral dignity, likeness of God (i. 26; Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10). His mental greatness; named the animals, &c. (ii. 20). His regal position (i. 28). His relation to other created intelligences (Heb. ii. 7, 8). His great age; lived 930 years (v. 5). During 243 years a contemporary of Methuselah, who for 600 years was contemporary of his grandson Noah. II. THE FIRST STEWARDSHIP. To dress and keep a garden. Lowly, healthful; needing diligence, forethought, &c. Mere office, however lofty, does not dignify; nor however humble, degrade. The great ancestor of the race, a gardener. III. THE FIRST COMMAND. A command to remind man of his subordinate relation, his duty, &c. Only one, very simple and easy. In common life the breach of one often makes many injunctions needful. (*Ibid.*) *Observations*:—I. THE FRUITFULNESS OF ONE PART OF THE EARTH ABOVE ANOTHER IS FROM GOD ALONE, AND MERELY AND ONLY BY HIS BLESSING. II. THOUGH GOD HAVE PREPARED THE EARTH FOR MAN, YET HE CAN HAVE NO TITLE TO ANY MORE OF IT THAN GOD ALLOTS OUT OF IT FOR HIS HABITATION. III. GOD IS PLEASED TO BESTOW UPON MEN LIBERALLY HIS BEST AND

CHIEFEST BLESSINGS. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Work*:—Not only did Adam work before the Fall; but also nature and nature's God. From the particle of dust at our feet to man, the last stroke of God's handiwork, all bear the impress of the law of labour. The earth, as has been said, is one vast laboratory, where decomposition and re-formation are constantly going on. The blast of nature's furnace never ceases, and its fires never burn low. The lichen of the rock, and the oak of the forest, each works out the problem of its own existence. The earth, the air, and the water teem with busy life. The poet tells us that the joyous song of labour sounds out from the million-voiced earth, and the rolling spheres join the universal chorus! Therefore, labour is not, as Tupper expresses it, the curse on the sons of men in all their ways.

Observations:—I. AS GOD GIVES US ALL THINGS FREELY, SO WITHAL HE TAKES SPECIAL NOTICE OF ALL THAT HE BESTOWS UPON US. II. EVERY PLANT ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH GROWS WHERE AND IN WHAT MANNER AND ORDER GOD APPOINTS IT. III. GOD'S BOUNTY ABOUNDS UNTO MEN, NOT ONLY TO THE SUPPLYING OF THEIR NECESSITIES, BUT ALSO FOR THEIR DELIGHT. 1. Let us then tender unto God, after the measure that we receive from Him, the most acceptable presents of our cheerful services, which that variety and abundance which we receive from His hand should provoke us unto (Deut. xxviii. 47). Serving Him with enlarged hearts, and delighting to run the way of His commandments with the holy prophet (Psa. cxix. 32). 2. It may warrant us the honest and moderate use of God's blessings, even for delight: so we use them—(1) Seasonably, when God gives us an occasion of rejoicing, and (2) within bounds of moderation, as we are advised (Prov. xxiii. 2), and (3) directed to those holy ends proposed by God to His own people (Deut. xxvi. 11). IV. IT IS USUAL WITH GOD TO MIX DELIGHT AND PLEASURE WITH USEFULNESS AND PROFIT IN ALL HIS BLESSINGS. V. THE BEST AMONGST MEN AND MOST PERFECT HAVE NEED OF THE HELP OF OUTWARD MEANS TO QUICKEN AND STRENGTHEN THEM AND PUT THEM IN MIND OF THEIR DUTIES. Let no man neglect any outward means, public or private, as being—(1) So needful to ourselves. (2) Commanded by God Himself. (3) Effectual by His blessing upon the conscionable use of them. Considering that the best of us know but in part (1 Cor. xiii. 9), are subject to so many temptations, laden with a body of sin (Rom. vii. 24). By which we are continually assaulted, often foiled, and continually retarded in our course of obedience. VI. SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS DUTIES OUGHT TO BE REMEMBERED IN THE MIDST OF THE USE OF OUR EMPLOYMENTS ABOUT THE THINGS OF THIS LIFE. VII. GOD'S COMMANDMENTS OUGHT TO BE STILL IN THE VIEW AND BEFORE THE FACE OF HIS CHILDREN. VIII. IT IS USUAL WITH GOD TO TEACH HIS CHILDREN BY THINGS OF ORDINARY AND COMMON USE. And this He doth—(1) In compassion of our weakness, stooping low unto us, because we cannot ascend up unto Him, nor easily raise up our earthly minds, to comprehend and behold spiritual things in their own nature, unless they be shadowed unto us by things that are earthly. (2) That by resembling those spiritual things by earthly, He might acquaint us with the right use of those things which are subject to sense, which is to raise up our hearts to the contemplation of things that are above sense. (3) That we might have monitors and teachers in every place, in every object of sense, in every employment that we take in hand. (4) To affect us the more with spiritual things, by representing them unto us by the objects of sense, which are most apt to work upon our affections. IX. GOD IS CONTENTED, NOT ONLY TO DO US GOOD, BUT BESIDES TO ENGAGE HIMSELF THEREUNTO BY HIS WORD, RATIFIED BY HIS OWN SEAL. X. BOTH THE CONTINUANCE OF PRESENT, AND HOPE OF FUTURE LIFE, AS THEY ARE GOD'S GIFT, SO THEY ARE ASSURED BY HIS PROMISE. XI. ALL GOD'S PROMISES MUST BE UNDERSTOOD AND EMBRACED UNDER THE CONDITION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR OBEDIENCE. XII. GOOD AND EVIL ARE BOUNDED AND LIMITED ONLY BY THE WILL OF GOD. (*J. White, M.A.*)

The promise of life in the first covenant:—1. We behold here the goodness and grace of God to man. Though the first covenant was a covenant of works there was, notwithstanding, much grace displayed in it. Could that obedience of the first Adam which was perfect, have, strictly speaking, merited nothing for him, at the hand of God? What ignorance, then, what folly, what pride, does it argue in a sinner, to pretend that his performances, notwithstanding their acknowledged imperfections, merit for him not something merely, but eternal happiness! 2. If Adam in innocence was not to depend for happiness immediately on the goodness of God's nature but on the promise of His covenant, how evidently does that sinner expose himself to woful disappointment who trusts to general, to uncovenanted mercy! Finally, was the first Adam's state of innocence his state of trial? Then a state of trial or probation is not, properly speaking, the state of man

since his fall. But now, since he has failed in his obedience, and broken the covenant, his state of trial has issued in a state of condemnation. (*J. Colquhoun, D.D.*)

The tree of knowledge of good and evil.—*The two trees*.—I. **THE TREE OF LIFE.** This was a real tree, as real as any of the rest, and evidently placed there for like purposes with the rest. The only difference was, that it had peculiar virtues which the others had not. It was a life-giving or life-sustaining tree—a tree of which, so long as man should continue to eat, he should never die. Not that one eating of it could confer immortality; but the continuous use of it was intended for this. The link between soul and body was to be maintained by this tree. So long as he partook of this, that tie could not be broken. II. **THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL.** Why may we not take this in the same literalness of meaning as the former? Why may it not mean a tree, the fruit of which was fitted to nourish man's intellectual and moral nature? How did this I do not attempt to say. But we know so little of the actings of the body or the soul, that we cannot affirm it impossible. Nay, we see so much of the effects of the body upon the soul, both in sharpening and blunting the edge alike of intellect and conscience, that we may pronounce it not at all unlikely. We are only beginning to be aware of the exceeding delicacy of our mental and moral mechanism, and how easily that mechanism is injured or improved by the things which affect the body. A healthy body tends greatly to produce not only a healthy intellect, but a healthy conscience. I know that only one thing can really pacify the conscience—the all-cleansing Blood; but this I also know, that a diseased or enfeebled body operates oftentimes so sadly on the conscience as to prevent the healthy realization by it of that wondrous blood, thereby beclouding the whole soul; and there is nothing which Satan seems so completely to get hold of, and by means of it to rule the inner man, as a nervously-diseased body. Cowper's expression, "A mind well lodged, and masculine of course," has in it more meaning than we have commonly attached to it. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

Of the sacraments of the covenant of works.—I. It hath pleased the blessed and Almighty God, in every economy of His covenants, to confirm, by some sacred symbols, the certainty of His promises, and, at the same time, to remind man in covenant with Him of his duty: to these symbols ecclesiastical practice has long since given the name of sacraments: this was certainly appointed with an excellent design by the all-wise God. For—1. What God has made known concerning His covenant, is, by this means, proposed to man's more accurate consideration; since he is not only once and again instructed in the will of God by a heavenly oracle, but frequently and almost daily beholds with his eyes those things which by heaven are granted him as pleasures of the greatest blessings: what believers see with their eyes, usually sink deeper into the soul, and leave deeper impressions of themselves, than those only which they hear with their ears. Elegantly to this purpose says Herodotus, "men usually give less credit to the ears than to the eyes." 2. These symbols also tend to confirm our faith. For, though nothing can be thought of that deserves more credit than the Word of God, yet, where God adds signs and seals to His infallible promises, He gives a twofold foundation to our faith (*Heb. vi. 17, 18*). 3. By means of this institution, a holy man does, by the sight, touch, and taste of the sacred symbols, attain to some sense of eternal blessings, and accustoms himself under the symbols, to a contemplation and foretaste of these things, to the plenary and immediate fruition of which he will, one time or other, be admitted without any outward signs. 4. The man has in these something continually to remind him of his duty: and as, from time to time, they present to his thoughts, and give a foretaste of his Creator, so at the same time they put him in mind of those very strong obligations, by which he is bound to his Covenant-God. And thus, they are both a bridle to restrain him from sin and a spur to quicken him cheerfully to run that holy race which he has so happily entered upon. (*H. Witsius, D.D.*)

The tree of the knowledge of evil.—There was here a very plain memorial of duty. For this tree taught—1. That man was sincerely to contemplate and desire the chief good, but not to endeavour after it, but only in the manner and way prescribed by Heaven; nor here to give in to his own reasonings, how plausible soever they might appear. 2. That man's happiness was not to be placed in things pleasing to the senses of the body. There is another and a quite different beatifying good which satiates the soul and of itself suffices to the consummation of happiness. 3. That God was the most absolute Lord of man, whose sole will, expressed by His law, should be the supreme rule and directory of all the appetites of the soul and of all the motions of the body. 4. That there is no attaining to a life of happiness but by perfect obedience. 5. That even man in inno-

cence was to behave with a certain religious awe when conversing with his God, lest he should fall into sin. (*H. Witsius, D.D.*) *The knowledge of right and wrong*:—I. We call the Scriptures a revelation; in other words, an unveiling. The Bible records were given to us to take away the veil which hung between heaven and earth, between man and God. Their purpose is to reveal God. The actual revelation which has been made to us is of God in His relation to the soul of man. We are not to demand, we are not to expect, any further revelation. Of the secrets of God's power and origin we are told not a word. Such knowledge is not for us. The self-declared object of the Scriptures is that men should know God and know themselves. II. But the condition on which such an object may be accomplished is this: that the Book of God should appeal to men in a form not dependent for its appreciation upon any knowledge which they may have obtained—independent, that is, of the science of any particular age or country. III. Here, so early in the sacred books, is revealed the fact of the two opposing forces of right and wrong. Take away the reality of this distinction, and the Bible and all religion falls for ever. Make its reality and importance felt in the soul of man, and you have at once whereon to build. Righteousness is the word of words throughout all Scripture. The righteousness which the Scriptures reveal is the knowledge of a communion with God. When our earth has played its part in the economy of the universe, and is seen by the few spheres which are within its ken to pass away as a wandering fire, right and wrong will not have lost their primeval significance, and the souls which have yearned and laboured for rest in the home of spirits will find that rest in Him who was and is and is to be. (*A. Ainger, D.D.*) *The tree of knowledge*:—The trial of Adam, like that of every other man, was whether he would so far believe in God as to look for happiness in obedience to the Divine command; or would seek that happiness elsewhere, and apply for it to some forbidden object, of which the tree must have been an emblematical representation. You will ask what that object was? And what information, as to the knowledge of good and evil, Adam could receive from the prohibition? By answering the last question, a way may, in some measure, perhaps, be opened for an answer to the first. A due contemplation of the prohibition might naturally suggest to the mind of our first parent the following important truths; especially if we consider (as we must and ought to consider) that to him, under the tuition of his Maker, all things necessary were explained and made clear, how obscure soever they may appear to us, forming a judgment of them from a very concise narrative, couched in figurative language, at this distance of time. Looking upon the tree of knowledge then, and recollecting the precept of which it was the subject, Adam might learn, that God was the sovereign Lord of all things: that the dominion vested in man over the creatures was by no means a dominion absolute and independent: that without, and beside God, there was no true and real good: that to desire anything without and beside Him was evil; that no temporal worldly good, however fair and tempting its appearance, was to be fixed upon by man as the source of his felicity: that the sole rule for shunning, or desiring things sensible, should be the will and word of God; and that good and evil should be judged of by that standard alone: that the obedience, which God would accept, must be paid with all the powers and affections of the mind, showing itself careful and prompt in even the least instance: that man was not yet placed in a state of consummate and established bliss; but that such state was by him to be earnestly expected, and incessantly desired: and that he must take the way to it, marked and pointed out by God Himself. These particulars seem to flow from the prohibition in an easy and natural train. And they lead us to answer the other question; namely—What was the object represented by the tree of knowledge? It was that object, on which man is prone to set his affections, instead of placing them on a better; it was that object, which, in every age, has been the great rival of the Almighty in the human heart; it was that object, which, in one way or other, has always been “worshipped and served rather than the Creator”; it was the creature, the world; and the grand trial was, as it ever hath been, and ever will be, till the world shall cease to exist, whether things visible, or things invisible, should obtain the preference; whether man should walk “by sight, or by faith.” To know this, was the knowledge of good and evil; and this knowledge came by the law of God, which said, “Thou shalt not covet.” Man's wisdom consisted in the observance of that law; but an enemy persuaded him to seek wisdom by transgressing it. He did so, and had nothing left but to repent of his folly; a case that happens, among his descendants, every day, and

every hour. Let us, therefore, consider the tree of knowledge, in this light, with respect to its nature, situation, design, qualities, effects, and the knowledge conferred by it. The fruit of this tree was, to appearance, fair and pleasant; but, when tasted, it became, by the Divine appointment, the cause of death. Now, what is it, which, in the eyes of all mankind, seems equally pleasing and alluring, but the end thereof, when coveted in opposition to the Divine command, proves to be death? It is the world, with its pleasures and its glories, desired by its votaries, *per fas atque nefas*, to the denial of God, and to their own destruction. The tree of knowledge was situated in the midst of the garden, as was the tree of life. They stood near together, but they stood in opposition. The Divine dispensations are always best illustrated by each other. Under the gospel Jesus Christ is the tree of life. What is it that opposes Him, and, notwithstanding all that He has done, and suffered, and commanded, and promised, and threatened, is continually, by its solicitations, being ever present and at hand, seducing men into the path of death? Scripture and experience again join in assuring us that it is the world. The tree of knowledge was designed to be the test of Adam's obedience, the subject matter of his trial. The world, with its desirable objects, is the test of our obedience, the subject matter of our trial, whether we will make it our chief good, or prefer the promise of God to it. The apparent qualities of the forbidden tree are represented to have been these. It seemed "good for food, and fair to the sight, and a tree to be desired to make one wise." It is remarkable that St. John, laying before us an inventory of the world, and all that is in it, employs a division entirely similar. "Love not the world," says he, "neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Here is a picture of the fatal tree, full blown, with all its temptations about it, drawn, by the pencil of truth, in its original and proper colours. The expressions tally, to the minutest degree of exactness. The "desire of the flesh" answers to "good for food"; the "desire of the eyes" is parallel with "fair to the sight"; and the "pride of life" corresponds with "a tree to be desired to make one wise." The opposition between this tree and the other is strongly marked. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And, we are informed, that one leads to death, the other to life. "The world passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Precisely conformable, in every circumstance, was the threefold temptation of the second Adam. He was tempted to convert stones into bread for food, to satisfy "the desire of the flesh." Thus, whether we consider the tree of knowledge as to its nature, its situation, its design, or its qualities, it seems to have been a very apt and significant emblem of the creature, or the world, with its delights and its glories, the objects opposed, in every age, to God and His Word. To reject the allurements of the former, and obey the dictates of the latter, is the knowledge of good and evil, and the true wisdom of man. So that the forbidden tree in paradise, when the Divine intentions concerning it are explained from other parts of Scripture, teaches the important lesson more than once inculcated by Solomon, and which was likewise the result of holy Job's inquiries; "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (*Bishop Horne.*) *The tree of knowledge of good and evil:*—The tree of knowledge of good and evil was so called not merely as a test for proving man, and showing whether he would choose the good or the evil—nor, merely because by eating it he would come to know both good and evil, and the evil so that he would know the good in the new light of contrast with the evil. Both these were involved. But it was set also as a symbol of the Divine knowledge to which man should not aspire, but to which he should submit his own judgment and knowledge. The positive prohibition was to be a standing discipline of the human reason, and a standing symbol of the limitation of religious thought. Man was to have life, not by following out his own opinions and counsels, but by faith and the unqualified submission of his intellect and will to God. No reason is here given for this, except in the name of the tree, and the nature of the penalty. God would not have him know evil. Sin was already an invader of His universe in the fallen angels. Evil was, therefore, a reality. Man was interdicted from that kind of knowledge which is evil, or, which includes evil—because of itself in its own nature, it leads him to death. Thus this is, therefore, not a mere arbitrary appointment. It has grounds in the evident nature of things. Nor was the penalty denounced

against the transgression arbitrary. The disobedience was itself necessarily death. The curse could not have been less than it was. The act itself was a disruption of the tie which bound man to his Maker, and by which alone he could live. The knowledge of evil, sadly enough, lay in the partaking of that tree. Man already had the knowledge of good, and a moral sense of the eternal distinction between right and wrong. But good and evil, in all their mutual bearings, he could not presume to know by contact and experience as he aspired and claimed to know them under the promise of Satan. We hear no more of this tree. It served its purpose in the garden. We hear of the tree of life. The act of partaking was an encroachment upon the Divine prerogative. This tree was set to be to man the occasion of the highest Divine knowledge, in the training of his thoughts to subjection, and in the contemplation of God's prerogatives of knowledge. The highest reason accords to God this claim—and renders the profoundest submission of the human mind and will to God—to His plan of Providence and grace. So the renewed man cries out, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Christ crucified is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, unto salvation. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Man was prohibited from laying hold of this fruit that was held to be under the Divine prerogative. And it is just at this point that Satan has always plied his most artful and powerful temptation. And just here, in taking what is forbidden—and in refusing all subjection and limitation of religious thought, man has always fallen under the curse. "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." This is the spirit of our fallen race, that in every age, keeps man out of paradise. And this is the mark of Anti-Christ "sitting in the temple of God, showing (exhibiting) himself that he is God," (2 Thess. ii. 4). Hence, also, cherubim—the angels of knowledge—are set with the "flaming sword to keep (guard) the way of the tree of life" (chap. iii. 24). This tree was also, as Luther says, a sign for man's worship and reverent obedience of God, and so it would represent the homage due to God's word, as the revelation of God's truth—of His mind and will to men. (*M. W. Jacobus.*)

Significance of trees:—To the thoughtful observer, perhaps, there is no more profound object in nature than a tree. Its graceful figure, its wavy outlines, its emerald hue, its variety of branches and twigs and leaves—illustrating diversity in unity—its tinted and fragrant blossoms, its luscious fruit, its exhibition of many of the wonderful phenomena of human life, such as birth, growth, respiration, absorption, circulation, sleep, sexuality, decay, death, reproduction: these are some of the particulars which make a tree the living parable of man and of society, and, as such, perhaps the most interesting object in the natural world. No wonder, then, that among all nations and in all ages trees have had a peculiar fascination, and even sacredness for the devoutly inclined. Witness the groves of the Hebrews, the symbol-tree of the Assyrian sculptures, the Dryads of Greece, the Druids of Britain, the Igdrasil of the Norsemen. We need not be surprised, then, that on going back to nature's Eden we learn that paradise, rich in every element of beauty, was especially rich in trees. Jehovah God caused to spring up in the Garden of Eden every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. But amid all this variety of trees two stood forth in memorable conspicuousness, their very names having come down to us through the oblivion of millenniums: one was the tree of life in the midst of the garden; the other the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (*G. D. Boardman.*)

The gold of that land is good.—*Good gold* :—I. If men so willed, GOLD MIGHT BE WON AND NO SOUL LOST. And therefore we must take care to distinguish between gold and the thirst for gold. Gold is like the rest of God's gifts, a good thing or a bad thing, according to the use made of it. And so it is no wonder that Scripture has recorded that near to paradise was a land of gold. The land of Havilah may exist still; the fine gold and the bdellium and the onyx stone may now lie buried deep beneath its surface, or perhaps may yet be lying disregarded, like the treasures of California or Australia not many years ago. II. Be this as it may, THERE IS ANOTHER LAND WHOSE GOLD IS GOOD, a land farther off than the far West and the islands of the sea, and yet ever close at hand, approachable by all, attainable by all, where no rust corrupts and no thieves break through and steal. The gold of that other land is good, simply because, though the words sound like a contradiction, it is not gold. It has been changed. In the world above, that which stands for gold is more precious than gold itself, for even gold cannot purchase it, though gold may serve it. III. THE TREASURE OF HEAVEN IS LOVE. Love is the true gold. All else will tarnish and canker and eat into the souls of them that covet it; but Love never. It is bright

and precious here in this world ; fraud cannot despoil us of it ; force cannot rob us of it ; it is our only safe happiness here, and it is the only possession we can carry with us into the world beyond the grave. (*F. E. Paget, M.A.*) *Fine gold* :—Money and money making are the most frequent and familiar subjects of talk and thought. I remember once seeing an old merchant, at whose house I was visiting, sitting by himself against the wall. The room was filled with guests ; music and dancing and merry laughter were all around ; but there sat the old man, taking no heed, with his head against the wall. Fearing he was ill, I asked his son about him, and he answered—“He is only thinking about money ; he is always like that.” I. Now, understand me at the beginning, there is no sin in having money, if it be honestly come by and rightly used. What I want to do is to show you the SIN and FOLLY of THINKING TOO MUCH OF EARTHLY TREASURE, and too little of heavenly. An emigrant ship was once wrecked on a desert island. The people were saved, but they had few provisions, and it was necessary to make haste to clear and till the ground and sow seed. Before this could be done they discovered gold on the island, and every one gave himself up to the search for wealth. Meantime, the season slipped by, the fields were left untilld, and the people found themselves starving in the midst of useless treasure. There are people now who starve their soul and conscience that they may acquire a little more gold and silver.

1. One reason why we are wrong in thinking too highly of earthly wealth is, that the obtaining it is a very uncertain and difficult thing. Where one man grows rich, hundreds are ruined. 2. Another reason for not thinking too highly of earthly wealth is, that it is soon gone. 3. We should not overvalue earthly wealth, because it does not make people happy. A golden crown will not cure the headache, or a velvet slipper give ease from the gout. Sometimes, indeed, wealth has made people altogether miserable. There was a miser, worth thousands of pounds annually, who firmly believed that he must die in the workhouse, and actually worked daily in a garden and made one of his own servants pay him wages. 4. Excessive love of money is to be avoided, because it often keeps us back from God.

II. I pass on to speak of BETTER RICHES THAN THIS WORLD CAN GIVE, riches which all may have if they will, which will make the poorest wealthy. “The gold of that land is good.” Earthly gold is often alloyed with base metal, but the gold of God is pure. Earthly gold is only for the few ; the gold of God is for all who desire it. Earthly gold soon passes away ; the gold of God lasts for ever. Earthly gold must be left at the grave ; the gold of God becomes even more precious after death than before. Earthly gold cannot satisfy ; the gold of God brings perfect peace and satisfaction. 1. The love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 2. The precious promises of the gospel. (1) That God will never leave or forsake us. (2) That the righteous shall want no good thing. (3) That God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him. (4) Rest for the weary and heavy laden. (5) Pardon for the penitent. (6) The resurrection of the body. (7) The life everlasting. (*H. J. Wilmot-Buxton, M.A.*)

The wonderful gold :—Every one knows what gold is. The land here spoken of was called “the land of Havilah.” This was a country far away in Asia, near the garden of Eden, in which God put our first parents when they were created. What a blessed, happy place it must have been ! Who would not like to have lived there ? And there was gold, too, in Eden ; yes, and “the gold of that land was good.” Now, we never can enter that garden. But there is a better one than that, which we may enter. The garden in which Adam first lived, and which we call Eden, or Paradise, was the figure or image of heaven. And many of the very same things will be found in this heavenly paradise which were in the earthly paradise. The gold of heaven means the grace of God. And, if anybody wants me to prove this, it is easy enough to do so. Jesus Himself speaks of His grace as gold, when He says, “I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich” (Rev. iii. 18). “Gold tried in the fire” here means the grace of God. And so, if we take “the land of Havilah” spoken of in our text as representing heaven, and if we take the gold of heaven as representing the grace of God, then we may very well point up to heaven and say, “The gold of that land is good.” There are three things about this gold which show that it is wonderful. And these three things are all connected with the word getting. I. THE WAY OF GETTING this gold is wonderful. 1. People sometimes have to go a great distance in order to get earthly gold. When the gold mines in California were first discovered, there was a great rush of people from all parts of this country, who wanted to go out there and get gold. Some went by sea, all the way round Cape Horn. That was a long,

cold, stormy, disagreeable, and dangerous voyage to take. But they were going for gold, and they cared nothing for the length of the journey they had to take in getting it. Other people went in waggons, or on foot, across the country. Some had more than two thousand miles' distance to go. What a long way that is to travel! But they were going for gold, and that made them willing. But the wonderful thing about the heavenly gold is, that no long journey is necessary in order to get it. It is not stored up, like earthly gold, in mines which can only be found in particular places. It is to be found in all countries. It may be had in all places. The church is a good place in which to seek it. So is the Sunday-school. So is the room in which you sleep at night. 2. But, besides going a great distance, men often have to meet great dangers before they can get the earthly gold they are seeking. Some of those people who went round by sea to California to get gold met with terrible storms. Some of them were shipwrecked, and lost their lives on the way. And those who went by land met with great dangers too. Some of them lost their way in the desert plains which they had to travel over. Some got out of provisions and suffered dreadfully from hunger and thirst. Some were robbed by the Indians. But there is no exposure to danger in seeking the heavenly gold. At home, among those who love you best, you may seek it and find it. And no one can hinder or hurt you in doing this. 3. In getting earthly gold men not only have to go a great distance, and meet great dangers, but often they have to pay a great price to get it. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, lost his situation with that good master; he lost his health too, and became a miserable leper all his days, whom no one could cure, in order to get a little gold. That was a great price to pay for it. Judas Iscariot sold his Master for a little money. Oh, what a tremendous price that was to pay for it! Benedict Arnold sold his country for a poor, paltry sum of gold. Some men are willing to pay any price for earthly gold. Look at the whalers. They are willing to go from home for two or three years at a time. They will sail up into the cold and stormy North Sea, or Frozen Ocean. They will run the risk of being crushed to death between jarring icebergs; or of being frozen up in the north all winter; they will meet with all sorts of trials and hardships in order to get a little gold. This is the great price they are willing to pay for it. But nothing of this kind is necessary in order to get the heavenly gold. Jesus counsels us to buy this gold of Him. He is the only one from whom it can be had. But the way in which Jesus sells this gold is very wonderful. He tells us to "come, and buy wine and milk, without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1). The "wine and milk" spoken of in one of these passages, and the "gold" spoken of in the other, all mean the same thing. They refer to the grace of God. Jesus sells this "without money and without price." This means that He lets poor sinners, such as we are, have it free. II. The second thing that is wonderful about it is THE DESIRE OF GETTING IT. The desire to get earthly gold often has a wonderfully bad effect; but the desire to get the heavenly gold has a wonderfully good effect. Let us see now what a bad effect the desire to get earthly gold often has on people. St. Paul calls this desire "the love of money"; and he says it is "the root of all evil" (1 Tim. vi. 10). The desire to get this gold has led men to cheat, and to lie, and to steal, and to murder, and to commit all kinds of wickedness. Some time ago, as many will remember, there was a horrible murder committed just outside Philadelphia. A poor, wretched German, whose name was Probst, enticed a whole family into the barn, and murdered them one by one, even down to the innocent little babe in the cradle. He was not angry with them. He had no quarrel with them. The only thing that led him on to do that dreadful deed was the desire for gold—"the love of money." And most of the horrible murders committed in the world are caused by this same desire. When the Spaniards discovered the country of Mexico, in South America, they sent an army, under a general, whose name was Cortez, to conquer the country. The principal motive of those Spanish soldiers, in trying to conquer the country, was a desire to get gold. They expected to find gold so plentiful in the city of Mexico, that there would be more than they would want, or more than they could carry away. The Mexicans defended their city as long as they could, like brave men. When they found that it was impossible to defend it any longer, they took the great treasures of gold that were in their city, and threw them into the lake on which the city stood. They knew that gold was the chief thing the Spaniards desired, and they wanted to leave as little for them to get as possible. The Spaniards took the city, but were sorely disappointed to find so little gold there. They knew that the Mexicans had put it away somewhere. They tried to persuade them to tell where they had hid their treasures. But the

Mexicans would not tell. Then the Spaniards tortured them in order to make them tell. The Emperor of Mexico then was a truly brave and noble man. The miserable Cortez became very angry with him, because he would not tell where the treasure was. So he ordered a huge gridiron to be made. He had this brave emperor fastened to it with a chain. Then he had a fire kindled under it, and roasted him alive in the most cruel and lingering manner. How horrible to think of! There you see the bad effect of the desire of earthly gold. But very different results follow from the desire to get the heavenly gold of which we are speaking. Wonderful good results from this, as wonderful evil results from the other. The love of earthly gold is the root of all evil. The love of heavenly gold is the root of all good. It corrects everything that is wrong, and leads to everything that is right. It makes the heart new, and the thoughts new, and the feelings new, and the tempers new; and everything about it makes holy and good. III. The third thing about this gold that is wonderful is THE RESULT OF GETTING IT. The result of getting earthly gold is wonderfully bad; but the result of getting the heavenly gold is wonderfully good. When St. Paul would show us the bad result that often follows to people from getting earthly gold, he says, it "drowns men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. vi. 9). Some years ago there was a person, in a village in England, who was a collector for a Bible Society. He had a list of the names of a number of persons in the village who were subscribers to the Bible cause, and once a year he used to go round and collect their subscriptions. Among these names was that of a poor widow woman, who supported herself by washing. She was about the poorest person whose name he had on his list, and yet she was one of the most liberal. For a long time she had been in the habit of giving a guinea a year to the Bible Society. But one year a rich relation of this poor washer-woman died, and left a large fortune to her. She still lived in the same village; but her humble little cottage had been exchanged for one of the largest and finest houses in the village. After a while the time came for the Bible collector to go round and gather up his subscriptions. He knew about the change which had taken place in the circumstances of her whom he had long known as the poor washer-woman. And as he went to call on her at her new house he said to himself, "I shall get a fine large subscription from this good woman. For if, when she was a poor washer-woman, and had to work hard for her living, she could give a guinea a year, how much more will she be sure to give now, when she lives in so large a house, and is so well off?" So he rang the bell; and was ushered into the handsome parlour, where he met his old friend and subscriber. He said he was glad to hear of the pleasant change which had taken place in her circumstances, and then stated that he came once more for her subscription to that best of all books—the Bible. She opened her purse and handed him a shilling! He looked at it with astonishment. Then he said, "My good friend, what does this mean? I can't understand it. When you were a poor woman and lived on your own labour, you always gave a guinea a year to the Bible Society; and now, when you are so well off, can it be possible that you intend to give only a shilling?" "Yes," she said, "that's all I am willing to give now. I feel very differently about these things from what I used to do. When I was really a poor woman I gladly gave away whatever money I could spare, for I never felt afraid of being poorer than I then was. But now the fear of being poor haunts me like a ghost, and makes me all the time unwilling to spend any money, or give it away. The truth is," she continued, "when I only had the shilling means, I had the guinea heart; but now, when I have the guinea means, I find that I only have the shilling heart." Here we see the evil that resulted to this person from getting gold. It froze all her kind feelings, and shrank up her large and liberal heart into a tiny little selfish one. She was a rich woman when she was very poor, but a poor woman when she became very rich. But the heavenly gold is very different from this. It is wonderful gold, because of the good it always does to those who get it. (*R. Newton, D.D.*)

Ver. 15. **To dress it, and to keep it.**—*Observations*.—I. EVERY SON OF ADAM IS BOUND TO SOME EMPLOYMENT OR OTHER IN A PARTICULAR CALLING. This ordinance of God concerning man's labour (as are all the rest of His laws) is both equal and good. 1. That men might exercise their love to the creatures, wherein they somewhat resemble God Himself. 2. That they might have some title, in equity, to the use of the creature, which they preserve by their labour. 3. That by busying themselves about the creatures, they might the better observe God in His various works in and by them; that so they might yield Him His due honour, and quicken their

hearts to more cheerfulness in His service, and settle them in a faithful dependance upon Him. 4. That their employments about the creatures might keep their hearts both from vain and idle thoughts, and from swelling with the apprehension of their lordship and sovereignty over them. 5. That the body of man being exercised as well as his mind, might at present be the better preserved in health, and hereafter be partakers of eternal glory, having been used as an instrument for God's service. II. MEN'S CALLINGS AND EMPLOYMENTS ARE BY GOD'S OWN APPOINTMENT. Let every man then in his calling so carry himself as God's servant: 1. Undertaking it by His warrant, either by public or private direction, or by bestowing on us abilities for the employment, or by presenting opportunities outwardly, or moving us inwardly, by strong, constant, and regular inclinations thereunto. 2. Walking in it with fear, fidelity, and cheerfulness (Eph. vi. 6-8). 3. Guiding himself by the rule of God's Word directing him, either by particular precepts or by general rules. 4. Aiming therein at the right end, seeking not so much our good as the good of community. 5. And abiding therein till God Himself discharge him (2 Cor. vii. 20)—either (1) by taking away the use of the calling itself, as of a soldier in time of peace; or by disenabling him, either in body or mind, to follow it, as Nebuchadnezzar was forced to cease ruling, when he was mad. (2) Or by withdrawing his needful maintenance: they cannot serve at the altar that cannot live of the altar. (3) Or by furnishing the person with abilities, fitting him with opportunities, or urging him by just occasions to undertake some more serviceable employment. III. DUTY, AND NOT GAIN TO OURSELVES, IS, OR SHOULD BE, THE GROUND AND SCOPE OF THE UNDERTAKING OF ALL OUR PARTICULAR CALLINGS. This duty we owe—1. To God, whose we are, and to whom we must be accountable for all that we do; whence the apostle requires every man to continue in his place, because he is called of God (1 Cor. vii. 20), as being therein the servants of God or Christ (Eph. vi. 7). 2. To men, serving one another through love, labouring not so much what is good to ourselves as what is good generally to others with ourselves (Eph. iv. 28), not seeking our own, but the profit of many (1 Cor. x. 33). IV. MAN'S LABOURS, ALTHOUGH THEY BE A MEANS OF PRESERVING THE CREATURES, YET THE BENEFIT OF THEM REDOUNDS AT LAST UNTO THEMSELVES. The plants and trees that are preserved and propagated by our labours are either our food or medicine, or serviceable to us for building; we clothe ourselves with the fleece of those flocks that we store up provision for, have the benefit of the labour of those oxen that we feed, and cheer our hearts with the wine of those vines that we plant. God hath indeed been pleased to order it—1. Because He hath made the creatures for our service. 2. That He might the more encourage us unto those services, whereof ourselves are to receive the fruit. V. MAN'S EMPLOYMENT OUGHT ESPECIALLY TO BE IN THOSE PLACES, AND LABOUR WHERE IT IS MOST NEEDED, AND MAY BRING MOST BENEFIT. VI. THE LABOUR OF MAN MAKES NOTHING AT ALL, BUT ONLY BY HIS HUSBANDRY CHERISHETH AND ORDERETH THAT WHICH IS ALREADY MADE. 1. God provides all the materials whereof we make use in our employments, as the soil, the seed, the rain, and influence of the heavens that cherish it; the timber, the stones, the metals, the wool, the flax, and the like. 2. The abilities by which they have strength to produce those effects are merely from God. 3. The understanding and wisdom by which men discern the natures and abilities of the creatures and their uses, for which, by well ordering and disposing of them, they may be made serviceable; that also is wholly from God (Isa. xxviii. 26). 4. The success and effect of the labour which we bestow is the fruit of this blessing (Gen. xxvi. 12; Psa. lxxv. 10). So that it is God alone that doth all in all; and man in effect doth nothing but make use of such means as God both prepares to his hand and works by to produce the desired effect. Let it then pluck down the pride of all our hearts, who are so apt to rejoice in the works of our own hands, not as in the fruits of God's blessing, but as in the effects of our own endeavours; and let it check our vain and dangerous confidence, which makes us trust in our own wisdom and power, and burn incense to our own net and yarn, that we may ascribe the success of all our labours about the things of this life unto God alone, who is indeed pleased to make use of our heads and hands in the conservation of His creatures; but—1. Rather to keep us doing than because He needs our help. 2. That finding by experience how little our labours work to the producing of any effect, we might rejoice in Him who worketh all things by His mighty power and not in ourselves. 3. And thereupon might be taught to depend upon Him and serve Him; when we observe the success of our labours to be the effect of His power, and not of any ability of ours. 4. To abase and humble us, in busying ourselves about the service even of those creatures that He hath put under

our feet; all which He hath ordained only for a short time, whereas hereafter all men's labours, as well as all other means, shall cease with the use of those creatures which are supported by them; and God shall be all in all. (*J. White, M.A.*)

Man's work in the garden:—Having prepared the garden, the Lord God took the man and placed him in it, that he might till it and keep it. It was made for him, and he for it, as the body is made for the soul, and the soul for the body. It was fruitful beyond anything we now know of, yet it was not so fruitful as to make any kind of care or cultivation needless. It was so fruitful as to occasion no toil nor weariness to the cultivator, yet not so fruitful as not to afford occasion to man's skill and watchfulness. No amount of skill or toil now can call up beauty, or verdure, or fruit, beyond a certain narrow limit; for man has to do with a rugged soil. But in Adam's case the ground easily and gladly yielded its substance without limit to the most gentle toil. Nay, it was not toil; it was simple, pleasant occupation. No doubt the amount and kind of its actual fruit-bearing was to depend upon himself; he was to regulate this according to his wants and tastes; but still the fruit-bearing source was in the soil, imparted directly by the hand of God—that all-quickening, all-fertilizing Spirit that brooded over the face of the deep. Afterwards that Spirit was grieved away from the soil by man's sin; but at first His power was most signally manifested in its fruitful richness. Man was lord of the soil, and of all that trod it or grew on it, and his daily employments were to manifest his dominion—not dominion over a rebellious earth, needing to be curbed or scourged into obedience, but a dominion over a willing world, that stood eagerly awaiting his commands. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

Exhortation to industry:—If God have called you, as He called Adam, to till the ground, let your weedless field give evidence that Industry has holden the plough and the hoe in her hands. If He have called you to ply the instruments of the artisan, let your shop be musical the livelong day with the clicking of your tools. If He have called you to the pursuit of trade, let your well-arranged commodities and punctual fulfilments testify that you are not slothful in business (Rom. xii. 11). If He have called you to the quest of knowledge, let your well-thumbed books attest that Diligence has reigned in your study. If He have called you to the wifely duties of the matron, look well to the ways of thy household, and eat not the bread of idleness (Prov. xxxi. 27). Take care lest thy garden degenerate into the sluggard's field, grown up with nettles, covered with brambles, breached with broken walls, poverty prowling around thy dwelling, thy wants leaping upon thee as armed men (Prov. xxiv. 30-34). In brief, whatever be the occupation to which the Providence of God has called thee, pursue it with enthusiasm, doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Col. iii. 17). (*G. D. Boardman.*)

Cyrus a gardener:—When Lysander, the Lacedæmonian general, brought magnificent presents to Cyrus, the younger son of Darius, who piqued himself more on his integrity and politeness than on his rank and birth, the prince conducted his illustrious guest through his gardens, and pointed out to him their varied beauties. Lysander, struck with so fine a prospect, praised the manner in which the grounds were laid out, the neatness of the walks, the abundance of fruits, planted with an art which knew how to combine the useful with the agreeable, the beauty of the parterres, and the glowing variety of flowers, exhaling odours universally throughout the delightful scene. "Everything charms and transports me in this place," said Lysander to Cyrus; "but what strikes me most is the exquisite taste and elegant industry of the person who drew the plan of these gardens, and gave it the fine order, wonderful disposition, and happiness of arrangement which I cannot sufficiently admire." Cyrus replied, "It was I that drew the plan and entirely marked it out; and many of the trees which you see were planted by my own hands." "What!" exclaimed Lysander, with surprise, and viewing Cyrus from head to foot, "is it possible that, with those purple robes and splendid vestments, those strings of jewels and bracelets of gold, those buskins so richly embroidered; is it possible that you could play the gardener, and employ your royal hands in planting trees?" "Does that surprise you?" said Cyrus; "I assure you that, when my health permits, I never sit down to my table without having fatigued myself, either in military exercise, rural labour, or some other occupation."

Vers. 16, 17. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.—*The fall of man:*—These words were fulfilled at the time they were spoken; they have been fulfilled ceaselessly thereafter. We live in a universe of death. The phenomenon is common to us, but no familiarity can rob it of its dreadfulness;

for the dead, who are the more in number, have kept their awful secret unrevealed, and the child who died yesterday knows more than can be guessed at by the thousand millions of living men. Yet this death is the least and the least dreaded part of that other, that second, that spiritual death which God meant in the warning of the text. 1. Notice first the certainty of that death. Let us learn to be early undeceived about the tempter's falsehood, "Ye shall not surely die." If a man will serve his sin, let him at least reckon upon this, that in one way or other it will be ill with him; his sin will find him out: his path will be hard; there will be to him no peace. The night of concealment may be long, but dawn comes like the Erinnyes to reveal and avenge its crimes. 2. Not only is this punishment inevitable, but it is natural; not miraculous, but ordinary; not sudden, but gradual; not accidental, but necessary; not exceptional, but invariable. Retribution is the impersonal evolution of an established law. 3. Retribution takes the form which of all others the sinner would passionately deprecate, for it is homogeneous with the sins on whose practice it ensues. In lieu of death God offers us His gift of eternal life. While yet we live, while yet we hear the words of invitation, the door is not shut, and we may pass to it by the narrow way. To Eve was given the dim promise that her seed should bruise the serpent's head; for us Christ has trampled sin and Satan under His feet. (*Archdeacon Farrar.*) *In what does man's death as a sinner consist?*—I. THE EMPHASIS EXPRESSED IN THE TEXT. Literally, "Dying thou shalt die." Intensity, rather than certainty. 1. Death, as a dissolution, may be a natural event. 2. Sin gives this dissolution its terrible significance. (1) Mysteriousness. (2) Physical sufferings. (3) Mental frustration. (4) Social disruptions. (5) Moral forebodings. II. THE TIME SPECIFIED IN THE TEXT. Adam did die on the day he sinned. Such a change took place, not merely in his physical condition, but in his mind and heart—so much remorse and foreboding, so many dark thoughts about his dissolution—that he died: his innocence died, his hopes died, his peace died. Conclusion: This view of the subject—1. Serves to reconcile science and revelation. 2. Serves to explain many ambiguous passages. "The wages of sin is death." "To be carnally minded is death." "Christ hath abolished death." 3. Serves to show the value of the gospel. (*Homilist.*) *Will God punish sin?*—I. Who can doubt it, who listens to the voice of reason and of Scripture? II. The political history of the world bears equally positive testimony. III. The history of the Church itself furnishes a solemn and affecting answer to the question. IV. The human conscience bears no doubtful testimony on this subject. V. The Holy Scriptures answer our question with solemn and startling emphasis. They reveal a holy God, hating all iniquity, and pledged by every attribute of His being, and by every principle of His government, to oppose, subdue, punish, and hedge up the way of sin. (*J. M. Sherwood, D.D.*) *The forbidden tree*:—I. THE LARGE AND BOUNTIFUL PROVISION WHICH GOD MADE FOR THE HAPPINESS OF MAN. It is this which leaves our first parents without excuse. There was but one forbidden tree. II. THE TRIAL OF MAN'S OBEDIENCE. The having some command which we can break is evidently essential to our first notions of moral accountableness; but further than this the restriction placed upon our first parents seems not intended to go. You will observe, from its terms, that it interfered with no one form of rational enjoyment; it left no one of man's mental appetencies ungratified; it involved neither pain, nor effort, nor self-denial, nor cost; it was just an acknowledgment which God required from man of his submission; it was, in fact, a mere nominal quit rent, which he had to pay to the great Landlord of the universe, for having an estate worthy of an angel. With regard to the manner in which all this mental and moral confusion could be connected with the mere gratification of the bodily appetite, it is not wise to speculate. Analogies are not wanting to show to us how the fruits of the earth may be converted into a moral as well as a material poison. We have heard of those who are said to "dig their graves with their teeth"; of those who for a mess of pottage would sell the birthright of immortality; of those who put a thief into their heads, to steal away reason, reflection, thought, ay, their very hopes of heaven; and it may have been so with regard to "the tree of knowledge." III. THE THREATENED PENALTIES OF DISOBEDIENCE. Where you may first notice the terms of the sentence, in respect to time. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Some persons see a difficulty in this passage, because the sentence of death was not executed upon the day of transgression; but this arises from overlooking the exact import of the Hebrew words used, which would fairly admit of being rendered as referring not to the actual

infliction of death, so much as subjecting man to the liability to die. It imports, that he should from that moment become mortal, that there should be the beginnings and seeds of dissolution incorporated with his very being, from the time he tasted of that tree. This rendering will receive some elucidation, if you look at the marginal rendering which is proposed. You will observe, it is there said, "dying, thou shalt die." Now, this is a common Hebraism for some continuous and gradually accomplished act. And therefore the import of the words is, that from the moment this tree was tasted, there should be the beginnings of a death which should reach to all his posterity. The same continuousness of action applies to a former part of the verse; for there too, you observe, the same marginal reference is given. It is said, "eating, thou shalt eat," just as here it is said, "dying, thou shalt die"; and therefore the two expressions may be interpreted alike—the one as saying, "Eating, thou shalt eat," or, "This tree shall be for thy perpetual life," the other as saying, "Dying, thou shalt die," or, "The taste of this tree shall be for thy perpetual death." Let us close with two reflections. 1. The history we have been contemplating should impress us with a sense of the transcendent evil of sin. The fruit, as it hung in all its seductive and inviting clusters, was a type of all the evil that is to be found in the world. It was pleasing to the eye, it was exciting to the appetite, it was easy to grasp, and, if the eye of God would but slumber, it might be partaken of unobserved. But what were its immediate effects? Disease, mortality, loss of paradise, tormenting fears, the shunning of the very presence of God. And such is sin now, and such do they who have entered upon its courses know to be its consequences. 2. Then, once more, this history should fill us with gratitude for the greatness of our deliverance through Christ. If we would know the infinite evil of sin, if we would be inspired with a holy aversion from its contact, if we would be won to love and gratitude to the Father of our spirits, we must go and gaze with the eye of faith on the wonders of the cross. (*D. Moore, M.A.*) *God's command*:—This is a pregnant sentence. It involves the first principles of our intellectual and moral philosophy. I. THE COMMAND HERE GIVEN IN WORDS BRINGS INTO ACTIVITY THE INTELLECTUAL NATURE OF MAN. First, the power of understanding language is called forth. This is the passive lesson of elocution; the practice, the active lesson will speedily follow. Not only the secondary part, however, but at the same time the primary and fundamental part of man's intellectual nature is here developed. The understanding of the sign necessarily implies the knowledge of the thing signified. The objective is represented here by the "trees of the garden." The subjective comes before his mind in the pronoun "thou." The physical constitution of man appears in the process of "eating." The moral part of his nature comes out in the significance of the words "mayest" and "shalt not." The distinction of merit in actions and things is expressed in the epithets "good and evil." The notion of reward is conveyed in the terms "life" and "death." And lastly, the presence and authority of "the Lord God" is implied in the very nature of a command. Thus the susceptible part of man's intellect is evoked. The conceptive part will speedily follow and display itself in the many inventions that will be sought out and applied to the objects which are placed at his disposal. II. THE MORAL PART OF MAN'S NATURE IS HERE CALLED INTO PLAY. 1. Mark God's mode of teaching. He issues a command. This is required in order to bring forth into consciousness the hitherto latent sensibility to moral obligation which was laid in the original constitution of man's being. 2. The special mandate here given is not arbitrary in its form, as is sometimes hastily supposed, but absolutely essential to the legal adjustment of things in this new stage of creation. Antecedent to the behest of the Creator, the only indefeasible right to all the creatures lay in Himself. These creatures may be related to one another. In the great system of things, through the wonderful wisdom of the grand Designer, the use of some may be needful to the well-being, the development, and perpetuation of others. Nevertheless no one has a shadow of right in the original nature of things to the use of any other. And when a moral agent comes upon the stage of being, in order to mark out the sphere of his legitimate action, an explicit declaration of the rights over other creatures granted and reserved must be made. The very issue of the command proclaims man's original right of property to be not inherent but derived. As might be expected in these circumstances, the command has two clauses, a permissive and a prohibitive. 3. The prohibitory part of this enactment is not a matter of indifference, as is sometimes imagined, but indispensable to the nature of a command, and, in particular,

of a permissive act or declaration of granted rights. 4. That which is here made the matter of reserve and so the test of obedience, is so far from being trivial or out of place, as has been imagined, that it is the proper and the only object immediately available for these purposes. The immediate want of man is food. The kind of food primarily designed for him is the fruit of trees. 5. We are now prepared to understand why this tree is called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The prohibition of this tree brings man to the knowledge of good and evil. The products of creative power were all very good (Gen. i. 31). Even this tree itself is good, and productive of unspeakable good in the first instance to man. The discernment of merit comes up in his mind by this tree. Obedience to the command of God not to partake of this tree is a moral good. Disobedience to God by partaking of it is a moral evil. 6. In the day of thy eating thereof, die surely shalt thou. The Divine command is accompanied with its awful sanction, death. The man could not at this time have any practical knowledge of the physical dissolution called death. We must, therefore, suppose either that God made him preternaturally acquainted with it, or that He conveyed to him the knowledge of it simply as the negation of life. Probably the latter. III. MAN HAS HERE EVIDENTLY BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH HIS MAKER. On the hearing and understanding of this sentence at least, if not before, he has arrived at the knowledge of God, as existing, thinking, speaking, permitting, commanding, and thereby exercising all the prerogatives of that absolute authority over men and things which creation alone can give. If we were to draw all this out into distinct propositions, we should find that man was here furnished with a whole system of theology, ethics, and metaphysics, in a brief sentence. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) *The first covenant*.—I. When we use the word covenant to describe a revelation, which sounds more like a bare command, we mean to imply that this earliest transaction between God and man is marked by the same characteristics which we can trace throughout God's later dispensations; that it does not rest the claim of obedience on the naked prerogative of unquestionable power, but connects it with the offer of an explicit alternative for the decision of freewill; accompanied by the promise of a blessing for obedience, and by the threat of punishment for disobedience. We thus bring it into direct comparison with the general tenor of God's later covenants: "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse." "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." A covenant, then, stands by its very nature between two other conceptions, each of which falls short of the full import of God's dealings with man. It is more than a mere ordinance, or a mere command, such as might have been imposed without reason, and enforced without reward. On the other hand, it is more than that expression of God's law which He wrote on man's heart in his very creation, and the traces of which we retain in the authority of conscience. II. We have next to ask the meaning of the precept which that covenant contained; a precept which sometimes seems so strange and arbitrary: which some interpretations, indeed, describe as really strange and arbitrary; namely, that while freely indulged in every other earthly blessing, man was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What is the right interpretation of those words? The following seems to be the meaning of Scripture in its disclosures on this earliest covenant. When man had been created after the image of God, there were two of the Divine attributes, his admission to which was limited by positive laws. These higher endowments were Immortality and Knowledge. To these the two trees which were planted in the midst of the garden bore a certain correspondence; that of life he might use, that of knowledge he might not. To have enjoyed free access to both from the beginning would have raised him above the rank which was suited to a being who was as yet so utterly untried. Therefore the one fruit was unconditionally forbidden, while the other fruit was conditionally allowed. When man disobeyed, and tasted of the prohibited tree of knowledge, the command was readjusted to meet the case of his sin. The tree of knowledge had now been tasted: the tree of life was therefore withdrawn. (*Archdeacon Hannah.*) *The knowledge of good and evil*.—"The knowledge of good and evil." Now to understand this expression thoroughly, we must distinguish it very clearly, in the first place, from other kinds of knowledge which were not forbidden: and in the second place, from such a knowledge, even of good and evil, as could manifestly be possessed without sin. 1. As to the first of these points, we might at first be disposed to wonder how knowledge could be, in any form, the one gift which God denied; how the special test of man's obedience could be placed in his abstinence from what would bring

him knowledge, and so open his eyes more fully, as it seemed, to the true nature of the path that lay before him. To this difficulty the obvious answer would be, that when man was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the injunction certainly did not imply that every kind of knowledge was withheld. 2. It is also clear that there is a knowledge of good and evil, which can be possessed, if it cannot be directly sought for, without sin. From these two considerations we establish, first, that the precept of this earliest covenant would debar man from some kind of knowledge, without excluding him from all knowledge; and secondly, that even when it withheld the knowledge of good and evil, there was still some knowledge which might be described by those same words, yet which could not have been forbidden by them, because its presence was implied in the mere form of the command. The first of these remarks suggests, that we may confine our present inquiry entirely to what is specially called moral knowledge: *i.e.*, the knowledge of moral acts or habits, so far as they are permitted or condemned: knowledge of the right, whether regarded as law, or precept, or command: in combination with knowledge of that transgression of the right, which may be diversely regarded as crime, or vice, or sin. Further, the second remark suggests, that this moral knowledge was not so much forbidden in itself, which would have been impossible in the case of a being endowed with both a moral and an intellectual nature; but forbidden under certain circumstances, and at a certain time. By the help of these two positions we may gain, I think, a more close and accurate conception of that acquirement which the fruit of the tree of knowledge would convey. 1. First it would have been barren knowledge. It would have given man a theory, when he needed a rule: it would have lighted up his mind to debate about his duty, when at present his sole work was, to do his duty as the will of God. Precisely so our moral sciences teach, that in morality, bare theory can never be safely carried far in advance of practice; and that the safe road to moral wisdom lies, not through a familiarity with intellectual systems, but through the ready obedience of the heart. 2. That this knowledge would have been barren, then, is enough to establish the mercy and wisdom of God's first injunction. But we can go further: we can show that it would have been not less dangerous than useless. Such a knowledge of good and evil would reveal to Adam the grounds of sin, the sources of temptation, &c. Hence, shame was the immediate result of that knowledge. The instant appearance of that feeling showed, that man now for the first time knew his capacities, tendencies, and opportunities for sin. (*Ibid.*) *Observations:—*

I. THE MOST RIGHTEOUS AMONGST THE SONS OF MEN, MUST AND NEEDS TO LIVE UNDER A LAW. 1. For direction, for man is unfit to choose his own way, being through his ignorance so apt to mistake evil for good: neither is any able to find out what is truly good but God alone, who is goodness itself; and His will the rule of goodness which none can find out or reveal but Himself (1 Cor. ii. 11). 2. It is needful that by conforming to the law given us by God, we may testify our obedience and subjection unto Him; withal acknowledging and witnessing to the world, that we account His will in all things to be most just, which we take unto ourselves as the rule of our actions.

II. THE WILL OF GOD IS THAT ONLY, WHICH MAN IS TO LOOK UPON AND TAKE FOR HIS RULE TO GUIDE HIMSELF BY IN ALL HIS WAYS. 1. That by that means we may acknowledge God's absolute sovereignty when all things are done upon no other ground but because God will have it so. 2. Because nothing is infallibly good or holy but His will, as Himself is good and righteous, and there is no iniquity in Him (Deut. xxxii. 4), seeing nothing is fit to be the rule of other things but that which is in itself certain and unchangeable.

III. GOD IS PLEASED NOT ONLY TO GIVE A LAW TO DIRECT US, BUT TO FURNISH US WITH ALL NEEDFUL MEANS TO FURTHER US IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE DUTIES REQUIRED THEREIN. And this He doth, partly, to manifest the sincerity of His affection towards us, in desiring our salvation; and partly, to justify Himself in the condemnation of those that refuse so great salvation so many ways tendered unto them, and so obstinately refused. Let us, then, make use of such helps and means as God is pleased to offer unto us, as being assured that He really intends what He so many ways labours to draw us to embrace; and, secondly, as having need of such helps to support us; and, thirdly, being liable to the greater condemnation, by despising and rejecting them.

IV. THE MATTERS IN WHICH GOD DELIGHTS TO TRY OUR OBEDIENCE ARE MANY TIMES IN THEMSELVES OF NO GREAT IMPORTANCE. 1. To manifest our total subjection unto Him, when we are limited even in the smallest things. 2. To show us that it is only obedience and conformity to His will that God respects, and not the matter or substance of the thing itself in which He requires it. 3. To

make our yoke the more easy, that we might be the more encouraged to obedience. V. OUR ABUNDANCE, AND DELIGHTS, AND PLEASURES MUST BE USED IN FEAR AND WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OBEDIENCE. VI. DISOBEDIENCE IS A FEARFUL SIN IN GOD'S ACCOUNT. And that especially because it is directed against the majesty of God Himself, whose authority is slighted and despised, when His laws and commandments are disobeyed. And, secondly, it opens a gap to all manner of looseness and disorder; nature knows no stay when it hath once passed the bounds of obedience, no more than a violent stream doth, when it hath once broken over those banks that before kept it in. VII. THE TERRORS OF THE LAW ARE USEFUL AND NEEDFUL, EVEN UNTO THE BEST AMONGST THE SONS OF MEN. VIII. DEATH AND DESTRUCTION ARE IN GOD'S HAND, TO INFLICT THEM WHERE HE PLEASETH. The consideration hereof, cannot but revive the heart of God's servants, hated and persecuted by men of the world, when they know their life and breath is in God's hand, which therefore none can take away, but by His will and decree; and therefore—1. Not while God hath any use of their service here. 2. Not if they be of the number of Christ's redeemed ones, for whom He hath conquered death, and taken away the sting of it (1 Cor. xv. 55-57), and delivered them from the power of it. IX. ALL KINDS OF EVILS AND MISERIES, PRESENT OR FUTURE, OUTWARD OR INWARD, ARE THE WAGES OF SIN. X. GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE CERTAIN AND INFALLIBLE, AS WELL AS HIS PROMISES OF MERCY. Resting upon the same grounds which are in themselves infallible. 1. The holiness of His nature, by which He is constantly moved to take vengeance on sin, as well as to reward righteousness. 2. His unalterable truth, which is firmer than heaven or earth. (See Numb. xiv. 23-35). 3. His irresistible power (Deut. xxxii. 39). Secondly, directed to the same end which God aims at in all His ways and works, the filling of the earth with His glory (Numb. xiv. 21), advanced in the acts of His justice, as well as of His mercy. XI. VENGEANCE AND JUDGMENT FOLLOW SIN AT THE HEELS. (*J. White, M.A.*)

A view of the covenant of works :—We have here an account of the original transaction between God and our first father Adam in paradise, while yet in the state of primitive integrity. In which the following things are to be remarked, being partly expressed and partly implied. 1. The Lord's making over to him a benefit by way of a conditional promise, which made the benefit a debt upon the performing of the condition. This promise is a promise of life, and is included in the threatening of death. 2. The condition required to entitle him to this benefit, namely, obedience. It is expressed in a prohibition of one particular, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." 3. The sanction, or penalty in case of the breach of the covenant, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." 4. Adam's going into the proposal, and acceptance of those terms, is sufficiently intimated to us by his objecting nothing against it. Doct. : There was a covenant of works, a proper covenant, between God and Adam the father of mankind. I. I SHALL CONFIRM THIS GREAT TRUTH, AND EVINCE THE BEING OF SUCH A COVENANT. 1. Here is a concurrence of all that is necessary to constitute a true and proper covenant of works. The parties contracting, God and man; God requiring obedience as the condition of life; a penalty fixed in case of breaking; and man acquiescing in the proposal. 2. It is expressly called a covenant in Scripture: "For these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai," &c. (Gal. iv. 24). This covenant from Mount Sinai was the covenant of works as being opposed to the covenant of grace, namely, the law of the ten commandments, with promise and sanction, as before expressed. At Sinai it was renewed indeed, but that was not its first appearance in the world. For there being but two ways of life to be found in Scripture, one by works, the other by grace, the latter hath no place but where the first is rendered ineffectual; therefore the covenant of works was before the covenant of grace in the world; yet the covenant of grace was promulgated quickly after Adam's fall; therefore the covenant of works behoved to have been made with him before. And how can one imagine a covenant of works set before poor impotent sinners, if there had not been such a covenant with man in his state of integrity? "But as for them, like Adam, they have transgressed the covenant" (Hos. vi. 7). 3. We find a law of works opposed to the law of faith. "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith" (Rom. iii. 27). This law of works is the covenant of works, requiring works, or obedience, as the condition pleadable for life; for otherwise the law as a rule of life requires works too. Again, it is a law that does not exclude boasting, which is the very nature of the covenant of works, that makes the reward to be of debt. And further, the law of faith is the covenant of grace;

therefore the law of works is the covenant of works. 4. There were sacramental signs and seals of this transaction in paradise. "And now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Gen. iii. 22); and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mentioned in the words of the text. When we find, then, confirming seals of this transaction, we must own it to be a covenant. 5. Lastly: All mankind are by nature under the guilt of Adam's first sin (Rom. v. 12). And they are under the curse of the law before they have committed actual sin: hence they are said to be "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. ii. 3), which they must needs owe to Adam's sin, as imputed to them. This must be owing to a particular relation betwixt them and him; which must either be, that he is their natural head simply, from whence they derive their natural being—but then the sins of our immediate parents, and all other mediate ones too, behoved to be imputed rather than Adam's, because our relation to them is nearer—or because he is our federal head also, representing us in the first covenant. And that is the truth, and evidences the covenant of works made with Adam to have been a proper covenant. II. I shall explain the nature of the covenant of works. In order to do this, I shall consider—First, The parties contracting in this covenant. These were two. First, On the one hand, God Himself, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying," &c. (Gen. ii. 16). God, as Creator and Sovereign Lord of man, condescended to enter into a covenant with man, His own creature and subject, whom He might have governed by a simple law, without proposing to him the reward of life. Thus it was a covenant betwixt two very unequal parties. And here God showed—1. His supreme authority over the creature man, founded on man's natural dependence on Him as his Creator (Rom. xi. 36). 2. His abundant goodness, in annexing such a great reward to man's service, which it could never merit (Heb. xi. 6). 3. His admirable condescension, in stooping to make a covenant with His own creature. Secondly, On the other hand was Adam, the father of all mankind. He must be considered here under a twofold notion. 1. As a righteous man, morally perfect, endued with sufficient power and abilities to believe and do whatever God should reveal to or require of him, fully able to keep the law. That Adam was thus furnished when the covenant was made with him—(1) Appears from plain Scripture: "God hath made man upright" (Eccles. vii. 29). (2) Man was created in the image of God (Gen. i. 27). And so—(a) His mind was endowed with knowledge; for that is a part of the image of God in man (Col. iii. 10). (b) His will was endowed with righteousness (Eph. iv. 24). (c) His affections were holy (Eph. iv. 24). (d) He had an executive power, whereby he was capable to do what he knew to be his duty, and inclined to do. He was made very good (Gen. i. 31); which implies not only a power to do good, but a facility in doing it free from all clogs and hindrances. (e) If he had not been so, that covenant could not have been made with him. It was inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to have required that of His creature which he had not ability to perform given him by his Creator. Wherefore, before Adam could be obliged to perfect obedience, he behoved to have ability competent for it; otherwise that saying of the wicked and slothful servant had been true (Matt. xxv. 24). Use 1. How low is man now brought, how unlike to what he was at his creation! Alas! man is now ruined, and sin is the cause of that fatal ruin. 2. What madness is it for men to look to that covenant for salvation, when they are nowise fit for the way of it, having lost all the furniture and ability proper for the observation thereof. 3. See how ye stand with respect to this covenant; whether ye are discharged from it, and brought within the bond of the new covenant in Christ or not. But I proceed. Adam, in the covenant of works, is to be considered as the first man (1 Cor. xv. 47), in whom all mankind was included. And he was—1. The natural root of mankind, from which all the generations of men on the face of the earth spring. This is evident from Acts xvii. 26. 2. The moral root, a public person, and representative of mankind. And as such the covenant of works was made with him. As to this representation by Adam, we may note—1. That the man Christ was not included in it; Adam did not represent Him, as he stood covenanting with God. This is manifest, in that Christ is opposed to Adam, as the last and second Adam to the first Adam (1 Cor. xv. 45), one representative to another (ver. 48). 2. Whether Eve was included in this representation is not so clear. I find she is excepted by some. It is plain that Adam was the original whence she came, as he and she together are of all their posterity. He was her head. "For the husband is the head of the wife" (Eph. v. 23). The thread of the history (Gen. ii.) gives us the making of the covenant of works with

Adam before the formation of Eve. The covenant itself runs in terms as delivered to one person: "Thou mayest—Thou shalt" (vers. 16, 17). From whence it seems to me that she was included. 3. Without question, all his posterity by ordinary generation were included in it. He stood for them all in that covenant, and was their federal head, that covenant being made with him as a public person representing them all. For—(1) The relation which the Scripture teaches betwixt Adam and Christ evinces this. The one is called the first Adam, the other the last Adam (1 Cor. xv. 45), the one the first man, the other the second man (ver. 47). Now, Christ is not the second man, but as He is a public person, representing all His elect seed in the covenant of grace, being their federal head; therefore Adam was a public person, representing all his natural seed in the covenant of works, being their federal head; for if there be a second man, there must be a first man; if a second representative, there must be a first. Again, Christ is not the last Adam, but as the federal head of the elect, bringing salvation to them by His covenant-keeping; therefore the first Adam was the federal head of those whom he brought death upon by his covenant-breaking, and these are all: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (ver. 22). (2) Adam's breaking of the covenant is in law their breaking of it; it is imputed to them by a holy God, whose judgment is according to truth, and therefore can never impute to men the sin of which they are not guilty. "All have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). (3) The ruins by the breach of that covenant fall on all mankind, not excepting those who are not guilty of actual sin. Hence believers are said to have been "the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3), and that "death hath reigned over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (Rom. v. 14). (4) The sin and death we come under by Adam, is still restrained unto that sin of his by which he brake the covenant of works. "Through the offence of one many be dead. The judgment was by one to condemnation. By one man's offence death reigned by one. By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Rom. v. 15-19). This representation was just and equal, though we did not make choice of Adam for that effect. The justice and equity of it appears in that—1. God made the choice; He pitched on Adam as a fit person to represent all mankind; and there is no mending of God's work, which is perfect (Eccles. iii. 14). 2. Adam was undoubtedly the most fit choice. He was the common father of us all; so being our natural head, he was fittest to be our federal head. He was in case for managing the bargain to the common advantage (Eccles. vii. 29), being "made upright," and furnished with sufficient abilities. And his own interest was on the same bottom with that of his posterity. Thus his abilities and natural affections concurring with his own interest, spoke him to be a fit person for that office. 3. The choice was of a piece with the covenant. The covenant, in its own nature most advantageous for man, though it could not be profitable to God (Job xxxv. 7) was a free benefit and gift on God's part; forasmuch as man had not a claim to the life promised, but by the covenant. So that as the covenant owed its being, not to nature, but a positive constitution of God, so did the choice owe its being to the same. God joined the covenant and representation together; and so the consent of Adam or his posterity to the one was a consenting to the other.

III. I COME NOW TO DISCOURSE OF THE PARTS OF THE COVENANT. Now, the parts of the covenant of works agreed upon by God and man were three—the condition to be performed by man, the promise to be accomplished to man upon his performance of the condition, and the penalty in case of man's breaking the covenant. The condition of the covenant of works: First. The first part is the condition to be performed; which was obedience to the law, fulfilling the commands God gave him, by doing what they required (Rom. x. 5), upon the doing of which he might claim the promised life in virtue of the compact. So this was a covenant, a covenant properly conditional. For understanding of this, we must consider—1. What law he was by this covenant obliged to yield obedience to; and—2. What kind of obedience he was obliged to yield thereto. First. Let us consider what law he was by this covenant obliged to yield obedience to. 1. The natural law, the law of the ten commandments, as the New Testament explains it (Gal. iii. 10). If it be inquired, How that law was given him? It was written on his mind and heart (Rom. ii. 15); and that in his creation (Eccles. vii. 29). Therefore it is called the natural law. 2. Another law which Adam was obliged, by the covenant of works, to yield obedience to, was the positive symbolical law, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil recorded

in the text. This law Adam had not, nor could have, but by revelation; for it was no part of the law of nature, being in its own nature indifferent, and altogether depending on the will of the Lawgiver, who, in a consistency with His own and man's nature too, might have appointed otherwise concerning it. But this law being once given, the natural law obliged him to the observation of it, inasmuch as it strictly bound him to obey his God and Creator in all things, binding him to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. Hence it follows—(1) That in as far as this law was obeyed, the natural law was obeyed; and the breaking of the former was the breaking of the latter also. (2) That whatever is revealed by the Lord to be believed or to be done, the natural law of the ten commandments obliges to the believing or doing of it. "The law of the Lord is perfect" (Psa. xix. 7). 1. Herein man's obedience was to turn upon the precise point of respect to the will of God, which was a trial of his obedience exactly suited to the state he was then in, and by which the most glaring evidence of true obedience would have been given. 2. Thus his obedience or disobedience behaved to be most clear, conspicuous, and undeniable, not only to himself, but to other creatures capable of observation; forasmuch as this law respected an external thing obvious to sense, and the discerning of any, who yet could not judge of internal acts of obedience or disobedience. 3. It was most proper for asserting God's dominion over man, being a visible badge of man's subjection to God. 4. It was a most proper moral instrument, and suitable mean, to retain man in his integrity, who, though a happy creature, was yet a changeable one. Secondly. Let us consider what kind of obedience to the law Adam was, by this covenant, obliged to yield, as the condition of it. To this twofold law he was to yield—1. Perfect obedience. (1) Perfect in respect of the principle of it. His nature, soul, and heart behaved always to be kept pure and untainted, as the principle of action. (2) Perfect in parts, nowise defective or lame, wanting any part necessary to its integrity (James i. 4). (3) Perfect in degrees (Luke x. 27, 28). 2. Adam was obliged to perpetual obedience (Gal. iii. 10). Not that he was for ever to have been upon his trial; for that would have rendered the promise of life vain and fruitless, since he could never at that rate have attained the reward of his obedience. But it behaved to be perpetual, as a condition of the covenant, during the time set by God Himself for the trial; which time God has not discovered in His Word. 3. Adam was obliged to personal obedience. Hence says the Lord, "Ye shall keep My statutes and My judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them" (Lev. xviii. 5), which words the Apostle Paul quotes: "Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doth these things shall live by them" (Rom. x. 5). The promise to be accomplished to man upon his performance of the condition. That was a promise of life (Rom. x. 5), which was implied in the threatening of death in case of sinning. We come now to consider THE PENALTY IN CASE OF MAN'S BREAKING THE COVENANT, not fulfilling the condition. This was death, death in its full latitude and extent, as opposed unto life and prosperity. This death was twofold. First: Legal death, whereby man sinning became dead in law, being a condemned man, laid under the curse, or sentence of the law, binding him over to the wrath of God, and to revenging justice. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Thus was man to die the day he should break the covenant; and thus he died that very moment he sinned, because by his sin he broke the holy, just, and good law of God; set himself in opposition to the holy nature of God, and cast off the yoke of submission to his Creator. Secondly: Real death, which is the execution of the sentence (Deut. xxix. 19, 20); the threatened evils and punishments contained in the curse of the law coming upon him. And of this there are several parts, all which man became liable to, or fell upon him, when he sinned. We take them up in these three—spiritual, natural, and eternal death. 1. Spiritual death, which is the death of the soul and spirit of man (Eph. ii. 1, where the apostle mentions a being "dead in trespasses and sins"). This results from the separation of the soul from God, by the breaking of the silver cord of this covenant, which knit innocent man to God, causing him to live, and live prosperously, as long as it was unbroken; but being broken, that union and communion was dissolved, and they parted (Isa. lix. 2). Thus man was separated from the fountain of life, upon which death necessarily ensued. 2. Natural death, which is the death of the body. This results from the separation of the soul from the body. It is twofold—stinged and

unstinged death. Unstinged death parts the soul and body indeed, but not by virtue of the curse for sin. This is the lot of the people of God (1 Cor. xv. 55), and is not the penalty of the covenant of works; for that is death with the sting of the curse (Gal. iii. 10), which death Christ died, which penalty He paid, and so freed believers from it (Gal. iii. 13). So that there is a specified difference betwixt the death of believers and that death threatened in the covenant of works; they are not of the same kind, no more than they die the death that Christ died.

3. Eternal death, which issues from the eternal separation of both soul and body from God in hell (Matt. xxv. 41). This is the full accomplishment of the curse of the covenant of works; and presupposes the union of the soul and body, in a dreadful resurrection to damnation; the criminal soul and body being brought forth from their separate prisons and joined together again, that death may exercise its full force upon them for ever and ever. I shall consider THE SEALS OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS, WHEREBY IT WAS CONFIRMED TO ADAM. It has pleased God to append seals to His covenants with men in all ages, for the confirmation of their faith of the respective covenants; and this covenant seems not to have wanted some seals appended thereto for the same effect.

1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. ii. 17). Whatever it was, it was not so called, as having a power really to make men wise. So the tempter pretended (Gen. iii. 5), but he was a liar from the beginning (John viii. 44). But it was a sign both of good and evil; sealing to him all good while he should abstain from it, and evil if he should eat of it; and so confirming his faith in both parts of the persuasion of it. And eventually, by eating of it, he knew good by the loss of it, and evil by the feeling of it. Though it was not to be touched, it might be seen, even as the rainbow, the seal of the covenant with Noah.

2. The tree of life (Gen. ii. 9). The which, though it might be an excellent means of preserving the vigour of natural life, as other trees of paradise also, yet it could not have a virtue in itself of making man every way immortal. But it was a notable sacramental sign of life and eternal happiness, according to the nature of that covenant. Here, as in a glass, ye may see several things, concerning God, concerning man in his best estate, concerning Christ, and concerning man in his present fallen state.

1. Concerning God, look into this covenant, and behold—(1) The wonderful condescension of God, and of His goodness and grace toward His creature man. (2) The spotless holiness and exact justice of God against sin.

2. Concerning man in his state of primitive integrity. (1) Man was a holy and happy creature in his first state. (2) Man at his best estate, standing on his own legs, is a fickle creature, liable to change.

3. Concerning Christ the Saviour of sinners, behold here—(1) The absolute necessity of a Surety in the event of a breach of this covenant. (2) The love of Christ to poor sinners in becoming surety for broken man.

4. Concerning man in his fallen state. (1) It is no wonder, that however scarce good works are in the world, yet working to win heaven is so very frequent. Legal principles and practices are natural to men; the covenant of works being that covenant that was made with Adam, and in him with all mankind, and so after a sort engrained in man's nature. And nothing less than the power of grace is able to bring man from off that way, to the salvation by Jesus Christ (1 Cor. i. 23, 24). (2) Salvation by works of our own is quite impossible; there is no life nor salvation to be had by the law, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse" (Gal. iii. 10). (*T. Boston, D.D.*)

Of the covenant of works:—

I. To show WHY GOD ENTERED INTO THIS COVENANT WITH MAN.

1. For His own glory, which is the supreme end of all His actions. More particularly—(1) To display the lustre of His manifold or variegated wisdom (Eph. iii. 10). (2) To show His wonderful moderation. For though He be Sovereign Monarch of the world, and has absolute power over all creatures to dispose of them as He pleases, yet, in covenanting with man, He sweetly tempered His supremacy and sovereign power, seeking, as it were, to reign with man's consent. (3) For the praise of the glory of His grace. It was free condescension on God's part to make such a promise to man's obedience. (4) For venting His boundless love in the communications of His goodness to man. (5) For the manifestation of His truth and faithfulness in keeping covenant with His creature, which could not otherwise have been so gloriously discovered. (6) That He might be the more cleared and justified in resenting the injuries done Him by the disobedience of His creatures, with whom He had condescended to deal so graciously. For the more condescension and goodness there is on God's part, the greater ingratitude appears on man's part in trampling on the Divine goodness. But—2. God condescended to enter

into covenant with man for man's greater good. (1) That thereby He might put the higher honour upon him. (2) To bind him the faster to his duty. The Lord knew man's mutable state, and how slippery and inconstant the heart of man is, where confirming grace is not vouchsafed; therefore, to prevent this inconstancy incident to man, a finite creature, and to establish him in His obedience, He laid him under a covenant-obligation to His service. (3) That his obedience might be more cheerful, being that unto which he had willingly tied himself. God chose to rule man by his own consent, rather than by force. (4) For his greater comfort and encouragement. By this he might clearly see what he might expect from God as a reward of his diligence and activity in His service. (5) That He might manifest Himself to him, and deal with him the more familiarly. The dealing by way of covenant is the way of dealing betwixt man and man that hath least of distance in it, and most of familiarity, wherein parties come near to each other with greatest freedom. II. I come now to make some practical improvement of this subject. 1. See here the great and wonderful condescension of God, who was pleased to stoop so low as to enter into a covenant with His own creature. 2. See what a glorious condition man was in when God entered into a covenant with him. 3. See that God is very just in all that comes on man. He set him up with a good stock, in a noble case, making him His covenant-party. He gave him the noblest undeserved encouragement to continue in his obedience, and told him his hazard if he should disobey. So that falling he is left without excuse, his misery being entirely owing to himself. 4. See the deplorable condition of all Adam's posterity by reason of the breach of this covenant. They are under the curse of the law, which is an universal curse, and discharges its thunder against every person who is naturally under that covenant, and has not changed his state. 5. This serves to humble all flesh, and beat down the pride of all created glory, under the serious consideration of the great loss we have sustained by Adam's fall, and the sad effects thereof upon us. We have lost all that is good and valuable, the image and favour of God, and have incurred the wrath and displeasure of a holy God. 6. See the unsearchable riches of Divine grace, in providing a better covenant for the recovery and salvation of fallen man. 7. There is no wonder, that however little good is wrought in the world, yet working to win heaven is so frequent. We have sufficient evidence of the covenant of works being made with man as a public person, seeing it is yet natural to us to do that we may live, and to think that God will accept us for our works' sake. 8. See your misery, all ye that are out of Christ. This covenant is your way to heaven, which is now impossible. Tell not of your good meanings and desires, your repentance, and your obedience, such as it is; and think not to get life, salvation, and acceptance thereby. For the covenant ye are under admits of no repentance, no will for the deed. It requires nothing less than perfect obedience, which ye are incapable to give. 9. Therefore give over this way of seeking life by the broken covenant of works, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ; lay hold on the better covenant, and come up to Christ's chariot (Cant. iii. 9, 10), which will drive you safely to eternal life and glory. That chariot which the first Adam drove, went not far till it was all shattered, and made unfit to carry any to heaven. It breaks with the weight of the least sin; and so you can never think it will drive to heaven with you (Rom. viii.). But come into the chariot of the covenant of grace, and ye will be safely carried in it to the land of eternal rest and glory. (*Ibid.*) *The law of paradise*:—A right understanding of this law of paradise is necessary, in order to get a clear knowledge of the most essential and fundamental doctrines of the gospel; and no less necessary in order to detect and refute many great and dangerous errors which have prevailed, and which still prevail, in the Christian world. I. I am to show that God has a right to give law to all His intelligent creatures. It is the part of a superior to give law to an inferior. Every lawgiver must be supreme, in respect to those to whom he gives law. God is by nature supreme in all His natural and moral attributes. His power is superior to the united power of all created beings. His wisdom is superior to their united wisdom. His goodness is superior to their united goodness. He stands supreme among the whole intelligent creation, in point of power, wisdom, and goodness, which are the most amiable and essential qualifications of a lawgiver. This supremacy alone is sufficient to give Him the throne of the universe, and clothe Him with the highest possible authority, to give law to all His intelligent creatures in every part of His vast dominions. But here the important point to be considered is, how God enacts His will into a law or rule of duty to the subjects of His moral

government. This He does, by publishing His will to them in a certain manner. By publishing His will, I say, because there is no necessity of His publishing His design, intention or determination. This, as a lawgiver, He has a right to keep a secret in His own breast. But He must publish His will, that is, His pleasure, in order to make His will or pleasure a rule of duty of legal obligation. And He must also make it known in a certain manner, to give it the force and obligation of law; or in other words, He must publish His will in the form of law.

1. In the first place, He must specify the persons or beings to whom He speaks authoritatively. 2. Secondly, He must express His will in the form of a precept, or a prohibition, in order to clothe it with Divine authority. 3. Besides, thirdly, He must threaten to punish those who disobey His precepts or prohibitions, in order to give His will the form and force of law. There can be no precept nor prohibition without a penalty expressed or implied. The penalty is the sanction of a law, and expresses the whole authority of the lawgiver. II. It is now easy to show that GOD DID GIVE A PROPER LAW TO ADAM respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These words were addressed to Adam personally; they contained a precise prohibition, which was sanctioned by a precise penalty. Adam was the very person prohibited; the thing prohibited was his eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and the penalty annexed was death: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." This was a proper law in distinction from any covenant, or constitution. III. I am next to show WHEREIN THIS LAW OF PARADISE WAS LIKE ALL OTHER DIVINE LAWS. Here it is easy to mention several important points of resemblance. 1. It was like all other Divine laws in its nature. Every Divine law which was given to Adam, and which has ever been given to his posterity, has required the heart, or internal holiness. 2. The law respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was like all other Divine laws in its extent. It extended to all who were specified in it, and to no others. 3. The law of paradise was like all other Divine laws in regard to its condemning power. Every Divine law has a condemning power; that is, a power to condemn those who are bound by it, and actually transgress it. And the law given to Adam, respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, had the same condemning power, and did actually condemn those who were guilty of eating the forbidden fruit. IV. Wherein the law respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was UNLIKE SOME LAWS which God has given to mankind. And here I can think of but one point of difference worthy to be mentioned; and that is, in respect to duration. This law was given to our first parents, to try their love and obedience; and as soon as it had answered this purpose, it ceased of course to have any legal force or obligation. V. WHAT PUNISHMENT THE LAW THREATENED TO ADAM, IN CASE OF DISOBEDIENCE. The words of the law are plain and explicit. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (*N. Emmons, D.D.*) *The threatened death*.—Our business is now to consider the import and the extent of this penalty. What are we to understand by this threatened death? What is the true construction of the language: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"? Let us first inquire whether bodily death, the dissolution of the physical organization, is embraced in the threatened penalty? Is there good ground to believe, either from the teachings of Scripture, or from any other source, that this is at least a part, if not the whole, of the punishment which was denounced and executed on our first parents? We answer at once that we know of no reason whatever for thus thinking. That corporal death does not include the whole of what was threatened, we suppose that there is little occasion for attempting to show to any here; and I hope to be able to convince the most of you, in the course of my discussion, that there is no evidence that it constitutes any part of the original threatening. I will not say that physical pain and bodily dissolution are not and cannot be, in any case, the fruit of sin and a part of its punishment; but there is force in the allegation, that as sin is the transgression of a moral law, and a moral offence, its proper punishment should first and chiefly be looked for in a disturbed state of the moral feelings and the moral relations. Since the seat of sin is the mind, it is mainly, no doubt, in the mind that its punishment should be sought. We cannot argue from the words in the text—"Thou shalt surely die"—that bodily death forms any part of the evil thus signified. This language may just as well be interpreted of moral or spiritual death, as of corporeal. The terms "die" and "death" are often used in the Bible to denote nothing beyond spiritual death, or that state

of mind, that feeling of guilt, condemnation, and misery, which immediately succeeds the transgression of the Divine law. But is there not a reason, in the language of the threatening itself, which unavoidably drives us to the spiritual sense? The terms employed are: "IN THE DAY THAT THOU EATEST THEREOF, thou shalt surely die." Now if we suppose here any reference at all to bodily death, if we consider this idea as in any manner included in the expression, "Thou shalt surely die," we at once involve ourselves in a great and apparently inextricable difficulty. We compromise the veracity of God; we make Him pronounce a sentence which He does not execute; for Adam and Eve did not die corporeally, did not suffer the extinction of their natural earthly life the very day in which they partook of the forbidden fruit, but lived, according to the account which we have of them, hundreds of years after this time. Is there, then, any way of avoiding the conclusion that bodily death is no part of the threatening pronounced against them? I certainly know of none. Let us see, however, what has been offered in order to meet this difficulty. It has been maintained by some, and is perhaps the common view, that although Adam and Eve did not actually suffer bodily death on that day, yet they then became mortal; they underwent a sudden change in their physical organization, which made them liable to death, and rendered it certain that their bodies would ultimately decay and perish. Death, according to this view, then began to work in them, inasmuch as they then became liable to bodily pains and diseases, which, by the appointment of the Creator, end in corporeal death. Now, satisfactory and consistent as this explanation may have been deemed by many, I trust I shall disturb no one in saying, that it is wholly incapable of support. It is, in fact, a mere supposition, invented, I believe, for the purpose of escaping a difficulty; and a supposition in favour of which there is not a particle of evidence. Especially we cannot accept it, when there are against it these two objections; first, that it assigns to the word "die," a meaning which it never has elsewhere, that of becoming liable to die; and hence, secondly, that it assumes that man was created physically immortal, endowed not only with an immortal soul, but with an equally immortal body; since otherwise his sin could not be spoken of as making him mortal. Let us then examine more particularly this assumption, that man had at the beginning a naturally imperishable body. The most that can be said of it is, that it is a mere human opinion, devoid of any precise and express warrant from the Bible. We believe that they received from their Maker a body which was subject to old age, decay, and death; and that their sin produced in them no immediate change in this respect. They were subject from the beginning to the great law of mortality, and had they always maintained their integrity, would, at the proper time, have passed out of their original corporeal life into some higher state of existence. The mere statement of this view is already some evidence of its correctness; for it corresponds in no way with our conceptions of the high dignity and destination of these first sharers of our nature, to suppose them encumbered for ever with the shackles of a coarse material body, appointed always to dwell on the earth, and denied any other knowledge and happiness, than what might come to them in this region and under these physical conditions. The garden of Eden was, at best, but the fit receptacle of their infancy; and after a suitable time passed on earth, a period of existence in the body, it must have been the intention of their Maker to take them up, by translation, if not by death, to a nobler sphere. This view recommends itself to us as intrinsically reasonable. It accords with all our best and most natural conceptions. But we have, in favour of the view, something more than this strong internal recommendation, this conformity with our natural ideas of the high destination of man. The Scriptures themselves lend it their decisive confirmation. They teach us that the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; that He gave him for food every herb bearing seed, and every tree yielding fruit; and that He commanded him to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it. This is an account of man, not as affected by sin, but as he was from the beginning. It is the description of his physical origin, of his sustenance, and of his appointment to exist in a succession of generations, till the world should be filled and subdued by his multiplied descendants. Now, can we fail to see, in all these carefully enumerated circumstances, the sure marks and evidences of a law of individual decay and dissolution? Is it not here clearly implied that our first parents were not exempted from any of the physical wants and changes which belong to men in general? Further evidence that man was created mortal is found in the sentence pronounced

on him at the time of his transgression. The substantial import of the curse is: While thy life lasts, thou shalt toil for its support, and have experience of sorrow. The words take for granted that the bodily life was limited; but they do not at all intimate that it then became so; that the sin, just committed and now punished, had limited this life. Far less do we find in them any allusion to a suddenly produced change in the physical constitution, by which this, created immortal, was now rendered mortal. On the whole, these intimations in Genesis (and we know of no conflicting statements in other parts of the Bible) lead us to conclude that the bodily constitution of Adam and Eve was, from the beginning, in every respect essentially like our own. They had just such skin and bones, just such muscles and nerves as we have. They fed on similar food, and would just as surely have hungered and died without it. They were placed in like relations to all natural agents and natural laws. A further support to the view here urged is found in the fact that Christ came on earth in a mortal body. As He was wholly free from sin, and an example of the right condition of our nature morally, so we cannot help viewing Him as exempted from any liability to physical sufferings, which were not common also to our first parents before the Fall. If these were created with a body incapable of pain, want, and death, then they were thus far distinguished above Christ, the Lord from heaven. But this is a highly improbable supposition. We add that it did not belong to the design of Christ to save any from corporeal death. Still His salvation must be commensurate with the evils caused by sin; and we hence infer that a liability to physical death is not among these evils. Our Saviour nowhere teaches us to look upon the death of the body as in itself an evil, and to see in it a proof of our guilt. There is no difficulty in admitting that sin may render the prospect of dissolution and of what lies beyond it sad and fearful, while yet it is true that men would suffer dissolution if they had not sinned. Sin may not have brought in corporeal death, any more than it brought in the destination to a continued and endless life after this death; but yet it may have darkened the view and the contemplation of both, and particularly of the latter. Returning, then, to the question, In what consisted the penalty inflicted on our first parents for sin? we have no hesitation in replying, that it consisted essentially in spiritual death, or in a state of condemnation before God, with such superadded physical sufferings, corporeal death excluded, as are traceable to sin. The penalty of their transgression lay emphatically in that state of mind which is always the appointed result of transgression. Adopting this view, we have no difficulty in giving their full force to all the words in the text: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The execution of the penalty thus corresponds perfectly with the threatening. The very day of the commission of the sin is the day of its righteous visitation. A spiritual punishment alights on the offenders, and enters into their very souls. They fear the presence of their Maker, and hide themselves from Him amidst the trees of the garden. This view saves the Divine veracity. It recommends itself to our sense of what is right and proper. It places the main punishment of the sin in the fit place, in the mind and the conscience of the sinner. It maintains the supremacy of the moral, instead of half sacrificing it to the material. Let us learn from what has been said, to regard, not bodily death, but sin, as the great evil which we have to fear. The death of the body, when not caused, and not hastened by sin, is never in itself an evil; but an uncorrected sinful character is always a fearful evil. The state of an unholy soul is as wrong now as it would be seen to be, if suddenly unclothed, and summoned into the world of spirits. It could carry thither nothing but its character, nothing but itself, as its own life-education had made it. Let us then all seek to give a wise direction to our thoughts. Let us recall them from the material to the moral, from the perishable to the imperishable, from the accidental to the essential. (*D. N. Sheldon, D.D.*)

The prohibition:—1. It was a needful prohibition. To remind man that he is not absolute sovereign, only vicegerent. 2. It was but one prohibition. Man was not burdened, or fretted, or perplexed with many points of this kind. Only one! How gracious! How considerate, as if God sought to make man's trial the least possible, so as to leave him without excuse if he should disobey. 3. It was a simple prohibition. It had nothing intricate or dark about it. There was nothing mysterious about it, nothing in which man could mistake, nothing which could leave room for the question, Am I obeying or not? It was distinct beyond the possibility of mistake. 4. It was a visible prohibition. It was connected with something both visible and tangible. It was not inward, but outward. It was not a thing of faith, but of sight. Everything about it was palpable and open—the tree, the fruit, the place, the

threat, the consequences. 5. It was an easy prohibition. Man could not say it was hard to keep. He was only to refrain from eating one fruit. Being a negative, not a positive requirement, it reduced obedience to its lowest form and easiest terms. Hence man's sin was the greater. He was wholly inexcusable. 6. It was enforced by a most solemn penalty. It began with a declaration of God's will, and it ended with the proclamation of the penalty—death. How much this expression includes has been often disputed. There is no need of this. In the day that man ate of the tree he came under condemnation; he became a death-doomed man; the sentence went forth against him. This death brought with it all manner of infinite ills and woes. It brought with it or included in it, condemnation, wrath, misery, separation from God; all endless; all immediate; all irreversible, had not free love come in; had "grace not reigned through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The sentence was, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

The first law:—The first word God spake to man was a blessing; the second word was a law. We might have anticipated this. It seems the natural expression of the relationship which exists between the Creator and His creature. The commandment given was a very simple one, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowledge." We are almost involuntarily reminded of the words of Naaman's servant—"My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, 'Wash, and be clean'?" Doubtless, in this morning of creation, Adam's soul, filled to overflowing with gladness, was ready to break forth, and say, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" No thankoffering could have seemed too great for God, no tribute of love too costly. The language of his worship could only be, "Of thine own, I give thee." And yet it was a little thing which God asked of man, for "to obey is better than sacrifice." Think, how great, how abounding was the provision for Adam; how narrow the prohibition. It was a small thing that God demanded; but a great ruin was involved in the withholding of obedience. We wonder to see how slight was the thread to which a world's destinies were suspended. Blind fools we are, slow to learn the lesson taught in every page of the Bible, and in every dispensation of personal providence, that there is nothing trivial with God. He makes great matters to turn on imperceptible hinges. We have no spiritual microscope wherewith to read that fine writing of the eternal finger of God upon every grain of ocean sand, and every glittering mote in the sunbeam, telling us of "a purpose under the heaven." Curious men have striven hard to discover what the forbidden tree of knowledge was: they would fain study the physiology of that "fruit, which brought death into our world"; but surely, there was no physical quality in that tree to enlighten the mind; it received its name, because by eating it, in transgression of God's law, man obtained the bitter knowledge of evil as an antagonist of good: the act of feeding upon its fruit taught him that there was misery as well as blessedness, darkness as well as light, evil as well as good. God called the tree according to His foreknowledge; Adam only saw the fitness of the name, when, having eaten, his eyes were opened, and he knew his ruin. There is one thing which calls, I think, for particular attention in the first law. It is, that there was no independent intrinsic evil in the forbidden act; it was evil only because God's law stood against it. If God had spoken of intrinsic evil to Adam (I use the word intrinsic, because I know no better word to express my meaning, evil, *per se*) he would not have understood that which was said. If God had said, Thou shalt not kill, or Thou shalt not lie, Adam would have been utterly unable to comprehend the words. He had not yet learnt the nature of evil. God took an act that was in itself perfectly innocent, and by forbidding it, He made it sin in Adam. I trust I shall not be mistaken here. I do not say, God made Adam to sin; but I say, God's law prohibiting an action, caused that action to be sinful in His creature. This is, indeed, a great lesson for us, and one which we are very unwilling to learn. God's law is as sovereign as His love. It is not necessary that a thing should be essential evil to meet with His disapprobation; it is enough that His will is against it. Behold, then, the severity of God, and fear before Him. There is no such thing as good by His law condemned. There is no such thing as evil by His law commanded. (*The Protoplast.*)

The limitation:—There need not, I think, be any reasonable difficulty in finding out the meaning of these trees. Make the statement historical, or make it parabolical, and it comes much to the same thing. It means that there is a permanent line separating obedience from disobedience; that all created life is limited; and that whoever breaketh through a

hedge a serpent shall bite him. These trees were not traps set to catch the man; they were necessities of the case. They showed him where to stop. Wonderful, truly, that if he touched the tree of mystery he should die! Yes, and it is grandly and solemnly true. It is so with life. Let life alone if you would live. Receive it as a mystery, and it will bless you; degrade it, abuse it, and it will slay you in great wrath. It is the same with light. Pluck the sun, and you will be lost in darkness; let the sun alone in his far-off ministry, and you shall never want day and summer. It is the same with music. Open the organ, that you may read its secret, and it will fall into silence; touch it on the appointed keys, and it will never tire in answering your sympathetic appeals. It is so difficult to be satisfied with the little we have and the little we know. We want to see over the hedge. We long to withdraw the screen that is everywhere trembling around us. We torture these little pulses of ours to tell us what they are, and how they were set a-ticking in their warm prisons. No man ever saw his own heart! There it is, knocking in his side, as if it wanted to come out; but if you let it out, it can return to its work no more! It seems to be only the skin that covers the pulse, but, though seemingly so near, it is really so far! "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," said the Almighty. This is not a threat. It is not a defiance or a challenge. It is a revelation; it is a warning! When you tell your child not to touch the fire or it will be burned, you do not threaten the child: you warn it in love, and solely for its own good. Foolish would the child be if it asked why there should be any fire; and foolish are we, with high aggravations, when we ask why God should have set the tree of life and the tree of knowledge in Eden. These trees are in every family. Yes; they are in every family, because they are in every heart! How near is death. One act and we cease to live. This is true, physically, morally, socially: one act—one step between us and death! (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The missionary trees*:—A good man in Berkshire had a cherry orchard. He bethought himself what he could do for the missionary cause, and at length selected two cherry trees, the fruit of which he would devote himself most sacredly to the cause of missions. When his friends occasionally visited him, he allowed them the full range of his orchard. "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat," said he, "but of these two trees ye shall not eat—they belong to God." The fruit was carefully kept separate, was brought to market, and the proceeds remitted to the Church Missionary Society. (*Word and Work.*)

Vers. 18-25. *I will make him an help meet for him.*—*The creation of woman*:—**I. WOMAN WAS BROUGHT TO MAN IN ORDER THAT SHE MIGHT RELIEVE HIS SOLITUDE BY INTELLIGENT COMPANIONSHIP.** **II. WOMAN WAS BROUGHT TO MAN THAT SHE MIGHT BE HIS HELPMET IN THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE.** 1. To develop his intellectual thinkings. 2. To culture his moral sympathies. 3. To aid him in the daily needs of life. 4. To join him in his worship of God. **III. WOMAN WAS BROUGHT TO MAN THAT SHE MIGHT RECEIVE HIS LOVE, PROTECTION, AND CARE.** **LESSONS:** 1. The Divine compassion for a lonely man. 2. That marriage is to furnish man with true companionship of soul. 3. That marriage is to aid man in all the exigencies of life. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The creation of woman*:—1. The occasion. 2. The resolution. 3. The preparation. 4. The presentation. (*Ibid.*) *Loneliness is not good*:—1. For intellectual development. 2. For moral culture. 3. For true enjoyment. (*Ibid.*) *Loneliness not good*:—1. For man's comfort. 2. For man's employment. 3. For posterity. (*Ibid.*) *The woman a help*:—1. For assistance in family government. 2. For the comfort of society. 3. For the continuance of the race. (*Ibid.*) *Complete solitude*:—**I. ADAM'S LONELINESS WAS COMPLETE.** **II. This complete loneliness was a MARK OF IMPERFECTNESS OF LIFE.** **III. This complete loneliness, marking an imperfect life, was THOROUGHLY UNIQUE.** (*Urijah R. Thomas.*) *Genesis of woman*:—**I. EXPLANATION OF THE PASSAGE.** 1. A Divine parable. 2. Panorama of emergent woman. It is the golden hour for Divine instruction; for it is in dreams, in visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, that God openeth their ear, and sealeth up their instruction (*Job xxxiii. 15, 16*). Wrapped in his deep sleep, Eden's dreamer beholds the vision of his second self. He sees his Maker taking from out of him one of his own ribs, forming it into a woman, and presenting her in all her glorious beauty to himself, to be to him henceforth that blessed mate for whom he has unconsciously sighed. And so his God has in very truth given to His beloved in his sleep (*Psa. cxxvii. 2*). Nor is it altogether a dream. Awaking from his sleep, he beholds still standing by him the fair blissful vision. Instinctively recognizing the community of nature, he joyously exclaims: "This,

now, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this shall be called woman, *Isha*, because from man, *Ish*, was she taken." II. MORAL MEANING. 1. Woman's formal inferiority to man. Woman, in the matter of outward, formal, scenic authority, is to yield to man. For every kind of organization, whatever it may be, political, military, financial, ecclesiastical, domestic, must have some kind of nominal head, or index-finger—*e.g.*, king, president, general, chairman, bishop, pastor, husband. Look at grand old fatherland. According to her theory of Government, England must have a monarch. And who sits on England's throne to-day? A woman—a pure, noble, true-hearted woman. But, because Victoria wears a crown as her nation's emblazoned figure-head, does it necessarily follow that she is intellectually superior to the Disraeli who holds her helm of state; or morally superior to the Spurgeon who preaches that there is another Sovereign, even one Jesus? Quite so is it with woman in her relation to man. According to Holy Scripture, she is subordinate to him. But this subordination implies in no sense whatever any essential inferiority. Woman is man's peer in all essential capacities—in capacities of sensibility, intellect, moral worth, humanhood. Woman is man's inferior simply in the matter of scenic, symbolic, formal authority. 2. Woman's essential equality. Man and woman, considered in their essence, are a unity. But, observe, unity implies complexity; that is to say, unity implies likeness and unlikeness, sameness and difference, community and diversity. (1) Community of man and woman. Woman is man's essential peer, his *Alter Ego*, his second self. There is nothing, then, in the essential nature of woman which should exclude her from the rights, privileges, activities, or duties, which inherently belong to the genus *Homo*. Whatever is legitimately open to man, not indeed as a man, but as a human being, is equally open to woman: for both are equally human. Woman as well as man can feel, think, reason, imagine, observe, classify, generalize, deduce. Woman as well as man can sell goods, plan buildings, make statues, resolve nebulae, discover elements, diagnosticate diseases, construct philosophies, write epics. There is nothing in the nature of woman as woman which should forbid her having a specific employment or vocation as distinctively as the brother brought up by her side. True, there are some things which woman cannot do as well as man: not because she is inferior in any of the essential attributes of humanity, but simply because she is inferior in the accidental element of physical strength. (2) Diversity of man and woman. Woman is something more than a supplement or appendix to man; woman is man's complement. Man and woman are the two poles of the sphere of humanity, opposite and complementary, complementary because opposite. And the one pole implies the other. Legislate as much as you please, you cannot abolish the fact of the sexes. Constitutively, elementally the same, man and woman are organized on different bases. Like the stars, they differ in their glory (1 Cor. xv. 41). Each has certain excellences which are peculiar to each, and distinctive of each. Man's excellences are virtues; woman's excellences are graces; and I suspect that, in the judgment of Him who seeth in secret, the graces are diviner than the virtues. 3. Marriage a Divine institution. 4. The earthly marriage a type of the heavenly. (G. D. Boardman.) *God's provision for man's needs*:—I. GOD KNOWS AND CONSIDERS ALL OUR WANTS, AND OUT OF HIS OWN GOODNESS MAKES PROVISION TO SUPPLY THEM. And this—1. He must do, or else we should often perish. 2. And it is fit He should do so to magnify His free mercies. Let God's dealing with us move us to deal in like manner with our brethren, considering the poor and needy (Psa. xli. 1) after the example of the disciples of Antioch (Acts xi. 29). II. GOD'S PROVIDENCE AND ABUNDANT GOODNESS FAILS US NOT TILL IT HATH SUPPLIED US WITH ALL THAT WE NEED THAT IS FIT FOR US. Let it quiet all our hearts in the consideration of our present condition, when our inordinate lusts provoke us sometimes to causeless complaints and murmurings upon supposed but mistaken grounds. Whereas—1. Either we have that which we conceive we want, as Hagar wept for want of water when she saw not the well which was fast by her (Gen. xxi. 19). Or—2. That which we want would do us hurt and no good if we had it, as the Israelites found by experience when they murmured for want of flesh (Num. xi. 33). III. A SOLITARY LIFE IS AN UNCOMFORTABLE AND AN UNPROFITABLE LIFE. From whence, then, came the affecting and admiring of a monastical life which crosseth—1. The very law of nature by which men are inclined to society; and—2. God's ordinance who hath appointed us—(1) To cause our light to shine before men that they might glorify Him (Matt. v. 16). And to serve one another through love (Gal. v. 13). So that a solitary life—(a) Deprives God of His honour; (b) Men, and the Church especially, both of that increase of an holy seed, which they might have of the fruit of their

bodies, of the comfort of their fellowship, the service of love which they owe, and of the examples of their godly lives; (c) Themselves in present, of many sweet comforts and needful helps, and hereafter of the increase of their reward enlarged according to the proportion of their present improving of their talents in advancing God's honour, and seeking and procuring the good of His children. IV. GOD TAKES NOT NOTICE OF OUR WANTS AS AN IDLE SPECTATOR, BUT, AS A FAITHFUL HELPER, PUTS FORTH HIS HAND TO HELP US IN WHAT WE NEED. Let us do likewise—observe, take pity, and relieve. 1. Otherwise our brethren have no benefit by us if we express our compassion in words only, and not in deeds (James ii. 16), but prove like clouds and wind without rain (Prov. xv. 14). 2. We make our own thoughts or words evidences against ourselves when we know what our brother needs and help him not, and provoke God to neglect us as we neglect Him. See what He threateneth in such a case (Prov. xxiv. 11, 12). V. GOD MAKES NOTHING BUT FOR SOME NECESSARY USE, AND UNTO SOME PROFITABLE END. VI. A WIFE IS NOT GOOD TILL IT BE NOT GOOD TO BE WITHOUT A WIFE. VII. A MAN MAY, AND IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT HE SHOULD, BE THE BETTER FOR HIS WIFE. 1. Woe be to those foolish wives that pluck down the house which they should build (Prov. xiv. 1), proving moths in their husband's estates by their idleness and wastefulness; and thorns in their sides, vexing those whom they should comfort, with their continual dropping; perverting those whom they should advise. 2. Let every man labour to be the better for his wife, and to that end—(1) Let him labour to be good in the sight of God. (2) Let him look well to his choice, that he may take a godly wife, and a wife fit both for his condition and disposition. (3) Let him dwell with his wife as a man of knowledge, governing her with all meekness, instructing her, and bearing with her infirmities (1 Peter iii. 7). VIII. IT IS ONLY GOD HIMSELF THAT MUST SUPPLY US WITH THAT WHICH WE STAND IN NEED OF. IX. NOTHING MOVES GOD TO TAKE COMPASSION ON US, TO SUPPLY US IN WHAT WE NEED, BUT HIS OWN BOUNTY AND GOODNESS. X. A WIFE IS BUT AN HELPER TO HER HUSBAND. Not his guide, for she was created for the man, not the man for her (1 Cor. xi. 9), and that too, inferior unto him, both in dignity, and usually in abilities. So that she is truly and worthily called the weaker vessel (1 Pet. iii. 7). XI. A WIFE CANNOT BE A GOOD WIFE UNLESS SHE BE A MEET AND A FIT WIFE. Answerable, if it may be—1. In blood and parentage (see 1 Sam. xxiii.). 2. In estate. 3. Education. 4. Especially in the temper of her disposition. 5. But above all the rest, in religion; seeing there can be no fellowship of righteousness with unrighteousness, nor of light with darkness (2 Cor. vi. 14). Least of all between married persons. (*J. White, M.A.*) *God's provision to remedy man's loneliness*:—God has always been thinking what would be for the man's good. How, then, does God propose to meet loneliness? By making another man? Why, when He made a man to keep Cain company, Cain killed him! It would seem to be one of the deepest laws of human nature that man must kill man, and that the only chance of keeping society together is by the marvellous influence of woman. For man to be alone means suicide; for two men to be together means homicide; woman alone can keep society moving and healthful. The woman and the little child are the saviours of social order at this day all over the world. For woman to be alone is as bad as for man to be alone. Safety is in contrast, and in mutual complement. Reverence for womanhood will save any civilization from decay. Beautiful and very tender is this notion of throwing man into a deep sleep to take a rib from him as the starting-point of a blessed companionship. So much is always being done for us when we are in states of unconsciousness! We do not get our best blessings by our own fussiness and clever contrivance; they come we know not how. They are sweet surprises; they are born of the spirit, and are as untraceable as the veerings of the wind. This is the course of true love, and of marriages that are made in heaven. You cannot by searching, and advertising, and scheming find out a companion for the lonely soul. She will come upon you unconsciously. You will know her by a mark in the forehead which none but yourself can read. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The creation of woman*:—I. The Creator's care of man, and His fatherly concern for his comfort. 1. God's pity for his solitude. 2. His resolve to provide society for him. II. The creatures' subjection to man, and his dominion over them. God brought the animals to Adam that he might name them, and so give a proof of—1. His knowledge. 2. His power. III. The creatures' insufficiency to be a happiness for man. Observe—1. The dignity and excellency of human nature. 2. The vanity of the things of this world. (*M. Henry, D.D.*) *Eve*:—Let us speak of—I. The woman. 1. Her creation. 2. The purpose God had in view in creating her. II. The wonderful institution by which man and woman are made one. It

is wonderful that this institution should be found so early in human history. III. The glorious union of which this institution is a type. Adam is a type of Christ; and since Christ was the spouse of the Church, then Eve was a type of the Church. And our conclusion therefore is that the marriage of Adam and Eve, and the marriage institute altogether, is typical of the union between Christ and the Church. (*T. W. Richards, M.A.*) *Lessons* :—1. How it is not said by God that it was not good for Adam to be alone, but for man to be alone; thereby in wisdom enlarging the good of marriage to man in general, that is, to some of all sorts, and not trying it to Adam alone, or to any sort only. Again, in saying it is not good, you see what the Lord regardeth in His actions and works, to wit, goodness and profit to the users, how good it may be, how comfortable: which is a good lesson for all such as regard in their deeds, their wills, their pleasures. *Sis volo, sic iubeo*, So will I, so command I; not respecting at all the good of any other. Shall sinful flesh disdain to do what the Lord of lords doth? He, though He have all power and authority, yet will not do only according to that, but He looketh how good it may be that He doth; and shall sinful flesh, dust and earth, upon a little authority be so proud, that their will must rule all actions? 2. Mark it with all your heart, how God doth consider before ever man see the want himself, what may be good for man, and entereth into purpose to make for him, and prepare for him what yet he wanted and had need of, saying, "Let us make man a helper like himself." Oh, how may we cleave and cling to the providence of this God in all comfort of our minds, that thus thinketh of what may be good for us before ever we think of it ourselves, and not only thinketh of it, but provideth it and prepareth it for us, saying in all matters as in this, Yet my servant such an one wanteth such a help, it is not good for him to be without it; come, therefore, let us prepare it for him, &c. 3. That woman is honoured with the title of a helper, not only sheweth the goodness of the institution, as was noted before, but teacheth also how dear and beloved she should be to her husband, for whose good she was ordained and given. Who will not cherish, foster, and love what is given him for a help, not by man, but by God Himself? Her help chiefly consisteth in three things, in bearing him children, the comforts of his life, and stays of his age, which he cannot have without her. In keeping his body holy to the Lord from filthy pollution which the Lord abhorreth. The apostle so teaching when he speaketh thus, "For the avoiding of fornication, let every man have his own wife." And, thirdly, in governing his house, children, and family, and many ways tending his own person both in sickness and health. These all and every one are great helps, and therefore the woman justly to be regarded for them. 4. But whereupon was woman made? Surely not of an outward but of an inward part of man, that she might be dear to him even as his inwards. Not of the head of man, lest she should be proud and look for superiority. Not of the foot of man, lest she should be contemned and used as for his inferior; but of his side, that she might be used as his fellow, cleaving to his side as an inseparable companion of all his haps whilst they two live. And as the rib receiveth strength from the breast of man, so doth the woman from her husband: his counsel is her strength, his breast should she account of to be ruled and governed by in all her ways, and seek to please him and ease him from all griefs as she any way can, knowing ever that she is most weak without her husband's breast, from which cometh all her strength and good comfort at all times. No creature had his mate made of his own flesh but man, and therefore no creature under heaven should be like man in the love of his mate, but man above them all. 5. It is, if you mark it, not only said that God made woman, but that He brought her to man: and thereby we are taught, that marriage is not every meeting of man and woman together upon their own heads, but when God bringeth them together, either to other: and God bringeth not together, except in His fear they meet with consent of parents and such as are interested in them. (*Bp. Babington.*) *God's ordinance of marriage* :—Let us pay particular attention to this language. Probably we have imagined the statement to mean that God would provide for man one who should be a helper to him, and whose nature and character would be suitable to his. Well, the words do mean this; but they mean also something more. Correctly rendered they would run thus: "I will make him a help as over against him"; or, "so as to meet him"; that is to say, "I will create for him one who shall tally and correspond with him as his counterpart." And the expression seems to point to that oneness in diversity, to that moral, intellectual, and spiritual adaptation of one to the other,—which exists between the woman and the man. Why were the man and the woman not created apart, as the animals

were, and afterwards brought together? Because Adam was to be the inclusive head of the human race: all were to be derived from him; he was to be the fountain from which every stream should flow. Therefore it was necessary that woman should not have an independent, but a derived existence—an existence derived from the federal head of the human race. As St. Paul says, "Man is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man." I. Now in commenting upon the passage, let us take this as the thought which rises first before the mind—THAT IT WERE WELL IF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE TWO SEXES, AND EVERYTHING BEARING UPON THE MARRIAGE TIE, WERE LOOKED UPON AS BEING SOMEWHAT SERIOUS MATTERS. Of course no sensible man would speak in an unnaturally solemn tone about them. He would throw bright and cheerful colours upon the subject of courtship and marriage. He knows that this entrance into life ought to be characterized by joyousness. But yet, underlying the joyousness, there should be, we venture to think, for Christian people, a sense of seriousness and responsibility. Young women, for instance, should understand and value the influence which they exert in the world; whereas, too often, in their intercourse with the other sex, they condone worthlessness of character for the sake of showy and attractive qualities. And as to men, if they would see the relation of the sexes in the light which this narrative of Genesis throws upon it, they would be more characterized than perhaps they are by chivalrous respect for womankind. They would honour a woman because she is a woman. II. Our second thought CONNECTS ITSELF WITH THE SUBJECT OF WHAT IS COMMONLY CALLED "WOMEN'S RIGHTS." Now let us see our way clear in this matter. We do not suppose that the great end of woman is to get married: many say so and think so; but so do not we. Still less do we wish to be understood as implying that a woman is justified in regarding herself, or that others are justified in regarding her, as having in any considerable degree failed of the object of her existence, if circumstances should lead her to remain in a single condition. Yet whilst holding the view of the essential and independent dignity of womanhood, we lament over that mismanagement of human affairs, which necessitates in so many human beings a life of celibacy; and we trace up to the fact of the immense and most disproportionate preponderance of women in our modern civilization, the existence of many of the evils which are sapping the foundations of our social prosperity. "Well," you may say, "there is the fact: you cannot alter it." No: I know that we cannot alter it; but we can try to make the best of it. Recognizing that there are, and that as matters now stand there ever must be amongst us large numbers of unmarried women, we would do all we could to make it possible for them, or at least for many of them (for some do not require it), to attain to a position of independence by means of their own honest exertions. This, at the very least, is our duty. But do we fulfil it? Of course we do not. I need not say that in the case of the educated classes, and in the case of those who come immediately below them, the way to independent subsistence for women is barred and blocked up by innumerable obstacles, that the sleepless dragon of popular prejudice guards most of the avenues of access to the golden fruit of honourable success, and that those few women who, as the pioneers of the advance of their sex, contrive by persistent energy to break through the circle of iron that encompasses them, are only too likely to acquire an unattractive and unfeminine hardness, from the very strength of the effort which enables them to force their way. There is something here which is wrong, and wants amending. Our social arrangements necessitate celibacy for hundreds of thousands who, probably, would not embrace that condition by choice. And then we frown upon their efforts if they struggle to maintain—might they be permitted to do so—an independent foothold upon our common earth. One last thing more let me say, and this of the same general character with what I have already ventured to advance. I have no manner of sympathy with the cackle and clatter we sometimes hear about the relative excellencies of the two sexes—about the superiority of one or the inferiority of the other. To me the idea that a woman wants only a "clear stage and no favour," wants training, and education, and suitable circumstances, in order to develop as big a brain and as vigorous a muscle as man, and so to be able to cope with him in the struggle of life—to me such a thought is unutterably repulsive. The great charm of a woman is that she is diverse from man: not a man in a lower stage of development. She is the complement of the man: her nature, her disposition, her powers, supply what is lacking in his. The two together make a completed orb: apart they are only segments of the circle. But in order to stand in this

relation to each other, it is obvious that they must not be alike, but diverse. I believe with our great modern poet, that "woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse." Nay, and I believe that the sexual differences of character, and disposition, and faculty, and nature generally which exist upon earth, will be found—of course in a certain modified form—to exist in the kingdom of heaven. (*G. Calthrop, M.A.*) Eve:—God does nothing without a purpose: and therefore "the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman." We can readily understand that, had Eve been builded of the earth as Adam was, there would have been a relationship between them which was never intended. They might have been regarded as bearing towards each other in some degree the tie of a brother and sister, springing from the earth as the parent of both. But the love that was to exist between them was not designed to be the love of relationship, not the love of consanguinity, not the love of a brother and sister. Adam was to love Eve as being essentially a part of himself, as a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, as one that originated in himself, and actually derived her existence from his own body. And the great purpose which the Almighty had in view in this formation of woman was the institution of marriage. So that you are not to regard the formation of Eve simply as a creation of the woman, just as the formation of Adam was the creation of the man; but you must consider it as the production of Adam's wife, and as having involved in it the Divine purpose of the institution of marriage. And then you see at once why the peculiar process of creation was employed in taking the rib of Adam. And all this shows us and teaches us that marriage is a Divine institution of no ordinary import, and that its vows and obligations are to be regarded as in a high degree sacred. It should never be entered upon inconsiderately, nor should its festivity ever go on to such extent as to blot out its sacred character. If we fail to recognize its Divine appointment, and give it not the reverence which it claims by virtue of its Divinity, how shall we look for the Divine blessing? It should be all love—love from the beginning to the close of the compact; like the ring, which belongs to our ceremony, having no end, emblematic of eternal love. And this is a mystical love: it is not the love which nature plants and nourishes wherever she has established kinsmanship, or where she has joined soul to soul in the bonds of friendship. It is a mystic love, which takes its stand upon Divine institution, and can be traced only to the recorded circumstance of creation—"The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman." And it strikes us as a wonderful thing, that this institution should be found so early and so prominently placed among the brief records of creation. We should, perhaps, have rather expected that it would have had its position among the Levitical appointments. It behoves us, then, to inquire whether there was any special purpose of the Almighty, whether there was any hidden mystery involved in the institution. There appears to be something so remarkable in the creation of the woman, and there is something so expressive in Adam's remark: "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh"; and the appointment is altogether so wonderful, that there must be some meaning in the history beyond that which appears upon the surface, and beyond that which our remarks have hitherto included. Now, we know that in many particulars Adam was a type of Christ our Redeemer. "Husbands," says the apostle, "love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." And, after speaking and exhorting concerning marriage, he quotes the very words employed by Adam at its first institution, and adds, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." If, then, Adam was the type of Christ, and Christ is the spouse of the Church, it follows as a logical deduction that Eve was a type of the Church. And our conclusion therefore is this, that the marriage of Adam and Eve, and the marriage institute altogether, is typical and emblematical of the union between Christ and His Church. And thus, in the very first page almost of the Bible (and there is hardly a page or a letter that has not reference to the same wonderful subject), we find redemption hinted at, and a Redeemer pointed out, and a Church suggested. Here is the gospel, here is the glad tidings of mediation in the very alpha of Divine revelation, and it is never lost sight of, even to the omega. And here, then, we arrive at the deep mystery of the marriage institute: here we learn why its appointment is such a prominent feature in the concise history of creation. If, then, we have reasoned correctly, and Eve be thus a type of the Church, then it would prove a matter of profitable investigation to observe how the position and the directions of Adam and Eve apply in their fulfilment to Christ

and the Church. But we can only hint at these things, and leave this wonderful subject for private meditation. There can be no question but that the opening of Adam's side for the formation of Eve had had reference to that opening of the side of the second Adam for the formation of His Church, which took place upon the cross at Calvary; for the Church, the ransomed of Sion, owes all its existence and all its salvation to the water and the blood which issued upon the spear-stroke of the soldier, and without which, we are told, there could have been no remission. And this opening of the side also was effected during a deep sleep; for, when the soldiers came to Him, they found that He was dead already: it was a deep sleep, the deep sleep of death. Let us, then, be true to ourselves and to our profession; so that, after having taken upon us the vows of marriage to Christ, we may never be spoken of as a wicked and adulterous generation. (*T. W. Richards, M.A.*)

The family: its scriptural ideal and its modern assailants.—I. THE FOUNDATION OF THE FAMILY IN NATURE. II. THE IDEAL OF THE FAMILY. The family is one of nature's combinations, being composed of several constituent parts; and it shows the same properties as are usually found in the other combinations of nature. In such combinations we find two things: first, a natural affinity or attraction of the parts to each other; and second, harmony and repose when the combination is effected, as if some invisible cement has been made use of to bind the whole into one. Harsh, frictional combinations are foreign to nature. The oxygen and hydrogen that combine to form water have a natural affinity to each other, and the product is so beautifully harmonious that no one could have fancied beforehand that water was not a simple substance. The most striking instance of harmonious combination in nature is that of light, where the seven colours of the rainbow give birth to a product in which the faintest trace of discord can never be found. Nature, in arranging her forces, makes a similar provision in that combination which we call the family. The intention of nature, or rather of the Creator, seems obvious here, although that intention is often frustrated by the perversity of man. In the first place, a natural affinity draws the man and woman together. There is not only the natural affinity of the sexes, but there is the individual attraction between one man and one woman, the desire to be closely related to each other, which is the true and natural foundation of marriage. It would be a very low view of the marriage relation that would make it flow from instinct alone. Man is surely much more than an animal. Has he not a spiritual nature that allies him to the higher orders of being, as really as his animal nature allies him to the lower? And when one human being is drawn to another with a view to the closest relation it is possible to form, surely this is not merely an attraction of the animal; the higher nature has a share in it too. We speak, at present, of what seems to be the purpose of the institution. We say that the law of affinity that governs all nature's combinations leads us to expect that the foundation of marriage should lie in an affinity or attraction, not of one part of man's nature merely, and not of the lower part of it merely, but of the whole. And when we turn to the Bible we find this view amply confirmed, for it is said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." There must be some attraction of the higher nature to draw a man from his father and mother, to whom his best affections would naturally induce him to cling. In other words, true marriage has its foundation in the attractive power of love. And as love is its foundation, so also it is the cement designed to bind the two beings into unity, and give rise to that harmony which we have seen to characterize all nature's combinations. Differences of temperament, varieties of taste, diversities of will, diverse forms of natural weakness and natural temptation tend naturally to friction and discord. What provision is there in nature to counteract this tendency and secure harmony? Love is the moral cement of nature. By its magic power, different temperaments become the complements of each other, opposing tastes find a method of reconciliation, and even contradictory wills, by learning to take and give, to bear and forbear, become like one. Perhaps it will be asked, Are you serious in affirming that marriage should always be founded on mutual love? Is not such an idea utterly Utopian? It may be: but Utopianism is not always the opposite of truth or of duty. If we were to lay it down as a proper rule of life that men should always speak the truth, it would seem utterly impracticable and Utopian; and yet it is a right and proper rule. When we speak of love we do not mean necessarily the state of ecstatic fervour which is commonly delineated in novels and which is sometimes found in actual life. That real affinity of hearts to each other which is the true foundation of marriage, may be, and often is,

much more calm and undemonstrative. There is another important element that enters into the idea of a complete family, and in connection with which, too, provision is made in nature for harmonious combination with the other elements—namely, children. It is not difficult to see, either in theory or in practice, that children may very readily become a most discordant element. To bring about the needful and desirable harmony, the parents are furnished with two things, strength and affection. They have strength of body if not also of mind to enforce what they deem right; but the employment of sheer strength would only stir up the spirit of rebellion, and while producing a temporary submission, make the discord deeper in the end. Hence love, parental love, is supplied, to make the application of strength more smooth and more effective. The two must work together, otherwise evil ensues. Thus we see how, in the case of families, the great law of nature is exemplified which aims at making all combinations harmonious and efficient. If in the case of any family the combination is discordant, it is because the working out of the plan is abused in the hands of frail human beings. For it is a painful fact in this world's history that nothing so often frustrates the plans of providence as the intervention of man. When Divine arrangements fall to be carried into effect by the blind forces of nature, they are carried out with precision and certainty; but when they are dependent on the intervention of man, bungling and defeat are too often the result.

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE FAMILY. 1. As regards the fellowship of husband and wife. It is to be remarked that the reason which is given in the second chapter of Genesis why God made woman is, that He might furnish the man with a suitable companion; it is not till afterwards that she is named Eve, in token of her motherhood, "because she was the mother of all living." Scripture views the relation of the married man and woman, therefore, as having an important end to serve in the Divine purpose, even apart from the continuation of the race. Man and woman come into this remarkable relation of unity in order to promote each other's welfare. True, there is often discord instead of unity. But unity is certainly attained in quite a sufficient number of cases to vindicate the wisdom of the arrangement. One thing is very certain: if this unity be not realized, the relation of husband and wife, instead of being beneficial, must be irksome and even disastrous to both. To be forced to live, eat, sleep, and worship together, while their hearts are at open discord, is simply awful. On the other hand, where there is substantial unity, the necessary interlacing of all the events of their life makes the unity the greater, and invests the relation with a more tender interest and a profounder sanctity. To bear the same name: to spend their days and nights in the same house and chamber; to share the same worldly goods; to be parents of the same children; to be partners of one another's joys and sorrows, cares and anxieties, perplexities and deliverances; to look to one another for counsel and cheer; to mingle their prayers and thanksgivings as none else can; to look back along the line of their lives, and think of all they have shared; to look forward, and think of the inevitable parting that is coming, and then of the reunion which faith expects; who shall deny that such experiences are fitted not only to deepen the unity which lies at the foundation of the relation, but to elevate the tone of life, purify the character, and sweeten the current of existence, as no other earthly influences can? Where the two are one flesh, there must be no contact with other flesh. And here, too, nature provides an abundant reward for those who are faithful to her order. Nothing keeps the fountain of conjugal love so pure and fresh as absolute faithfulness to the marriage bond. Even in pagan nations, there have been beautiful instances of a happy unity and the highest esteem between man and wife. Joseph Cook, in his Boston lectures, finds much in this connection to vindicate marriage on natural grounds. He instances the case of the wife of Phocion, the great reformer, who, when her husband was refused burial in Attic soil, went by night to burn the body, brought back his bones to Athens, buried them beneath her hearth, and blessed the place that thus afforded protection to the remains of a good and great man, until the Athenians, returning to their right minds, should restore them to the sepulchre of his fathers. More striking is the story told by Cyrus of Panthea, the wife of Abradatus. She loved her husband with a supreme affection. When taken captive by Cyrus, he asked her where her home was. "On the bosom of my husband," was in substance her reply; and when offered a dazzling position at the Court of Cyrus, she besought them to send her swiftly home. "If ever there was a woman that regarded her husband more than her own soul, she was that woman." Encouraging him to fight for Cyrus to show his gratitude, she sent him with her blessing to the battle in which he fell.

Again she had offers of this world's glory; again her purpose was declared to be with her husband. "I cannot justify Panthea in everything," says Mr. Cook. "She had been brought up to the stern opinions which justified suicide. She told her maid to cover her in the same mantle with her husband. Then she smote herself; put her head upon his breast, and fell asleep. Great nature is in that! You wish me to teach what science proclaims respecting family life. I must ask you to go back to the deepest springs of human experience. These women, Phocion's wife and the wife of Abradatus are sisters to us all, helpers to every age. They are crystalline water bursting up from the innermost rifts of human nature and society, and one in its purity with that rain which falls on all the hills, and is the real source, after all, of every one of these crystalline springs." Even under Paganism there were thus influences strong enough to realize in at least some instances the true unity of husband and wife, and show to the world what kind of relation it was designed to be. Christianity has brought new influences into the field. A new pattern has been furnished of conjugal unity, and a new force for developing conjugal love (Ephes. v. 25, 30).

2. The relation of parents and children. Now let us observe that the provision of nature for the bringing up of children is to place them under the charge of their two parents, both possessed of affection towards them, though in somewhat different proportions, and this provision for their upbringing is most essential. An essential desideratum for a child is moral training. Is this too hard and too heavy a task for parents? So it is affirmed by those who disparage the family institute, and who would gather children into barracks or other large establishments, where they would be brought up by the wisest and most experienced of the race, under the best conditions of efficient training. To commit such work to parents of average character, is objected to on two grounds; first, because where it is attempted, the work will be done ill, in consequence of the folly and ignorance of the parents; and second, because in a vast multitude of cases, it will not be attempted at all. That the qualifications needed for the right upbringing of children are within the reach of the ordinary run of parents, is sufficiently clear from the fact, that many a parent, in the humblest ranks of life, has discharged the duty with admirable success. When Dr. Livingstone composed a simple epitaph to be placed on the tombstone of his father and mother, the one thing which he desired to commemorate was the gratitude of their children to God for poor and pious parents. He refused to change the expression into "poor but pious," because he believed in the beneficial influences of poverty, in the nobility of character which it had fostered in them, and in the good he had got from it himself. Had he been brought up in luxury and splendour he would not have learned the habits that enabled him to open Africa at a cost of painful endurance and unflinching perseverance seldom equalled in the annals of mankind. It is not great intellect nor ample means that enables a parent to give a good upbringing to his children, but conscientious devotion to duty, the spirit of love, and a good example. These are qualities within the reach of every class. Much stress is to be laid on the last point—the good example. In estimating the moral value of the family as a whole, we must not lose sight of the influence which the children often have on the parents. "What I learned from my children" might often be the subject of as interesting a narrative as "What I learned from my parents." What father has not found occasion to search deeper into truth from the strange questions which children so often put respecting things which older minds are apt to take for granted? The present writer, in his early ministry, had once occasion to hear the spiritual history of an afflicted woman, who was lying in bed, awaiting the last messenger. "For many years," she said, "I did not see that I was a sinner, I did not think that I had seriously broken any of the commandments of God. But I had the misfortune to have an only son who ran away from me, and never wrote to me, or seemed to care to hear of me or from me. Then it flashed upon me that I had been just as unmindful of my heavenly Father, as my son had been of me. Though I had not been guilty of open sins, I had utterly neglected my duty to my heavenly Father. The words came into my mind, 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.' I got a new light on the whole of my life; I saw myself to be a great sinner; and I got no rest until I came to the cross, and was there sprinkled with the blood that cleanseth from all sin." The presence of children in a house softens the heart, makes it more human and sympathetic. It brings men down from the stiff and serious attitude of business. It evokes the gentler and the more playful elements of our nature. It keeps the heart young and

its affections fresh. But more powerful than anything yet noticed, is the effect on a right-minded man of the thought of his children in reference to his own temptations and dangers. There are evil pleasures whose attraction might prove too strong for some men, if the thought of their children did not come to check them. What would they think if these children were to do the same? 3. We note then, next, the relation of brothers and sisters. In a well-regulated family this is a very important factor. The ideal of the Christian home suggests the thought of Milton's *Comus*, where pure-minded brothers, admiring a dear sister's purity, are concerned lest, alone in the world, she should fall in the way of any of those bloated monsters that would drag even an angel into their filthy sty. But apart from this painful subject, what a blessed provision we have for the spread of mutual benefit in the contrasted qualities of brothers and sisters attached to each other, and deeply interested in each other's welfare! A great charm in the relation of brothers and sisters comes from the difference in their ages. The power to help on the part of the older is designed to develop the sense of responsibility, and when duly exercised, gives them some share in the parental government, and facilitates the work of the parents themselves. Moreover, there is a development of that tender spirit which intercourse with the weak stirs in the hearts of the strong. 4. In many families, besides brothers and sisters, there are also servants. 5. The friends and acquaintances of a family extend the horizon of interest, affection, and sympathy. (W. G. Blaikie, D.D.)

Marriage.—I. THE MARRIAGE TIE. This is really what it comes to. It is needless to discuss the question whether marriage ought to be dissoluble not only on the ground of adultery, but on that of cruelty, or of habitual drunkenness, or of insanity. The opponents of marriage as it now is, would be satisfied with no such enactments. The contract of marriage must be brought down to the level of a contract between partners in business, and the one must be rendered voidable precisely in the same way as the other. Is this, let us ask, apart altogether from Scripture, a fair or reasonable method of treating the contract of marriage? 1. Does it not overlook the very delicate and solemn nature of the relation established in marriage between man and wife? That contract is indeed without a parallel. It places the parties in a relation of intimacy and delicacy unapproached in any other. 2. This view of marriage subverts the provision of nature for the welfare of the young. What is to become of the children when a marriage is broken up on the ground that the father and mother are tired of each other? 3. An arrangement which would terminate the union of husband and wife whenever they happened to tire of it, would greatly discourage the exercise of forbearance toward each other when differences unfortunately did arise. 4. Such a policy would, moreover, leave little opportunity for repentance and reconciliation. Once the tie was severed, severed it must remain. But it may be contended, that what is called the arrangement of nature is a faulty arrangement, and in practice gives rise to evils so great that in order to remedy them you must have recourse to easy divorces. Are we to exalt into "a plan of nature," an arrangement which is so painfully fruitful of contention and misery? Yes, it is still the plan of nature; but it is the plan of nature perverted, frustrated, made abortive by some evil habit or vile indulgence which hinders the intention of nature from being fulfilled, as really and as wholly as a nail driven into the works of a watch hinders it from indicating the proper time. First among these perverting influences we must place the habit of drunkenness. Hitherto we have been dealing with the objection on grounds common to the Secularist and the Christian. But we cannot leave the subject without examining it also on the ground of Scripture. Let us remember that, according to Scripture, marriage and the family constitution were instituted while the human race was yet unfallen, and while the relation between God and man existed in all its fullness of blessing. The Fall did not abrogate the institution, but it made a great change in the conditions under which it existed. Discord ensued between man and God, discord in man's own soul between passion and conscience, discord in his social relations, discord between man and wife. Admitting, then, that in a vast number of cases marriage is the parent of discord and misery, which of two policies is the more worthy of support with a view to remedy this grievous evil? Are we to change the marriage bond as it has hitherto been, make the relation of married persons slack and easy, tie the knot so loosely that a very slight pull will undo it, and place what has hitherto been the most sacred of human obligations at the mercy of the whim of either party? Or shall we try to get this relation penetrated by the love of Christ, to bring the spirit of forbearance and forgiveness to bear on actual divergences, to exalt men's sense of the dignity and sacredness of the conjugal relation,—symbol

as it is of the union of Christ and His Church; shall we try to quicken the consciences of parents in regard to the welfare of their children, to induce them to extend their view beyond the horizon of the present life, and to think of the momentous consequences for evermore of faithfulness on the one hand and neglect on the other? II. THE NURTURE OF CHILDREN. Another common objection to the family has reference to the best arrangement for bringing up children to be orderly, respectable, and useful citizens. We say it is family life. But in how many instances is the upbringing they get in their homes worse than useless—an education of blows and curses, of drunkenness and debauchery, of sin and misery. In such cases, no doubt, you must supersede the family. But this is an extreme remedy, applicable only to the very worst cases. And before this course is resorted to, every effort should be made to stimulate the sense of parental responsibility. To many it appears not only a simpler but a more efficient remedy for the evils of parental neglect, to take neglected children wholesale from their parents and bring them up elsewhere. But to make a promiscuous practice of this would be to do infinite harm. When Dr. Guthrie instituted his Ragged Schools, he provided no sleeping accommodation for his children; at night they returned to their parents; because of all things he was most anxious to preserve the interest of the parents in their children, and the interest of the children in their parents. We are not warranted to separate the children wholly from their parents except under two conditions: first, when it is certain that the children would be ruined if they should continue to live with them; and, second, when the parents are willing to give them up, let us say for emigration. (*Ibid.*) *Meaning of wife*.—And now let us see whether the word “wife” has not a lesson. It literally means a weaver. The wife is the person who weaves. Before our great cotton and cloth factories arose, one of the principal employments in every house was the fabrication of clothing: every family made its own. The wool was spun into thread by the girls, who were therefore called spinsters; the thread was woven into cloth by their mother, who, accordingly was called the weaver, or the wife; and another remnant of this old truth we discover in the word “heirloom,” applied to any old piece of furniture which has come down to us from our ancestors, and which, though it may be a chair or bed, shows that a loom was once an important article in every house. Thus the word “wife” means weaver: and, as Trench well remarks, “in the word itself is wrapped up a hint of earnest, in-door, stay-at-home occupations, as being fitted for her who bears this name.” (*Dictionary of Illustrations.*) *Woman, a helpmeet*.—Joshua Reynolds met Flaxman the day after his marriage, and said: “You are a happy man, but you are ruined for an artist.” He told his bride of it in great despondency. “I wanted to be a great artist.” “And, John,” said Annie, with the fire in her eye, “a great artist you shall be!” He always said that was what made an artist of him. There was a young man in Switzerland, engaged in observing and classifying the *Hymenoptera* of his native land, when he was suddenly smitten with blindness. The calamity was so hopeless that marriage was absolutely forbidden by the father of his beloved. She waited, like a dutiful child, until she was twenty-one years of age; then, without concealment, and, in great sorrow, but honouring her father in disobeying him, she married the scientist, and immediately persuaded him to resume his studies. She carried on his experiments under his direction. She soon became more skilful than he had ever been in watching the operation of the curious creatures. And he became more exact in his generalization, in consequence of being shut up to his own reflections. The result was a work which astonished the world, and remains a classic and the first authority on the subject—the immortal treasure of Huber on bees! What will not the faithful love of a wife accomplish! God in heaven looks down upon nothing on earth so like the paradise above as trustful and helpful married love. *Society in the family*.—“Family society,” says Henry, “if that be agreeable, is a redress sufficient for the grievance of solitude. He that has a good God, a good heart, and a good wife to converse with, and yet complains that he wants conversation, would not have been easy and content in paradise, for Adam himself had no more.”

Ver. 19. That was the name thereof.—The naming of the animals by Adam:—

1. The man was thus to be made conscious of his lordship over the animal tribes.
2. In token of his relations to them, respectively, he was to give them their respective names.
3. His knowledge of animal nature, (in which he had been created), is at once to be developed, under the special teaching of God.
4. His organs of speech are to be put in exercise.
5. His knowledge of language (Divinely imparted), is to be

developed in the use of terms for naming the several classes—under the Divine instruction and guidance. 6. It would seem, from the connection, that the man was to be made sensible of his social need as he should see the animals passing before him in pairs. (*M. W. Jacobus.*) *Language a Divine gift*:—The man was created in knowledge, after the Divine image, and thus was endowed with powers of perception and discrimination, by which he could know the habits, characters, and uses of the several species, both of animals and of fowls, yet not without Divine teaching in the matter, and in the use of terms. The names which he gave them were appointed to be their names by which they should be known—and they were, doubtless, significant—as was the name of Eve, (ver. 23), chap. iii. 20. Language itself could not so early have been a human invention, but a revelation. (*Ibid.*) *Observations*:—I. GOD'S MERCIES ARE, OR SHOULD BE, PRECIOUS UNTO US WHEN WE CAN NEITHER RE WITHOUT THEM, NOR HAVE THEM FROM ANY OTHER BUT FROM HIMSELF. That the necessity of creating a woman to be Adam's helper might be the more clearly discovered unto him, He brings before him the creatures, that out of his own judgment himself might conclude how unſit any of them were to be his companions or helpers. II. WE MUST KNOW THE UNSERVICEABLENESS OF OTHER THINGS, THAT WE MAY KNOW AND APPROVE THE PROFITABLENESS OF THAT WHICH IS TRULY GOOD. III. GOD CAN ORDER AND DISPOSE OF THE CREATURES TO DO WHAT, AND TO BE WHERE HE APPOINTS THEM. IV. MAN MAY LAWFULLY USE THAT POWER OVER THE CREATURES WHICH GOD HIMSELF HATH PUT INTO HIS HAND. V. GOD IS PLEASED TO HONOUR MEN SO FAR AS TO EMPLOY THEM IN MANY THINGS WHICH OF RIGHT BELONG UNTO AND MIGHT BE DONE BY HIMSELF ALONE. 1. To encourage men to His service in honouring them so far as to make them His fellow-workers. 2. To unite men the more in love, one to another. 3. To increase their reward hereafter, by the faithful employment of their talents for the advantage of their Master from whom they received them, Matt. xxv. 21, 23. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Intuition*:—God now proceeds to show man the exact point where the void lay. Adam had been made to feel that void, but God's object is to place him in circumstances such as shall lead him step by step to the seat of the unsatisfied longing within. Accordingly, God brings before him all the creatures which He had made, that Adam, in his choice, may have the whole range of creation. Adam surveys them all. He sees by instinctive wisdom the nature and properties of each, so that he can affix names to all in turn. His knowledge is large and full; it has come direct from God, just as his own being had come. It is not discovery, it is not learning, it is not experience, it is not memory, it is intuition. By intuition he knew what the wisest king in after ages only knew by searching. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The first act of man's sovereignty over the animals*:—Man was certainly the superior master of nature. This is evident from the next feature which our text mentions. God brought the animals which He had created to man, to "see what he would call them"; and the names chosen by man were to remain to them for ever. This is the first act by which man exercised his sovereignty; and although his intellect was not yet roused, he was sufficiently endowed for that task; for he had been capable of understanding the Divine command and of representing to himself death. In the first cosmogony, God Himself fixed the names of the objects which He had called into existence; He determined the appellations of day and night, of heaven, and sea, and dry land. Here He cedes this right to man, whom He has ordained "to have dominion over all the earth." The name was, according to Hebrew and Eastern writers in general, an integral part of the object itself; it was not deemed indifferent; it was no conventional sign; it was an essential attribute. When God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush, the latter hastened to inquire under what name He wished to be announced to the Israelites. When a crisis in the life of an individual was imminent, or had been successfully overcome, his name was changed into another one expressive of that event. Kings, at their elevation to the throne, assumed another name. To "know the name of God" was identical with knowing His internal nature, and even with piously walking in His precepts. The right, therefore, of determining the names includes authority and dominion; but man did not perform this act of his own accord; he did not yet feel his exalted rank; but God, by inviting him to perform it, made him governor over the works of His hands, and placed all under his feet (*Psa. viii. 7*). It has been frequently observed, that our text explains the origin of language, and attributes its invention solely to man. Language is, indeed, a spontaneous emanation of the human mind; it is implanted in its nature; in furnishing man, besides his external organization, with reason and imagination, God bestowed upon him the principal elements for communication by speech; it is as natural a function of his intellect as reflection;

intelligent speech is one of the chief characteristics of man; hence the ancient Greek poets call men simply the "speech-gifted"; the germ was bestowed by God; man had to do no more than to cultivate it. But our author does not enter upon this abstruse question at all; it is of no practical importance for religious truth; it must have appeared superfluous to one who knows God as the Creator and Framer of all, as the Bestower of every gift, as Him who "has made man's mouth, and who maketh dumb" (Exod. iv. 11). Pythagoras, and other ancient philosophers, justly considered the invention of names for objects an act of the highest human wisdom; and the Chinese ascribed it to their first and most honoured sovereign Fo-hi, who performed this task so well, that "by naming the things their very nature was made known." (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) *The origin of language*:—Was it an invention? So some have taught. Was it the issue of a convention? So some have taught. Was it an imitation of the sounds of nature? So some have taught. Was it a direct gift from heaven? So some have taught. Most erudite men have pondered the problem; and yet all speculation here is quite afloat. And so we fall back on the childlike, pictorial language of time's most hoary archive: "Jehovah God formed out of the soil every beast of the field and every fowl of the heavens: and He brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man should call every living being, that should be the name thereof; and the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the heavens, and to every beast of the field." It was man's first recorded act. Observe: it was an act of perception, discrimination, description. The animals were arrayed before him; and animals suggest all the phenomena of life. And the vision of moving life stirred up within him the latent capacity of speech. In brief, it was the origin of humanity's vocabulary. As such, it is a profoundly philosophical account. For nouns, *i.e.*, names, are the rudiments of language, the very A B C's of speech. Such is the theory of the genesis of language according to Moses. Can your Max Müllers and Wedgwoods and Whitneys give a more philosophical theory? (*G. D. Boardman.*) *Twofold use of language*:—This indicates to us a twofold use of language. First, it serves to register things and events in the apprehension and the memory. Man has a singular power of conferring with himself. This he carries on by means of language in some form or other. He bears some resemblance to his Maker even in the complexity of his spiritual nature. He is at once speaker and hearer, and yet at the same time he is consciously one. Secondly, it is a medium of intelligent communication between spirits, who cannot read one another's thoughts by immediate intuition. The first of these uses seems to have preceded the second in the case of Adam, who was the former of the first language. The reflecting reader can tell what varied powers of reason are involved in the use of language, and to what an extent the mind of man was developed, when he proceeded to name the several classes of birds and beasts. He was evidently fitted for the highest enjoyments of social intercourse. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

Vers. 21, 22. The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam.—*The first sleep*:—How profound is the mystery of sleep! It is one of those riddles of familiar life of which we know so little; about which thought will occupy itself and fancy speculate. Sleep has been beautifully spoken of by the Germans as the "twin brother of death"; and really the more earnestly we regard the subject, the more we see the likeness which has given rise to the observation. But sleep was born in the garden of paradise, ere its beauty faded and its glory grew dim; death sprung into existence amid the gloom and sorrow of a darkened world. Sleep came to man as a blessing; death as a curse. Strong as is the resemblance, there are points where it fails; but, since the Fall, sleep has become more like death; since the resurrection of Christ, death has become more like sleep. We who have sinned—in our sleep "die daily"; we who are redeemed—in our death "sleep in Christ." I think we have every reason to receive the words of the text as a record of the first sleep. Whether, as the nights of Eden came round in their starry and cloudless beauty, they brought to the first man the repose of sleep, alternating with his pleasant occupation of keeping and dressing the garden, I cannot tell; but I think the first sleep was not of this character; it has something special and peculiar in it, occurring by the direct interposition of the Creator. "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept." What a blessed sleep it proved! The first sleep has been succeeded by the troubled, diseased, and pain-fraught slumbers of a fallen race; and for us the mystery is mingled with fearfulness. I purpose to say a few words on the four kinds of sleep which naturally suggest

themselves to the mind while musing on the subject of somnolency. **I. THE DEEP, OR DREAMLESS SLEEP,** of which the first sleep was peculiarly the type and pattern. The physical condition of this sleep appears to be simply this, that the senses, tired from use, or acted upon by some influence from without, refuse to do their office, and cease to give to the soul intelligence of the external world. It is remarkable to think how, in such a sleep, all those functions of the body which are necessary to it as an organic structure, and which are generally performed without the soul's recognition, or particular notice, such as the pulsation of the heart, the circulation of the blood, the digestion of our food, go on uninterruptedly: but just those parts of our system which are the especial channels of communication between outward things and the reasoning, immaterial essence are affected. Surely there is a fearfulness in sleep. The soul, unconscious of its fleshly companion, exists in some strange state of suspension, hid in the hollow of its Creator's hand, and overshadowed by His covering wings. It is not with the present world of realities; nor with the past world of memory; nor with the future world of promise; but, held in life by the Preserver of men, and compassed about with Divine power, it waits the body's fitness to be used again. Such a state, indeed, is inconceivable; we can only refer the fact to the infinite and wonder-working operation of God. It is the current supposition that the dreamless sleep is common at the present day. I have long had my doubts, however, whether since the Fall, men have ever slept this sleep. So completely do I look upon dreaming as one of the strongest physical effects of the Fall, I am inclined to think it always accompanies slumber, except when vision takes its place; and that what we imagine to be a dreamless sleep is only one in which our dreams are unremembered when we wake. This is somewhat confirmed by the fact of forgotten dreams being suddenly recalled to the mind, by some circumstance occurring hours or days after. It is very seldom indeed that we retain a recollection of what we have dreamed, immediately on awaking; the recall to the mind of the impressions it has received in sleep is generally incidental, and brought about by some connection with waking thoughts. **II. THE SLEEP OF DREAMS.** It is no uncommon thing to pursue a long and connected train of thought in sleep. The Bible is full of instances of God's speaking by this mode to His servants; and although we live in the days of gospel-light, and not in the days of Urim and Thummim, dream and vision, shall we positively affirm that God never now by the instrumentality of dreams communicates warning and strength to His Church? Shall we altogether slight and scorn the testimony of John Newton concerning his dream of the ring? I think not. And yet let us not be idle, superstitious observers of dreams, they are but the "divers vanities" of a fallen nature. If they weigh with us and depress our minds, let us carry them to God; if they afford us comfort in a time of sorrow, let us bless Him who useth the weak and the dishonourable things of this world to show forth His praise. **III. THE MESMERIC, OR ARTIFICIAL SLEEP.** **IV. THE TRANCE, OR SLEEP OF VISION.** (*The Protoplast.*) **Observations:—I. EVEN SLEEP AND QUIET REST ARE GIVEN BY GOD HIMSELF, AND THEREFORE ARE TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED AS HIS BLESSINGS.** **II. THOUGH GOD BE PLEASED TO MANIFEST HIS WORKS TO MEN, THAT THEY MAY BEHOLD THEM; YET THE MANNER HOW THEY ARE WROUGHT IS USUALLY HIDDEN FROM THEIR EYES.** **III. GOD TAKES CARE OF US, AND PROVIDES FOR US, EVEN WHILE WE SLEEP, AND THINK NOT ON OUR OWN AFFAIRS.** And this as—1. He can do because He neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psa. cxxi. 3, 4). So, 2. He doth—(1) To manifest His care over us, that our hearts may rest upon Him. (2) And to convince us that the means by which we are supported are not from ourselves, when we have no hand in those works which are done, not only without our help, but without our knowledge. **IV. GOD DELIGHTS TO VARY HIS WAYS IN ALL HIS OPERATIONS.** Matter is sometimes rude and unprepared, sometimes fitted for the effect to be produced, as seeds to produce herbs and plants. And so are His ways of working sometimes by means, sometimes without: sometimes by means agreeable, otherwise by contraries. All this He doth to manifest—1. His infinite wisdom (Psa. civ. 24). 2. His almighty power, appearing in this, that He ties Himself to no means nor manner of working, but brings to pass anything by what way He pleaseth; so that the effect appears not to depend upon any means, but only upon the power of Him that worketh all in all. 3. That He may entice us by such variety, to search into His ways as His works are sought out by those that have pleasure therein (Psa. iii. 2). **V. GOD'S WAYS AND WORKS ARE ORDINARILY FULL OF HOLY INSTRUCTIONS.** **VI. THE WIFE MUST BE NEITHER HER HUSBAND'S LORD NOR VASSAL.** **VII. A WIFE IS, OR SHOULD BE, A STRONG HELPER TO HER HUSBAND.** **VIII. GOD REQUIRES NOTHING OF US, NOR DOETH ANYTHING UNTO**

us, THAT MAY HURT US, OR UNDO US. Let nothing be grievous unto us that God either commands or lays upon us; remembering—1. That He may do with His own what He will. 2. And yet He hates nothing which He hath made. 3. And He can and will not fail to restore unto us abundantly, whatsoever we seem to lose, either in doing, or suffering by His appointment, that He may be no man's debtor. IX. GOD TAKES NOTHING FROM US BUT HE TAKES CARE TO RECOMPENSE IT UNTO US, SOME WAY OR OTHER. X. IT IS USUAL WITH GOD TO LEAVE WITH US NEAR AND LIVELY REMEMBRANCES BOTH OF HIS MERCIES TO US, AND OF OUR DUTIES. (*J. White, M.A.*)

Observations.—I. GOD CAN CHANGE ANYTHING INTO WHAT FORM HE PLEASETH. II. GOD IS EXACT AND PERFECT IN ALL THE WORKS THAT HE UNDERTAKES. III. WOMEN, AS WELL AS MEN, ARE GOD'S OWN WORKMANSHIP. IV. GOD HATH ALLOWED BUT ONE WIFE TO ONE MAN. V. THOUGH ALL THINGS BE MADE FOR MAN, YET HE CAN HAVE NO INTEREST IN ANYTHING UNTIL GOD HIMSELF BESTOW IT ON HIM. Yea, when God hath put men's estates into their hands, yet our Saviour directs us to beg our allowance out of them from God, for the portion of every day. 1. Because all that we have or use is God's, who only sends them to us for our use, reserving the propriety of all to Himself. 2. That we may use all according to His direction, and not according to our own lusts. 3. That we may upon the better grounds expect His blessing upon that which we use, without which it cannot profit us. VI. EVERY CHILD OF GOD MUST DESIRE TO RECEIVE HIS WIFE FROM GOD'S HAND. 1. By making choice of such a person, as is of His family, with whom He may converse as an heir with him of the grace of life. 2. Labouring to gain her by warrantable ways, prayer, advice, and mediation of godly friends, holy conferences, and godly propositions, not by carnal allurements, deceitfulness, enticements, or violent importunities. 3. And aiming at a right end therein, rather our increase in piety, and the propagation of an holy seed, than the advancing ourselves in our outward estates: remembering—1. That God only (who looks not as man on the outward appearance, but seeth the heart) is able to direct us in our choice. 2. That it lays upon us a strong engagement to make an holy use of marriage, when we thus lay the foundation of it in His fear. 3. That it sweetens all the crosses which we may meet with in a married life; being assured, that if they fall upon us by His hand, they shall by Him be so sanctified unto us, that they as all things else, shall work together to our good. (*Ibid.*)

Observations.—I. GOD'S BLESSINGS OUGHT TO BE ENTERTAINED AND EMBRACED BY US WITH A HOLY REJOICING AND THANKFULNESS. This rejoicing must be—1. In God, and not in ourselves; not so much that it is well with us, as that God's honour, in His mercy and truth, is manifested and advanced thereby. 2. And performed with fear and trembling (*Psa. ii. 11*); and infinite abasement of ourselves before Him, upon the apprehension of our own unworthiness, of so great favours, after David's example (*2 Sam. vii. 18*). And—3. May be publicly testified when God's favours are eminent and public, and especially when the Church is any way concerned in them: whence David, being a public person, promiseth a public thanksgiving in the congregation for those mercies, which though they lighted on Him, yet redounded to the benefit of his people also. II. WE MAY AND SHALL KNOW AS MUCH OF GOD'S WAYS AND WORKS AS CONCERNS US, FOR THE DIRECTING AND QUICKENING OF US UNTO OUR DUTIES. As—1. That they are the works of His own hand (*Psa. lxiv. 9*). 2. And those wrought in righteousness, mercy, and truth. 3. And for His only glory (*Prov. xvi. 4*); and for our good, unto which all things work together (*Rom. viii. 28*); that men may fear, and trust in Him (*Psa. lxiv. 10*). III. IT IS CONSENT THAT MUST MAKE THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN MAN AND WIFE. IV. EVEN THE BEST AMONGST MEN NEED TO BE MINDED BOTH OF THEIR DUTY AND CONDITION EVERY WAY. (*Ibid.*)

Woman.—I. THE POSITION AND DESTINY OF WOMAN. 1. Her position is inferior and subordinate. If the Scripture speaks plainly on any point, it most unequivocally asserts the superiority of man over the woman, both in his nature and in the sphere which by Divine appointment he is to occupy. How strange, then, it is, that our day should have given birth to so many schemes for raising her to the level of him, unto whom the supremacy has been so distinctly given. Even in innocence we have seen that woman was not man's equal: Eve, in her unsullied purity, was content to take a lower place than Adam, and to serve him according to God's ordinance. Experience confirms the truth stated in the Word of God—the inferiority of the female character. That woman's physical strength is less than that of man, is almost universally acknowledged. In all cases where power and daring are required, the work is given to man. From scenes of terror and danger woman instinctively shrinks, and man instinctively shields her. If it be said that the historic page records instances of her passing

through them with undaunted mien; if the name of a Joan of Arc be cited as a witness to disprove my statement, I only answer, that the exception proves the rule. Is it not equally true, that woman's mental strength is less than that of man? Should it be urged, again, that the name of a De Stael, a De Genlis, or a Somerville certifies the possibility of the highest masculine mind being enshrined in a female form—if I admitted this—I would say, again, the exception proves the rule: but while I do not deny that a woman of the noblest and most exalted intellect may be superior to men of ordinary talent around her, I do not hesitate to say she is inferior, in her greatness, to a man of the highest genius. Compare woman at her best estate, with man at his best estate, and the disparity will tell itself strikingly. There has been no Isaac Newton in the ranks of the weaker sex. According to the woman's nature, God has appointed her position in the world. She is "not to teach"; she is "not to usurp authority over the man"; she is to be in "subjection," and "under obedience." 2. Her destiny is to occupy the next rank to him who was made "a little lower than the angels"; to share with him the government of the animal world; to stand by his side in all the life of the present; to give herself unto him, with all her powers, and all her affections; to sacrifice herself for him, with her peculiar devotedness and concentration of purpose; to draw near unto him when the society of his fellow-man would be insupportable; and to speak to him when the voice of his fellow-man would be jarring and discordant; to sympathize with him in the hour of sorrow; to cheer him in the hour of sickness; to re-animate him in the hour of listlessness; to aid him in the hour of difficulty; to encourage him in the hour of temptation: to be, in fact, his companion, his comfort, his co-operator, his friend. But, moreover, this destiny, under a dispensation of redemption, is to participate with him the blessings and privileges of the New Covenant—to share with him the duties and hopes of an inner and spiritual life; to receive with him the gift of immortality; to hold with him the title-deeds of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the eternal heaven. Surely there is nothing necessarily degrading in such a lot! All the ignominy and misery attached to it have been the effect of the woman's sin, and the woman's curse. We may say, in conclusion, using the apostle's words, "Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." II. THE PREPARATION NECESSARY FOR WOMAN'S WORK. 1. As a most important self-discipline, I would mention, first, that progressive cultivation of the mind which is carried on when the time for compulsory study is passed. There has been no mistake so fatal to the elevation of female character as the idea, that when the rubicon of the eighteenth year is crossed, a life of so-called pleasure, that is, a life of idleness and dissipation, is to succeed a life of mental application. 2. A woman's preparation for her office is greatly brought about by an experience of suffering. Sorrow, sanctified and sacred sorrow, gives the finest touches to her character. It produces in her that exquisite refinement of feeling, that acute susceptibility, that deep sympathy, for which woman is so distinguished. III. Woman's work itself. After all I have written, will it be thought strange if I say, that its nature may be expressed in one comprehensive word—ministration! It must be remembered that we are not considering woman in her direct relations to God as His creature, but in her direct relations to man as his help. In this point of view, her work may be regarded as consisting in ministration to man. In mental ministration, or a service unto his mind. In corporeal ministration, or a service unto his body. In spiritual ministration, or a service unto his spirit. 1. Mental ministration. Woman, as we have seen, meets man, not upon the footing of a passive slave, but of an intelligent assistant. It is her office to share his intellectual pursuits, and to aid him in his researches after natural knowledge and scientific truth. How is she to do this? By bringing her mind to bear upon his; by laying its treasures before him; by entering with appreciation and interest into the details of the discoveries of his genius, or even of the speculations of his imagination; by communicating to him her thoughts on the high and mysterious subjects which engage his attention. 2. Corporeal ministration. It is a woman's province to provide for man the trifles of life, things which contribute greatly to his comfort, and which are yet unworthy to engage much of his time and attention. The constitution of her nature is such, that household arrangements do not have with her that harassing effect on the mind, which is so peculiarly felt by one who would devote himself wholly to higher and more important matters. It is her office then to surround man with little luxuries; to give him little pleasures; to let him feel that he has cared for nothing,

and yet has wanted nothing in the domestic economy of each successive day. 3. Spiritual ministration. Woman, as redeemed from the Fall, is a fellow-heir with man of the grace of life. She is to walk with him in that narrow path which leads to the heavenly land, and much of her companion's progress therein depends instrumentally upon her own. Many a man has been hindered in the perfecting of holiness by the burden of a woman who has forgotten to do him service in the best and highest sense. The task of a Christian female is a very glorious one. She is to be the "help" of the servant of God. Living with man, and bound to him by some close tie, it is her part to assist him in the devotion of all his energies to his Creator's glory; to aid him in his renunciation of the world, by showing that she is contented with the lot of God's children; to aid him in his liberality to those who are in need by proving that she looks upon money given unto the poor as lent to the Lord, and that she is willing to wait for the redemption of His bond; to aid him in the establishment of righteous authority in his household, by respecting his rule herself; to aid him in his obedience to duty's call, even when it leads him into the midst of danger, by counting his life less dear to her than his fulfilment of the will of God. IV. The recompense attending woman's work. A few brief words will suffice for this last division of our subject. The highest recompense of woman consists in the honour and the joy of being employed for God, in the way of His own appointment. The creature's blessedness is connected with the consciousness of filling the place assigned by Jehovah's unerring wisdom, and of fulfilling His holy will. In proportion to a woman's greatness of mind, will be her satisfaction in the thought that she is occupying the station which God intended for her, and that she is accomplishing the service to which He has called her. Moreover, the work of ministration is its own reward. In drawing a woman out of self, in bringing her into sympathetic union with another; in giving her occupation and interest all the days of her life on earth; it is itself a means of happiness. Still God has permitted a further recompense to wait upon a female's fulfilment of her sacred office. For a married woman there is a peculiarly rich and sweet reward. It is beautifully set before us by Solomon, as a husband's trust, and a husband's praise. "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her" (Prov. xxxi. 11). (*The Protoplast.*) A wedding sermon:—God's bringing Eve to Adam implieth five things:—1. His permission, allowance, and grant; for that Adam might thankfully acknowledge the benefit as coming from God, God Himself brought her. This bringing was the full bestowing her upon him, that they should live together as man and wife. 2. His institution and appointment of marriage as the means of propagating mankind. 3. For the greater solemnity and comely order of marriage. Adam did not take her of his own head, but God brought her to him. This honour and special favour God vouchsafeth mankind above all other creatures; He Himself, in His own person, maketh the match, and bringeth them together. 4. To dispense His blessing to them. The woman was created on the sixth day, as appeareth (Gen. i.); and it is said that when He had "created them male and female, He blessed them" (ver. 28). He doth enlarge things here, and explaineth what there He had touched briefly. When He had made the woman, He brought her to the man, and blessed them both together; showing thereby that when any enter into this estate, they should take God's blessing along with them, upon whose favour the comfort of this relation doth wholly depend. 5. For a pattern of providence in all after-times. It is worth the observing, that Christ reasoning against polygamy, from ver. 24, compared with Matt. xix. God having abundance of the spirit, as the prophet speaks (Mal. ii. 15), brought the woman to one man, though there was more cause of giving Adam many wives for the speedier peopling of the world, than there could be to any of his posterity. The point which I shall insist on is this:—That marriages are then holily entered into, when the parties take one another out of God's hands. I. I will show you in what sense they are said to take one another out of God's hands. II. Why this is so necessary to be observed. I. For the first, THEY TAKE ONE ANOTHER OUT OF GOD'S HANDS TWO WAYS. 1. When His directions are observed. 2. When His providence is owned and acknowledged. 1. When His directions in His word are observed; and so—(1) As to the choice of parties. (2) As to consent of parents. (3) As to the manner of procuring it, that they labour to gain one another by warrantable, yea, religious ways, that we may lay the foundation of this relation in the fear of God; not by stealth, or carnal allurements, or violent importunities, or deceitful proposals, but by such ways and means as will become the gravity of religion; that weanedness and sobriety that should be in the hearts of believers; that deliberation which a business of such

weight calls for; and that reverence of God, and justice that we owe to all; that seriousness of spirit, and that respect to the glory of God with which all such actions should be undertaken (Col. iii. 17). (4) Especially clearing up our right and title by Christ. Meats, drinks, marriage, they are all sanctified by the word and prayer, and appointed to be received by thanksgiving of them that believe and receive the truth (1 Tim. iv. 3-5). (5) For the end. The general and last end of this, as of every action, must be God's glory (1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17). A Christian's second-table duties and first-table duties should have on them HOLINESS TO THE LORD. All the vessels of Jerusalem must have God's impress. More particularly our increase in godliness and the propagation of the holy seed must be aimed at. 2. When His providence is owned and acknowledged. It is the duty of them that fear God to own Him upon all occasions, especially in such a business. Heathens would not begin such a business without a sacrifice. There is a special providence about marriages. God claimeth the power of match-making to Himself, more than He doth of ordering any other affairs of men—"Riches and honours are an inheritance from our fathers; but a good wife is from the Lord" (Prov. xix. 14). II. WHY IS THIS SO NECESSARY A DUTY? It doth in a great measure appear from what is said already. But farther—1. It will be a great engagement upon us to give God all the glory of the comfort we have in such a relation, when you do more sensibly and explicitly take one another out of God's hands. 2. That we may carry ourselves more holily in our relations, it is good to see God's hand in them. Every relation is a new talent wherewith God intrusteth us to trade for His glory; and to that end we must make conscience to use it. 3. That we may more patiently bear the crosses incident to this state of life if God call us to them. They that launch forth into the world, sail in a troublesome and tempestuous sea, and cannot expect but to meet with a storm before they come to the end of their voyage. The married life hath its comforts, and also its encumbrances and sorrows. Now it will sweeten all our crosses incident to this condition, when we remember we did not rashly enter into it by our own choice, but were led by the fair directure and fair invitation of God's providence; we need not much be troubled at what overtaketh us in the way of our duty, and the relations to which we are called. That hand that sent the trouble will sanctify it, or He will overrule things so that they shall work for our good. If God call us into this estate, He will support us in it. 4. We may with the more confidence apply ourselves to God, and depend on Him for a blessing upon a wife of God's choosing, or a husband of God's choosing. We have access to the throne of grace with more hope, because we have given up ourselves to His direction—"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. iii. 6). 5. It is a help to make us more ready to part with one another when God willeth it. It is the apostle's direction—"The time is short, it remains that those that have wives be as though they had none" (1 Cor. vii. 29); not so as to be defective in our love to them and care over them; no, there is rather to be an excess than a defect here—"Be thou ravished always with her love" (Prov. v. 19); but as to a preparation of heart to keep or lose, if God should see fit, to be contented to part with a dear yoke-fellow, or at least with an humble submission and acquiescence, when God's will is declared; and somewhat of this must be mingled with all our rejoicings, some thoughts of the vanity of the creature.

APPLICATION. I. Let us seek God by earnest prayer when any such matter is in hand. It is a contempt of God, and a kind of laying Him aside, when we dare undertake anything without His leave, counsel, and blessing; and these are the things we are to seek in prayer. 1. His leave. Adam had no interest in Eve till God brought her to him, and bestowed her on him. Every one of us must get a grant of God of all that he hath; the Lord He possesseth the house that we dwell in, the clothes we wear, the food we eat; and so, in the use of all other comforts, we must have a license from God, and take His leave. God is said to have given David the wives that he had into his bosom. 2. His counsel and direction when the case is doubtful and our thoughts are uncertain—"Lean not to thy own understanding" (Prov. iii. 5). We scarce know duties, certainly we cannot foresee events; therefore a man that maketh his bosom his oracle, his wit his counsellor, will choose a mischief to himself, instead of a comfort and a blessing. Therefore we ought chiefly, and first of all, to consult with God, and seek His direction, for He seeth the heart, and foreseeth events. 3. We ask His blessing. God doth not only foresee the event, but orders it; by His wisdom He foreseeth it, and by His powerful providence He bringeth it to pass. Therefore God, that hath the disposal of all events when our direction is over, is to be sought unto for a blessing; for every

comfort cometh the sooner when it is sought in prayer; and whatever God's purposes be, that is our duty. II. Advice to persons that are entering into this relation. 1. Negatively. See that God be no loser by the marriage. 2. Positively. Be sure that God be a gainer. These are the two proffers I have to make to you. 1. Negatively. Let not God be a loser; He never intended to give you gifts to His own wrong. Now that will be—(1) If He be not the only one and the lovely one of your souls. God must not have an image of jealousy set up; He must still be owned as the chiefest good. A wife is the delight of the eyes, but not the idol of the heart. (2) If you be diverted from the earnest pursuit of heavenly things, either by carnal complacency or distracting cares and worldly encumbrances. (3) God would be a loser if you be less resolute in owning God's truth than you were before. Oh, take heed of daubing in religion! We must hate all for Christ (Luke xiv. 26). 2. Positively. Let God be a gainer. (1) By your daily praises, and blessing God for His providence, that hath brought you into this relation—"I obtained favour from the Lord." (2) By living to God in this relation, performing the duties thereof so as your converse may be some lively resemblance of the communion between Christ and His Church (Eph. v. 25-30). (3) By being mutual helps to one another in the best things, by the advancement of piety and godliness. The love of Christ doth not only enforce the husband's duty as an argument, but points forth the right manner of it as a pattern. Christ's love is sanctifying love: so should theirs be, such a love as sheweth itself by sincere and real endeavours to bring about one another's spiritual and eternal good. Love one another, "as heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Peter iii. 7). (*T. Manton, D.D.*) *A preparative to marriage*:—Well might Paul say (Heb. xiii. 4), "marriage is honourable"; for God hath honoured it Himself. It is honourable for the author, honourable for the time, and honourable for the place. Whereas all other ordinances were appointed of God by the hands of men, or the hands of angels (Acts xii. 7; Heb. ii. 2), marriage was ordained by God Himself, which cannot err. No man nor angel brought the wife to the husband, but God Himself (Gen. ii. 12); so marriage hath more honour of God in this than all other ordinances of God beside, because He solemnized it Himself. Then it is honourable for the time; for it was the first ordinance that God instituted, even the first thing which He did, after man and woman were created, and that in the state of innocency, before either had sinned: like the finest flower, which will not thrive but in a clean ground. Then it is honourable for the place; for whereas all other ordinances were instituted out of paradise, marriage was instituted in paradise, in the happiest place, to signify how happy they are that marry in the Lord. As God the Father honoured marriage, so did God the Son, which is called "the Seed of the woman" (Gen. iii. 15); therefore marriage was so honoured among women because of this seed, that when Elizabeth brought forth a son (Luke i. 25), she said that "God had taken away her rebuke," counting it the honour of women to bear children, and, by consequence, the honour of women to be married; for the children which are born out of marriage are the dishonour of women, and called by the shameful name of bastards (Deut. xxiii. 2). As Christ honoured marriage with His birth, so He honoured it with His miracles; for the first miracle which Christ did, He wrought at a marriage in Cana, where He turned the water into wine (John ii. 8). As He honoured it with miracles, so He honoured it with praises; for He compareth the kingdom of God to a wedding (Matt. xxii. 2); and He compareth holiness to a wedding garment (ver. 11); and in the 5th of Canticles He is wedded Himself (Cant. v. 9). We read in Scripture of three marriages of Christ. The first was when Christ and our nature met together. The second is, when Christ and our soul join together. The third is, the union of Christ and His Church. These are Christ's three wives. As Christ honoured marriage, so do Christ's disciples; for John calleth the conjunction of Christ and the faithful a marriage (Rev. xix. 7). And in Rev. xxi. 9, the Church hath the name of a bride, whereas heresy is called an harlot (Rev. xvii. 1). Now it must needs be, that marriage, which was ordained of such an excellent Author, and in such a happy place, and of such an ancient time, and after such a notable order, must likewise have special causes for the ordinance of it. Therefore the Holy Ghost doth show us three causes of this union. One is, the propagation of children, signified in that when Moses saith "He created them male and female" (Gen. ii. 22), not both male nor both female, but one male and the other female; as if He created them fit to propagate other. And, therefore, when He had created them so, to show that propagation of children is one end of marriage, He said unto them, "Increase and multiply" (Gen. i. 28);

that is, bring forth children, as other creatures bring forth their kind. The second cause is to avoid fornication. This Paul signifieth when he saith, "For the avoiding of fornication, let every man have his own wife" (1 Cor. vii. 8). The third cause is to avoid the inconvenience of solitariness, signified in these words, "It is not good for man to be alone"; as though He had said, This life would be miserable and irksome, and unpleasant to man, if the Lord had not given him a wife to company his troubles. If it be not good for man to be alone, then it is good for man to have a fellow; therefore, as God created a pair of all other kinds, so He created a pair of this kind. We say that one is none, because he cannot be fewer than one, he cannot be less than one, he cannot be weaker than one, and therefore the wise man saith, "Woe to him that is alone" (Eccles. iv. 10), that is, he which is alone shall have woe. Thoughts and cares and fears will come to him because he hath none to comfort him, as thieves steal in when the house is empty; like a turtle which hath lost his mate; like one leg when the other is cut off; like one wing when the other is clipped; so had the man been, if the woman had not been joined to him; therefore for mutual society God coupled two together, that the infinite troubles which lie upon us in the world might be eased with the comfort and help one of another, and that the poor in the world might have some comfort as well as the rich; for "the poor man," saith Solomon, "is forsaken of his own brethren" (Prov. xix. 7); yet God hath provided one comfort for him, like Jonathan's armour-bearer, that shall never forsake him (1 Sam. xiv. 7), that is, another self, which is the only commodity (as I may term it) wherein the poor do match the rich; without which some persons should have no helper, no comfort, no friend at all. In Matt. xxii. Christ sheweth that before parties married, they were wont to put on fair and new garments, which were called wedding-garments; a warning unto all which put on wedding-garments to put on truth and holiness too, which so precisely is resembled by that garment more than other. Yet the chiefest point is behind, that is, our duties. The duties of marriage may be reduced to the duties of man and wife, one toward another, and their duties towards their children, and their duty toward their servants. For themselves, saith one, they must think themselves like to birds: the one is the cock, and the other is the hen; the cock flieth abroad to bring in, and the dam sitteth upon the nest to keep all at home. So God hath made the man to travel abroad, and the woman to keep home; and so their nature, and their wit, and their strength are fitted accordingly; for the man's pleasure is most abroad, and the woman's within. In every state there is some one virtue which belongeth to that calling more than other; as justice unto magistrates, and knowledge unto preachers, and fortitude unto soldiers; so love is the marriage virtue which sings music to their whole life. Wedlock is made of two loves, which I may call the first love and the after love. As every man is taught to love God before he be bid to love his neighbour, so they must love God before they can love one another. To show the love which should be between man and wife, marriage is called *conjugium*, which signifieth a knitting or joining together; showing, that unless there be a joining of hearts, and a knitting of affections together, it is not marriage in deed, but in show and name, and they shall dwell in a house like two poisons in a stomach, and one shall ever be sick of another. Therefore, first, that they may love, and keep love one with another, it is necessary that they both love God, and as their love increaseth toward Him, so it shall increase each to other. To begin this concord well, it is necessary to learn one another's natures, and one another's affections, and one another's infirmities, because ye must be helpers, and ye cannot help unless you know the disease. Thus much of their duties in general; now to their several offices. The man may spell his duty out of his name, for he is called "the head" (Eph. v. 23), to show that as the eye, the tongue, and the ear are in the head to direct the whole body, so the man should be stored with wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, and discretion, to direct his whole family; for it is not right that the worse should rule the better, but the better should rule the worse, as the best rules all. The husband saith that his wife must obey him, because he is her better; therefore if he let her be better than himself, he seems to free her from her obedience, and binds himself to obey her. His first duty is called *hearting*, that is, hearty affection. As they are hand-fasted, so they must be heart-fasted; for the eye, and the tongue, and the hand will be her enemies if the heart be not her friend. As Christ draweth all the commandments to love, so may I draw all their duties to love, which is the heart's gift to the bride at her marriage. First, he must choose his love, and then he must love his choice. This is the oil which maketh

all things easy. His next duty to love, is a fruit of his love; that is, to let all things be common between them which were private before. The man and wife are partners, like two oars in a boat; therefore he must divide offices, and affairs, and goods with her, causing her to be feared, and revered, and obeyed of her children and servants, like himself, for she is an under officer in his commonweal, and therefore she must be assisted and borne out like his deputy; as the prince standeth with his magistrates for his own quiet, because they are the legs which bear him up. Lastly, he must tender her as much as all her friends, because he hath taken her from her friends, and covenanted to tender her for them all. To show how he should tender her, Peter saith, "Honour the woman as the weaker vessel" (1 Peter iii. 7). As we do not handle glasses like pots, because they are weaker vessels, but touch them nicely and softly for fear of cracks, so a man must entreat his wife with gentleness and softness, not expecting that wisdom, nor that faith, nor that patience, nor that strength in the weaker vessel, which should be in the stronger; but think when he takes a wife he takes a vineyard, not grapes, but a vineyard to bear him grapes; therefore he must sow it, and dress it, and water it, and fence it, and think it a good vineyard, if at last it brings forth grapes. So he must not look to find a wife without a fault, but think that she is committed to him to reclaim her from her faults; for all are defective. And if he find the proverb true, that in space cometh grace, he must rejoice as much at his wife when she amendeth, as the husbandman rejoiceth when his vineyard beginneth to fructify. So much for husbands. Likewise the woman may learn her duty of her names. They are called goodwives, as goodwife A and goodwife B. Every wife is called a good wife; therefore if they be not good wives, their names do belie them, and they are not worth their titles, but answer to a wrong name, as players do upon a stage. This name pleaseth them well. But besides this, a wife is called a yoke-fellow (Phil. iv. 3), to show that she should help her husband to bear his yoke, that is, his grief must be her grief; and whether it be the yoke of poverty, or the yoke of envy, or the yoke of sickness, or the yoke of imprisonment, she must submit her neck to bear it patiently with him, or else she is not his yoke-fellow, but his yoke; as though she were inflicted upon him for a penalty, like to Job's wife, whom the devil left to torment him when he took away all he had beside (Job ii. 9). Beside a yoke-fellow, she is called a helper (Gen. ii. 18), to help him in his business, to help him in his labours, to help him in his troubles, to help him in his sickness, like a woman-physician, sometime with her strength, and sometime with her counsel; for sometime as God confoundeth the wise by the foolish, and the strong by the weak (1 Cor. i. 27), so He teacheth the wise by the foolish, and helpeth the strong by the weak. Beside a helper, she is called a comforter too; and therefore the man is bid rejoice in his wife (Prov. v. 18); which is as much to say, that wives must be the rejoicing of their husbands, even like David's harp to comfort Saul (1 Sam. xvi. 23). Lastly, we call the wife huswife, that is, house-wife; not a street-wife, like Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 14); nor a field-wife, like Dinah (Gen. xxxiv. 2); but a housewife, to show that a good wife keeps her house; and therefore Paul biddeth Titus to exhort women that they be "chaste, and keeping at home" (Titus ii. 5). Presently after "chaste" he saith "keeping at home," as though homewere chastity's keeper. As it becometh her to keep home, so it becometh her to keep silence, and always speak the best of her head. Others seek their honour in triumph, but she must seek her honour in reverence; for it becometh not any woman to set light by her husband, nor to publish his infirmities. For they say, That is an evil bird that defileth her own nest; and if a wife use her husband so, how may a husband use his wife? Because this is the quality of that sex, to overthwart, and upbraid, and sue the pre-eminence of their husbands, therefore the philosophers could not tell how to define a wife, but call her the contrary to a husband, as though nothing were so cross and contrary to a man as a wife. This is not Scripture, but no slander to many. As David exalted the love of women above all other loves (2 Sam. i. 26), so Solomon mounteth the envy of women above all other envies (Prov. xxi. 19). Stubborn, sullen, taunting, gainsaying, out-facing, with such a bitter humour, that one would think they were molten out of the salt pillar into which Lot's wife was transformed (Gen. xix. 26). We say not all are alike, but this sect hath many disciples. Loth the rib that is in man's side fret or gall him? No more then should she which is made of the rib (Gen. ii. 20). Though a woman be wise, and painful, and have many good parts, yet if she be a shrew, her troublesome jarring in the end will make her honest behaviour unpleasant, as her over-

pinching at last causeth her good housewifery to be evil spoken of. Therefore, although she be a wife, yet sometimes she must observe the servant's lesson: "Not answering again" (Titus ii. 9), and hold her peace to keep the peace. Therefore they which keep silence are well said to hold their peace, because silence oftentimes doth keep the peace when words would break it. To her silence and patience she must add the acceptable obedience which makes a woman rule while she is ruled. This is the wife's tribute to her husband; for she is not called his head, but he is called her head. Thus we have shadowed the man's duty to his wife, and the woman's to her husband. After their duties one to another, they must learn their duties to their family. One compareth the master of the house to the seraphim, which came and kindled the prophet's zeal; so he should go from wife to servants, and from servants to children, and kindle in them the zeal of God, longing to teach his knowledge, as a nurse to empty her breasts. Another saith that a master in his family hath all the offices of Christ, for he must rule, and teach, and pray; rule like a king, and teach like a prophet, and pray like a priest (Rev. v. 10). To show how a godly man should behave himself in his household, when the Holy Ghost speaketh of the conversation of any housekeeper, lightly he saith, that "the man believed with all his household" (Acts xvi. 34; xviii. 8). As Peter being converted, must convert his brethren; so the master being converted, must convert his servants. Lastly, we put the duty towards children, because they come last to their hands. In Latin children are called *pignora*, that is, pledges; as if I should say, a pledge of the husband's love to the wife, and a pledge of the wife's love toward the husband; for there is nothing which doth so knit love between the man and the wife as the fruit of the womb. The first duty is the mother's, that is, to nurse her child at her own breasts, as Sarah did Isaac (Gen. xxi. 7); and therefore Isaiah joined the nurse's name and the mother's name both in one, and called them "nursing mothers"; showing that mothers should be the nurses. The next duty is, "Catechize a child in his youth, and he will remember it when he is old" (Prov. xxii. 6). This is the right blessing which fathers and mothers give to their children, when they cause God to bless them too. If these duties be performed in marriage then I need not speak of divorcement, which is the rod of marriage, and divideth them which were one flesh, as if the body and soul were parted asunder. But because all perform not their wedlock vows, therefore He which appointed marriage hath appointed divorcement, as it were taking our privilege from us when we abuse it. As God hath ordained remedies for every disease, so He hath ordained a remedy for the disease of marriage. The disease of marriage is adultery, and the medicine hereof is divorcement. Moses licensed them to depart for hardness of heart (Matt. xix. 8); but Christ licenseth them to depart for no cause but adultery. If they might be separated for discord, some would make a commodity of strife; but now they are not best to be contentious, for this law will hold their noses together, till weariness make them leave struggling; like two spaniels which are coupled in a chain, at last they learn to go together, because they may not go asunder. As nothing might part friends, but "if thine eye offend thee, pull it out" (Matt. v. 32); that is, thy friend be a tempter; so nothing may dissolve marriage but fornication (Matt. xix. 9), which is the breach of marriage, for marriage is ordained to avoid fornication (1 Cor. vii. 9), and therefore if the condition be broken, the obligation is void. (*H. Smith.*) *Why the creation of woman was deferred to this precise juncture in human history:* — First, man's original unity is the counterpart of the unity of God. He was to be made in the image of God, and after His likeness. If the male and the female had been created at once, an essential feature of the Divine likeness would have been wanting. But, as in the Absolute One there is no duality, whether in sex or in any other respect, so is there none in the original form and constitution of man. Hence we learn the absurdity of those who import into their notions of the deity the distinction of sex, and all the alliances which are involved in a race of gods. Secondly, the natural unity of the first pair, and of the race descended from them, is established by the primary creation of an individual, from whom is derived, by a second creative process, the first woman. The race of man is thus a perfect unity, flowing from a single centre of human life. Thirdly, two remarkable events occur in the experience of man before the formation of the woman; his instalment in the garden as its owner, keeper, and dresser; and his review of the animals as their rational superior, to whom they yield an instinctive homage. By the former he is prepared to provide for the sustenance and comfort of his wife. By the latter, he becomes aware of his power to protect her. Still

farther, by the interview with his Maker in the garden he came to understand language; and by the inspection of the animals to employ it himself. Speech implies the exercise of the susceptible and conceptive powers of the understanding. Thus Adam was qualified to hold intelligent converse with a being like himself. He was competent to be the instructor of his wife in words and things. Again, he had met with his superior in his Creator, his inferiors in the animals; and he was now to meet his equal in the woman. And lastly, by the Divine command his moral sense had been brought into play, the theory of moral obligation had been revealed to his mind, and he was therefore prepared to deal with a moral being like himself, to understand and respect the rights of another, to do unto another as he would have another do to him. It was especially necessary that the sense of right should grow up in his breast, to keep in due check that might in which he excelled, before the weaker and gentler sex was called into being, and entrusted to his charge. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) *Feminine solace*:—Washington Irving likens such a woman to the vine. As the vine, which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it in sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs; so it is beautifully ordered by Providence that woman should be man's stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity—binding up the broken heart.

“ ’Tis woman's to bind up the broken heart,
And soften the bending spirit's smart;
And to light in this world of sin and pain,
The lamp of love, and of joy again.”

Wife-help:—Guelph, the Duke of Bavaria, was besieged in his castle, and compelled to capitulate to the Emperor Conrad. His lady demanded for herself and the other ladies safe conduct to a place of safety, with whatever they could carry. This was granted; and to the astonishment of all, the ladies appeared, carrying their husbands on their backs. Thus wives aided their husbands: and never in the gayest moods in tournament or court did those fair dames look more lovely.

Woman:—Hargrave says that women are the poetry of the world in the same sense as the stars are the poetry of heaven. Clear, light-giving harmonies, women are the terrestrial planets that rule the destinies of mankind. *The word “woman”*:—In English, the qualification “wo,” placed before “man,” indicates merely a difference of sex. In Latin, she is called the *mulier*, a word derived from *mollior*—softer, more tender. In Hebrew *ish* signifies “man,” and the addition of a terminal vowel makes it *isha*—a woman. In all three of these languages, the words used are also applied to a “wife.” In Turkish, however, the name *karu*—woman—is never applied to a wife; she is called *ev*, which signifies “house”; while the Armenians call her *undantik*, or the keeper at home, a word which includes the children; they also call the wife *gin*, i.e., a woman. (*Things not Generally Known.*)

Ver. 24. **Cleave unto his wife.**—*Marriage*:—I. THE NATURE AND END OF MARRIAGE. It is a vow of perpetual and indissoluble friendship. 1. It has long been observed that friendship is to be confined to one: or that, to use the words of the axiom, “He that hath friends, has no friend.” That ardour of kindness, that unbounded confidence, that unsuspecting security which friendship requires, cannot be extended beyond a single object. 2. It is remarked, that friendship amongst equals is the most lasting, and perhaps there are few causes to which more unhappy marriages are to be ascribed than a disproportion between the original condition of the two persons. 3. Strict friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions. Whoever is to choose a friend is to consider first the resemblance or the dissimilitude of tempers. How necessary this caution is to be urged as preparatory to marriage, the misery of those who neglect it sufficiently evinces. 4. Friends, says the proverbial observation, “have everything in common.” This is likewise implied in the marriage covenant. Matrimony admits of no separate possessions, no incommunicable interests. 5. There is yet another precept equally relating to friendship and to marriage, a precept which, in either case, can never be too strongly inculcated, or too scrupulously observed; “Contract friendship only with the good.” Virtue is the first quality to be considered in the choice of a friend, and yet more in a fixed and irrevocable choice. II. BY WHAT MEANS THE END OF MARRIAGE IS TO BE ATTAINED. The duties, by the practice of which a married life is

to be made happy, are the same with those of friendship, but exalted to higher perfection. Love must be more ardent, and confidence without limits. It is therefore necessary on each part to deserve that confidence by the most unshaken fidelity, and to preserve their love unextinguished by continual acts of tenderness: not only to detest all real, but seeming offences; and to avoid suspicion and guilt, with almost equal solicitude. (*John Taylor, LL.D.*) *Marriage*.—I. MARRIAGE OF MAN AND WOMAN IS AN ORDINANCE OF GOD HIMSELF. And is therefore called the covenant of God (Prov. ii. 17). By which He is said to join the married persons together (Matt. xix. 6). Of which conjunction especially the apostle speaks, when he warns every man to walk as God hath called him (1 Cor. vii. 17). Neither in reason can it be otherwise; seeing—1. We are God's and not our own; and therefore none of us having power over his own person, can be disposed of otherwise than He directs (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). 2. We bring forth children unto God (Mal. ii. 15). Which He therefore calls His own (Ezek. xvi. 21), as born unto Him. II. MARRIED PERSONS MUST BE WHOLLY AND ENTIRELY ONE TO ANOTHER. According to the form of that stipulation mentioned (Hos. iii. 3), which extends unto all conjugal duties only. One may love other friends, but only his wife with a conjugal love and affection, rejoicing in her alone (Prov. v. 18, 19); dwelling with her as an inseparable companion; advising and jointly labouring with her for upholding and governing of the family (1 Cor. vii. 3) and the like—in those the married persons must be wholly one to another. But so that they also, as well as others, must still hold themselves obliged to those general duties of love, due reverence, and service, unto all other persons, according to their several relations. III. MARRIED PERSONS ARE NOT ONLY TO REFRAIN THEMSELVES FROM ALL OTHERS, BUT BESIDES TO ADHERE AND CLEAVE FIRMLY ONE TO ANOTHER. (*J. White, M.A.*) *The unity of husband and wife*.—Husband and wife should be like two candles burning together, which make the house more lightsome; or like two fragrant flowers bound up in one nosegay, that augment its sweetness; or like two well-tuned instruments, which, sounding together, make the more melodious music. Husband and wife—what are they but as two springs meeting, and so joining their streams that they make but one current? (*W. Secker.*) *Two hallowed institutions*.—Two hallowed institutions have descended to us from the days of primeval innocence, the wedding and the sabbath. The former indicates communion of the purest and most perfect kind between equals of the same class. The latter implies communion of the highest and holiest kind between the Creator and the intelligent creature. The two combined, import communion with each other in communion with God. Wedded union is the sum and type of every social tie. It gives rise and scope to all the nameless joys of home. It is the native field for the cultivation of all the social virtues. It provides for the due framing and checking of the overgrowth of interest in self, and for the gentle training and fostering of a growing interest in others. It unfolds the graces and charms of mutual love, and imparts to the susceptible heart all the peace and joy, all the light and fire, all the frankness and life of conscious and constant purity and good-will. Friendship, brotherly-kindness and love, are still hopeful and sacred names among mankind. Sabbath-keeping lifts the wedded pair, the brethren, the friends, the one-minded, up to communion with God. The joy of achievement is a feeling common to God and man. The commemoration of the auspicious beginning of a holy and happy existence will live in man while memory lasts. The anticipation also of joyful repose after the end of a work well done will gild the future while hope survives. Thus the idea of the Sabbath spans the whole of man's existence. History and prophecy commingle in its peaceful meditations, and both are linked with God. God is; He is the author of all being and the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. This is the noble lesson of the Sabbath. Each seventh day is well spent in attending to the realization of these great thoughts. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

Ver. 25. Not ashamed.—*Nakedness without shame*.—There they stood, just as they came from the hands of God. They did not need to blush; they felt no shame. It is sin that has connected nakedness and shame together. No sin, no shame. There is no blush upon an angel's brow. Unfallen man had the unashamed nakedness of innocence; but with the Fall this has passed away, not to be returned to, even under redemption, but to be replaced by something higher, the glorious raiment of a righteousness that is unfading and divine. Unfallen man needed no covering, and asked for none; but fallen man, under the bitter consciousness of the unworthy and unseemly condition to which sin has reduced him, as

unfit for God, or angels, or man to look upon, cries out for covering—covering such as will hide his shame even from the eye of God. Hence He who undertook to provide this covering, must bear the shame. And He has borne it—all the shame of hanging naked on the cross; the shame of a sinner; the shame of being made the song of the drunkard; the shame of being despised and rejected of men; the shame of being treated as an outcast, one unfit for either God or man to look upon—unfit not only to live, but even to die within the gates of the holy city (Heb. xiii. 11, 12). All that shame has He borne for us, that we might inherit His glory. He stooped to the place of shame below, that we might obtain the place of honour in the better paradise above. Thus walked our first parents amid the groves of a paradise that had not then been lost. Thus dwelt they in its bowers as a home, and worshipped in it as a sanctuary. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *What was man's glory is now his shame*:—That very state of body which was, in Adam and Eve, their highest glory, would be, in us, should we be seen in that state, our deepest shame. It was the very glory of man, and would have continued to be so, had he remained in his original innocency, that while all the other animals had need of hairs, feathers, and scales, &c., to cover their unsightliness, man alone was created with that dignity and beauty of body, that he could appear, uncovered, in the glory of his created nakedness. But all this glory is lost. We are now compelled, not only for necessary protection, but for the sake of avoiding the deepest turpitude, to cover our bodies with more study and care than any other animals of God's creation. For they all come into the world covered by nature. (*M. Luther.*)

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 1-6. Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field.—The first great temptation:—I. THAT THE HUMAN SOUL IS FREQUENTLY TEMPTED BY A DIRE FOE OF UNUSUAL SUBTLETY. 1. The tempter of human souls is subtle. 2. Malignant. 3. Courageous. II. THAT THE TEMPTER SEEKS TO ENGAGE THE HUMAN SOUL IN CONVERSATION AND CONTROVERSY. 1. He seeks to hold controversy with human souls, that he may render them impatient of the moral restrictions of life. 2. That he may insidiously awaken within them thoughts derogatory to the character of God. 3. That he may lead them to yield to the lust of the eye. III. THAT THE TEMPTER SEEKS TO MAKE ONE SOUL HIS ALLY IN THE SEDUCTION OF ANOTHER. IV. THAT THE HUMAN SOUL SOON AWAKENS FROM THE SUBTLE VISION OF TEMPTATION TO FIND THAT IT HAS BEEN DELUDED AND RUINED (see ver. 7). 1. That the human soul soon awakes from the charming vision of temptation. Temptation is a charming vision to the soul. The tree looks gigantic. The fruit looks rich and ripe, and its colour begins to glow more and yet more, then it is plucked and eaten. Then comes the bitter taste. The sad recollection. The moment of despair. To Adam and Eve sin was a new experience. No man is the better for the woeful experience of evil. 2. That the human soul, awakening from the vision of temptation, is conscious of moral nakedness. Sin always brings shame, a shame it deeply feels but cannot hide. How sad the destitution of a soul that has fallen from God. 3. That the human soul awakening from the vision of temptation, conscious of its moral nakedness, seeks to provide a clothing of its own device. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to make them aprons. Sin must have a covering. It is often ingenious in making and sewing it together. But its covering is always unworthy and futile. Man cannot of himself clothe his soul. Only the righteousness of Christ can effectually hide his moral nakedness. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *How could God justly permit satanic temptation?*—We see in this permission not injustice but benevolence. 1. Since Satan fell without external temptation, it is probable that man's trial would have been substantially the same, even though there had been no Satan to tempt him. 2. In this case, however, man's fall would perhaps have been without what now constitutes its single mitigating circumstance. Self-originated sin would have made man himself a Satan. 3. As, in the conflict with temptation, it is an advantage to objectify evil under the image of corruptible flesh, so it is an advantage to meet it as embodied in a personal and seducing spirit. 4. Such temptation has in itself no tendency to lead the soul astray. If the soul be holy, temptation may only confirm it in virtue.

Only the evil will, self-determined against God, can turn temptation into an occasion of ruin. As the sun's heat has no tendency to wither the plant rooted in deep and moist soil, but only causes it to send down its roots the deeper and to fasten itself the more strongly, so temptation has in itself no tendency to pervert the soul. The same temptation which occasions the ruin of the false disciple stimulates to sturdy growth the virtue of the true Christian. Contrast with the temptation of Adam the temptation of Christ. Adam had everything to plead for God, the garden and its delights, while Christ had everything to plead against Him, the wilderness and its privations. But Adam had confidence in Satan, while Christ had confidence in God; and the result was in the former case defeat, in the latter victory. How could a penalty so great be justly connected with disobedience to so slight a command. To this question we may reply: 1. So slight a command presented the best test of the spirit of obedience. 2. The external command was not arbitrary or insignificant in its substance. It was a concrete presentation to the human will of God's claim to eminent domain or absolute ownership. 3. The sanction attached to the command shows that man was not left ignorant of its meaning or importance. 4. The act of disobedience was therefore the revelation of a will thoroughly corrupted and alienated from God—a will given over to ingratitude, unbelief, ambition, and rebellion. The motive to disobedience was not appetite, but the ambition to be as God. The outward act of eating the forbidden fruit was only the thin edge of the wedge, behind which lay the whole mass—the fundamental determination to isolate self and to seek personal pleasure regardless of God and His law. So the man under conviction for sin commonly clings to some single passion or plan, only half-conscious of the fact that opposition to God in one thing is opposition in all. *Consequences of the fall, so far as respects Adam:—*1. Death. This death was twofold. It was partly—(1) Physical death, or the separation of the soul from the body. The seeds of death, naturally implanted in man's constitution, began to develop themselves the moment that access to the tree of life was denied him. Man from that moment was a dying creature. But this death was also, and chiefly—(2) Spiritual death, or the separation of the soul from God. In this are included—(a) Negatively, the loss of man's moral likeness to God, or that underlying tendency of his whole nature toward God which constituted his original righteousness. (b) Positively, the depraving of all those powers which, in their united action with reference to moral and religious truth, we call man's moral and religious nature; or, in other words, the blinding of his intellect, the corruption of his affections, and the enslavement of his will. Seeking to be a god, man became a slave; seeking independence, he ceased to be master of himself. In fine, man no longer made God the end of his life, but chose self instead. While he retained the power of self-determination in subordinate things, he lost that freedom which consisted in the power of choosing God as his ultimate aim, and became fettered by a fundamental inclination of his will toward evil. The intuitions of the reason were abnormally obscured, since these intuitions, so far as they are concerned with moral and religious truth, are conditioned upon a right state of the affections; and—as a necessary result of this obscuring of reason—conscience, which, as the moral judiciary of the soul, decides upon the basis of the law given to it by reason, became perverse in its deliverances. Yet this inability to judge or act aright, since it was a moral inability springing ultimately from will, was itself hateful and condemnable. 2. Positive and formal exclusion from God's presence. This included—(1) The cessation of man's former familiar intercourse with God, and the setting up of outward barriers between man and his Maker (cherubim and sacrifice). (2) Banishment from the garden, where God had specially manifested His presence. Eden was perhaps a spot reserved, as Adam's body had been, to show what a sinless world would be. This positive exclusion from God's presence, with the sorrow and pain which it involved, may have been intended to illustrate to man the nature of that eternal death from which he now needed to seek deliverance. (*A. H. Strong, D.D.*) *The temptation:—*Observe, in general, its nature and subtility.—1. He concealed his true character as the enemy of God. He appears to pay a deference to the Creator, not presuming to insinuate any question about His right to give laws, such laws as seemed good in His sight, to His intelligent creatures. He does not begin to tell of his own fall, and to speak boastfully of his own rebellion. He pretends great regard and friendly wishes for them, and at the same time carefully conceals his enmity against God. 2. He assails Eve, as would appear, when alone; in the absence of Adam. He thus took her at the greatest disadvantage, knowing well that in such a case "two

are better than one"; that what was yielded by one might have been resisted by them both. 3. There is a probability, amounting as nearly as possible to certainty, that he assaulted her at a moment when she was near the tree, so that there might be no length of time allowed her for reflection and deliberation. 4. Mark the ingredients included in the temptation itself. There is, first, an insinuation of unkindness—of an unnecessary and capricious restriction, put in the form of a question of surprise, as if it were a thing he found difficult to believe, and for which he could imagine no reason. There was, secondly, a direct contradiction of the assurance she gave him of the consequence of eating, as having been intimated to them by Jehovah. (*R. Wardlaw, D.D.*) *The nature of the test to which Adam's allegiance was put*:—1. So far as we are capable of judging, it was a thing in itself indifferent, having nothing in it of an intrinsically moral character. Now, in this view of it, it was peculiarly appropriate. It was a test of subjection to the Divine will; a test, simply considered, of obedience to God. 2. It has been remarked that the circumstances in which Adam was, at his creation, were such as to remove him from all temptations to, and, in some instances, from all possibility of, committing those sins which now most frequently abound amongst his posterity; "which is one thought of considerable importance to vindicate the Divine wisdom in that constitution under which he was placed." 3. We further observe that it was specially appropriate in this, that, from the comparatively little and trivial character of the action prohibited, it taught the important lesson that the real guilt of sin lay in its principle, the principle of rebellion against God's will; not in the extent of the mischief done, or of the consequences arising out of it. 4. I might notice also its precision. The language of Dr. Dwight on another part of this subject may be fairly applied here. "It brought the duty which he (Adam) was called to perform up to his view in the most distinct manner possible, and rendered it too intelligible to be mistaken. No room was left for doubt or debate. The object in question was a sensible object, perfectly defined, and perfectly understood." No metaphysical or philosophical discussion was demanded or admitted. 5. A test of this particular kind being once admitted to be suitable, the one actually selected was one which, from its obvious connection with the condition in which our first parents were placed, was, in the highest degree, natural. "Considering they were placed in a garden, what so natural, what so suitable to their situation, as forbidding them to eat of the fruit of a certain tree in that garden? The liberal grant of food was the extent of their liberty; this single limitation the test of their obedience." 6. It was, besides, an easy test. It was neither any mighty thing they were to do, nor any mighty indulgence they were to deny themselves, that was made the criterion of their subjection to God. (*Ibid.*) *Observations*:—I. IT IS THE USUAL CUSTOM OF SATAN TO ATTEMPT MEN BEFORE THEY BE CONFIRMED, AND SETTLED IN A COURSE OF GODLINESS. II. SATAN CONTRIVES MISCHIEF, EVEN AGAINST SUCH AS NEVER PROVOKED HIM. Hope not for peace with wicked men (who being Satan's seed, must needs resemble his nature, as our Saviour testifies they do (John viii. 44), seeing a good man's peace with them is—1. Impossible, because of the contrariety between good and evil men every way. As,—(1) In their very disposition a good and wicked man are an abomination one to another (Prov. xxix. 27). (2) And are employed in the service of contrary masters, Christ and Belial (2 Cor. vi. 15). (3) They follow, and are guided by contrary rules, the law of sin (as the apostle terms it, Rom. vii. 23), and the law of righteousness, as God's law is termed (Psa. cxix. 172). (4) And are carried in all their ways and actions to contrary ends: whence it necessarily follows that they must continually cross one another in all the course of their conversation. III. NO PLACE NOR EMPLOYMENT CAN FREE US FROM SATAN'S ASSAULTS. IV. THOUGH SATAN BE THE AUTHOR AND PERSUADER TO EVERY SINFUL MOTION, YET HE LOVES NOT TO BE SEEN IN IT. In casting of evil thoughts into the heart, he makes use of inward and indiscernable suggestions; that though we find the motion in our hearts, yet we cannot discover how they entered into our minds. Thus he stirred up David to number the people (1 Chron. xxi. 1), entered into Judas (Luke xxii. 3), was a lying spirit in the mouth of Zedekiah, though he knew not which way he entered into him (1 Kings xxii. 23, 24). But oftentimes he makes use of some outward instruments by which he conveys his counsels, sometimes taking on him the shape of unreasonable creatures, as he always doth in dealing with witches and conjurers, and as we see he dealt with Eve in this place, although more usually he makes use of men to beguile men by, as he did in tempting Ahab by Jezebel his wife (1 Kings xxi. 25), and by his false prophet. V. SATAN USUALLY MAKES CHOICE

OF THOSE INSTRUMENTS WHICH HE FINDS FITTEST FOR THE COMPASSING OF HIS OWN WICKED ENDS. Thus he makes use of the wise and learned to persuade, of men of power and authority to command, and to compel men to evil practices, of beautiful women to allure to lust, of great men to countenance, and of men of strength and power to exercise violence and oppression. And this he doth upon a double reason. 1. That whereas God hath therefore given great abilities to some above others, to enable them the better for His service, that He might have the more honour thereby, Satan, as it were, to despite God the more, turns his own weapons against himself to dishonour him all he can in that wherein he seeks, and out of which he ought to receive his greatest glory. 2. Necessity enforceth him to make the best choice he can of able instruments, because carrying men in sinful courses, he must needs have the help of strong means, the work being difficult in itself, as crossing all God's ways. VI. CUNNING AND SUBTILE PERSONS ARE DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS TO DECEIVE, AND THEREBY TO DO MISCHIEF. Such a one was Jonadab, to show Amnon the way to defile his own sister (2 Sam. xiii). Achitophel to further Absalom's treason against his own father (2 Sam. xv. and xvi. 23). Such were the scribes and Pharisees, our Saviour's enemies, and murderers at last, whom He everywhere taxeth for their pride, covetousness, and subtle dissimulation: with whom we may join Elymas the sorcerer, full of all subtilty, whom the devil made use of, to turn away the people's hearts from receiving Paul's ministry. But what are those to Satan himself, that sets them all on work, called the old serpent, more subtle, and consequently more dangerously mischievous than all his agents? VII. NO ADVANTAGE CAN ASSURE A CHILD OF GOD FROM THE ASSAULTS AND TEMPTATIONS OF SATAN. VIII. OUR WEAKNESS IS SATAN'S ADVANTAGE. IX. SOLITARINESS IS OFTEN A SNARE. 1. It yields advantage to temptations (as appears in David's entangling himself with lust after Bath-sheba when he was alone); whence it was, that our Saviour, to give Satan all the advantage that might be, that thereby He might make His victory over him the more glorious, went out to encounter with him in the solitary wilderness. 2. Solitariness gives the greater opportunity to commit sin unespied of men; an advantage upon which Joseph's mistress attempts him to commit adultery with her (Gen. xxxix. 11, 12). 3. It deprives men of help, by advice and counsel to withstand the temptation. So, Eccl. iv. 10, 12. 4. Man was ordained for society, and fitted with abilities for that purpose, and as he is most serviceable that way, so he is most safe, as being secured by God's protection in that way and employment, to which the Lord hath assigned him. X. SATAN'S MAIN END IS MAN'S DESTRUCTION, BY TURNING AWAY HIS HEART FROM GOD. XI. IT IS USUAL WITH SATAN AND HIS INSTRUMENTS TO PRETEND THE GOOD OF THOSE WHOM THEY INTEND WHOLLY TO DESTROY. XII. SATAN AND HIS AGENTS IN TEMPTING MEN TO SIN, ARE VERY WARY IN DISCOVERING THEIR FULL INTENTIONS AT FIRST, TILL THEY SEE HOW THEY WILL BE ENTERTAINED. XIII. DISCRETION AND WAINNESS IN MEN'S ACTIONS OUGHT NOT TO HINDER THE EFFECTUAL PROSECUTION OF THAT WHICH THEY INTEND. XIV. THE FORGETTING OF GOD'S MERCIES IS A GREAT MEANS TO TAKE OFF A MAN'S HEART FROM CLEAVING TO HIM. XV. IT IS A DANGEROUS SNARE TO A MAN TO HAVE HIS EYES TOO MUCH FIXED UPON HIS WANTS. XVI. THE NATURE OF MAN, BY THE ART AND POLICY OF SATAN, IS APT TO BE CARRIED AGAINST ALL RESTRAINT AND SUBJECTION. XVII. AMBIGUOUS AND DOUBTFUL EXPRESSIONS MAY BE, AND MANY TIMES ARE DANGEROUS SNARES. If they be purposely used. As—1. Betraying an ill mind and affection in him that proposeth them, seeing men that think well and sincerely have no cause to cover their intentions with the darkness of doubtful terms. 2. And being dangerous means to lead men into error, if they be not wisely and heedfully observed. (*J. White, M.A.*) *But why did God give Adam this law, seeing God did foresee that Adam would transgress it?*—I. It was Adam's fault that he did not keep the law; God gave him a stock of grace to trade with, but he of himself broke. II. Though God foresaw Adam would transgress, yet that was not a sufficient reason that Adam should have no law given him; for, by the same reason, God should not have given His written word to men, to be a rule of faith and manners, because He foresaw that some would not believe, and others would be profane. Shall not laws be made in the land, because some break them? III. God, though He foresaw Adam would break the law, He knew how to turn it to a greater good, in sending Christ. The first covenant being broken, He knew how to establish a second, and a better. (*T. Watson.*) *The woman and the serpent*:—I. THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD. Among the maxims of this wisdom are these—1. That happiness is the end of human existence. 2. That nature is a sufficient source of happiness. 3.

That man's chief happiness lies in forbidden objects. 4. That God is what we fancy or desire Him to be. II. THE QUALITIES OF SIN. 1. The elements of all sin are here—sensuality, covetousness, ambition. 2. Sin originates in unbelief. 3. It wears a specious appearance of goodness. III. THE RESULTS OF SIN. It—1. Transforms its victims into Satanic incarnations. 2. Reveals its own deceptiveness. 3. Covers its victims with confusion. (*J. A. Macdonald.*) *Little sins, if not prevented, bring on greater, to the ruin of the soul:—*Thieves, when they go to rob a house, if they cannot force the doors, or that the wall is so strong that they cannot break through, then they bring little boys along with them, and these they put in at the windows, who are no sooner in, but they unbolt the doors and let in the whole company of thieves. And thus Satan, when by greater sins he cannot tell how to enter the soul, then he puts on and makes way by lesser, which, insensibly having got entrance, set open the doors of the eyes and the doors of the ears, and then comes in the whole rabble: there they take up their quarters, there, like unruly soldiers, they rule, domineer, and do what they list, to the ruin of the soul so possessed. (*J. Spencer.*) *The great danger of not keeping close to God's Word:—*It is a thing very well known in the great and populous city of London, that when children, or some of bigger growth newly come out of the country, and so not well acquainted with the streets, are either lost or found straying from their home, there is a sort of lewd, wicked people (commonly called "spirits") that presently fasten upon them, and, by falsehood and fair language, draw them further out of their way, then sell them to foreign plantations, to the great grief of their parents and friends, who, in all likelihood, never afterwards hear what is become of them. Thus it is that, when men and women are found straggling from God their Father, the Church their mother, and refuse to be led by the good guidance of the blessed Spirit—when they keep not to the Law and to the Testimony, nor stick close to the Word of God, which is in itself a lantern to their feet and a light unto their paths—then no marvel if they meet with wicked spirits, seducers and false teachers, that lead them captive at their will, and that, not receiving the truth in the love of the truth, God gives them over to strong delusions, to believe a lie. (*Ibid.*) *The serpent:—*Here is the devil—that apostate spirit—that accused being—that arch rebel—that daring adversary of God—that merciless foe of man. Eden's serpent truly is the devil. His work declares him. God's Word denounces him. 1. The devil is a real person. This relation is no myth—no dream—no vision—no fable—no allegory. It narrates the real conduct of a real person. Works prove a workman. Acts show an agent. So real performances stamp a real devil. Watch then, and pray. He is always personally near; for he "walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. v. 8). Bar the portals of your heart. He seeks to make that heart his personal home. He is the "spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2). 2. The devil is a hater of God. Who hates God most? Surely he who most contravenes His will. Of the devil's antecedent rebellion nothing should be said, for nothing can be proved. But here a patent fact evidences his enmity. He aims directly to upset God's plans. He arms himself in the panoply of bold opposition. Thus he schemes; thus he uplifts his arm boldly to fight against God. See, then, how he hates God. Reader, you profess to love God. Where is your evidence? Do you abhor the fiend, who from the beginning has strained his every power to subvert God's kingdom? 3. The devil is a hater of man. Who hates man most? Surely he who most contrives his misery. In Eden there was sweet bliss. Every faculty was the inlet of God. Every thought—full of Him—was only joy. Satan beholds and writhes. What! shall man share the peace which he has lost; and joy in joys, which never can be his again? Such bliss is torture to him. He will not rest till he uproot it. Sad that the sons of men should lend their ears so gladly to their deadliest foe, and drink so readily this viper's poison! What madness to court the embrace of such an enemy—to admit the sure murderer to our abode—to open the door to the known robber! 4. The devil is most daring. Truly nothing daunts him. His case is hopeless, therefore he is reckless. 5. The devil is consummate in skill. He watches for the fit opportunity; and then applies the fit snare. 6. The devil shrinks not from the blackest sin. His first appearance shows that there is no iniquity so foul, but he will handle it; no depth of evil so profound, but he will fathom it. He commences with trampling down all truth. "Ye shall not surely die." He rises upon earth the meridian orb of crime. He blushes not—nor trembles—nor pauses—nor scruples. His earliest words are the lie of lies. So now he allures each victim to the extremest extremity of evil. 7. The devil has awful power. Weak agents fail.

Difficulties baffle them. But he is not baffled. His first victory was hard to win. But he quickly won it. Reader, beware. All his mighty arts plot your destruction. (*Dean Law.*) *Original state of man:*—Now, in respect of this I cannot but believe that we often impose upon ourselves, and cherish a picture which is not consonant with the reality, and foster an illusion which is not a little heightened and strengthened by the strong language commonly used in speaking or writing of man's condition in paradise as one of absolute perfection. From such language we are apt to carry away the notion that Adam was a being not only physically complete and perfect, but also a being whose intellectual and moral nature was in its highest degree developed,—a being, in short, to whom nothing needed to be added to render him perfect in all his parts. Along with this, we are apt to fancy that his condition in paradise was one of the most perfect felicity which the human nature is capable of enjoying. Now, that this is an illusive view of man's primitive condition, will, I think, appear from the following considerations: 1. On a mere general survey, and looking at man simply in his physical and intellectual aspect, it must strike one that the highest state of man is not and cannot be that of a naked animal, with nothing to do but to keep a garden, already richly furnished with all that is "pleasant to the eye and good for food." It is inconceivable that with capacities for thought and work, such as man even in the lowest state of civilization is seen to possess, the perfection of his nature and his supreme felicity can have been realized in a state of such simplicity and in a sphere so limited as that which paradise afforded to our first parents. 2. It must also, I think, strike one that if Adam was the perfect being intellectually and morally he is often represented as having been, it is inconceivable that he should have fallen before so slight a temptation, or yielded to so trifling an impulse as that by which he was led to transgress the Divine prohibition. 3. The law of man's nature is that he reaches perfection only by a slow process of growth and gradual development, secured through the due exercise of his faculties. This is inseparable from his constitution as a free intelligent agent. That God could create an intelligent being from the first absolutely perfect, so that he neither needed to become nor could become more complete either intellectually or morally than he was at the moment of his creation, is not to be denied, for with God all things are possible. But such a being would not be like any of those whom God has formed. It was not so that God made man. Man, as he came from the hand of his Maker, was a free, intelligent, self-governing agent, capable of development, and needing experience, trial, and use in order to attain both the proper growth of his physical and mental faculties, and the strengthening, maturing, and perfecting of his moral nature. Of every such being it is in a very important sense true that he is his own maker. From God he receives the faculties and capacities by which he is to be enabled to fulfil the functions of his position; but he must himself use these, and use them wisely and well, if he is really to advance in culture and rise towards the perfection of his being. Now, we have no reason to believe that it was otherwise with our first parents. Their nature was the same as ours, and it is to be presumed that the same law applied to them in this respect as to us. They could reach perfection only by the continuous use of the faculties they possessed. It would seem even that their moral perceptions needed the discipline of evil before it could be fully developed; for it was after they had sinned that God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil," i.e., to make moral distinctions, to discern between good and evil (*Gen. iii. 22*). Not that they needed personally to sin in order to attain to this, but that it was only by experience that they could arrive at an apprehension of the distinction between good and evil. And as it was only by experience that their moral nature could be fully matured, so we may safely affirm of their whole nature that it could reach perfection only by the free and intelligent use of those faculties, physical, intellectual, and moral, with which God had endowed them. "Mere animal natures are finished from the first; God took everything that concerned them upon Himself, and left them nothing to do. But it was His will that man should be His fellow-worker in the great feat of his own creation, and thereby in the completion of all creation; the Father left the mighty work unfinished, so to speak, until the child should set his seal on it." We must think of man, then, in his first estate, as he came from the hand of his Creator, not as a perfect, fully-matured being, but rather as a man-child,—a man with noble capacities, but these as yet undeveloped, and with everything to learn—an innocent, pure, guileless being, with no bias to evil, without any knowledge of evil, with affections tending naturally to good, and with a soul capable of rising to a freedom like that of God,

who is of purer eyes than to behold sin, and who cannot be tempted of evil. Adam was placed in paradise as in a school, a training-place suited to a beginner, and where the lessons and the discipline were such as his almost infantile condition required. (*W. L. Alexander, D.D.*) *Probation, temptation, and fall of man:*—

1. The probation. (1) This assumed the form of a restriction upon their absolute right to do as they would with the place in which God had placed them. (2) To some it has appeared as if there was something in this arrangement unworthy of the dignity of the parties involved in it, or unbecoming the wisdom and beneficence of Him to whom it is ascribed; and hence doubts have been cast on the historical integrity of this part of the Mosaic narrative. 1. And, first, there are some who seem to stumble at the littleness of the trial to which man was thus exposed, and on which such mighty results were made to depend. If so, they must be prepared to object to one of the most manifest of those laws under which this world is administered; for nothing can be more obvious and certain than that the mightiest and most permanent effects are constantly resulting from the most apparently trivial and transient causes. Or do they object to so feeble a test of man's obedience being imposed? If this be their meaning, it is obvious to reply that so much the more was the arrangement favourable to man, and therefore beneficent and gracious. The more insignificant the self-denial required in order to obedience, the easier the obedience and the more probable the success of the probationer. Never, we may say, was a moral experiment conducted under circumstances more favourable to the subject of it. 2. As others advance this objection, it assumes the shape of a protest against the dishonour which it is alleged is done to God by the representation of Him as a being who would make a condition of spiritual advantage dependent on an external act. A mere physical act as such has no moral character at all; and though it may be the index of a man's moral state or tendencies, it is not, nor ever can be, an adequate test of them. The test to which Adam and Eve were subjected was not so much whether they would eat or not eat this particular fruit, but whether they would respect and obey or neglect and transgress God's prohibition. It was not, therefore, on any mere external act that man's fate depended; it was on such an act as connected with, flowing from, and giving evidence of a particular state of mind. The hinge in Adam's testing turned really not so much on his eating or abstaining from this fruit or that, but on his obeying or transgressing God's commandment. Was such a test unfair to man? Was it unworthy of God? 3. Another form in which the objection to the Mosaic account of the trial of our first parents is presented is that in which stress is laid on the purely positive and apparently arbitrary character of the test by which their obedience was to be tried. This was the only arrangement possible; for how is the virtue of a sinless being to be tested but by means of some positive precept? In such a being moral truth is so perfectly a part of the inner life, that it is only when a positive duty is enjoined that the mind comes to a consciousness of objective law and extrinsic government so as to render obedience. But even supposing a moral test could have been proposed, was it not much more in Adam's favour that his obedience should have been tested by a positive enactment? What God required of him was thus clearly and unmistakably brought before him. 4. Some profound thinkers have started the doubt whether it be possible for a limited intelligence, left to the freedom of its own will, to avoid transgressing the boundaries of duty, and so falling into sin. Without entering at present into so difficult a speculation, we may admit that a limited intelligence is, from the very fact of its limitation, very likely to be exposed to a strong inducement from mere curiosity, not to speak of other motives, to pass beyond the limits within which it may be confined. What lies on the other side of this barrier which I am forbidden to pass? Why am I forbidden to pass it? What will be the result to me if I do pass it? These and such like questionings, working in the mind, are very likely to result in a daring attempt to remove the barrier, or to overleap it, and thereby, if it be a moral barrier, to plunge into sin. Obviously, therefore, the kindest and best arrangement for man in his state of primeval probation was one which should reduce the action of such provocative curiosity to the lowest possible form, which should hem him in by no vague, mystic, uncertain prohibition, but by one perfectly single and intelligible, and which should leave him in no doubt as to the certain misery into which he would bring himself if he suffered any motive to carry him beyond the limits which that prohibition prescribed. Such an arrangement the wisdom and the goodness of God instituted for our first parents in their probationary state; their continuance in happiness was made to depend on their submission to one simple and most

intelligible restriction; they had but to refrain from the fruit of one tree, while of all the others they might freely eat; and they knew beforehand what the consequences would be of their violating this restriction. (*Ibid.*) *Eastern ideas regarding the serpent*:—1. Almost throughout the East, the serpent was used as an emblem of the evil principle, of the spirit of disobedience and contumacy. A few exceptions only can be discovered. The Phœnicians adored that animal as a beneficent genius; and the Chinese consider it as a symbol of superior wisdom and power, and ascribe to the kings of heaven (*tien-hoangs*) bodies of serpents. Some other nations fluctuated in their conceptions regarding the serpent. The Egyptians represented the eternal spirit Kneph, the author of all good, under the mythic form of that reptile; they understood the art of taming it, and embalmed it after death; but they applied the same symbol for the god of revenge and punishment (Tithrambo), and for Typhon, the author of all moral and physical evil; and in the Egyptian symbolical alphabet the serpent represents subtlety and cunning, lust and sensual pleasure. In Greek mythology, it is certainly, on the one hand, the attribute of Ceres, of Mercury, and of Æsculapius, in their most beneficent qualities; but it forms, on the other hand, a part of the terrible Furies or Eumenides: it appears, in the form of Python, as a fearful monster, which the arrows of a god only were able to destroy; and it is the most hideous and most formidable part of the impious giants who despise and blaspheme the power of heaven. The Indians, like the savage tribes of Africa and America, suffer and nourish, indeed, serpents in their temples, and even in their houses; they believe that they bring happiness to the places which they inhabit; they worship them as the symbols of eternity; but they regard them also as evil genii, or as the inimical powers of nature which is gradually depraved by them, as the enemies of the gods, who either tear them to pieces, or tread their venomous head under their all-conquering feet. So contradictory is all animal worship. Its principle is, in some instances, gratitude, and in others fear; but if a noxious animal is very dangerous, the fear may manifest itself in two ways, either by the resolute desire of extirpating the beast, or by the wish of averting the conflict with its superior power: thus the same fear may, on the one hand, cause fierce enmity, and, on the other, submission and worship. Further, the animals may be considered either as the creatures of the powers of nature, or as a production of the Divine will; and those religious systems, therefore, which acknowledge a dualism, either in nature or in the Deity, or which admit the antagonism between God and nature, must almost unavoidably regard the same animals now as objects of horror, and now of veneration. From all these aberrations, Mosaism was preserved by its fundamental principle of the one and indivisible God, in whose hands is nature with all its hosts, and to whose wise and good purposes all creatures are subservient. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Yea, hath God said.—*The devil's questions*:—I. IT IS DANGEROUS TO LAY OPEN OURSELVES FREELY TO PERSONS UNKNOWN, OR SUCH OF WHOM WE HAVE NO ASSURANCE. II. IT IS A DANGEROUS THING TO QUESTION OR DEBATE EVIDENT AND KNOWN TRUTHS. Principles in all sciences are exempted from dispute, much more should they be in divinity. Amongst which we may account—1. The dictates of nature, written by the finger of God in all men's hearts, as, that there is a God (Rom. i. 19, 20); that He judgeth the world (Psa. lviii. 11), and that in righteousness, which is a principle that Jeremy will not dispute (Jer. xii. 1); and that consequently it shall be well with the good, and ill with the wicked at last (Eccles. xii. 13), as being truths, which every man's conscience within his own breast gives testimony unto. 2. Such truths as are delivered by God Himself, either recorded in His Word (as the creation of the world and that great mystery of man's redemption by Jesus Christ, &c.), or made known unto us by any special message from God. And by this assenting unto the truths of God, without questioning or admitting them into debate, (1) We seal unto His truth (John iii. 33), and give him the honour of a God, to be believed upon His own testimony; whereas we believe not men upon their word without some further evidence. (2) And by the same means we provide for our safety, who having our minds full of ignorance, and by their corrupt disposition, more inclinable to embrace lies rather than truth, might be endangered by admitting known truth to debate, to be misled by the mists of human reasonings into error, to the endangering or overthrowing of our faith. These were Eve's gross oversights in entertaining conference with Satan, a person unknown, and that about such a manifest and evident truth. III. BLASPHEMOUS AND FOUL SUGGESTIONS OUGHT NOT TO BE HEARD WITHOUT INDIGNATION AND DETESTATION. 1. To manifest our zeal for God's honour and for His truth. 2. By it we secure ourselves from a farther assault, which we

easily invite when we bear such blasphemies with too much softness of spirit and patience. 3. And harden our own hearts against such wicked suggestions by abhorring the very mention of them. 4. And oftentimes terrify the suggesters themselves, or at least put them to shame. IV. WHEN GOD'S MERCIES ARE MENTIONED WE MUST WITHAL BE CAREFUL TO REMEMBER HIS NAME THAT BESTOWS THEM. 1. That by entitling God unto, and prefixing His own name before His works of mercy, wherewith men's hearts are most affected, He may be highly advanced above all things, and held out and proclaimed to the world as the fountain of all goodness, when all the good things which we enjoy, and in which we rejoice, are still laid down at His foot. 2. There is an evil disposition in men's hearts to forget God in His mercies (Deut. xxxii. 18; Psa. cvi. 21), and to ascribe them to themselves (Dan. iv. 25). V. GOD'S MERCIES OUGHT NOT, WHEN THEY ARE SPOKEN OF, TO BE REPRESENTED IN COLD AND WEAK EXPRESSIONS. 1. Because they, having their hearts enlarged in the apprehension of them inwardly, cannot but speak as they think of them. 2. It is our duty to advance the Lord by all the means we can, that His name alone may be excellent (Psa. cxlviii. 13), and great (Mal. i. 11). Now, nothing advanceth His name more than His mercies, which therefore must be set out as the mercies of God, high, and without comparison. 3. When all is done, and we have made use of all our art and abilities, to set out God's mercies in the largest manner that we can devise, all our words come infinitely short of the full extent of those things which we desire to represent. 4. In the meantime, while we strive to set out things in the fullest measure, we warm our own hearts, and quicken our affections the more, and fill our hearts with the greater admiration of those things which exceed all our expressions. (J. White, M.A.) *Satan's question*:—I. SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS BEGIN BY LAYING A DOUBT AT THE ROOT. He does not assert error; he does not contradict truth; but he confounds both. He makes his first entries, not by violent attack, but by secret sapping; he endeavours to confuse and cloud the mind which he is afterwards going to kill. II. THE PARTICULAR CHARACTER OF THESE TROUBLESOME AND WICKED QUESTIONINGS OF THE MIND VARIES ACCORDING TO THE STATE AND TEMPERAMENT AND CHARACTER OF EACH INDIVIDUAL. 1. In order to combat them, every one should have his mind stored and fortified with some of the evidences of the Christian religion. To these he should recur whenever he feels disquieted; he should be able to give "a reason for the hope that is in him," and an answer to that miserable shadow that flits across his mind, "Yea, hath God said?" 2. A man must be careful that his course of life is not one giving advantage to the tempter. He must not be dallying under the shadow of the forbidden tree, lest the tempter meet him and he die. III. THE FAR END OF SATAN IS TO DIMINISH FROM THE GLORY OF GOD. To mar God's designs he insinuated his wily coil into the garden of Eden; to mar God's designs he met Jesus Christ in the wilderness, on the mountain top, and on the pinnacle of the temple; to mar God's design he is always leading us to take unworthy views of God's nature and God's work. (J. Vaughan, M.A.) *The temptation, the fall, and the promise*:—I. THE PARTIES TO BE TESTED. II. THE TEMPTER. 1. The instrument was a serpent. 2. The real agent was Satan. III. THE TEMPTATION. Literally the tempter says, "Then it is so that God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden.'" As if so incredible a report could be believed only on the positive assertion of Eve herself. He then insinuates that God had issued this prohibition from other motives than love. He hints at something strange, if not unjust or unkind, on the part of God. Like other trees, Eve perceives that the forbidden one is "good for food and pleasant to the sight." Unlike other trees, she is now informed that it is capable of affording wisdom; that eating from it gives knowledge of good and evil; that while other trees minister to the sense, this ministers also to the reason. Thus all parts of Eve's sensitive nature are wrought upon; her fancy is aroused, curiosity awakened, desire for knowledge excited. IV. THE SIN. Eve sought knowledge in a way foreign to God's will. He would have her know good by adopting it, and evil by resisting it. By disobedience she came to know good as a forfeited possession, and evil as a purchased bane. She found that unlawful knowledge was dearly bought, and that a stolen likeness to God brought sorrow. V. THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OF SIN. Conscious of their sin, they fancy that their guilty bosoms are open to every eye. But the accuser is in their own breasts. They have opened the door, and the sweet-songed bird of innocence has flown. VI. THE SENTENCE. In God's dealings with the human pair there was a mingling of justice and mercy. By their sin they had become spiritually dead—had died in the sense in which God declared they should. Their true life—that of holiness—was gone. Existence now was but partial and

abnormal. For this altered moral state God made for them a change externally. The world which they and their sinful seed were to inhabit, must be adapted to a race of sinners. Hence God made it, not a place of punishment, but of discipline; the end being to restore to the race their lost holiness. Bodily fatigue, the thorn-infested ground, and the dread of dying (an event which, but for the Fall, would have had no terror), all these were designed as chastisements for man's sins, and at the same time as agencies to reclaim him from it. VII. THE PROMISE OF A DELIVERER. (*P. B. Davis.*) *Man's enemy makes his appearance*:—The passage takes for granted that there was already an enemy in existence. There had been sin before, somewhere, though where is not said. There had been an enemy somewhere; but how he had become so, or where he had hitherto dwelt, or how he had found his way to this world, is not recorded. That he knew about our world, and that he had some connection with it, is evident; though whether as its original possessor, or a stranger coming from far in search of spoil, we cannot discover. All that is implied in the narrative is, that there did exist an enemy—one who hated God, and who now sought to get vent to that hatred by undoing His handiwork. This enemy now makes his appearance. He has not been bound; he has not been prohibited entrance: he gets free scope to work. He shall be bound hereafter, when the times of restitution of all things commence, but not yet. He shall not be permitted to enter the "new earth," but he is allowed to enter and do his work of evil in the first earth. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *God not the author of sin*:—Thus we learn, even at the outset, that God is not the author of sin. It is the creature that introduces it. God, no doubt, could have hindered it, but for wise ends He allows it. We know also how sin spreads itself. It is always active. It multiplies and propagates itself. Every fallen being becomes a tempter, seeking to ruin others—to drag them down to the same death into which he has himself been driven. (*Ibid.*) *The process of temptation*:—1. We may consider that the fact is established that man was created with a nature capable of temptation, and placed in the highest possible probation for the discipline of that nature. Our first parents stood as a stately oak upon a plain, beat upon by an impetuous storm, but meeting it with all the vigour and power of original uprightness. The hurricane beneath which they sunk may have been more severe than ours, but the bias of their nature made their probation less difficult. What, then, is that nature in us to which temptation addresses itself? 2. Who is the being that applies that temptation? And what are the instruments and modes of his attacks, and of our self-defence? These are questions of no small moment. Temptation implies the existence of two natures to which adverse powers and influences appeal, and in Holy Scripture these two natures in us are called the "flesh and spirit"; that they exist in more or less activity in every one of us an examination of ourselves will prove. We all know it; but more than this, they are contrary one to the other. It is this very perverseness in our nature which shows more than anything the contradictoriness of sin, and the warfare between the flesh and the spirit. 3. The personality and individuality of the tempter are points which it is most important to establish. That tempter is our constant companion, he has gaged his word to bring his one victim a bound captive to the gate of hell. The only solace, if we may use such a term, to his miserable eternity will be the consciousness that by his side is one who shares for ever the intensity of his agony, though not one throb of anguish will be alleviated in himself: It will be something that every throe is but a reflex of the torture of his companion; his delight is in suffering, his sympathy is in woe; he rejoices, if joy can be felt in hell, in iniquity and pain. That tempter, if he loses his one victim, has no other which he can effect, unless he can regain his entrance into the home from which he has been expelled. 4. But I pass on to the next point, the medium through which the tempter acts. That he has power to affect every portion of our being, and to cast the deepest shadow over it, as an evening cloud can obscure the radiance of the setting sun on the marble columns of some eastern temple, there is no doubt. The lustful thought, the disrelish for heaven, the positive dislike for goodness, the deep despondency, are, with a thousand other infirmities and sins, traceable to the connection of the spirit with the body; and in proportion as that body is subjugated by discipline, the power of those sins will be weakened, and when the spirit will be freed from the present corruptible body, it will be wholly liberated. But all this is widely different from the doctrine which would teach that the bodies of men or matter generally are materially and actually wicked. They are instruments, and that is all. We have the same kind of power over them as we have over the staff we lean

on, or the glass we use to aid the eye-sight. Let us conceive the case of some instrument which has the greatest possible degree of connection with ourselves, and the greatest possible power to influence us, yet over which we have perfect control : such a case will be a very fair analogy for our relation with the body. Our bodies are temples ; we may neither worship them nor despise them. They are instruments ; as we use them, for good or evil. They are given for the discipline of the soul ; for its aid, or for its hindrance. They are its school-house, in which it is taught to spell the syllables of heaven. But more, it is manifest that Satan affects the spirit independently of the body. There are dreams when the soul realizes that awful state of separation from its physical condition, and ranges unfettered up and down the universe. Then sometimes Satan pursues it in its flight, and suggests awful thoughts. There are sudden unaccountable bursts of passion ; injuries long since forgotten ; exciting feelings for vengeance ; dislikes for holiness, for good men ; unaccountable desires to swear ; without a cause to curse ; for its own sake to steal, though the next instant the object for which honesty was bartered is thrown unvalued aside to rot and decay ; there are strange wanderings when we would pray, in the church, in the chancel, at the altar, the spirit yet wings her flight to every region of the imagined universe, the corners furthest removed from God : all these are influences of Satan. Satan does tempt the spirit independently of the body ; for these temptations, many of them, show no trace of physical cause. But that spirit, too, is in our power to bear us heavenward, or to the gate of hell, as we would have it. It may be the wing of the archangel soaring to the gate of paradise, or, it may be as the waxen wing of Icarus bringing us down to destruction. It is as we would have it. Has Satan ever power to tempt body or spirit in such a manner as we have no power to resist ? It seems that he has. There are faint foreshadowings of that power in the cases of Pharaoh and Judas. There are cases in the experience of most of us, where the drunkard, after years of resisted conscience, has so entirely become the victim of the tempter, that the resolution formed daily with the bitter weeping of remorse, pales off each evening before the fire of the tempter, until at last, he passes from the hell on earth to the hell of eternity.

5. Satan binds us first with cords of silk ; ere long they have become coils of rope ; a little while and they are cables, scarcely to be bent ; another interval, and the rope has become a chain, and the chain a bar of iron which no human power can resist. He creeps upon us. 6. Another favourite mode of his attack will be, as Jeremy Taylor quaintly illustrates, through the outward circumstances of a man. Adam, says he, so fascinated by the beauty and meekness of his new wife, was easily ensnared by her solicitations, and Satan consequently made use of her as the instrument of the fall of man. Over the stumbling stones of their partial affection for their younger born, even Rebecca and Jacob successively fell ; and the same overweening love which the mother bore to her child was inherited and transmitted to its cost to Joseph and Benjamin. To us a favourite scheme, an idolized child, a friend on whom we lean, an honest calling, a noble aim, a brilliant yet well-directed talent, may, each one of them, from at first being planets clear and radiant in our sky, turn into baseless meteors and falling stars. They may be the fire-damps of our ruin when they were the guiding stars of our salvation. 7. But I must mention a third mode through which the tempter will affect our spiritual nature independently alike of disposition or circumstance. He often acts, as was suggested above, in a sudden and unaccountable manner, and, as the Arab who kneels at the muezzin on the sand of the desert, over whose crimson sea the setting sun is shedding its ray without a cloud in the sky or an object on the earth, would be startled at the sight of a shadow fleeting over the bosom of the wilderness ; so we are often startled by the sudden suggestion of lust, of doubt, of anger, of intense pride, of ruthless bitterness against another, of dislike to God, when within five minutes of the passing shade we thought we were kneeling in the cloudless sunshine of prayer, meditation, or communion. Nothing so shows the actual existence of the tempter as this. Against these unexpected attacks the habit of holiness and prayer can alone be a protection. We cannot tell where the weed will grow in the most highly cultivated garden ; at any point may spring couch grass and the nettle ; it is only by a state of general cultivation and purity that we can depend on the produce of our soil. The fever, the pestilence, may fall on the best ordered house and the most abstemious body, yet we know cleanliness and temperance are the best preservers. Apply the same rule to your spiritual life. One word of high encouragement and I have done. The eyes that watch us like lamps around our path ; the watching eyes of the holy and the just, like starlight gleaming above us ;

the quiet gaze of the blessed in paradise, beaming like the moon that shines in softness with its borrowed lustre; the hosts of unfallen angels, like the sun that shines in its strength; the eye of Jesus and the Father from the great white throne, watch us daily. The page of man's brief annals teems with instances of suffering, borne to its last thro' without a sigh, and all because the world around or the generations to come would smile on or admire the deed. The eyes that gaze on us are more radiant and more holy; they are the eyes of eternity; let us not disappoint them, they watch us. Perhaps but another day and our strife may be ended! (*E. Morro, M.A.*)

Temptation of the first and of the second man:—I invite you to notice how exactly parallel the temptation of the second Adam was to the temptation of the first. This cannot fail to concern us very greatly: for it is a clear intimation, afforded us by the person best qualified to make it, viz., by the devil, of our special liability, through certain avenues of choice, to fall away from God. 1. We are to note that the rebellion of the lower appetites against the powers of reason and the dictates of conscience, must be the prevailing form of human sin: for it was the seductiveness of the fruit of one particular tree which originally moved our first mother to disobey. And this is what the beloved disciple calls "the lust of the flesh." 2. There is the illusion produced in our higher nature when outward things are seen otherwise than in the light of God. Eve was seduced by the prospect of enlarged views, and the promise that her eyes should be opened. And this is that "lust of the eyes" of which the same apostle speaks. 3. There is the spiritual snare of becoming to oneself the highest object, the standard to which all other things are to be referred. Man thus becomes a god to himself, and straightway directs his proceedings by reference to himself instead of to God. And to this, Eve's desires tended when her pride (that special work of the devil) was called forth by the representation "ye shall be as gods." St. John calls this the "pride of life." . . . "God doth know" (said the tempter) "that in the day ye eat thereof"—here was the first seduction: "your eyes shall be opened"—there was the second: "and ye shall be as gods"—there was the third. Accordingly, it was "when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise," that "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." How exactly in our Lord's case Satan addressed himself to the same three instincts, seeking first to inspire sensual distrust; next spiritual presumption; lastly worldly ambition; needs hardly to be pointed out. The order of the last two temptations was however inverted in the case of the second Adam. And why? I presume because the first of the three temptations had been resisted. Accordingly, from the seduction of sensuality the transition is made at once to the seduction of pride, these being the two extremes between which the fallen nature of man oscillates continually. Let us further note, in both cases (in paradise, I mean, and in the wilderness), that the instrument with which the reason is plied is still the same, namely, calumnious insinuation. A misrepresentation of the truth, and that couched in the modest form of an inquiry, was the tempter's device. He at first asserted nothing. He asked, as if for information. He might have known, he did know, the truth. . . . I am much mistaken if something very similar to this is not Satan's method still. "It is most important to observe this first origin of evil. It is in the form of a question. It is not a direct denial of God's truth or faithfulness, but a questioning of it. Because faith in God is the foundation of all good, it is to unsettle the foundation that this attempt is made. The poison is inserted in the way the question is stated. Thus also in dealing with our Divine Lord, Satan begins with a like questioning of what God had just declared. 'If Thou be,' which implies, 'Art Thou then indeed the Son of God?' " And next, he insinuated what he dared not openly to proclaim: for by calumniously imputing to God a base motive for withholding the fruit of the one forbidden tree, he misrepresented God's whole nature. But he did it by insinuation. And here, again, I recognize a favourite device of the enemy of souls in these last days. And then, the point to which his seductive speech tended, was, to make the creature desire to be as God: to be himself the standard, himself supreme, himself as God unto himself. It was a suggestion that the bondage of external law should be thrown aside, and that the conscience should henceforth become a law unto itself. Further—You are invited to note how the mischief began with an attempt to tamper with God's Word. "Yes, hath God said?" But God had not said it! And then you will note that Satan beguiled Eve's understanding by the seductive avenue of an increase of knowledge in prospect. . . . Knowledge—that first appetite of man—and his last! . . . And is not "knowledge" good then? Yea,

surely, most good: for indeed what were life without it? But like every other creature of God, it is good only when it subordinates to God's revealed mind and will. Yet once more, and for the last time, death was the penalty of all; and yet, "Ye shall not surely die," was the promise wherewith Satan sought to silence the fears of our first mother. . . . What but that, what but the assurance "Ye shall not surely die," is Satan's cry at this very hour to a willing world? (*Dean Burgon*). *The temptation*:—There are in this question two things equally dangerous to the soul of Eve, a fatal doubt of the truth of the Word of God, and a perfidious exaggeration, calculated to insinuate distrust. I say, first, a doubt of the truth of the Word of God. "Hath God said?" Here is an insinuation calculated to sap the foundation of all faith, all obedience, all morality, all established order. Here is the most powerful weapon of the devil and of our own wicked heart; the weapon by which thousands and thousands are smitten and plunged into ruin. Hath God said that the "friendship of the world is enmity against God; and that whosoever will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God"? Hath God said that we must forsake all and follow Him, bearing our cross; that "if we love father or mother, or sister or brother, or house, or lands, more than Him, we are not worthy of Him"? Hath God said that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," that we have within us an evil and corrupt heart, that "the carnal mind in us is not subject to the law of God," that our life is polluted with sin? Hath God said that "He doth not hold the sinner guiltless, that He hateth sin, that the broad road leadeth to destruction"? No, no, God is not so severe; He is too good a Father to punish the weaknesses of His children; beware of taking in the letter, the figurative language of the threatenings of the Bible, or at least, reserve them for the wicked or great criminals. God well knows that we are weak; be honest, repent of your faults, and all will go well. When doubt has thus despoiled the Word of God of its immutable sanctity, weakened the obligation and responsibility of the creature towards the Creator, opened a wide door to passion, which hurries us along and paves the way for temptation; these same truths, which the deadly breath of doubt has not yet been able to destroy, because they contain an immortal force, are presented to the already wavering soul with an exaggeration which shall soon engender distrust. Hath God said, "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden"? These delicious fruits which the earth produces, which seem to have been placed before you to spread in your abode abundance, beauty, and well being, shall ye not taste of any of these gifts? Are they only here to excite in you useless desires? Has He whom you adore as your God imposed upon you such hard laws? It is thus in the present day also; they who insinuate doubts of the truths of God's Word, guard against presenting them faithfully and in their true light. They are skilful in disfiguring them, in showing that observance to the laws of God is incompatible with our weakness, that the morality of the gospel is not made for men, and that there would be injustice in chastisement inflicted upon those who do not conform their lives to them. They are skilful in throwing ridicule upon those who let the Bible speak for itself, believe it in its whole extent, and abandon the multitude to range themselves under the banner of obedience to their God. They are skilful in presenting, under a false light, the vital doctrines of the gospel, in showing that they are contrary to reason, and that we must, as soon as possible, apply to them the amendments of human wisdom. They are skilful in persuading those who hear them, that a living and a true faith is a renunciation of reason, that filial submission is bondage, and that to give up the world, its joys, and its vanities, is to throw a veil of gloom and melancholy over the whole life. They would willingly say to the God of the Bible, if they were as sincere as the unprofitable servant in the parable, "I know that thou art an austere master, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sown." Now let the temptation present itself; everything in the heart of the unhappy being who has lent an ear to the lying insinuations of the tempter, is prepared for the fatal hour of seduction . . . and of ruin. Know ye, my brethren, the power of temptation? It is present, it presses the poor heart, in which it finds but too much sympathy; it draws it along by the charm of sin, decked in seducing colours; conscience lifts up its voice; the conflict begins; you resist, for the thunders of God's word against sin echo from afar, and bring trouble into the depths of your soul. But, in the head of the conflict, a doubt arises; Hath God said? Will He be offended at this weakness? Will He care for it? Will He punish? Thus is broken the last restraint imposed upon the impetuosity of the temptation; the barrier of the Word of God is overthrown: you yield . . . And

thus you are delivered over to the torments of remorse; you come forth from a vortex, to taste all the bitterness of that which, a moment before, appeared to you so sweet! (*L. Bonnet*). *After God comes the devil*:—In the former chapters we have heard nothing but the Lord said, the Lord said; but now come we to hear the serpent said, and the serpent said. So see we plainly how after the Word of God cometh the word of the devil. It was not so then only, but it hath so continued ever since. When the Lord hath spoken by the mouth of His minister, prophet, apostle, pastor, or teacher, then speaketh Satan by his serpents contrary. They in the Church, these as soon as they be out of the Church, yea, many times even in the Church they will be hissing in their ears that sit next them. If God have spoken to a child by his parents, to a servant by his master, to a man by his friend what is true and good, straight cometh a serpent, one or other, and overthroweth all, leading them captive to a contrary course. What, say these serpents, wilt thou be thus used, wilt you hear all this? you are now no child, do this and do that, you shall not die, but you shall live and be like gods, knowing good and evil, &c. But as Eve sped by this serpent, so shall you by those, if you avoid them not. Such serpents were those counsellors that made Rehoboam, Solomon's son, do contrary to the advice of the old counsellors, to his great loss. Again, mark here which was first, the word of God or the word of Satan. *Dixit Dominus*, the Lord said, goeth before *Dixit serpens*, the serpent said, and so you see truth is elder than falsehood, and God's Word before Satan's lies: that is Tertullian's rule to know truth by, namely, to look which was first; "*Quodcumque primum illud verum, quodcumque posterius illud falsum.*" Whatsoever was first, that is true, whatsoever was latter that is false, and that is first that was from the beginning, and that was from the beginning, that in the writings of the apostles may find his warrant. Let it not blind you then that such an error hath continued a thousand years, if it be to be proved that a contrary truth is elder far. (*Bp. Babington*). *Satan attacks the weakest point*:—Satan tempteth the woman as the weaker vessel, and if you have anything wherein you are weaker than in another, beware, for he will first assault you there. It is his manner like a false devil to take his advantage. Happily you are easier drawn to adultery than murder: that then shall please him, he will begin there. So did he with David, and then brought him to murder after. David was weaker to resist the one than the other. Think of your frailties and be godly wise, where the wall is lowest he will enter first. (*Ibid.*) *Satan's subtlety in tempting*:—Satan did break over the hedge, where it was weakest; he knew he could more easily insinuate and wind himself into her by a temptation. An expert soldier, when he is to storm or enter a castle, observes warily where there is a breach, or how he may enter with more facility; so did Satan the weaker vessel. (*T. Watson*). *A crafty question*:—With well-feigned surprise and incredulity he puts the question, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" meaning thereby to insinuate the harshness of the injunction which he pretended hardly to believe. Is it possible that God can have said so? Is it conceivable that He who has just made you, and provided you with such abundance, should grudge you a little fragment of that plenty, and debar you from the garden's choicest fruits; making you lords of creation, yet not allowing you to put forth your lordship; nay, refusing you access to that tree, the fruit of which would enable you rightly to exercise wise dominion? In this his object was to calumniate God; at least, cunningly to suggest an idea which would misrepresent His character to man. He keeps out of sight all that God had done for man, all the proofs of love, so manifold, so vast; he fixes on one thing which seemed inconsistent with this; he brings up this before man in the way most likely to awaken evil thoughts of God. His object is to isolate the one fact, and so to separate it from all God's acts of love as to make it appear an instance of harsh and unreasonable severity. Man had hitherto known the prohibition; but he had put no such construction on it; he had not imagined it capable of being so interpreted. Now Satan brings it up, and sets it out in an aspect likely to suggest such constructions as these: "God is not your friend after all; He but pretends to care for you. He is a hard Master, interfering with your liberty, not leaving you a free agent, but constraining you, nay, fettering you. He mocks you, making you creation's head, yet setting arbitrary limits to your rule; placing you in a fair garden, yet debarring you from its fruits. He grudges you His gifts, making a show of liberality, while withholding what is really valuable." Thus Satan sought to calumniate God, to malign His character, to represent Him as the enemy, not the friend, of man. If he can succeed in this, then man will begin

to entertain hard thoughts of God, then he will become alienated from Him; then he will disobey; and then comes the fall, the ruin, the guilt, the doom, the woe! Man is lost! Hell gets another inmate. The devil gets another companion. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

The woman said unto the serpent.—*Eve parleying with the tempter*:—We wish on the present occasion to examine with all carefulness the workings of Eve's mind at that critical moment, when the devil, under the form of a serpent, sought to turn her away from her allegiance unto God. This is no mere curious examination; as it might indeed be, had Eve, before she yielded to temptation, been differently constituted from one of ourselves. But there was not this different constitution. A piece of mechanism may have its springs disordered, and its workings deranged, but it is not a different piece of mechanism from what it was whilst every part was in perfect operation. And we may find, as we go on, that the workings of Eve's mind were wonderfully similar to those of our own; so that we may present our common mother as a warning, and derive from her fall instruction of the most practical and personal kind. Now the point of time at which we have to take Eve, is one at which she is evidently beginning to waver. She has allowed herself to be drawn into conversation with the serpent, which it would have been wise in her, especially as her husband was not by, to have utterly declined; and there is a sort of unacknowledged restlessness and uneasiness of feeling, as though God might not be that all-wise and all-gracious Being, which she had hitherto supposed. She has not yet, indeed, proceeded to actual disobedience, but she is certainly giving some entertainment to doubts and suspicions; she has not yet broken God's commandment, but she is looking at that commandment with a disposition to question its goodness, and to depreciate the risk of setting it at naught. There are certain preludes, certain approaches, towards sin, which, even in ourselves, are scarcely to be designated sin, and which must have been still further removed from it in the unfallen Eve. You remember how St. James speaks: "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." The apostle, you observe, does not give the name of sin to the first motions. If these motions were duly resisted, as they might be, the man would have been tempted, but he would not have actually sinned. And if so much may be allowed of ourselves, in whom the inclinations and propensities are corrupted and depraved through original sin, much more must it have been true of Eve, when, if not fallen, she was yet tottering from her first estate. She was then still innocent; but there were feelings at work which were fast bringing her to the very edge of the precipice; and it is on the indications of these feelings, that for the sake of warning and example we wish especially to fix your attention. I. IT WAS A LARGE AND NOBLE GRANT, WHICH THE ALMIGHTY HAD MADE TO MAN OF THE TREES OF THE GARDEN. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." It is true, indeed, there was one exception to this permission. Man was not to eat of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"; but of every other tree he might not only eat, he was told to eat "freely," as though God would assure him of their being all unreservedly at his disposal. Now observe, that when Eve comes to recount this generous grant, she leaves out the word "freely," and thus may be said to depreciate its liberality. It is a disposition in all of us to think little of what God gives us to enjoy, and much of what He appoints us to suffer. It may be but one tree which He withholds, and there may be a hundred which He grants; but, alas! the one, because withheld, will seem to multiply into the hundred; the hundred, because granted, to shrink into the one. If He take from us a single blessing, how much more ready are we to complain, as though we had lost all, than to count up what remains, and give Him thanks for the multitude! He may but forbid us a single gratification, and presently we speak as though He had dealt with us in a churlish and niggardly way; though, were we to attempt to reckon the evidences of His loving-kindness, they are more in number than the hairs of our head. And when we suffer ourselves in any measure to speak or think disparagingly of the mercies of God, it is very evident that we are making way for, if not actually indulging suspicions as to the goodness of God; and it cannot be necessary to prove, that he who allows himself to doubt the Divine goodness, is preparing himself for the breach of any and of every commandment. Learn, then, to be very watchful over this moral symptom. Be very fearful of depreciating your mercies. II. But we may go further in tracing in Eve the workings of a dissatisfied mind—of a disposition to suspect God of harshness, notwithstanding the multiplied evidences of His goodness. You are next to observe how SHE SPEAKS OF THE PROHIBITION WITH REGARD TO "THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD

AND EVIL." She left out a most important and significant word in stating God's permission to "eat of the trees of the garden," and thus did much to divest that permission of its generous character; but she put in words when she spoke of the prohibition, and thereby invested it with strictness and severity. You would have argued from her version of the prohibition, that God had altogether closed and shut up the tree, guarding it with the most extreme jealousy and rigour, so that there was no possibility of detecting any of its properties; whereas the restriction was only on examining the fruit in and through that sense, which would make it bring death, and there was the warrant of the Divine word, that to taste would be to die. All that could be learnt—and it was very considerable—from sight and touch and scent, Adam and Eve were at liberty to learn, whilst what the taste could have taught was distinctly revealed; and thus the single prohibition did not so much withhold them from the acquisition of knowledge, as from the endurance of disaster. But now, then, was Eve single in the misrepresenting the prohibition of God? Was she not rather doing what has been done ever since; what is done every day by those, who would excuse themselves from the duties and the obligations of religion? As though He had given them appetites, which were never to be gratified; desires, which were only to be resisted, and yet, all the while, had surrounded them with what those appetites craved, and those desires sought after. Whereas, there is nothing forbidden by the Divine law, but just that indulgence of our appetites and desires, which because excessive and irregular, would from our very constitution, be visited with present disappointment and remorse, and, from the necessary character of a retributive government, with future vengeance and death. III. It was bad enough to depreciate God's permission, or to exaggerate His prohibition; BUT IT WAS WORSE TO SOFTEN THE THREATS. This showed the workings of unbelief; and there could have been but a step between our common mother and ruin, when she brought herself to look doubtfully on the word of the Lord. And this symptom was more strongly marked than even those which we have already examined. The declaration of God had been, "Thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But what is Eve's version of this strong and unqualified declaration? "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." "Lest ye die!" This is what she substitutes for—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." "Lest ye die!" An expression which implies a sort of chance, a contingency, a bare possibility; what might happen, or might not happen; what might happen soon, or might not happen for years. It is thus she puts a denunciation as express, as explicit, as language can furnish—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Alas! now, for Eve. Harbouring the thought that God would not carry His threatenings into execution—and this she must have harboured, ere she could have softened His threatening into "lest ye die,"—no marvel that she gave a ready ear to the lie of the serpent, "Ye shall not surely die." She had whispered this lie to herself, before it was uttered by Satan. The devil could do little then, and he can do little now, except as openings are made for him by those upon whom he endeavours to work. It was probably the incipient unbelief manifested by the "Lest ye die" of Eve, which suggested, as the mode of attack, the "Ye shall not surely die" of Satan. The devil may well hope to be believed, as soon as he perceives symptoms of God's being disbelieved. And if we could charge upon numbers in the present day, the imitating Eve in the disparaging God's permission, and the exaggerating God's prohibition, can we have any difficulty in continuing the parallel, now that the thing done is the making light of His threatenings? Why, what fills hell, like the secretly cherished thought, that perhaps, after all, there may be no hell to fill? What is a readier or more frequent engine for the destruction of the soul, than the false idea of the compassion of God, as sure to interfere, either to shorten the duration, or mitigate the intenseness of future punishment, if not altogether to prevent its inflictions? God hath said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." When men come to give their version of so stern and solemn a denunciation, they put it virtually into some such shape as this: "The soul should not sin lest it die." Christ hath said, "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Men often practically throw this sweeping and startling affirmation into a much smoother formula: "Believe upon Christ lest ye die." "Lest ye die!" Is this, then, all? Is there any doubt? Is it a contingency? Is it a "may-be"? "Lest ye die!"—when God hath said, "Ye shall surely die!" "Lest ye die!" when God hath said, "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the people that forget God!" "Lest ye die!" when God hath said,

"Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God!" Nay, sirs, ye may give the paragraph a smoother turn, but ye cannot give the punishment a shorter term. Ye may soften away the expression; ye can neither abbreviate nor mitigate the vengeance. "If we believe not," says Paul, "yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." (*H. Melvill, B.D.*)

Observations.—I. MEN'S WORDS AND SPEECHES ARE USUALLY PROPORTIONED ACCORDING TO THE MEASURE OF THE AFFECTIONS OF THE HEART. 1. First, because words being ordained to be the means of representing the thoughts of the heart within, it is agreeable to all reason that they should express them in their full proportion, as the glass doth the face. 2. Secondly, because although the understanding be, or at least should, hold the reins of the tongue, yet the affections add the spurs unto it, as indeed they do many times give the measure to our actions themselves, as we run according to our fear, fight according to our anger, and wake according to our hope and desire; and so in many other of our actions. II. WHEN WE REMEMBER ANY LAW OF GOD, WE OUGHT WITHAL TO SET BEFORE US THE SANCTION ANNEXED THEREUNTO. 1. Together with God's name is represented unto us His authority, and withal both His wisdom and goodness, which will be an effectual means to stay and silence all carnal reasonings, which otherwise will very hardly be answered, considering how hard a matter it is for the wisdom of the flesh to submit to the law (*Rom. viii. 7*). But against God Himself, who dare dispute with the apostle (*Rom. ix. 20*). 2. By the same means we are quickened to obedience with cheerfulness, when we consider that they are the commandments of that God who gave us our being and in whom we subsist, to whom we owe ourselves and all we have, and from whom we expect glory and immortality and eternal life. See David's answer to his scoffing wife (*2 Sam. vi. 21*). 3. Only this looking upon God in all His commandments makes our services duties of obedience when they are performed at the command and in submission to the will of Him whose we are, whereby we acknowledge both His authority and besides His will to be the rule of righteousness. Lastly, it wonderfully stirs us up to watchfulness, diligence, and sincerity in all our carriage, when we behold the presence, majesty, and holiness of Him to whom we perform our duties, serving Him with reverence and fear and with a single heart, as being the God who sees in secret, and whose eyes are purer than to behold evil. III. WHEN WE LAY THE LAW OF GOD BEFORE US, WE MUST WITHAL FIX OUR THOUGHTS UPON HIM THAT GIVES IT. 1. For God's honour, that all our obedience may be tendered to Him, both in faith and fear. 2. For our own necessity, whose dead hearts need such effectual means to quicken us. IV. IT IS A HARD MATTER TO BRING MAN'S HEART TO SUBMIT UNTO AND BEAR WITH PATIENCE AND CHEERFULNESS ANY YOKE OF RESTRAINT. V. WHOSOEVER WILL NOT BE ENTANGLED BY ALLUREMENTS TO SIN, MUST NOT COME NEAR THEM. We may not stand in the council of the ungodly (*Psa. i. 1*), nor come near their paths, as Solomon adviseth (*Prov. iv. 14*); and we are commanded to hate the very garment spotted with the flesh (*Jude 23*). And this we must do—1. Out of the conscience of the weakness of our corrupt nature, which as easily takes fire by the least allurements to sin as gunpowder doth by any spark that falls into it, or rather of itself draws towards it, as iron doth towards an adamant: now we know that he that will not be burnt must carry no coals in his bosom (*Prov. vi. 27*). 2. That we may manifest our perfect detestation of evil, which every man that will approve himself to be a lover of God must hate (*Psa. xcvi. 10*). VI. THE SLIGHTING OF THE CURSE OF THE LAW MAKES WAY TO THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Deceitfulness of sin*.—It is not only a crime that men commit when they do wrong, but it is a blunder. "The game is not worth the candle." The thing that you buy is not worth the price you pay for it. Sin is like a great forest tree that we sometimes see standing up green in its leafy beauty, and spreading a broad shadow over half a field; but when we get round on the other side there is a great dark hollow in the very heart of it, and corruption is at work there. It is like the poison-tree in travellers' stories, tempting weary men to rest beneath its thick foliage, and insinuating death into the limbs that relax in the fatal coolness of its shade. It is like the apples of Sodom, fair to look upon, but turning to acrid ashes on the unwary lips. It is like the magician's rod that we read about in old books. There it lies; and if tempted by its glitter or fascinated by the power that it proffers you, you take it in your hand, the thing starts into a serpent, with erect crest and sparkling eyes, and plunges its quick barb into the hand that holds it, and sends poison through all the veins. (*A. MacLaren,*

D.D.) Danger of the eye:—Satan turned Eve's eye to the apple; Achan's eye to the wedges of gold; Ahab's eye to Naboth's vineyard; and then what work did he make of them! (*Allcine.*) *Use of the eye*:—The eye, as it is used, will either be a help or a snare; either it will let in the sparks of temptation, or enkindle the fire of true devotion. These are the windows which God hath placed in the top of the building, that man from them may contemplate God's works and take a prospect of heaven, the place of an eternal residence. (*T. Manton, D.D.*) *Tests designed for the strengthening of virtue*:—I know not whether all soldiers love the thought of war, but there are many who pant for a campaign. How many an officer of low rank has said, "There is no promotion, no hope of rising, no honours, as if we had to fight. If we could rush to the cannon's mouth, there would be some hope that we might gain promotion in the ranks." Men get few medals to hang upon their breasts who never knew the smell of gunpowder. The brave days, as men call them, of Nelson and Trafalgar have gone by, and we thank God for it; but still we do not expect to see such brave old veterans, the offspring of this age, as those who are still to be found lingering in our hospitals, the relics of our old campaigns. No, brethren, we must have trials if we are to get on. Young men do not become midshipmen altogether through going to the school at Greenwich and climbing the mast on dry land; they must go out to sea. We must go out to sea and really be on deck in the storm; we must have stood side by side with King David; we must have gone down into the pit to slay the lion, or have lifted up the spear against the eight hundred. Conflicts bring experience, and experience brings that growth in grace which is not to be attained by any other means. *A talk about temptation*:—So paradise had a tempter in it. Then, one thing is quite certain—get where we may in this world, we cannot get beyond temptation. Do you think that life would have been a great deal better if there had been no possibility of evil? Certainly we might have been made without any will, blindly obeying instinct, an animated machine. Then we should never have fallen. But as certain is it that then we could never have risen. Or we might have been placed in circumstances where the will could never have exerted itself; where no temptation could have met us. Then, again, we could not have fallen; and then, again, we should not have risen. Innocence is not a virtue until it has had temptation and opportunity to sin; then innocence is strengthened by resistance, and exalted by victory into virtue. Everywhere and in everything that is a poor, languid, sickly kind of life, which knows no resistance; a flabby thing, not worthy the name of a man, is he who has never had a chance of overcoming. Temptation overcome is the way, the only way, to the very throne of God. Amongst the brave men of old there was a notion that when one conquered an enemy the strength of the enemy went into the conqueror, and he became so much stronger by every conquest, and thus went on from strength to strength. It is thus that God grows His heroes, by overcoming. Is not this the great law of all success? A young man comes to London for business or for study. He does not expect to get on without any struggle. He knows that if he would succeed he must be watchful, hard-working, ready to resist and to overcome. If he is worth his salt he rejoices in real difficulties rightly dealt with; in real hard work to be done. It knits the muscle of his character; it developes in him courage, resoluteness, heroism. Again, there was a serpent in paradise—one. But there are a great many in the wilderness outside—fiery flying serpents! So then all men know the devil on one side or the other. On the resisting side they know him as a tempter only; but on the other side, the yielding side, they know him as infinitely more than that—as the cruel tyrant, the bitterly hard master, Apollyon the Destroyer. To-day the saddest people in the world, the hardest worked, who spend most and earn least, who find life an awful weariness, are those who have let the tempter lead them furthest by his promises of pleasure. It is true, there is one serpent in the garden of God—but there are a great many outside. Learn the lesson of his devices. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." Subtlety is his stock-in-trade. He is a doctor in philosophy, a master in logic; and if he were subtle and skilful at the first, how much more so to-day, when for six thousand years he has been diligently practising his art and perfecting it? Whenever any course wants a very clever man to defend it, be quite sure that is not the path for you. The way of God is a narrow way, but it is not a crooked way, nor is it a by-path; it is a highway. Trace his subtlety in his methods. He comes to the woman first; perhaps because she is less suspicious; possibly because she was less able to withstand his wiles; probably because he knew the best way to get the man was to get the woman. The tempter finds her near to

the tree, looking at it and desiring it; so her eyes and her longing were on the side of the enemy. If we would keep free from the tempter, keep out of the way of temptation. Some do really tempt the tempter to destroy them. The tempter begins by questioning—for he knows how innocently to begin—"So, is it true that God hath said that ye may not eat of every tree of the garden?" "It is written, Thou shalt"; "it is written, Thou shalt not." The absolute surrender of ourselves to God for an utter obedience is our perfect safety. But to loosen the authority of the law is to fall an easy prey to the adversary. It is to come forth from our stronghold and to stand unharmed and helpless, face to face with the old Lion. "I really am quite concerned about you," he seems to say, "to see such gifted and noble creatures as you are kept from your true position and sacred rights!" See how Eve might have reasoned if only she had kept in mind the goodness of God. "What, then, hast thou done for us, sir, since thou art so concerned for our welfare? Where are the tokens and proofs of thine eagerness to serve us? He who said, 'Thou shalt not eat of this tree,' hath made this fair earth and all that is therein. He planted this paradise, and hath given us all things richly to enjoy. Canst thou be more generous, more gracious than He? Against thy single word, behold, He sets ten thousand glorious assurances of His regard. If thou, indeed, wert seeking our good, wouldst thou beget these doubts of Him whom we have found all love, and who hath so perfect a claim upon us?" This completes our safety, when to our utter obedience to His law there is added this abiding confidence in His love. (*M. G. Pearse.*) *Longing for the forbidden*:—Speaking of the craving of colonists for dispossessing the Indians of their lands, a modern writer says: "On their way to the Kansas border, they passed over thousands of desirable acres, convenient to markets and schools, which they might have had at low rates and on long credits. But they had a special craving for Indian lands, and lands 'kept out of market'; the simple desire to enter this territory is sufficient to make them think it the fairest portion of the universe." *Sin, a deceiver*:—Martha Browning, a young woman, aged twenty-four, was executed many years ago for murder. The fatal deed was committed to obtain possession of a £5 note; but when the tempting bait was at last really possessed, it proved to be not a note of the Bank of England, but a flash note of the Bank of Elegance! **Ye shall not surely die.**—*The first lie*:—I. THE AUTHOR OF THIS FIRST LIE. Satan. Devil. Deceiver. II. THE NATURE OF THE LIE UTTERED. Direct falsification of God's threatening. III. A MOST DARING AND PRESUMPTUOUS LIE. A challenge of the Almighty. IV. A MOST MALIGNANT AND ENVIOUS LIE. V. A DESTRUCTIVE, MURDEROUS LIE. It slew our first parents: destroyed their innocence—blinded their minds—defiled their consciences—and overspread their souls with leprous defilement and guilt. VI. THE GERM OF ALL UNREALNESS AND DECEPTION THAT SHOULD CURSE MANKIND. VII. A LYING ENTANGLEMENT FROM WHICH HUMANITY COULD NOT EXTRICATE ITSELF. VIII. JESUS, THE DIVINE TRUTH, CAME TO DELIVER US FROM THIS LIE AND ITS RESULTS. IX. THE GOSPEL IS THE DELIVERING POWER FROM SATAN'S FALSEHOODS. (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *Satan's counter-assertion*:—I. THERE ARE MANY THINGS AGAINST WHICH GOD HAS UTTERED HIS VOICE IN EVERY MAN'S HEART; in which, even independently of written revelation, He has not left Himself without witness. He who lives in concealed or open sin knows full well that God hath said he shall surely die. But in the moment of temptation the certainty of ruin is met by a counter-assertion of the tempter—"Thou shalt not surely die": "Do the act and cast the consequences to the winds." We have a notable instance of this in the case of the prophet Balaam. Men with the full consciousness that God is against them persist in opposition to Him, till they perish; persuading themselves, from one step to another, that matters shall not turn out so badly as God's words and God's monitor within tell them that they shall. II. THERE ARE OTHER CLASSES OF PERSONS, BESIDES NOTORIOUS PROFLIGATES WHO ARE CAUGHT BY THIS DEVICE, "Thou shalt not surely die." 1. God has declared, "To be carnally minded is death." To be carnally minded is to be of the mind of the children of this world, to view things through a worldly medium, to pass day by day without a thought beyond this world, and as if there were no life after this life. Of this kind of life God has said that it is death, that those who live it shall surely die—nay, are dying now; and by this is meant that such a life is the immortal spirit's ruin, that it breaks up and scatters and wastes all man's best and highest faculties. "Ye shall not surely die" is the tempter's fallacy with which he deludes the carnally minded. He persuades them that they can give this life to God's enemy, and yet inherit life eternal. 2. God

has said, "He that hath the Son hath life; but he that hath not the Son of God hath not life"—i.e., "If ye have not the Son of God ye shall surely die." How many of us have any persuasion of the reality of this sentence of death? How many have cared enough about it to ascertain what it is to have the Son of God? Whosoever has not by his own personal act taken Christ as his, has not life, and must certainly die eternally: first by the very nature of things, for the desire for God has never been awakened in his heart, the guilt of sin has not been removed from him, nor its power over him broken; and then by solemn declarations of the God of truth—"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God abideth on him." III. MYSTERIOUS AS THE HISTORY OF OUR FALL IS, ITS GREATEST WONDER IS THIS: THAT GOD OUT OF RUIN BROUGHT FORTH FRESH BEAUTY; OUT OF MAN'S DEFEAT, HIS VICTORY; OUT OF DEATH, LIFE GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL. Thou shalt surely live is now the Divine proclamation to man's world. "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." (*Dean Alford.*) *Satan's character shown by the first temptation*:—I. SUBTLE. 1. Tempted the woman. 2. When alone. 3. Concealed himself, and spoke through the serpent. II. A LIAR. "Ye shall not surely die." III. A SLANDERER. "God doth know," &c. IV. A DECEIVER. "Ye shall be as gods," &c. (*J. McConnell.*) *Satan's temptations*:—Eve was vanquished by three crafty thrusts. Three poisoned arrows gave the deadly wounds. The flesh was seduced to lust—the eyes to long—and pride to covet. The forbidden fruit was exhibited first, as good for food—next, as pleasant to the eyes—then, as desirable to make one wise. Now, just as in the acorn, the monarch of the forest lives; as a small seed contains the planks for mansions, ships, and mighty works—so, in the earliest temptation there lies the embryo of sin's whole progeny. I. THE FLESH IS MIGHTY TO CORRUPT THE INNER MAN. Its doors are countless. Its casements are seldom closed. Through these there is quick access to the heart. It also is our encompassing mantle. We cannot escape its close embrace. We never move but in its company. There is no time when it is absent. Hence its prodigious power. II. THE EYE IS ALSO AN INLET OF SOLICITATIONS. Eve warns again. She fixed her eyes upon the fruit, and soon its beauty put forth fearful fascination. The attraction strengthened. Resistance melted, as snow before the sun. The enchanting appearance bewitched. The outward show injected sparks of longing. The fire kindled. The bait was taken. The eye betrayed. From that day he has been diligent to exhibit fascinating scenes, to gild externals with bewitching beauty, and to lead through them into sin's vilest paths. 3. There is another broad road open for temptation's feet. It is the desire to be great—the ambition to be distinguished—the lust of admiration. The Spirit names it, "The pride of life" (1 John ii. 16). This net too was first spread in Eden. The devil showed the fruit—and whispered that the taste would enlarge the faculties—give nobler wings to intellect—communicate new stores of knowledge. While she beheld, the poisonous thought took root, the tree is "to be desired to make one wise." But was not her intelligence enough? She knew God. In that knowledge is the joy of joys, and life for evermore. (*Dean Law.*) *Lessons*:—1. Once yielding to the tempter's charm gives him boldness to greater violence. 2. It is the devil's method to draw souls from doubting of God's truth to deny it. 3. It is a strong delusion of Satan to persuade a sinner that he shall not die. 4. It is the initial property of the tempter to be a liar, to deny what God affirms (ver. 4). 5. It is Satan's wile to deceive by urging God against God; and so make him vain. 6. It is Satan's falsehood to persuade that God either allows man's sin, or envies man's good and comfort. 7. The tempter dealeth in equivocations with double words and senses. 8. The time and cause of misery set by God is made the time and cause of good by Satan. That day's eating shall bring you good. 9. It is a strong temptation on man to persuade himself by sinning. 10. In all the light pretended, Satan intends nothing but experience of nakedness and shame. 11. Parity to God in place, not in nature, is a shrewd argument for Satan to tempt with. 12. In such arguments the devil intends to make sinners like himself. 13. Knowledge of all states and things is a powerful engine to draw man to sin (ver. 5). 14. Experience of all evil and miseries is the mark that Satan aims at in it. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Is death a reality?*—1. Let us first consult reason. It says, God is good, and as to die would be painful, and to be attended with all the ills of sickness, confinement, abstinence—as it necessarily includes the privation of accustomed pleasures, the abandonment of gay associates—the absence of every eye to admire, and every tongue to praise—it is not reasonable to suppose that He would inflict it whose name is love. He is just—must the righteous be slain with

the wicked? Must the infant and the aged perish together? But what is death? Has any one ever seen or heard it? Can any tell where it is? Till all these difficulties be removed, reason rebels against the assumption that we must all die. 2. It is true, Scripture asserts "It is appointed unto men once to die," and that "Death has passed upon all men," but is it not also said in Scripture, "Ye shall not surely die"? David plainly says in Psalm cxviii. 17th verse, "I shall not die," and Habakkuk, giving extension to the opinion and including his brethren, exclaims, "We shall not die" (Hab. i. 12). In what other sense are we to receive the declaration of St. Paul, "We shall not all sleep"? (1 Cor. xv. 51) and does not God Himself assure us that He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, much less therefore in the death of the righteous? Now, my friends, I have quoted for you Scripture for Scripture—You may impugn my manner of doing it—you may say I mould and mutilate it for my purpose—that I sacrifice its spirit to its letter, and make the one contradict the other. To this I answer, whatever contrivance my method exhibits, it is not mine—it is in use by thousands and millions of rational beings for the settlement of every question involving the paramount interests of their immortal souls. 3. Passing from Scripture, let us turn to the last test by which I propose to try the validity of my assumption—general observation. Were there such a formidable enemy as death to be encountered by all, it would be but natural to expect to find it the subject of general conversation and the object of universal alarm, its very name filling all faces with dismay, and occupying all heads with devices either to evade or successfully resist it. Can there therefore be such an enemy as death, not only in existence, but continually in our very neighbourhood, and not a whisper regarding it issue from the lips of its assumed victims in their most crowded assemblies, or an apprehension of its approach blanch for an instant the cheek or interrupt the ceaseless smile of the most sensitive among the daughters of mirth, who nightly record their satisfaction with the joys of time, and their scepticism regarding those of eternity? Both reason and precedent reject the supposition. Now, my friends, let us suppose the position established, that death is only an empty name—a bugbear to terrify the ignorant and superstitious; what do you suppose would be its effect on yourselves? Doubtless, you would consider it expedient to erase every serious impression which your mind had received, under the discipline of an imaginative subject of apprehension—to shake off the trammels of a vulgar superstition, and assert the freedom of a more enlightened judgment. How would you proceed? Considering the world now as your inalienable possession—you would rush freely into the intoxication of business, pleasure, or ambition. Self would be your only idol, earth its capacious temple, and every achievable gratification its justly due and most appropriate offering: to ensure the admiration of your fellows would be your highest ambition, and to evade their censure your most anxious solicitude. The Allwise and Allgracious Being who created you and the world you inhabit, who bestowed upon you all the sources of gratification you possessed, and the ability to enjoy them, would naturally be disregarded. Oh, my friends, what an awful picture have I permitted my imagination to draw! Surely it could never be realized, except on the supposition that there was no death—no judgment—no eternity! What if I undertake to convince you that such a supposition must prevail now? But meanwhile the besom of a long-insulted, but long-suffering God, is sweeping our land. Wrath has gone out from the Lord, and hundreds are dying in the plague; but where are the evidences of its recognition—of the hand from whence it issues, or the object for which it is sent? Where is the ear, attentive to the lesson of mortality it conveys?—where the fleeing, under the convictions it awakens, for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us? Where the awaking of the soul from its slumber of ignorance and death? You have heard the fiat of Jehovah—"The wages of sin is death." To this Satan replies, addressing the soul, as he did before the body—"You shall not surely die"; and here again he employs reason, Scripture, and experience, to substantiate his assertion. I. Reason testifies that the God with whom we have to do, is merciful, loving, and just, but when under the dominion of Satan, it exacts as the price of this admission the privilege of representing Him in an attitude of falsehood—as too tenderly alive to the well-being of His creatures, to expend a thought upon what is due to his own Divine attributes—upon the demands of His justice, holiness, and truth. Its solution of a human difficulty is the degradation of Him who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto. II. Let us now advert to the mode by which Scripture is made to countenance a practical denial of God's repeated admonition

to the wicked—"thou shalt surely die." This, then, is twofold. 1. By taking refuge behind particular characters or occurrences which bear a faucied analogy to ourselves and our actions, in some case under reprehension, and from their acknowledged exemption from Divine censure, feeling satisfied that we establish our own. The character and conduct of Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26), are, strange to say, the most usual refuge of "revellers, banqueters, and such like," from an assumption that He indulged on particular occasions in the society of the worldly and profane—engaging in their festivities and partaking of their cheer. 2. Another and very common mode of arguing the point with Jehovah out of His own Scriptures, is by reminding Him of such examples of his long-suffering mercy and forbearance, as they represent to have been admitted by a late repentance to the forgiveness of their accumulated guilt, and thence asserting a claim to similar indulgence to be followed by a similar result. III. The sect of the Sadducees, as it existed in our Saviour's time, is now fully represented by the generality of professing Christians, in their notions of that spiritual kingdom of which Christ is the head. Still earth and its constitutions, its laws, its maxims, and its incidents, supply to them their only conceivable model of the things which must be hereafter; and, consequently, Satan finds a ready basis for his falsehood, in the apparent discrepancy between the character of God, as revealed in His providences here, and such as it is represented in the Bible. Here His hatred of sin is but faintly delineated, and His vengeance against the sinner by no means strikingly displayed: many who confine their view to the results of conduct here, are ready to exclaim—"The ways of the Lord are not equal," since His chastisements do not seem proportioned to the number or depravity of the offences committed. From this the believers of the tempter often infer, that there is no positive law to regulate the adjudications of eternal punishment. (*S. A. Walker, B.A.*) *The subtlety of the first temptation, as impeaching the goodness, justice, and holiness of God:*—The art of this temptation is very much the same as that which still prevails over men in whom there is an evil heart of unbelief, leading them to depart from the living God (Heb. iii. 12). It is by arguments of unbelief that the tempter solicits Eve to sin. I. Thus, in the first instance, he insinuates his doubts REGARDING THE EQUITY AND GOODNESS OF GOD AS A BENEFACTOR, and the liberality of His gifts—"Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (ver. 1). Can it be? Has He really subjected you to so unreasonable a restraint? And the insinuation takes effect. Suspicion begins to rankle in the woman's breast. II. Then, again, in the second place, the tempter suggests DOUBTS REGARDING THE RIGHTeousNESS AND TRUTH OF GOD AS A LAWGIVER: "Ye shall not surely die." And for this he seems to find the woman already more than half prepared. She has very faintly and inadequately quoted the threat. III. And, thirdly, he has a PLAUSIBLE REASON TO JUSTIFY DOUBT AND UNBELIEF ON THIS POINT. It cannot be that ye shall be so harshly dealt with, "for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (ver. 5). This, then, was the order of the temptation: First, The goodness of God must be disbelieved; secondly, His justice; and, lastly, His holiness. It begins with a rebellion of the will, or the heart, against the moral attributes of God, as the Governor of His creatures. It ends in blindness of the understanding, or the mind, as to His natural and essential perfections as the infinite and eternal Creator. God ceases to be recognized as good, and just, and holy. Man, at the suggestion of Satan, would himself be as good, as just, as holy as God. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Observations:*—I. A LITTLE YIELDING TO SATAN IN HIS TEMPTATIONS, INVITES AND ENCOURAGEETH HIM TO A STRONGER AND MORE VIOLENT ASSAULT. If a man yield so far as to stand in sinners' counsels, Satan will not leave till he have brought him to walk in sinner's ways, till at last he sit down in the seat of scorners. The first reason hereof may be taken from Satan's diligence and vigilancy, to make the best of, and pursue to the uttermost all advantages (like Benhadad's messengers—1 Kings xx. 23), as waters, where the bank begins to yield, lie upon it with the greater weight, especially if we join with his diligence his malice, which sets him on, and is never satisfied till he have brought men to destruction (1 Pet. v. 8). Secondly, it is just with God to punish men's haltings and want of zeal with more dangerous errors and backslidings. Let us then be careful to resist Satan strongly in his first encounters, as we are advised (1 Pet. v. 9), with resolute denials. This resolute opposing of sinful motions—1. Keeps our hearts free from all defilement by sin. 2. Moves God to strengthen us with a greater measure of grace, as He did St. Paul

(2 Cor. xii. 9). 3. And daunts the devil, and makes him fly from us when he is readily opposed and resisted (James iv. 7). II. EVEN THOSE WHO SEEM MODEST IN SIN AT THE FIRST, GROW DOLD AND SHAMELESS IN IT AT THE LAST. 1. Because use and custom makes sin so familiar unto men, that it takes away, first the sense, and then the shame that follows it, which as they feel not in themselves, so they fear it not from others. 2. By this means God brings all evils to light, that the committers of them may be abhorred of all men, and His justice may be the more clearly manifested in their deserved punishment. III. THERE IS NO TRUTH OF GOD SO CLEAR AND MANIFEST, WHICH SATAN AND HIS AGENTS DARE NOT TO CONTRADICT. 1. Seeing Satan is both a liar, and the father of lies (John viii. 44), so that by his own nature he must needs be opposite to the truth. 2. Besides, it concerns him above all things to contradict fundamental truths, upon which God's honour and man's salvation most depend, both which Satan labours to overthrow with all his power. 3. And lastly, he well understands by experience, the corruption of man's nature, which inclines him to embrace darkness rather than light, to believe lies rather than to love the truth, which gives him great hope of prevailing, even in suggesting the foulest untruths to such favourable hearers. IV. SATAN AND HIS AGENTS NEVER MAKE USE OF GOD'S WORD BUT FOR MISCHIEF. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Satan's commentary*.—Said a quaint New England preacher: "Beware of Bible commentators who are unwilling to take God's words just as they stand. The first commentator of that sort was the devil in the Garden of Eden. He proposed only a slight change—just the one word 'not' to be inserted—'Ye shall not surely die.' The amendment was accepted, and the world was lost." Satan is repeating that sort of commentary with every generation of hearers. He insists that God couldn't have meant just what he said. To begin with, Satan induced one foolish woman to accept his exegesis; now he has theological professors who are of his opinion on these points; and there are multitudes of men and women who go on in the ways of sin because they believe Satan's word, and do not believe the Word of God. *A serpent-like trick*.—A clever serpent, truly, to begin using words in a double sense! That is pre-eminently a serpent-like trick. Observe how the word "die" is played upon. It is used by the serpent in the sense of dropping down dead, or violently departing out of this world; whereas the meaning, as we all know by bitter experience, is infinitely deeper. We lose our life when we lose our innocence; we are dead when we are guilty; we are in hell when we are in shame. Death does not take a long time to come upon us; it comes in the very day of our sin—"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Death*.—A heathen exercised his genius in the formation of a goblet, in the bottom of which he fixed a serpent, whose model he had made. Coiled for the spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, and in its open mouth fangs raised to strike, it lay beneath the ruby wine. As Guthrie says: "Be assured that a serpent lurks at the bottom of guilt's sweetest pleasure." (*W. Adamson.*) *Treachery of sin*.—Anthony Burgess says that sin is a Delilah, a sweet passion tickling while it stabs. Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eye, and from its fragrance likely to be good for food, a delicious morsel. Dr. Cuyler forcibly illustrates this by reference to the Judas tree. The blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are of a brilliant crimson. The flaming beauty of the flowers attracts innumerable insects; and the wandering bee is drawn after it to gather honey. But every bee which alights upon the blossom, imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth. Well may it be said that beneath this tree the earth is strewn with the victims of its fatal fascinations. (*Ibid.*) *Ye shall be as gods. Observations*.—I. SATAN IN ALL HIS PROMISES, GIVES MEN NO GROUND TO BUILD UPON, BUT HIS OWN BARE WORD. It is true, that God Himself doth affirm things upon His own Word alone, and justly may, seeing His Word is the standard of truth, and therefore the only ground of faith: but this is a peculiar privilege to Him alone, incommunicable to any creature, not to men who are all liars (Rom. iii. 4), much less to Satan, who is the father of lies (John viii. 44). Indeed Satan sometimes imitates God in this way, and offers also, and makes show, to confirm by experiments what he suggests, as that proud men are happy because they prosper (Mal. iii. 15), by which means he prevails much upon wicked men, to harden their hearts (Eccl. viii. 11; Jer. xiv. 17-18). Yea, and sometimes shakes the faith of the godly themselves, as he did David's (Psa. lxxiii. 2, 3, 13). But therein he plays the notable sophister. 1. In representing wicked men's prosperity so as if it were the reward of their wickedness, whereas, it is either the blessing of God upon their provident care and industry, in managing their affairs according to His own decree (Prov. x. 4 and xiv. 23), or for the manifest-

ing of His goodness to all (Matt. v. 45), and His justice in their condemnation who abuse His mercies, and provoke Him by their sins, when He doth them good; or for the fattening of them against the day of slaughter (Jer. xii. 3), and raising them up on high unto eminent places, their casting down into sudden and horrible destruction may be the more observed (Psa. lxxiii. 18). 2. He deceives men, by making the world believe that to be their happiness which is indeed their plague, as Solomon had found it in his own experience (Eccles. v. 13). II. IT IS SATAN'S CUSTOM AND POLICY TO CAST SUSPICIONS OF EVIL ENDS, ON THAT WHICH HE CANNOT BLAME OR DISCREDIT OTHERWISE. In the like manner he hath dealt with the Church of God in all ages, and doth unto this day. The reasons whereof may be—1. Because evil intentions are, in true estimation, the greatest of all evils, wherewith men can be charged. 2. Because nothing can be laid unto men's charge (especially where their lives and actions are without offence) with so much advantage, because things that appear not in themselves may with as much probability be affirmed as they can be denied. III. IT IS USUAL WITH SATAN AND HIS AGENTS TO CHARGE UPON OTHER MEN THOSE EVILS FALSELY WHEREOF THEMSELVES ARE TRULY GUILTY. 1. Those who have false and evil hearts of their own, are apt to suspect that to be in other men which they find in themselves. 2. By casting suspicions upon other men, they hope in some measure to clear themselves, as if they might in all probability be free from those evils which they tax in other men; or at least they hope to gain thus much, that their own evils may seem the less heinous, when other men appear to be little better than they. IV. DISCONTENT AT OUR PRESENT CONDITION IS A DANGEROUS TEMPTATION OF SATAN. It is indeed directly contrary to God's express direction (1 Tim. vi. 8; Heb. xiii. 5), and unto the practice of all godly men (see the apostle's example, Phil. iv. 11); and is the daughter of pride and self-love, which makes us think ourselves worthy of much more than we have, and is the parent—1. Of unthankfulness to God for what we have received, which proceeds from an undervaluing of those blessings which we enjoy. 2. Of uneasiness in our hearts, when our desires are not satisfied, as Ahab had no rest in himself, when he could not get Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings xxi. 3-4). 3. Of envy at and contention with our neighbours, who possess that which we desire to enjoy, and are consequently looked on by us with an evil eye, as standing in our way to the obtaining of that which we aim at. 4. Of unconscionable dealing, and taking up ways of dishonest gain, that we may purchase that by any means, without which we think ourselves not sufficiently supplied, according to our worth. V. BLINDNESS AND IGNORANCE IS A GREAT MISERY. 1. Ignorance abases a man to the condition of a beast. 2. Ignorance makes a man unuseful and unserviceable every way, in all his undertakings, for only a wise man's eyes are in his head, but a fool walks in darkness (Eccles. ii. 14), which we know hinders all manner of employments. 3. Ignorance leaves a man without comfort, for it is the light that is sweet, that is comfortable (Eccles. xi. 7), and the light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart (Prov. xv. 30). VI. IT IS GREAT INJUSTICE IN ANY MAN, TO KEEP UNDER, AND HINDER OTHERS FOR HIS OWN ADVANTAGE. VII. IT IS FALSE LIBERALITY TO WITHHOLD THINGS THAT ARE OF TRUE VALUE, AND TO BESTOW THAT WHICH IS OF LITTLE WORTH. Let us, upon this ground admire the infinite and incomprehensible love of God unto man, upon whom He hath bestowed His own beloved Son, His choicest jewel, His delight daily (Prov. vii. 30), and that from all eternity. VIII. MAN'S LEANING TO THE CREATURE MUST NECESSARILY UTTERLY DIVIDE HIS HEART FROM GOD. Let us therefore in this sin consider—1. The indignity, both in respect of God, whom we abase below His own creatures (see Jer. ii. 12-13), and in relation to ourselves, when we stoop to those things, which are either far below us, or at the best but equal to us. 2. The folly, in forsaking the fountain of living waters, and digging cisterns that hold no water, which makes them prove fools in the event (Jer. xvii. 11-13). 3. The danger of provoking God's jealousy, which no man is able to endure. IX. SELF-LOVE AND SEEKING IS ONE OF SATAN'S MOST DANGEROUS SNARES. 1. First, because it most easily seizeth upon man's heart, as it is clearly manifested unto any that will take notice of men's ways, and of the scope wherewith they aim, not only men that live without God in this present world, or without any form of godliness, whose character is to be lovers of themselves (2 Tim. iii. 2), inquiring after nothing else, but who will show them any good (Psa. iv. 6), referring all unto themselves with the king of Babylon (Dan. iv. 30). 2. Secondly, as this evil disposition easily seizeth upon us, and possesseth us strongly, so is it of all others most injurious. (1) To God, against whom we lift up ourselves, advancing ourselves above Him, in seeking ourselves more than His honour, for which we were created, and pre-

ferring our own lusts before His righteous and holy will. (2) To men, whom we must neglect in all offices and services of love, when we seek only ourselves, and our own advantages. (3) But most of all to ourselves, who neglecting both our duty to Him, when we respect ourselves more than His honour, and towards our brethren, must therefore lose all our reward, which is promised only to such as serve God according to His will, and one another through love. X. SATAN USUALLY LAYETH HIS SNARES FOR MEN IN THOSE THINGS WHEREIN THEY NATURALLY TAKE MOST DELIGHT. 1. First, because by this means he prevails upon men much more easily, as having a help within our own breasts, to let in those temptations wherewith he assails us. 2. And secondly, because such snares, when they have entangled us, hold us of all others most strongly, as indeed love is strong as death (Cant. viii. 6). XI. SATAN TEMPTS US TO SIN, NOT ONLY IN OUR PLEASURES AND DELIGHTS, BUT EVEN IN OUR DUTIES TOO. 1. Because we are in such ways most secure, and therefore most easily ensnared. 2. Satan desires most to corrupt our best endeavours, for the greater dishonour to God and religion. 3. Because there be many easy and dangerous errors in circumstances of duty, even where the substance of the action is warrantable in itself. XII. THE SEARCHING AFTER THE KNOWLEDGE OF UNNECESSARY THINGS, IS ONE OF SATAN'S SNARES, AND UNPROFITABLE TO US. Let us then learn to be wise to sobriety (as the words, Rom. xii. 3, may not improperly be rendered), contenting ourselves with the knowledge—1. Of such things as God hath revealed in His Word, which belong to us (Deut. xxix. 29). 2. Which are most proper and useful to us, as our Saviour intimates in His answer to St. Peter (John xxi. 21–22). 3. As are profitable to edification both of ourselves and others (see Eph. iv. 29). These the apostle calls wholesome words (1 Tim. vi. 3). As for the searching after the knowledge of future events, which God hath sealed up in His own breast, and oppositions of sciences (1 Tim. vi. 20), they must needs occasion—(1) Unprofitable expense of time. (2) Needless distraction of our thoughts. (3) The neglect of searching into things more useful and needful for ourselves and others. (4) And tends to ungodliness; the nourishing of pride, contention, and the like, and are the very baits and snares of Satan. XIII. THE PROMISES OF SATAN, OR HIS AGENTS, ARE OF SUCH THINGS AS ARE EITHER EVIL OR UNPROFITABLE. XIV. THE SPECIAL END THAT SATAN PERSUADES WICKED MEN TO AIM AT IS THAT THEY MAY BE AS GODS. This was not only the high thought of the proud king of Babel (Isa. xiv. 13–14), or of antichrist his antitype (2 Thess. ii. 4), but is the desire of every wicked man, to have or do that which is peculiar to God Himself. 1. To excel alone, and to get themselves a name, that may be admired and spoken of by all men, not only the builders of Babel (Gen. xi. 4), and Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 18), but generally all proud men, as they are described unto us (Psa. xlix. 11). 2. To be independent, and to have sufficiency in their own hand, as that fool thought himself to have (Luke xii. 19), which is the desire of all covetous persons. 3. To be commanded by none, but to be their own lords (Psa. xii. 4), to follow only their own counsel, and be guided by their own wills (Jer. xlv. 16). 4. To give account to none but themselves, with those rebellious Jews, that desire to have the Holy One of Israel cease from them (Isa. xxx. 11), and Amaziah, who will not be called to account by the prophet (2 Chron. xxv. 16). 5. To refer all to themselves, and to their own glory, with proud Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 30), and to do well to themselves (Psa. xlix. 18). XV. IT IS SATAN'S POLICY TO DRAW MEN TO DEPEND UPON THE CREATURE, FOR THAT WHICH ONLY GOD CAN GIVE. Let all that are wise take notice of the least motion of their hearts, that tends that way, abhorring the very least inclination of our affections that way, as a dangerous evil. 1. Dishonourable both to God and ourselves. 2. Uncomfortable, when our hearts cannot be assured of that which we depend upon, as having no firm ground to support our hopes. 3. Unprofitable, when men gain nothing by such a kind of dependance, more than they do by a dream of a great feast, who find themselves empty and hungry when they are awake. 4. Most dangerous, by drawing us from the service of God, to the service of the creature, upon which we have our dependance. XVI. SELF-SEEKING AND DEPENDANCE ON THE CREATURE ARE EVILS THAT BE INSEPARABLE. Now this comes to pass—1. By necessity, because man as well as all other creatures, wanting sufficiency in himself for self-subsistence, having now in a sort departed from God, and thereby lost his dependance upon Him, hath nothing else left him but the creature to fly unto for his support. 2. Because God by His just judgment cannot bring upon a man a fitter plague to avenge the dishonour done to Him, by lifting up ourselves against Him, than by abasing us to submit to things below ourselves. XVII. SATAN'S PREFERMENTS ARE IN TRUE ESTIMATION ABASEMENTS AND BASE

SLAVERIES. XVIII. HASTY RESOLUTIONS PROVE COMMONLY DANGEROUS IN THE ISSUE. 1. Because in the thoughts of our heart natural notions, which are full of error, come first to hand; upon which if we settle our resolutions, we must needs be mistaken, and err dangerously ere we be aware. 2. Because our understanding, being weak in itself, is not able at once to take in, and lay before it all things, upon which a well-grounded judgment should be settled; so that we need some time to search out and lay together all those circumstances and evidences which must guide us in all that we take in hand. XIX. THE NEARER THINGS ARE TO BE ENJOYED, THE MORE STRONGLY THE HEART IS AFFECTED TOWARDS THEM. 1. Let us be careful to fix our eyes upon the present examples of mercies or judgments upon ourselves or others, especially upon those which are inward and spiritual, laying hold of eternal life, upon the sense of God's present favours, as the Prophet David seems to do (Psa. lxxiii. 24), and beholding and trembling at the very face of hell in present judgments. 2. Labour to work those experiments upon our hearts, till they awaken faith by which only those things which are to come are made present (Heb. xi. 1), so that they affect men with joy, as if they were possessed already (1 Pet. i. 8), and with like fear on the other side. 3. Let us often recount with ourselves the shortness of this present life. Meditation may and will show a man's life unto him but a span long, and may make a thousand years seem unto him, as God accounts them, but as one day. (*J. White, M.A.*) *A poisoned honour*:—If we are to credit the annals of the Russian empire, there once existed a noble order of merit, which was greatly coveted by the princes and noblesse. It was, however, conferred only on the peculiar favourites of the Czar, or on the distinguished heroes of the kingdom. But another class shared in its honour in a very questionable form. Those nobles or favourites who either became a burden to the Czar or who stood in his way, received this decoration only to die. The pin-point was tipped with poison—and when the order was being fastened on the breast by the imperial messenger, the flesh of the person was “accidentally” pricked. Death ensued, as next morning the individual so highly honoured with imperial favour was found dead in bed from apoplexy. Satan offered to confer a brilliant decoration upon Adam and Eve—“Ye shall be as gods.” It was poisoned; the wages of sin is death. (*W. Adamson.*) *The devil's bait*:—He telleth her, “they shall be like gods,” &c. And it is his continued practice still with hope of higher climbing, to throw down many a man and woman. He will tickle you with honour, with wealth, with friends, and many gay things that you shall get by yielding to him, but whilst you so look to mount aloft to better your state, and to enjoy promises, down shall you fall from heaven to hell, and find a false serpent when it is too late to call again yesterday, that is, to undo what you have done. Our mother Eve whilst she looked to become like God, and her husband with her, she became like the devil, and cast away her husband also; even so shall you if any vain hope, promise, or speech tickle your heart to offend the Lord, and to undo yourself and your friends. (*Bp. Babington.*) *She took of the fruit thereof*.—*The moral aspect of the senses*:—I. THAT MAN REQUIRES A BOUNDARY FOR HIS SENSES. By prohibiting one tree, God declares that there must be a limitation to the gratification of the senses. This is a most important doctrine, and fearfully overlooked. But why should the senses be restricted? 1. Because an undue influence of the senses is perilous to the spiritual interests of men. The senses, as servants, are great blessings; as sovereigns, they become great curses. Fleshly lusts “war against the soul.” 2. Because man has the power of fostering his senses to an undue influence. Unlike the brute, his senses are linked to the faculty of imagination. By this he can give new edge and strength to his senses. He can bring the sensual provisions of nature into new combinations, and thereby not only strengthen old appetites, but create new ones. Thus we find men on all hands becoming the mere creatures of the senses—intellect and heart running into flesh. They are carnal. II. THAT MAN'S MORAL NATURE IS ASSAILABLE THROUGH THE SENSES. Thus Satan here assailed our first parents, and won the day. Thus he tempted Christ in the wilderness, and thus ever. His address is always to the passions. By sensual plays, songs, books, and elements, he rules the world. “Lust, when it is finished, bringeth forth sin.” This fact is useful for two purposes: 1. To caution us against all institutions which aim mainly at the gratification of the senses. We may rest assured, that Satan is in special connection with these. 2. To caution us against making the senses the source of pleasure. It is a proof of the goodness of God that the senses yield pleasure; but it is a proof of depravity when man seeks his chief pleasure in them. Man should ever attend to them rather as means of relief

than as sources of pleasure. He who uses them in this latter way, sinks bruteward. III. THAT MAN'S HIGHEST INTERESTS HAVE BEEN RUINED BY THE SENSES. "She took of the fruit." Here was the ruin. History teems with similar examples. Esau, the Jews in the wilderness, and David, are striking illustrations. Men's highest interests—of intellect—conscience—soul—and eternity—are everywhere being ruined by the senses. (*Homilist.*) *Stages to ruin*:—In vers. 1-7 are indicated the human stages through which evil entered the world. I. INDETERMINATION. This afforded the tempter an opportunity of doing three things. 1. Insinuating a doubt as to the truth of the prohibition. 2. Contradicting the sanction of the prohibition. 3. Impiously reflecting on the kindness of the prohibition. Parleying with the tempter has ever been the ruin of man. II. SELFISM. Two impulses arose within her to an undue power. 1. Appetite. 2. Ambition. III. SEDUCTIVENESS. Eve no sooner falls, than she becomes a tempter. (*Ibid.*) *The fatal choice*:—I. THE PROCESS OF TEMPTATION AND FALL. 1. The first step towards ruin was, and is, willingness to parley with the tempter. 2. Desire. 3. Change of opinion regarding the expediency or morality of the sin. 4. The overt act of sin. II. THE TRAIN OF CONSEQUENCES. 1. The tempted becomes at once a tempter of others. 2. Knowledge of sin works shame. 3. Knowledge of sin makes one especially afraid of God. 4. Sin brings the sentence of Divine displeasure. III. THE INTERVENTION OF DIVINE GRACE. (*The Homiletic Review.*) *Temptation and Fall of man*:—I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES. 1. The instrument used for the temptation. A tree. 2. The agent in conducting the temptation. The serpent. 3. The mode by which the temptation was conducted to its issue. II. THE MORAL CHANGE which the success of this great temptation produced and perpetuated. 1. The nature of the change. A change of character. Depravity and alienation from God. 2. The extent and application of this change beyond those who submitted to it. Universal. III. THE PENAL INFLICTIONS which in consequence of the success of the great temptation and its attendant moral changes have been incurred. 1. Exclusion from paradise. 2. Corporeal sorrow and toil. 3. The consignment of the body to death. 4. Exposure to future and eternal punishment. CONCLUDING LESSONS: 1. The voluntariness of sin. Let no one for a moment suppose that man sins by decree; he is saved by decree, but he is not lost by decree. Besides the voluntariness of sin which is one truth which requires to be acknowledged, another is the universality of sin. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." 2. But it is vastly important, that the remedy provided against the consequences of man's fall should be at once and gratefully embraced. (*James Parsons, M.A.*) *Observations*:—I. THINGS USUALLY APPEAR UNTO US AS WE STAND AFFECTED TOWARDS THEM IN OUR HEARTS. II. SIN PROCEEDS NOT FROM THE OUTWARD OBJECT, BUT FROM THE CORRUPTION OF THE HEART WITHIN. III. IT IS DANGEROUS TO A MAN TO FIX HIS SENSES UPON ENTICING OBJECTS. IV. MEN BY NATURE ARE MORE APT TO GIVE CREDIT UNTO LIES THAN UNTO THE TRUTH OF GOD. V. MEN ARE EASILY DRAWN TO BELIEVE AND HOPE ANYTHING OF THAT WHICH THEY AFFECT AND DESIRE. VI. THE TERRORS OF WRATH TO COME CANNOT PREVAIL AGAINST STRONG AND VIOLENT AFFECTIONS TO THINGS THAT ARE PRESENT. VII. OUTWARD SENSE IS AN ILL AND A DANGEROUS GUIDE. 1. Sense was never given men for a judge or counsellor to determine and direct, but only for an informer. 2. Sense can show us nothing but the outward forms of such things as it represents, upon which we shall never be able to lay the ground of a right judgment: wherefore judgment according to appearance, is opposed to God's true and infallible judgment (1 Sam. xvi. 7). VIII. A MAN CANNOT NATURALLY DESIRE ANYTHING BUT UNDER A SHOW AND APPEARANCE OF GOOD. IX. MAN IS AN ILL CHOOSER OF HIS OWN GOOD. X. IT IS A GROSS EVIL TO CHOOSE NOT WHAT IS GRANTED US, BUT WHAT WE LIKE ESPECIALLY. OUT OF RESPECT TO OURSELVES IN PARTICULAR. XI. LUST, ONCE CONCEIVED, WILL AT LAST BRING FORTH ACTUAL SIN IN FULL PERFECTION. First, it cannot be otherwise, because inward desires and affections are the ground of all outward actions and performances, as Solomon tells us (Prov. iv. 23), which therefore must needs follow, unless there be some impediment cast in the way, especially in this corruption of man's nature, wherein they bear all the sway. Secondly, God is pleased it shall be so, that men may be made known by their actions, as a tree is known by his fruit. XII. IT IS NOT IN THE POWER OF SATAN HIMSELF, TO DRAW ANY MAN TO SIN WITHOUT HIS CONSENT. XIII. THEY THAT SIN THEMSELVES, ARE COMMONLY SEDUCERS OF OTHERS TO SIN. XIV. ONE WHO HAS FALLEN INTO SIN, IS OFTEN MOST DANGEROUS TO HIS NEAREST FRIENDS. XV. IT IS THE PROPERTY OF TRUE LOVE TO COMMUNICATE TO OTHERS WHATSOEVER ITSELF EMBRACETH AS GOOD. XVI. THE

STRONGEST MAN IS NOT ABLE TO STAND AGAINST SATAN, IF GOD LEAVE HIM TO HIMSELF. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Temptation and Fall*.—Should it occur to any to ask. How it can be consistent with the Divine wisdom and goodness to place creatures in the beginning of their life in a condition of such exposure and peril, we must allow that the question is not unattended with difficulty. We know it, however, to be a fact, imperfectly as we may be able to reconcile it with the acknowledged character of God, that the beginning or early part of every human life, and probably of the life of every moral being, is especially fraught with temptations and dangers. The sacred writer may have had this idea in his mind when he said, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof." Childhood and youth are, in most cases, seasons of temptation. The entrance on early manhood is a time of temptation. Principles are then to be settled and habits to be formed, which will do much toward shaping the character for all the future life. Viewed in relation to God and religion, the first part of life is important. It is the period of moral formation; and the principles which then gain an ascendancy are likely to be permanent. Hence the solicitude which parents feel in relation to their children, and especially their sons, when they go from them to enter on a course of study in a public institution, or to engage as clerks and apprentices in the employment of others, or to begin life for themselves. The young cannot wholly escape these trials and dangers; and they greatly resemble the temptations through which Adam and Eve passed. They are inseparable from the responsibilities of self-government, until a stable and well-tried character is formed. Men are put into the world to meet its duties, and to discipline themselves, amidst difficulties and moral hazards, for a better state. The sooner in life they learn this truth, the better will it be for them. The plan of God is not to shield any of us from temptation; but to teach us to pass through it undamaged and with advantage. But it may help somewhat to reconcile us to this part of the Divine government, if we inquire whether it is possible for us to conceive of a better constitution? All creatures must begin to exist. They must therefore either be as perfect as they ever can be at first, or they must have scope to grow and to unfold themselves. Would we, any of us, choose to be created so perfect at the beginning, as to preclude the idea of any improvement, or even of any change? Would we be in favour of a constitution, supposing it possible, which would permit no increase of knowledge, of virtue, or of happiness? Would we prefer to be wholly without hope? Would we account a dead, stagnant monotony, an unvarying sameness of existence, an improvement on our present state? I cannot think we should any of us so elect, were the election in our power. And yet all these ideas belong to the notion of a creature made at the outset as perfect as he ever can be. (*D. N. Sheldon.*) *The husband tempted through the wife*.—Agrippina poisoned the Emperor Commodus with wine in a perfumed cup; the cup being perfumed and given him by his wife, it was the less suspected. Satan knew a temptation coming to Adam from his wife, would be more prevailing, and would be less suspected: O bitter! Sometimes relations prove temptations: a wife may be a snare, when she dissuades her husband from doing his duty, or enticeth him to evil. "Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness, whom his wife Jezebel stirred up." She blew the coals and made his sin flame out the more. Satan's subtlety was in tempting Adam by his wife, he thought she would draw him to sin. (*T. Watson.*) *The Fall of man*.—I. MAN'S FALL FROM A STATE OF INNOCENCE. Mark the steps of the transgression. She "saw": she should have turned away her eyes from beholding vanity; but she enters into temptation by looking with pleasure on the forbidden fruit. "She took": it was her own act and deed. Satan may tempt, but he cannot force us into sin. She "did eat": when first she looked, perhaps she meant not to touch, or if she took, not to eat; but who can say, So far I will go in sin, and no further? It is a downward road. Our only safety is to stop the first thought, the first beginning. She "gave also unto her husband with her." No sooner was Eve a sinner than, like the devil, she became a tempter. Adam, it seems, had joined her now; and he listened to her persuasion, "and he did eat." And will any dare to think the sin a small one? God had given him a plain and easy command; had made him with a will free, a nature holy and good. His act, then, showed unbelief in God's word, discontent with his state, aspiring pride; in a word, it was disobedience. He sinned against the clearest light, the highest knowledge, the greatest goodness, the dearest love. He turned aside quickly. And will any ask, as men do now, What great harm was there? II. THE UNHAPPY CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL. 1. Shame. 2. Fear. 3. Pride. Adam attempts to hide

his offence from God. 4. Judgment. Sorrow, misery, death. Every sinner finds it so. III. THE ONLY REMEDY PROVIDED—in Jesus Christ our Saviour. God has stooped from heaven to redeem man. (*E. Blencowe, M.A.*) *Sin and death:—* This narrative teaches us great facts regarding temptation and sin. I. REGARDING TEMPTATION. 1. Temptation often comes through Satanic influence. As in the cases of Eve, Judas, Ananias, so to-day Satan is busy in placing temptation before us. How he does it we know not, but he evidently has supernatural power to instil evil thoughts into our minds. (1) Satan's method is to start doubts and queries in men's minds. By parleying with temptation Eve was lost. (2) The narrative shows the subtilty of temptation. Satan was careful in this narrative not to lie outright. All error begins in one-sided truths. (3) But with this presentation of a part of the truth, Satan took care that doubts should be awakened regarding God's motives. 2. But the narrative teaches that, though there be Satanic influence from without, there is a greater temptation from within (see James i. 14). Eve thought she should be as God if she ate the forbidden fruit. She reasoned as do so many foolish young people in these days who say about places of evil resort: "I want to see for myself. It isn't going to do me any harm, and I want to know about it." And so young men—bent on being as smart as their fellows and on knowing as much of the world as any body, and seeing the gilded apple, fair to look upon and promising temporal advantage, hanging in the liquor-saloon, or the gambling resort, or the house of death—pluck and eat. II. REGARDING SIN. 1. The question at once arises—Why did God forbid the eating of the fruit of this tree? The injunction was not arbitrary, we may be sure. The inherent wrong we do not know, but we are certain that it was essential to the character and destiny of man that there should be something prohibited. There must be law: first, because some things are inherently right and others inherently wrong; second, because without law, enjoining or forbidding, character can neither be tested nor developed. 2. We see again from the narrative that the essence of sin consists in unbelief. Why does God forbid this and enjoin that? Because He loves us and knows a contrary course would do us harm. What subtle conviction justifies us when we allow ourselves in disobedience to God's laws? Either that we know better than God, or that God lays His commands on us from selfish and ungenerous motives. It is hard to tell which conviction is the worse, but probably the latter is the more common. At any rate, it is clear that all sin originates in distrust of God. Doubting His wisdom or His truthfulness, or above all, His love, we rush on, heedless of His warnings, to our destruction. 3. There is a lesson in this narrative regarding the propagation of sin. No sooner did Eve eat the forbidden fruit than she offered it to Adam and persuaded him to be a sinner also. In this she did but carry out instinctively an inevitable law of sin. Sin is a contagious disease. 4. The penalty of sin is death. (*A. P. Foster, D.D.*) *The first sin:—*I. THE CHARACTER OF THE FIRST SIN. The strength of the first sin was the law of God. There was no intrinsic poison in the forbidden fruit, for God cannot produce an essentially evil thing; the creature's disobedience gave to it its deadly power. II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST SIN. So long as the creature's love for God was perfect, the first law remained unbroken; but even as in Elijah's days, there arose out of the sea a vapour, not larger than a man's hand, which gathered unto itself other clouds, until the whole heaven was covered with blackness; so there arose in the horizon of Eden, as a little cloud, a doubt of God's love, and behold now the sky is overcast above our heads, even with the shadow of death. Yes, Eve began to think that her Maker had withholden from her that which was good. She, looking upon the forbidden tree, formed an independent judgment upon its qualities; she pronounced that it was good for food, pleasant to the sight, and of a nature to communicate wisdom to the partaker thereof. This was the first step in the development of her sin. Next, she desired it. It was "a tree to be desired." There is something wonderful in the typicality of the first sin; how distinctly do we see the shadow of that, which is now in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of an intellectual life. In the full and final development of sin the woman took of the fruit and ate. The deed of wickedness followed the unholy thought; and the ruin of the world was completed. III. THE PROLIFIC NATURE OF THE FIRST SIN. "Gave unto her husband, and he did eat." No sooner is one sin truly born, or brought forth in its maturity, than it becomes the parent of a thousand or a million of other transgressions. There is no point which should make us dread sin more than its hydra-like multiplication. It branches forth in every direction; it is impossible to check its rapidity of reproduction. IV. THE

PERPETUITY OF ITS EFFECT ON POSTERITY. (*The Protoplasm.*) *The first sin*:—I. THE NATURE OF THE SIN. 1. Ingratitude. 2. Disbelief. 3. Disobedience. II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIN. 1. Our first parents were not the same afterwards. 2. That one sin paved the way for other sins. For insincerity and untruth. 3. It estranged them from God. 4. It broke up the home. 5. It shut them out of life. III. THE REMEDY FOR SIN. In Christ. (*J. Ogle.*) *Ten sins in Adam's disobedience*:—1. Incredulity. Our first parents did not believe what God had spoken was truth. 2. Unthankfulness, which is the epitome of all sin. Adam's sin was committed in the midst of paradise. 3. In Adam's sin was discontent: had he not been discontented, he would never have sought to have altered his condition. How wide was Adam's heart, that a whole world could not fill it. 4. Pride, in that he would be like God. But, by climbing too high, he got a fall. 5. Disobedience. How could God endure to see His laws trampled on before His face? This made God place a flaming sword at the end of the garden. 6. Curiosity: to meddle with that which was out of his sphere, and did not belong to him. Adam would be prying into God's secrets, and tasting what was forbidden. 7. Wantonness: though Adam had a choice of all the other trees, yet his palate grew wanton, and he must have this tree. Adam had not only for necessity, but for delight; yet his wanton palate lusted after forbidden fruit. 8. Sacrilege: the tree of knowledge was none of Adam's, yet he took of it, and did sacrilegiously rob God of His due. Sacrilege is a double theft. 9. Murder: Adam was a public person, and all his posterity were involved. 10. Presumption. One sin may have many sins in it. As in one volume there may be many works bound up, so there may be many sins in one sin. The dreadfulness of the effect: it hath corrupted men's nature. How rank is that poison a drop whereof could poison a whole sea! And how deadly is that sin of Adam, that could poison all mankind, and bring a curse upon them, till it be taken away by Him who was "made a curse for us." (*T. Watson.*) *The first sin*:—I. THE GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST SIN. 1. Creating uncertainty in the mind as to duty towards God. 2. Nourishing the hope that God is not in earnest. 3. Producing a doubt as to God's goodness and sincerity. II. THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE FIRST SIN. 1. Contaminating. 2. Destructive to human love. 3. Bringing men morally to the same level. 4. The precursor of physical suffering. III. THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF THE FIRST SIN. 1. Burdening the soul with guilt. 2. Disturbing its peace with fear. 3. Obliterating its true conceptions of God. IV. THE PUNISHMENT OF THE FIRST SIN. 1. Its punishment shows that sin is foreign to our nature. 2. That sin and punishment are linked together. 3. That God is just in its punishment. 4. That God is willing to pardon sin. 5. That liberty is not without its attendant risks. 6. That knowledge without holiness is dangerous. (*Homilist.*) *The Fall*:—I. THE TEST OF OBEDIENCE WHICH GOD INSTITUTED. 1. It was just and reasonable. 2. Simple and plain. 3. Practicable and easy. II. THE MANNER OF ITS VIOLATION. 1. The serpent tempted. 2. The woman transgressed. 3. She gave also to Adam, and he did eat. III. THE MORAL EVIL IT INVOLVED. 1. Great credulity, yet great unbelief. 2. Great discontent. 3. Great pride. 4. Great disobedience and presumption. 5. Great ingratitude. IV. THE CALAMITOUS RESULTS IT PRODUCED. 1. Overwhelming fear and shame. 2. Open exposure and correction. 3. The Divine displeasure and punishment. (1) On the serpent (see ver. 15). (2) On the woman; subjection and sorrow in child-bearing (ver. 16). (3) On Adam. Ground cursed; toil, &c. (chap. xvii. 18, 19). On both death, though not immediately executed. APPLICATION: 1. Learn the origin of human sin. 2. Its disastrous effects. 3. Our natural connection with it. 4. The only way of deliverance from it. By faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was manifested in the flesh to destroy the work of the devil (see Rom. v. 12-17). (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *Man's moral conflict*:—I. THE GREAT MORAL CONFLICT APPOINTED FOR MAN. In Eden and in every human history there is a collision between appetite and conscience, between right and wrong, between God's will and human wilfulness. Things know nothing of such oppositions. In self-governments and to wills they are inevitable. 1. That it was waged between powers both good in themselves for the exclusive rule and supremacy of the lower over the life. 2. It begins with a suggestion from without and from beneath. 3. We are assailed from the most unlikely quarters, and are injured by the most unlikely instruments. 4. The danger in this case arose from a lawless desire for knowledge. II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF MAN'S MORAL DEFEAT. Given the fact of sin, the fact of a fatal change in the condition and circumstances follows of necessity. 1. The harmonious and beautiful subordination of the powers of the

human constitution is destroyed. 2. Native innocence is lost. 3. Sin shuts out the light of heaven and prevents the enjoyment of the vision of God. 4. Sin changes the face of nature to the guilty, and banishes the spirit from the regions of Divine joy. Men in the first consciousness of guilt dare not pray. (*The Preacher's Monthly*.) *Lessons from the Fall of man*:—I. TEMPTATION LIES IN THE DIRECTION OF PLEASURE. II. GUILT OPENS MEN'S EYES. III. GUILT VAINLY TRIES TO HIDE ITS DEFORMITY. (*The Homiletic Review*.) *A warning from Eve's Fall*:—She was thus tempted, seduced, and overthrown in paradise, and it may well admonish us, that if that paradise could not free them from temptation, surely our paradises here shall never do it. But even in our princely palaces, our glittering chambers, our dainty and delicate gardens, the devil will be chatting with us, and seeking to work our woe for ever and ever if he can. Nay, would God these painted paradises were not rather the places and means of our woful falls than poorer places be, we giving ourselves so much to the pleasures of them that God is forgotten, and the passage to Satan's pleasure laid open a thousand ways. Oh, how have they fallen swimming in pleasures, that stood most holy when they had fewer delights! Oh, how have courts of princes robbed them of virtue, whom in country and meaner places no devil could violate or defile! Beware we then of Satan even in our paradises, yea, rather I say, than in poorer cots: when everything about us is bright and brave, beware we that enemy that is black and foul. Many pleasures should effect many desires to please the Giver, God Almighty, and no pleasures should make me wanton, lusting and longing for unlawful things. Let Eve be remembered where she was deceived, and I say no more, it was in paradise. (*Bp. Babington*.) *A threefold temptation*:—There were three things that wrought upon her. 1. The tree was good for food. A strong reason, had she been famishing, but none when surrounded with the plenty of the rich garden. Strange that she should have cared for it on such an account! She is in no need of food, yet it is on this account that she covets it! She is without excuse in her sin. It was the lust of the flesh that was at work (Eph. ii. 3; 1 John ii. 16). She saw in the tree the gratification of that lust, and in God a hinderer of it. Thus she fell. 2. It was a desire of the eyes. And had she no other objects of beauty to gaze upon? Yes; thousands. Yet this forbidden one engrossed her, as if it had acquired new beauty by having been prohibited. Or can she not be satisfied with looking? Must she covet? Must she touch and taste? It is plain that hers was no longer the natural and lawful admiration of a fair object, but an unlawful desire to possess what she admired. It was "the lust of the eye." 3. It was a tree to be desired for imparting wisdom. This was the crowning allurements. She must have wisdom, and she must have it at all risks, and she must have it without delay. She made haste to be wise. She would not in faith wait for God's time and way of giving wisdom. Such was the desire (or lust) of the mind (Eph. ii. 3). These three reasons prevailed. She plucked the fruit, and did eat. Nay, more, she gave also to her husband, who was with her, and he did eat. She was not content to sin alone. Even the dearest on earth must be drawn into the same snare. Let us mark here such lessons as the following:—1. The danger of trifling with objects of temptation. To linger near them; to hesitate about leaving them; to think of them as harmless—these are the sure forerunners of a fall. 2. The three sources of temptation: the lust of the flesh, of the eye, of the mind. Strictly speaking, they are not in themselves sinful, but in their excess, or disorderly indulgence. 3. The swift progress of temptation. She listened, looked, took, ate! These were the steps. All linked together, and swiftly following each other. The beginning how small and simple; the end how terrible! (Jas. i. 25). You begin with a look, you end in apostasy from God. You begin with a touch, you end in woe and shame. You begin with a thought, you end in the second death. Yet of all these steps God protests solemnly that He is not the Author (Jas. i. 13). It is man that is his own ensnarer and destroyer. Even Satan cannot succeed unless seconded by man himself. 4. The tendency of sin to propagate itself. No sooner has the tempted one yielded than he seeks to draw others into the snare. He must drag down his fellows with him. There seems an awful vitality about sin; a fertility in reproduction, nay, a horrid necessity of nature for self-diffusion. It never lies dormant. It never loses its power of propagation. Let it be the smallest conceivable, it possesses the same terrific diffusiveness. Like the invisible seeds that float through our atmosphere, it takes wing the moment it comes into being, flying abroad, and striking root everywhere, and becoming the parent of ten thousand others. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Apostasy*:—I. THE TEMPTATION BY WHICH ADAM WAS

ASSAILED. II. THE GREATNESS OF HIS GUILT. A fearful complication. 1. Disbelief of the Creator. 2. Rebellion against the highest authority. 3. The most criminal ambition. 4. The basest and vilest ingratitude. 5. A sin against his own soul, and against all his posterity. III. THE SCRUTINY TO WHICH HE WAS SUBJECTED. IV. THE SENTENCE PRONOUNCED ON ADAM. 1. Exclusion from paradise must have been a painful evil considered in itself. 2. But the sentence included death also. The death of the body, the precursor, if grace prevent not, of the death of the soul. (*H. Burder, M.A.*) *Paradise lost; or, man's Fall*:—I. THE SUTLE TEMPTER. Changed the tree of probation into a tree of temptation. II. THE FATAL TRANSGRESSION. Eve hesitated, and was drawn into the tempter's net. Then sin reproduces sin. III. THE SAD DISCOVERY. Innocence gone: in its place was shame. LESSONS: 1. To obey God's word, even when it contradicts our own inclinations. 2. To be humble and patient, waiting God's time and will, as to His "secret things." 3. To refuse to listen to temptation from without, and to evil lusts in ourselves. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *Temptation and Fall of man*:—Corroborative of the Mosaic account of the Fall are numerous ancient corrupted traditions. Thus—1. On an ancient bas-relief of the story of Prometheus and Pandora, a man and woman are represented standing naked and disconsolate under a tree; and a figure seated on a rock is strangling a serpent. 2. Apollo destroys the serpent Python, and is crowned with laurel. 3. Hercules—who in his infancy had destroyed a serpent—gathered the apples of Hesperides, having killed the serpent that kept the tree. 4. Many gems, &c., represent Hercules killing a serpent entwined about a fruit-laden tree. I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION. 1. To be tempted, and to sin, two different things. Christ was tempted but did not sin (*Heb. iv. 15*). 2. Its source—(1) Not man, who was holy, innocent, happy. "A solicitation to sin could come only from without." (2) Not from God. He "tempteth no man" (*James i. 13*). (3) But from the devil. Disarmed suspicion by assuming a familiar form. No living creature, not even the serpent, then inspired fear. 3. Appeared thus to Eve, whose knowledge was partial. Speech used by a serpent would have "opened the eyes" of Adam, who had named the beasts according to their nature. 4. Concealed the real death that would be introduced. Told a partial truth: "your eyes shall be opened." Half truths are the devil's most successful lies. Thus Tennyson says:—

"That a lie, which is part a truth, is ever the blackest of lies;
That a lie, which is all a lie, may be met, and fought with, outright;
But a lie, which is part a truth, is a harder matter to fight."

II. THE FIRST SIN. Apparently small, and by the thoughtless often spoken lightly of, as such. But as all sin is a violation of principle, injures the moral sense, imperils the soul, and dishonours God, no transgression can be truly called a little sin. Sin is the transgression of law (*1 John iii. 4*). This was the only sin that could be committed, since there was but one law (*Rom. iv. 15*). It was great, because the only one possible. It contained the elements of all evil: disobedience (*Rom. v. 19*), pride, unbelief, blindness, ingratitude, selfishness, covetousness, &c. As from small fountains, mighty rivers have their beginning; so from this sin, all transgression took its rise and character (*Rom. v. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 22*). (*J. C. Gray.*) *Adam; or, human nature*:—I. ADAM, OR MAN. First, to trace this path in that world of thought and will which is within; for, to this day, when we sin nothing else is done but what is here set forth in the man, the woman, and the serpent. In this view the man is the understanding, the woman the will, the serpent some animal faculty or emotion in us—good when in subjection, but which may be a means, under the influence of the evil spirit, to tempt the will and lead it to disobedience and independence, and so to misery. For the will, not the understanding, is that in us which is first assailed, seduced by some lower sense or emotion, which seems to promise more happiness. But for the will, the emotions would not be felt, but only thought about: but they are felt: hence they are passions; for we really suffer, though we should command, them. Only thus is man led away. II. MAN'S WAY. From God to self and independence. III. THE FRUIT OF MAN'S WAY. 1. A bad conscience. 2. An attempt to hide from God. 3. An attempt to clear self by throwing blame on some other one. 4. But there are other fruits of sin, more external, and having to do with man's body and his dwelling place. The earth is cursed, and henceforth sorrow and toil are to be man's due portion until he return to the dust whence he was taken; a lot which seems hard, and yet is mercy; by

toil to draw man out of self, and then by death to destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil. 5. One consequence of sin remains, characteristic of the lot of man as man, namely, exclusion from paradise. Fallen man is driven out, lest as fallen he eat and live for ever. This, too, is love. Old Adam is shut out, but the Seed can enter through the flaming sword and past the cherubim. IV. THE REMEDY FOR MAN. This too has stages, all of God; first a call, then a promise, then a gift, from Him. 1. First comes a call, a voice which will be heard, to convince man of his state, saying, "Where art thou?" A voice which may sound in different ways, but which in all is crying to draw man back again; at first only convicting of sin, yet by this very conviction laying the foundation for man's recovery; leading man to come to himself before it is too late, that he may come to his Father, and from Him receive another life; and asking, though man oft turns a deaf ear, why we are not with Him, who still loves and yearns over us. 2. Then comes a promise, full of grace and truth, touching the woman's Seed; a promise not to old Adam, for the old man is fallen and must pay the penalty—no reprieve is given to the flesh: the cross which saves us is Adam's condemnation—but a promise to the Seed or New Man, who shall be born, in and by whom man shall regain paradise. 3. God adds a gift—"The Lord God made them coats of skins and clothed them." Again He works, for sin had broken His rest; working, as ever, to restore blessedness; to cover not with fig-leaf screens only that part of our nakedness which is before each of us; but to give us, upon us, in token of our state—for the skins spoke of death, and so confessed trespass—a covering which, while it puts us in our place as sinful creatures, yet shelters us. (*A. Jukes.*) *The peril of capacity*:—Why did God make man capable of falling? Because God could not have made man upon any other condition: He made the sun incapable of falling, and all the stars incapable of falling; but the moment you pass from matter to life you multiply your danger; increased life means increased risk. I drive a nail into this piece of wood to hold some article until I return for it; I also request a child to watch another article for a time. On my return I find the nail where I put it, I also find the child where I left him; do I say to the nail, "You are very good for doing what I wanted to have done"? Certainly not. But I may say to the child, "You have been good, and I thank you for doing me this kindness." But why not express my thanks to the nail? Simply because the nail had no will in the matter. The child had a will, and could have foregone his charge; and by so much as he could have broken his promise he was honourable in keeping it. But put the case the other way. Suppose that on my return I discovered that the child had abandoned his position; then I should see that in passing from matter to life I pass from comparative certainty to probable uncertainty; yet even the bad child is greater than the nail, for his capacity of badness is also his capacity of goodness. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Man fallen*:—You see a beautiful capital still bearing some of the flowers and some of the vestiges of the foliage which the sculptor's chisel had carved upon the marble. It lies on the ground, half-buried under rank weeds and nettles, while beside it the headless shaft of a noble column springs from its pedestal. Would you not at once conclude that its present condition, so base and mean, was not its original position? You say the lightning-bolt must have struck it down; or an earthquake had shaken its foundations; or some ignorant barbarian had climbed the shaft, and with rude hand hurled it to the ground. Well, we look at man, and arrive at a similar conclusion. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*) *Original sin*:—A minister having preached on the doctrine of original sin, was afterwards waited on by some persons, who stated their objections to what he had advanced. After hearing them he said, "I hope you do not deny actual sin too?" "No," they replied. The good man expressed his satisfaction at their acknowledgment; but, to show the absurdity of their opinions in denying a doctrine so plainly taught in Scripture, he asked them, "Did you ever see a tree growing without a root?" *Consciousness of the Fall*:—The degenerate plant has no consciousness of its own degradation, nor could it, when reduced to the character of a weed or a wild-flower, recognize in the fair and delicate garden-plant the type of its former self. The tamed and domesticated animal, stunted in size, and subjugated in spirit, could not feel any sense of humiliation when confronted with its wild brother of the desert, fierce, strong, and free, as if discerning in that spectacle the noble type from which itself had fallen. But it is different with a conscious moral being. Reduce such an one ever so low, yet you cannot obliterate in his inner nature the consciousness of falling beneath himself; you cannot blot out from his mind the latent reminiscence of a nobler and better self which he might have been, an

which to have lost is guilt and wretchedness. (*J. Caird.*) *The Fall*:—1. Temptation comes like a serpent; like the most subtle beast of the field; like that one creature which is said to exert a fascinating influence on its victims, fastening them with its glittering eye, stealing upon them by its noiseless, low, and unseen approach, perplexing them by its wide circling folds, seeming to come upon them from all sides at once, and armed not like the other beasts with one weapon of offence—horn or hoof, or teeth—but capable of crushing its victim with every part of its sinuous length. It lies apparently dead for months together, but when roused it can, as the naturalist tells us, “outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish, outleap the zebra, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger.” 2. Temptation succeeds at first by exciting our curiosity. It is a wise saying that “our great security against sin lies in being shocked at it. Eve gazed and reflected when she should have fled.” The serpent created an interest, excited her curiosity about this forbidden fruit. And as this excited curiosity lies near the beginning of sin in the race, so does it in the individual. I suppose if you trace back the mystery of iniquity in your own life and seek to track it to its source, you will find it to have originated in this craving to taste evil. No man originally meant to become the sinner he has become. He only intended, like Eve, to taste. It was a voyage of discovery he meant to make; he did not think to get nipped and frozen up and never more return from the outer cold and darkness. He wished before finally giving himself to virtue, to see the real value of the other alternative. 3. Through this craving for an enlarged experience unbelief in God’s goodness finds entrance. In the presence of forbidden pleasure we are tempted to feel as if God were grudging us enjoyment. The very arguments of the serpent occur to our mind. No harm will come of our indulging; the prohibition is needless, unreasonable, and unkind; it is not based on any genuine desire for our welfare. 4. If we know our own history we cannot be surprised to read that one taste of evil ruined our first parents. It is so always. The one taste alters our attitude towards God and conscience and life. It is a veritable Circe’s cup. 5. The first result of sin is shame. The form in which the knowledge of good and evil comes to us is the knowing we are naked, the consciousness that we are stripped of all that made us walk unabashed before God and men. The promise of the serpent while broken in the sense is fulfilled to the ear; the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened, and they knew that they were naked. Self-reflection begins, and the first movement of conscience produces shame. 6. But when Adam found he was no longer fit for God’s eye, God provided a covering which might enable him again to live in His presence without dismay. Man had exhausted his own ingenuity and resources, and exhausted them without finding relief to his shame. If his shame was to be effectually removed, God must do it. It is also to be remarked that the clothing which God provided was in itself different from what man had thought of. Adam took leaves from an inanimate, unfeeling tree; God deprived an animal of life, that the shame of His creature might be relieved. This was the last thing Adam would have thought of doing. To us life is cheap and death familiar, but Adam recognized death as the punishment of sin. Death was to early man a sign of God’s anger. And he had to learn that sin could be covered not by a bunch of leaves snatched from a bush as he passed by and that would grow again next year, but only by pain and blood. Sin cannot be atoned for by any mechanical action nor without expenditure of feeling. Suffering must ever follow wrong-doing. From the first sin to the last, the track of the sinner is marked with blood. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *The allurements of the temptation*:—If we translate these words in a language more metaphysical, we shall find that they include the three elements which are considered to constitute perfection: goodness, beauty, and truth. Goodness in that which pleases the taste, beauty in that which delights the sight, truth in that which gives knowledge or wisdom. And remark, that in seeking this perfection the woman obeyed an impulse which God Himself had given to her nature. Yes, it was the eternal destination of man to love, admire, and appropriate to himself all that is good, all that is beautiful, all that is true. It was his destination to grow in that perfection which he already possessed by nature, but which might be developed to infinity by his union with Him who is Goodness, Beauty, Truth, and Sovereign Perfection. It was, therefore, in Him alone, and in the harmony of their will with His, that our first parents were to seek perfection. The commandment which God had given them was intended to lead them to this perfection, by placing them in a state of dependence and responsibility. It was designed to unite them to their Creator and to give them the consciousness of all that is good,

beautiful, and true in the moral, as well as in the visible world, which was their habitation. But, alas! a doubt has entered into the mind of Eve, already guilty through the admission of it; the word of her God is no longer her light and the sole object of her confidence; she is going to seek out of God, goodness, beauty, and truth; yea, she expects to find them in the very object whose enjoyment has been forbidden her under pain of death, in disobedience, and in sin! Henceforward all is changed in the objects of her desires, because all is changed in her heart; henceforward we see in her pursuit of a false perfection and of a false happiness, nothing but what St. John calls, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." (*L. Bonnet.*)

Ver. 7. The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.—*The dawn of guilt*.—I. A CONSCIOUS LOSS OF RECTITUDE. Moral nudity (*Rev. iii. 17.*) 1. They deeply felt it. 2. They sought to conceal it. II. AN ALARMING DREAD OF GOD. 1. This was unnatural. 2. Irrational. 3. Fruitless. God found Adam out. III. A MISERABLE SUBTERFUGE FOR SIN. The transferring of our own blame to others has ever marked the history of sin. Some plead circumstance, some their organization, and some the conduct of others. (*Homilist.*) *The fruits of the temptation*.—I. They suffered together. The immediate effects of their act of disobedience were of a sense of shame—"the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (ver. 7); and a dread of judgment—"Adam and his wife hid themselves," through fear, as Adam afterwards admits—"I was afraid" (ver. 8, 10). They were ashamed, then, and they were afraid. This was the fulfilment of the threatening—"Thou shalt surely die—dying, thou shalt die." There was present death felt, and future death feared. And as shame and fear drive them away from God, so, when they are brought into His presence, the same feelings still prevail, and prompt the last desperate expedient, of deceit or guile, which marks the extent of their subjection to bondage, the bondage of corruption. They do not deny, but they palliate, and extenuate, their sin. The attempt to excuse their sin only proves how helplessly they are debased by it, as the slaves of a hard master, who, having them now at a disadvantage, through their forfeiture of the free favour of God, presses unrelentingly upon them, and compels them to be as false and as unscrupulous as himself. Shame, therefore, fear, and falsehood, are the bitter fruits of sin. Guilt is felt; death is dreaded; guile is practised. The consciousness of crime begets terror; for "the wicked flee when no one pursueth." How degrading is the bondage of sin! How entirely does it destroy all truth in the inward parts! The sinner, once yielding to the tempter, is at his mercy, and having lost his hold of the truth of God, he is but too glad, for his relief from despair, to believe and to plead the lies of the devil. II. God, however, has a better way. He has thoughts of love towards the guilty parents of our race. For the sentence which He goes on to pronounce, when He has called them before Him, is not such as they might have expected. It is not retributive, but remedial, and in all its parts it is fitted exactly to meet their case. 1. In the first place, their complaint against the serpent is instantly attended to. He is judged and condemned. 2. Having disposed of the serpent, the sentence proceeds, secondly, to deal with his victims more directly, and announces both to the woman and to the man a period of forbearance and long-suffering on the part of God. Their fear is, in so far, postponed. The woman is still to bear children, the man is still to find food. But there are these four tokens of the doom they feared still abiding on them: (1) The woman's pain in child-bearing; (2) Her subjection to the man; (3) The man's toil and trouble in finding food; (4) His liability to the corruption of death. III. And now, Satan being put aside, who, as the father of lies, prompted guile, and death being postponed, so as to give hope instead of fear, the sentence goes on to provide for the removal of the shame which sin had caused: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (ver. 21). (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Observations*.—I. MAN CAN DISCERN NOTHING BUT WHAT AND WHEN, AND HOW FAR GOD IS PLEASED TO DISCOVER IT UNTO HIM. II. IT IS A GREAT FOLLY IN MEN NOT TO FORESEE EVIL BEFORE IT BE TOO LATE TO HELP IT. Wise men beforehand see a plague and prevent it (*Prov. xxii. 3.*) and hearken for time to come (*Isa. xlii. 23.*), and indeed for this special end was wisdom given, that men having their eyes in their head (*Eccles. ii. 14.*) they might foresee both good and evil to come, that they might lay hold on the one while it may be had, and avoid and prevent the other before it comes. As for after-wisdom, it is of

no use but to increase our misery, by looking back upon our misery when it is too late to help it. III. SATAN NEVER DISCOVERS ANYTHING UNTO US, BUT TO DO MISCHIEF. Thus he shows us the baits of sin to allure us; as he did to our Saviour Christ the glory of all the kingdoms of the earth, to entice Him to fall down and worship him (Matt. iv. 8). Thus he discovers the means of affecting what our inordinate lusts move us unto, to encourage us to sin, as by Jonadab he showed Ammon the means how he might satisfy his lust upon his sister Tamar (2 Sam. xiii. 5), and by Jezebel to Ahab the means of getting Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings xxi. 7), and if he shows the foulness of sin, after it is acted, it is to drive men, if possibly he can, into despair, when the case is desperate. IV. EVEN THOSE WHICH DISCOVER NOT BEFOREHAND THE EVILS WHICH THE ERRORS OF THEIR WAYS LEAD THEM INTO, YET THEY SHALL SEE IN THE END, AND FEEL TOO THE MISERY INTO WHICH THEY BRING THEM. V. SIN IS ABLE TO MAKE THE MOST EXCELLENT AND GLORIOUS OF ALL GOD'S CREATURES VILE AND SHAMEFUL. 1. It defaces the image of God in them, which especially consists in righteousness (Eph. iv. 24), which sin perverts (Job xxxiii. 27). 2. It separates a man from God (as all sin doth, Isa. lix. 2) who is our glory (Isa. lx. 19; xxviii. 5). 3. It disorders all the faculties of the soul, and parts of the body, and consequently all the motions and actions that flow from them, and subjects us to our own base lusts and vile affections, to do things that are not comely (Rom. i. 4, 26, 28). VI. MEN ARE MORE APT TO BE SENSIBLE OF, AND TO BE MORE AFFECTED WITH THE OUTWARD EVILS THAT SIN BRINGS UPON THEM, THAN WITH THE SIN THAT CAUSETH THEM. VII. GARMENTS ARE BUT THE COVERS OF OUR SHAME. 1. The first occasion of the use of clothing was to cover our shame. 2. The materials of it are things much baser than ourselves, in just estimation. 3. The apparel at the least doth but grace the body, but adorns not the soul at all, which is the only part wherein man is truly honourable. 4. And the outward person they commend also, only to men of vain minds, but to no wise or sober man. 5. And withal, do more discover the vanity of our minds than they cover the shame of our bodies. VIII. MOST OF OUR NECESSITIES ARE BROUGHT UPON US BY SIN. IX. WHEN MEN ARE ONCE FALLEN OFF FROM GOD, THEIR NATURE THEREBY CORRUPTED, CARRIES THEM STRONGLY FORWARDS TO SEEK HELP FROM THE CREATURE. 1. They are wholly carnal and sensual in their dispositions, and therefore easily carried after sensual and carnal things. 2. They cannot but be enemies to God, from whom they are driven away by the guiltiness of their own consciences, as having no cause to depend on Him whose yoke they have cast off, and therefore have ground to expect no help from Him, to whom they resolve to do no service. 3. And they are by the just judgment of God delivered over to abase themselves to vile things far below themselves, because they have not advanced God, nor glorified Him as God, as they ought. X. SIN BEGETS MEN, AND MAKES THEM FOOLS. XI. ALL THE CARE THAT MEN TAKE, IS USUALLY RATHER TO HIDE THEIR SIN THAN TO TAKE IT AWAY. XII. ALL SATAN'S FAIR PROMISES, PROVE IN THE EVENT NOTHING ELSE BUT LIES AND MERE DELUSIONS. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Sin known by its fruit*.—The real nature of sin, its disgrace and misery and ruin, are never fully known till it has been committed. The tempter veils it in a false and delusive garb, which can never be entirely stripped off but by actual experience. As a matter of assurance, Adam and Eve knew beforehand the miserable consequences of their breach of the Divine command: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." They could, therefore, have no possible reason to doubt on this point; the terrible result lay open before them; perhaps revealed in many more particulars than are recorded, for the history of this eventful period is exceedingly short; yet still nothing was known, or could be known, of the awful reality, till it was felt in the stricken heart, till the accursed step had been taken, and the wretched working stood confessed in all the blight and agony. And in similar ways he continues to deceive mankind: every temptation to evil is an instrument in his hand, promising by its appearance, or else in our imagination, some pleasure or some gain: this is the whisper of the same great adversary of souls, this a reflection of his deceitful image. Let us now seek, in the spirit of humility, to learn and apply the moral lesson of the text; which teaches us the direful consequences of sin, the evils with which it makes us acquainted, as the foretaste and assurance of the dreadful end to which it infallibly leads. It was not till the commission of their sin, but it was instantly after, that the eyes of our parents were opened; that the evils of guilt and disobedience flashed upon them in all their terribleness and extent. Their conscience was immediately smitten: new thoughts entered their minds, new and painful feelings arose instantly in their bosom: there was in them a sense of dis-

grace and degradation; love and confidence were gone, and shame had taken possession, and fear and trembling. We must all have felt, on manifold occasions, the sudden and painful effects of sin; the sharp convictions, the uneasiness and wretchedness, and not seldom the injury thereby inflicted upon us; the disgrace attending it when brought to light; our altered position in the esteem of men, nay, even in our own esteem. How often has the fairest character been blasted by only one transgression! and the humbled offender suddenly brought to perceive the truth of all the denunciations and threatenings against sin; what would he not give to retrace that one step, to recall that one word, to undo that one miserable deed? How sad and complete was his folly! How could he have been thus deceived and betrayed? What shame, what indignation, what grief, what abasement, what violent self-accusation, yea, what astonishment is raised within him! That he, a man of reason, a man of faith, a man of religious profession, one of the people of God, should have flung such discredit upon the whole cause, should have so sinned against the majesty and holiness, the goodness and long-suffering of the Lord; should have admitted such corruption into that body which Christ has redeemed, which was made one with Christ, should thus have disordered and dishonoured and endangered his soul. I say, how many a servant of God has been distressed by such feelings and sentiments; sometimes hurried into wretchedness, lowered to the dust! I speak not of the hardened and abandoned sinner: of those whose consciences are, as the apostle describes it, "seared with a hot iron": when the mind and affections have grown long familiar with vice and iniquity, and have become inured to its effects, we must expect the feeling to be blunted, the moral eye to be judicially closed: the Spirit of God, which keeps alive the conscience, withdraws from the bosom of the determined offender, leaves it ordinarily incapable of emotion: I say ordinarily, because there are seasons, when even the vilest transgressors are suddenly roused and awakened to a sense of guilt and ruin; led, like the prodigal, to look back upon the happiness they have lost; and mourn, after a godly sort, over their evil and perishing condition. But this is a conviction not to be trusted to, often appearing too late: bringing disturbance and distress, but no comfort, no living hope of salvation. How blessed are they, whose conscience is quickly moved and opened to the perception of evil: there is a hope of their speedy recovery; no one, who is truly alive to the wretchedness of sin, can be content to abide in it: it is every way hateful and distressful, as well as dangerous, to the soul that is humbled under a sense of it: and the consciousness and sorrow and vexation of spirit frequently, as in the case of our first parents, follow the offence in rapid succession, and the heart is overwhelmed. (*J. Slade, M.A.*)

Sad results of the Fall:—The Fall of man was most disastrous in its results to our entire being. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." was no idle threat; for Adam did die the moment that he transgressed the command—he died the great spiritual death by which all his spiritual powers became then and evermore, until God should restore them, absolutely dead. I said all the spiritual powers, and if I divide them after the analogy of the senses of the body, my meaning will be still more clear. Through the Fall, the spiritual taste of man became perverted, so that he puts bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter; he chooses the poison of hell and loathes the bread of heaven; he licks the dust of the serpent and rejects the food of angels. The spiritual hearing became grievously injured, for man naturally no longer hears God's Word, but stops his ears at his Maker's voice. Let the gospel minister charm never so wisely, yet is the unconverted soul like the deaf adder, which hears not the charmer's voice. The spiritual feeling, by virtue of our depravity, is fearfully deadened. That which would once have filled the man with alarm and terror no longer excites emotion. Whether the thunders of Sinai or the turtle notes of Calvary claim his attention, man is resolutely deaf to both. Even the spiritual smell with which man should discern between that which is pure and holy and that which is unsavoury to the Most High has become defiled, and now man's spiritual nostril, while unrenewed, derives no enjoyment from the sweet savour which is in Jesus Christ, but seeks after the putrid joys of sin. As with other senses, so is it with man's sight. He is so spiritually blind, that things most plain and clear he cannot and will not see. The understanding, which is the soul's eye, is covered with scales of ignorance, and when these are removed by the finger of instruction, the visual orb is still so affected that it only sees men as trees walking. Our condition is thus most terrible, but at the same time it affords ample room for a display of the splendours of Divine grace. Dear friends, we are naturally so entirely ruined, that if saved the whole work must be of God, and the whole

glory must crown the head of the Triune Jehovah. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *The effects of the Fall*:—I. The effects of the Fall may be arranged under three divisions: the loss of God's special gifts; the corruption of man's own nature; and his new position of guiltiness in the sight of God. And for our present purpose it will be most convenient to consider these now under two heads—the internal, which will cover the first and second; and the external, which corresponds to the third.

1. Viewed internally then, the effects of the Fall must be regarded as twofold. The one was negative—the immediate loss of that original righteousness which we have learnt to connect immediately with God's supernatural gift of grace. The other was positive—the wound, which struck instantly to the very heart of man's nature, carried poison along with it, which tainted all that nature with immediate corruption. The will had rebelled, therefore the channel of God's grace was closed. So much was negative. But within that cast-off and isolated will there lurked a prolific power of fatal mischief, which immediately burst forth into positive evil. Hence sprung at once that "concupiscence and lust" which "hath of itself the nature of sin"; hence "the flesh" learnt immediately to lust against "the spirit"; hence came "the sin" that reigns in our mortal bodies; hence that other "law in our members," which wars against the law of our minds.

2. But all this evil was man's own work. It was man himself who closed the door of grace. It was man himself who severed his will from his only safeguard, by withdrawing it from dependence upon God. It was man himself who thus introduced rebellion into his nature, who caused this outburst of trouble and confusion in his heart. We must look to another quarter for the penalty which God imposed. And this is the external aspect, which, as I have said, demands a separate consideration. Man no sooner fell than he recognized the immediate certainty of punishment, and fruitlessly strove to conceal himself from the vengeance of his offended Creator. So weak and worthless was his new-found knowledge. It told him how he might hide his shame on earth; it could not aid him when he wished to escape the wrath of God. God's sentence may be briefly said to involve three different judgments; the first to toil and sorrow; the second to exile; and the third, which completes them, to death.

II. Let us pass then to that closing portion of our subject—the extension of the sin of Adam to ourselves, in connection with the doctrine of the Atonement of our Lord. (*Archdeacon Hannah.*) *Lessons*:—1. Yielding to Satan and suffering in evil are the twins of the same day. 2. Man and woman are equal in vengeance as well as sin. 3. Sin blinds to good, but opens mind and sight to experience evil. 4. Sin makes men very knowing in misery; wise to see their fall from heaven to hell. 5. Sin strips stark naked of spiritual and bodily good, and makes sensible of nothing but shame. 6. Sin is ashamed of itself, and seeks a covering. 7. Sin is very foolish in patching a veil or covering to hide from God—Leaves (ver. 7). 8. The voice of God pursueth sinners after guilt; sometimes inward and outward. 9. God hath His fit time to visit sinners. 10. God walks sometimes in wind and storms to find out the guilty. 11. Conscience hears and trembles at God's voice pursuing. 12. The face of the Lord God, which is life to His, is terrible to the guilty. 13. Sin persuades souls as if it were possible to hide from God. 14. All carnal shifts will sin make to shun God's sight; if leaves do not, then trees must closet them (ver. 8). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Opened eyes*:—What an opening of the eyes was this, my brethren! What disclosures followed! How much is contained in these few words, "The eyes of them both were opened"! Various are the circumstances under which men may open their eyes. After a dark, dreary, stormy night, the eyes may be opened to behold the dawn of a fine day, and the heart may be gladdened by the bright rays of the sun gilding the chambers of the east and restoring warmth and comfort to all around. After a night of pain and weariness on a bed of sickness, the eyes of the sufferer from a gentle slumber may be opened to a sense of relief at the return of light with respite from suffering. After a tedious and dangerous sea voyage, the eyes may be opened some morning to behold with joy the desired port at hand. Under these and a thousand such-like circumstances the eyes of a man may be opened with emotions of various kinds; but no case that we can imagine can be a parallel with the one now before us—even the condition of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, immediately after their fatal disobedience, when, yielding to the wiles of Satan, they ate of the forbidden fruit, and proved the truth of the Divine warning and declaration. The eyes of them both were opened to see the snare which had been artfully spread for them, and in which they had been caught; and what did they see? They saw misery before them; horror and dismay attended the sight, and their discovery

was accompanied with the most galling bitterness. For all men are naturally more ashamed of being detected in sin than of committing it; and more desirous of keeping up a good opinion of themselves than of obtaining pardon from God, though they can hide nothing from Him, and can neither elude His justice nor recover His favour by any device or contrivance of their own. What a discovery must Adam and Eve have made when their eyes were opened! How appalling the conviction of their condition! They were fallen, degraded creatures; no longer holy, pure, innocent, perfect, but unholy, defiled, guilty, depraved. They recognized sin in themselves, they felt it: and although they vainly attempted to excuse it, yet they denied it not. They were fallen beings; guilt lay upon them, the anger of God pressed hard on them; their expectations were disappointed; instead of delicious enjoyment, they had bitterness to reward their pains; and although natural death did not instantly take place, the prospect of it was set before them, hung over them in suspense, and spiritual death was theirs. In this sad state we are all born, children of wrath, slaves of Satan, enemies to God, and by nature we are not sensible of it. Adam and Eve felt their change instantly; they had known innocence and happiness; they perceived at once the difference occasioned by guilt and misery. But we by nature are not sensible of our guilt and danger; our eyes are not open to behold our wretchedness; and hence we are not disposed to flee to that Refuge promised to Adam, and fulfilled and set before us in Christ Jesus. Like the church of the Laodiceans, we are disposed to say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Our eyes must be opened to a sense of our danger and guilt; we must see spiritual things in a spiritual light; and then we shall not only see our guilt and danger, but the mercy, goodness, and love of God in stretching out an arm of salvation, and raising up a Saviour in the person of Jesus Christ. Having drawn your attention to man's wretchedness, and the cause of it, I must now invite you to consider the remedy provided for it, and freely set before us in the gospel. This St. Paul sets forth very forcibly (Rom. v.): "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"; "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. Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." The "Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." (*T. R. Redwar.*)

The covering of fig-leaves.—This one act, this one feeling, was, above all things, expressive of the fall of the whole condition of man as he now is; it is the sense of something within which we wish to hide. For it has been said that there is no man who would not rather die than that all which he knows of himself should be known to the world. It is the want of a covering which we so deeply and thoroughly feel. Our souls must needs dwell apart, isolated in this their own consciousness of ill. So that when we turn for sympathy to each other, yet language conceals as much as it expresses; and when we turn to God, our prayers immediately take the form of confession, though it be but to confess what we know that He knows; yet it is expressive of a burden which we feel, and which we most of all wish to get rid of; and in turning to Him our feeling is, "Thou art a place to hide me in": "Thou shalt hide me by Thine own Presence." "Hide me,"—but from what? Not from other men only, but from ourselves. And what are the pursuits of busy life, but to hide from ourselves this our internal want and shame? "Thou sayest I am rich, and knowest not that thou art miserable, and blind, and naked." And what is the great dread of death? It is chiefly connected with this divesting and stripping off of all disguises, and going naked into the land of spirits. "For in this, our earthly house, we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon"; "if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Hence the glory of the redeemed is to be "clothed"—to be "clothed in white raiment before the throne," and to "walk with Christ in white." The law of nature has become hallowed into the law of grace. "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked." Our great care is that we be not "found naked." The judgment and condemnation is, "Thy nakedness shall be uncovered." Further, another expression here in the text is remarkable and emphatic—"made for themselves"; "made for themselves,"

in distinction from the covering of God. It is fruitless, and worse, to strive to hide ourselves from ourselves and God. "Woe unto him, saith the Lord, that cover with a covering, but not of My spirit." It is in this our great want He has visited us: "When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee"; under the sense of sin I succoured thee, and "thou shalt see greater things than these." His comings to us are called Epiphanies and Manifestations, as dissipating all vain disguises of the soul. It is said, "He will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." He unclothes us, that we may be clothed upon by Himself, "that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (*I. Williams, B.D.*)

The terrible disease introduced by the Fall.—Sin had, like a snake from hell, crossed over and darkened human nature. A disease had appeared on earth of the most frightful and inveterate kind, moral in its nature, destined to be universal in its prevalence, deep-seated in its roots, varied in its aspects, hereditary in its descent, defying all cures save one, and issuing where that one cure was not sought for or applied—in everlasting death.

1. The disease was a moral disease. This grand disease of sin combines all the evil qualities of bodily distempers in a figurative yet real form—the continual fretting heat of fever, the loathsomeness of smallpox, the fierce torments of inflammation, and the lingering decay of consumption, and infects with something akin to these diseases, not the material, but the immaterial part, and turns not the body but the soul into such a mass of malady that from the "crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness in us; nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores."
2. Again, the disease introduced by the sin of Adam is universal in its ravages. It has infected not only all Adam's sons and daughters, but all of them in almost every moment of their existence. Their very dreams are infected with this distemper. The boa constrictor binds only the outer part of the body of its victim, although he binds it all; but the serpent of sin has seized on and knitted together individual man—body, soul, and spirit—and even collective man, into a knot of selfish, malignant, mortal distemperatures. The entire being is encrusted with this leprosy.
3. Again, the disease introduced by man's first disobedience is deep-seated in its roots. It is in the very centre of the system, and infects all the springs of life. It makes us cold, and dead, and languid, in the pursuit of the things that are good. It, in fine, pollutes the fountain of the heart, and turns it into a "cistern for foul toads," instead of being a sweet and salubrious source of living waters.
4. Again, this disease is a hereditary disease. It is within us as early as existence; it descends from parent to child more faithfully than the family features, or disposition, or intellect. As the tree in the seed, so lies the future iniquity of the man in the child, and in this sense "the boy is father of the man." And even as letters are sometimes traced in milk on white paper, and are only legible when placed before the fire, so the evil principles in man's heart are often not disclosed till they are exposed to the flame of temptation, and then they come forth in black prominence and terrible distinctness.
5. Again, this is a disease which assumes various forms and aspects. Its varieties are as numerous as the varieties of man and of sinner. Each particular sin is a new species of this disorder. It has one aspect in the ambitious man, who sacrifices millions in his thirst for renown. It has another in the petty tyrant of a village or factory. It has one aspect in the openly profane, and another in the hypocrite and secret sinner.
6. Again, this is a disease which defies all human means of cure. Many attempts, indeed, have been made to check its ravages and abate its power. Empirics innumerable have stood up, each with his several nostrum in his hand as an infallible remedy for the evil; all differing from each other as to the nature of the grand specific, but all agreeing in this, that they offer a cure apart from the help of God. When we think of the enormous number of remedies which have been proposed, and are still being proposed, to effect the cure of the world, we seem standing in an immense laboratory, where, however, there are more labels than medicines; where even the medicines are, in general, exploded or powerless, and where we miss the true and sovereign remedy, the "Balm of Gilead." Yes, that bloody Balm, and balmy Blood, as it was in the beginning, two thousand years ago, is still the one thing that can effectually mitigate the evil of the disease of sin, as well as the only remedy that has the authoritative stamp of God.
7. We remark, again, that this disease, if not cured, will terminate in everlasting death and destruction from the presence of the Lord. And what a termination this must be! If men are at all moved by regarding this world as a vast bed of disease, they must surely be moved immensely more when they look to the next as a vast bed of death. (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Open eyes:—Some time ago passengers in the streets of Paris were attracted to the figure of a woman on the parapet of a roof in that city. She had fallen asleep in the afternoon, and under the influence of somnambulism had stepped out of an open window on to the edge of the house. There she was walking to and fro to the horror of the gazers below, who expected every moment to witness a false step and terrible fall. They dared not shout, lest by awakening her inopportunely they should be only hastening on the inevitable calamity. But this came soon enough; for moving, as somnambulists do, with eyes open, the reflection of a lamp lit in an opposite window by an artisan engaged in some mechanical operation, all unconscious of what was going on outside, aroused her from sleep. The moment her eyes were opened to discover the perilous position in which she had placed herself, she tottered, fell, and was dashed below. Such is the sleep of sin; it places the soul on the precipice of peril, and when the spell is broken it leaves the sinner to fall headlong into the gulf of woe. (*W. Adamson.*) *Men covering their sins with specious pretences reproved*:—As when Adam had tasted of the forbidden fruit, he espied his own nakedness, poverty, and how that he was miserably fallen, for remedy whereof he went about to hide it with fig-leaves, and so shroud himself amongst the trees of the garden, so it is that too, too many of Adam's sons now living go about to cloak their sins with the fig-leaves of their foolish inventions, and to hide their treacherous designs in the thicket of their wicked imaginations, covering their vices with the cloak of virtue. And hence it comes to pass that murder is accounted manhood; pride looked on as decency; covetousness as frugality; drunkenness as good fellowship, &c. (*J. Spencer.*) *Opened eyes*:—Wonderful in its depth of meaning is this expression, "the eyes of them both were opened"! They saw before; no new organs of vision were created; yet they saw what they had never seen, as we ourselves have done. Temptation blinds us, guilt opens our eyes; temptation is night, guilt is morning. In guilt we see ourselves, we see our hideousness, we see our baseness; we see hell! "Their eyes were opened," and they saw that their character was gone! You can throw away a character in one act, as you throw away a stone. Can you go after it and recover it? Never! You may get something back by penitence and strife, but not the holy thing exactly as it was. A stone that is thrown along the road you may recover, but a stone thrown at night time into the sea who can get back again! (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Clothes*:—"They sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons." And this we have been doing ever since! We try to replace nature by art. When we have lost the garment sent from heaven we try to replace it with one woven from earth. But our deformity shows through the finest robe! The robe may be ample, brilliant, luxurious, but the cripple shows through its gorgeous folds. Ever since this fig-leaf sewing, life has become a question of clothes. (*Ibid.*) *A sense of shame is not natural to man*:—A sense of shame either in regard to soul or body is not natural. It does not belong to the unfallen. It is the fruit of sin. The sinner's first feeling is, "I am not fit for God, or man, or angels to look upon." Hence the essence of confession is, being ashamed of ourselves. We are made to feel two things; first, a sense of condemnation; and secondly, a sense of shame; we are unfit to receive God's favour, and unfit to appear in His presence. Hence Job said, "I am vile"; and hence Ezra said, "I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God" (ix. 6). Hence also Jeremiah describes the stout-hearted Jews, "They were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (vi. 15). Hence Solomon's reference to the "impudent face" of the strange woman (Prov. vii. 13), and Jeremiah's description of Israel, "Thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed" (iii. 3). It was the shame of our sin that Christ bore upon the cross; and therefore it is said of Him that He "despised the shame." It was laid upon Him, and He shrank not from it. He felt it, yet He hid not His face from it. He was the well-beloved of the Father, yet He hung upon the tree as one unfit for God to look upon; fit only to be cast out from His presence. He took our place of shame that we might be permitted to take His place of honour. In giving credit to God's record concerning Him we are identified with Him as our representative; our shame passes over to Him, and His glory becomes ours for ever. It was this sense of shame that led Adam and Eve to have recourse to fig-leaves for a covering. What is it but this same consciousness of shame that leads men to resort to ornaments? These are intended by them to compensate for the shame or the deformity under which men are lying. They feel that shame belongs to them; nay, confusion of face. They feel that they are not now "perfect in beauty," as once they were. Hence they

resort to ornament in order to make up for this. They deck themselves with jewels that their deformity may be turned into beauty. But there is danger here—danger against which the apostle warns us, specially the female sex (1 Pet. iii. 3, 4). There is nothing, indeed, innately sinful in the gold, or the silver, or the gems which have been wrought by the skill of men into such forms of brightness. But in our present state they do not suit us. They are unmeet for sinners. They speak of pride, and they also minister to pride. They are for the kingdom, not for the desert. They are for the city of the glorified, not for the tent of the stranger. They will come in due time, and they will be brilliant enough to compensate for the shame of earth. But we cannot be trusted with them now. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

Ver. 8. They heard the voice of the Lord God.—God's voice in nature:— Whether their ears as well as their hearts heard God's voice does not much matter. It would have mattered if their ears and not their hearts had heard. They doubtless often heard Him in the evening hour—the twilight which all the faiths of all cultivated nations have chosen as their special season of devotion. When they heard, and when men now hear God's voice in garden, meadow, wood, of what does it tell? **I. OF GOD'S PRESENCE.** Nature is a kingdom, in which the King resides as well as reigns: a house in which the Father dwells as well as which He supports. **II. OF GOD'S POWER AND WISDOM.** **III. OF GOD'S BOUNTY AND LOVE.** Profusion of life. **IV. OF MAN'S MORTALITY.** Nature is a sepulchre as well as a shrine. **V. OF MAN'S RETRIBUTION FOR BROKEN LAW.** (*Urijah R. Thomas.*) **Observations:—I. IF MEN WILL NOT DRAW NEAR UNTO GOD, YET HE WILL FIND THEM OUT IN THEIR SINS, AND BRING THEM INTO JUDGMENT BEFORE HIM.** Let all those that have sinned come and prepare to meet their God (*Amos iv. 12*), who can neither be blinded nor escaped, nor resisted, that they may take hold of His strength to make peace with Him, considering—**1.** That it is more credit to come in voluntarily than to be drawn in by force. **2.** A readier way to obtain pardon, as *Benhadad's* lords found by experience (*1 Kings xx. 32*), and *David* much more in submitting unto God (*Psa. xxxii. 5*). **3.** If we come not in voluntarily, God will bring us in by force, which will be worse for us every way. **II. GOD, WHO HATH ALL THE WRONG WHEN HE IS PROVOKED BY OUR SINS, IS THE FIRST THAT SEEKS TO MAKE PEACE WITH US.** **1.** He allures us by His mercies, as He promised to deal with His people (*Hos. ii. 14, 15*). **2.** By the inward and secret persuasions of His Spirit, in giving them hearts to return (*Zech. xii. 12*). **3.** By the effectual ministry of the gospel, wherein He doth not only offer unto us, but persuade and beseech us to embrace those terms of peace which He offers, as the apostle speaks (*2 Cor. v. 20*). The reason is—**1.** Necessity, seeing we cannot turn our hearts unto Him unless He draws us (*John vi. 44*), which moves the Church to pray, "Turn us, and we shall be turned" (*Jer. xxxi. 18*). **2.** The fitness of this way, to advance the free mercy of God the more, that all men's boasting may be taken away (*Eph. ii. 8, 9*), and that he that rejoiceth may rejoice in God alone (*1 Cor. i. 31*), who, as He loves us first, so He seeks us first (*Isa. lxi. 1*), and recovers us oft when we go astray. **III. GOD, WHEN HE DEALS WITH MEN, DELIGHTS TO BE HEARKENED UNTO WITH BEVERENCE AND FEAR.** **IV. GOD, IN REPRESENTING HIS MAJESTY TO MEN, SO DEALS WITH THEM THAT HE MAY HUMBLE BUT NOT CONFOUND THEM.** **1.** In dispensing His Word by the ministry of men (and not of angels, whose presence might affright us), and that, too, in such a manner, that whereas it is in itself like a hammer (*Jer. xxiii. 29*), mighty in operation through God, sharper than any two-edged sword (*2 Cor. x. 5*), able, if it were set on by the strength of His hand, to break the heart in pieces, yet is so tempered in the dispensation thereof, by men like unto ourselves, and therefore sensible by experience of human infirmities, that it only pricks the heart (*Acts ii. 27*), but cuts it not in pieces. **2.** In the terrors of conscience, which being in themselves unsupportable (*Prov. xviii. 14*), yet are so moderated unto us, that though we be perplexed, we are not in despair (*2 Cor. iv. 8*), burned but yet not consumed, like *Moses' bush* (*Exod. iii. 2*), walking safely in the flames of fire with the three children (*Dan. iii. 25*). **3.** In afflictions, which God lays on us in such a measure proportioned to our strength (*1 Cor. x. 13*) that they only purge us, but do not destroy us (*Isa. xlvii. 8, 9*). **V. GOD MANY TIMES CALLS MEN TO ACCOUNT, AND PROCEEDS IN JUDGMENT AGAINST THEM IN THE MIDST OF THEIR DELIGHTS.** **VI. IT IS VERY NEEDFUL TO OBSERVE A FIT SEASON IN DEALING WITH OFFENDERS AFTER THEY HAVE SINNED.** **VII. THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS TERRIBLE TO A SINNER.** **1.** Behold, then, the miserable condition into which sin hath brought us, which hath

changed our greatest desire (Psa. xlii. 2), and joy (xvi. 11), and content (xvii. 15), into the greatest terror, especially unto the wicked, who neither can fly from God's presence (cxxxix. 7) nor endure His revenging hand. 2. Behold the comfort of a good conscience, wherein we may behold the face of God with comfort and confidence (1 John iii. 21); but not in ourselves, but in the name of Jesus Christ, who hath by His mediation established with us a covenant of peace between God and us (Rom. v. i.) and purchased unto us access with boldness to the throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16), so that we can not only rejoice at present in God's presence with us in His ordinances, but withal love and long for His appearance, when He shall come in His glory (2 Tim. iv. 8; Rev. xxii. 20). VIII. WHEN MEN ARE ONCE FALLEN AWAY FROM GOD, THEY ARE LEFT TO MISERABLE AND UNPROFITABLE SHIFTS. 1. It cannot be otherwise when men are once gone away from God, in whom only is true comfort and safety, and His name a strong tower, which they that run unto are safe, and from whom is the efficacy of all means, which without Him can do neither good nor evil. 2. God, in His just judgment, when men honour Him not as God, deprives them of that wisdom. IX. MEN ARE NATURALLY APT TO FLY FROM THE MEANS OF THEIR OWN GOOD. The reason is—1. Men's ignorance of spiritual things, wherein their true good consists. 2. The wisdom of the flesh being enmity against God: as many as are of the flesh must needs hate Him, and therefore cannot submit unto Him. 3. The ways of attaining true good are by denial of one's self and all the lusts of the flesh, which is impossible for any man to do, remaining in his natural condition. X. THE TERRORS OF GOD SHALL FIRST OR LAST SHAKE THE HEARTS OF ALL THOSE THAT DO MOST SLIGHT HIS JUDGMENTS. Indeed, unless God should in this manner deal with the wicked of the world, He should—1. Suffer His honour to be trampled under foot, and His authority and power despised. 2. Harden the hearts of wicked men in mischief (Eccles. viii. 11). 3. There is no fitter judgment, nor more proportionable to the sin, than to punish security and contempt with fear and terror. XI. A GUILTY CONSCIENCE IS FILLED WITH TERRORS UPON EVERY OCCASION. XII. WHATSOEVER WE TRULY FEAR WE CANNOT BUT ENDEAVOUR TO FLY FROM AND AVOID. XIII. THERE IS A WONDERFUL PRONENESS IN THE HEARTS OF MEN TO CONCEIVE OF GOD AS THEY DO OF A MORTAL MAN. (*J. White, M.A.*) *God's call to Adam*:—Our text suggests—I. MAN'S DEPARTURE FROM GOD. Adam was in a state of—1. Alienation from God. 2. Fear of Him. 3. Delusion about Him. 4. Danger. II. GOD'S CONCERN ABOUT MAN'S DEPARTURE. God is concerned about man's departure from Him, because it involves—1. Evil; and He is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." 2. Suffering; and He "is love." III. GOD'S PERSONAL DEALING WITH THE WANDERER. (*H. J. Martyn.*) *The garden of the Lord concealing the Lord of the garden*:—The garden of the Lord concealed from Adam and Eve the Lord of the garden. God did not turn Adam out of paradise till Adam had turned God out. It is a long lesson to learn to be able to keep the garden of the Lord, and the Lord of the garden both. Adam's felicities were of an innocent nature, to be sure. There is no blessing so blessed that the unilluminated side of it will not fall off and darken down into a curse. All the planets that dance even about the sun are black on their off side. The better a thing is, the more harm it is capable of doing. The very results yielded by Christianity, in the shape of respectability, and wealth, and power, and culture, and elegant refinements, come in to obscure the root itself out from which they are sprung. It is like a tree shaded and hindered by its own verdure. It is like the sun waking up the mists in the morning; its beams, like so many nimble fingers, weaving a veil to hang across the face of the sun, till it defeats its brightness by its own shining. We become indifferent to the cause in our engrossment with its effects, and the old fact becomes true again, that the garden of the Lord conceals from us the Lord of the garden. 1. One of the trees behind which the face of the Lord becomes hidden from us is the tree of knowledge. We shall mention only two or three of these briefly; but there is propriety in mentioning that first. It is the first historic instance wherein a good thing demonstrated its capacity for mischief. The tree was of God's planting, to be sure, and knowledge is no doubt good; but from the first the devil has been a learned devil, and has posed as the patron of erudition. That "knowledge puffeth up" was known by Satan before it was stated by Paul. Consciousness of knowledge is more stultifying than ignorance, and is essentially atheistic; atheistic in this sense: that it converts present cognitions into a barrier that blocks the entrance of the heavenly light and thwarts the Holy Ghost. The tree grew in God's garden; so our schools have been planted and fostered by the Christian Church. Still, the multitudinousness of books, ideas,

theories, and philosophies, out into which the schools have blossomed, tends to work that intellectual complacency, and that conceit of knowledge, which blurs every heavenly vision, discredits the wisdom that is from above, and routs the Redeemer. "Not many wise men after the flesh are called." One single electric light out here on Madison Square extinguishes the stars, and the shining of the low-lying moon snuffs out all the constellations of the firmament. The garden of the Lord grows up at length into such prodigality of leaf and flower as to conceal the Lord of the garden. 2. Another tree behind which the face of the Lord becomes hidden from us is that of affluence. The tree of wealth, verily, like the tree of knowledge, has its best rooting in the soil of paradise. We should no sooner think of speaking a disparaging word of money than we should of knowledge. But as knowledge trails behind it its shadow (as we have seen), so money is regularly attended by its shadow. Money is just as holy a thing in one way as wisdom is in another. But it makes not the slightest difference how holy a thing is, if, like Adam, the Lord is on one side of it and you are on the other. And the more this consciousness of money is developed, the more truly the man becomes encased in a little world that is all his own, and the more impervious to any influences that bear upon him from without. The verdure becomes so thick that the sky gets rubbed out, and the tree so broad and massive that the Lord God shrinks into invisibility behind it. 3. I mention only one other tree in God's garden, and that is the tree of respectability. More evidently, perhaps, than either of the others, it is the outcome of heavenly soil. The devil of decency is more incorrigible than the devil of dirt. (*C. H. Parkhurst, D.D.*) *No hiding from God*:—It was said of the Roman empire under the Cæsars that the whole world was only one great prison for Cæsar, for if any man offended the emperor it was impossible for him to escape. If he crossed the Alps, could not Cæsar find him out in Gaul? If he sought to hide himself in the Indies, even the swarthy monarchs there knew the power of the Roman arms, so that they could give no shelter to a man who had incurred imperial vengeance. And yet, perhaps, a fugitive from Rome might have prolonged his miserable life by hiding in the dens and caves of the earth. But, O sinner, there is no hiding from God. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Sinner shuns God*:—A burglar, not long ago, rifled an unoccupied dwelling by the seaside. He ransacked the rooms, and heaped his plunder in the parlour. There were evidences that here he sat down to rest. On a bracket in the corner stood a marble bust of Guido's "Ecce Homo"—Christ crowned with thorns. The guilty man had taken it in his hands and examined it. It bore the marks of his fingers; but he replaced it with its face turned to the wall, as if he would not have even the sightless eyes of the marble Saviour look upon his deeds of infamy. So the first act of the first sinner was to hide himself at the sound of God's voice. (*Professor Phelps.*) *A bad conscience embitters comforts*:—There is no friend so good as a good conscience. There is no foe so ill as a bad conscience. It makes us either kings or slaves. A man that hath a good conscience, it raiseth his heart in a princely manner above all things in the world. A man that hath a bad conscience, though he be a monarch, it makes him a slave. A bad conscience embitters all things in the world to him, though they be never so comfortable in themselves. What is so comfortable as the presence of God? What is so comfortable as the light? Yet a bad conscience, that will not be ruled, it hates the light, and hates the presence of God, as we see Adam, when he had sinned, he fled from God (Gen. iii. 8). A bad conscience cannot joy in the midst of joy. It is like a gouty foot, or a gouty toe, covered with a velvet shoe. Alas! what doth ease it? What doth glorious apparel ease the diseased body? Nothing at all. The ill is within. There the arrow sticks. (*R. Sibbes.*) *The sinner afraid of God*:—I once met a little boy in Wales, crying bitterly at his father's door, afraid to go in. I asked him what was the matter. He told me that his mother had sent him out clean in the morning, but that he had got into the water, and made his clothes dirty. So he feared to go in, because his father would punish him. We have soiled our characters by sin, and therefore is it that we fear death—dread the meeting with our Father. (*Thomas Jones.*) *An ill conscience*:—An ill conscience is no comfortable companion to carry with thee. An ill conscience is like a thorn in the flesh. A thorn in the hedge may scratch you as you pass by it, but a thorn in the flesh rankles with you wherever you go; and the conscience, the ill conscience, the conscience that is ill at ease, it makes you ill at ease. You cannot have peace so long as you have an evil conscience, so long as there is that continual monition flashing across your mind: Judgment cometh, death cometh—am I ready? Many

a time, when you go to your worldly scenes of pleasure, this conscience, like the finger writing on the wall of the palace of the king of Babylon, alarms and frightens you. You tell nobody about it. Strange thoughts strike across your mind. You have no rest. Can a man rest on a pillow of thorns? Can a man rest with the heart-ache? Can a man rest with his soul disturbed by the horrors of guilt? I tell thee there is no rest to thee till thou comest to Christ. He alone can calm a conscience. (*S. Coley.*) *A troubled conscience*:—As the stag which the huntsman has hit flies through bush and brake, over stock and stone, thereby exhausting his strength, but not expelling the deadly bullet from his body, so does experience show that they who have troubled consciences run from place to place, but carry with them wherever they go their dangerous wounds. (*Gotthold.*) *The voice of God*:—The voice of God was heard, it seems, before anything was seen; and as He appears to have acted towards man in His usual way, and as though He knew of nothing that had taken place till He had it from his own mouth, we may consider this as the voice of kindness, such, whatever it was, as he had used to hear beforetime, and on the first sound of which he and his companion had been used to draw near, as sheep at the voice of the shepherd, or as children at the voice of a father. The voice of one whom we love conveys life to our hearts; but, alas, it is not so now! Not only does conscious guilt make them afraid, but contrariety of heart to a holy God renders them averse to drawing near to Him. The kindest language to one who is become an enemy will work in a wrong way. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." Instead of coming at His call as usual, "they hide themselves from His presence among the trees of the garden." Great is the cowardice which attaches to guilt. It flies from God, and from all approaches to Him in prayer or praise; yea, from the very thoughts of Him, and of death and judgment when they must appear before Him. But wherefore flee to the trees of the garden? Can they screen them from the eyes of Him with whom they have to do? Alas, they could not hide themselves and their nakedness from their own eyes; how, then, should they elude discovery before an omniscient God! (*Ibid.*) Suppose (what is not to be supposed) that they could have run from God, yet this would not do, unless they could have run from themselves too, for the wounded deer, whither ever he runs, carries with him the fatal arrow sticking fast in his sides. The guilt of their souls and the terror of their consciences went along with them, whither ever they went. So would only have been like the angled and entangled fish with the hook of the fisherman, that may indeed swim away all the length of the line, but the hook in her mouth hales her back again; so God summons in sinful man: Adam, where art thou? (ver. 9). (*C. Ness.*) *The cool of the day*.—*Evening*:—I. THE PRIVILEGES OF EVENING. 1. Evening has calmness. 2. Evening has leisure. 3. Evening is social. II. THE DUTIES OF EVENING. 1. It is a season for review. 2. It is a season for settlement. 3. It is a season for preparation. III. THE TEACHING OF EVENING. A type of the close of life. Night is death, and the morrow the day which will break beyond the grave. (*Homilist.*) *God appearing in the wind*:—It was "in the wind of the day" that Jehovah was heard. Meaning thereby, either at the time that the breeze was blowing, or in the breeze; or, more probably, both. It is generally in connection with the wind, or whirlwind, that Jehovah is said to appear (*Ezek. i. 4*). In 2 Sam. xxii. 11 we read, "He was seen upon the wings of the wind"; in *Psa. xviii. 10* we read, "He did fly upon the wings of the wind"; in *Psa. civ. 3* we read, "Who walketh upon the wings of the wind." In these passages we note the difference of expression, yet the identity of the general idea—He was seen upon the wind; He did fly upon the wind; He did walk upon the wind; which last is the very expression in the passage before us. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Evening the time for reflection*:—"The cool of the day," which to God was the season for visiting His creatures, may, as it respects man, denote a season of reflection. We may sin in the day-time; but God will call us to account at night. Many a one has done that in the heat and bustle of the day which has afforded bitter reflection in the cool of the evening; and such in many instances has proved the evening of life. (*A. Fuller.*)

Vers. 9-12. *Where art thou?*—*God's question*:—I. The speaker is God; the person spoken to is the representative of us all. II. The call is—1. Individual. 2. Universal. III. God calls in three ways. 1. In conscience. 2. In providence.

3. In revelation. IV. His call is—1. To attention. 2. To recognition of God's being. 3. To reflection on our own place and position. V. It is a call which each must answer for himself, and which each ought to answer without delay. (*Dean Vaughan.*) *An important question*:—Here God asks an important question: "Where art thou?" 1. Where are you?—are you in God's family or out of it? When you are baptized, you are put into God's family upon certain conditions—that you will do certain things; and it depends upon you how you live, because if you do not love God you cannot be God's child. 2. Supposing you are one of God's children, "Where art thou?"—near to thy Father or far from Him?—because some children are nearer to their fathers than others. Mary and Martha were sisters, and they were both Christians, but one was much nearer to Christ than the other. Mary sat at Jesus' feet, Martha was "troubled about many things." If we delight to tell Jesus everything, than we shall be near God. 3. Are you in the sunshine or the shade? If you follow Christ you will always be in the sunshine, because He is the Sun. 4. Are you in the path of duty? Are you where you ought to be? The path of duty is a narrow path sometimes a steep path. God could say to many of us, as He said to Elijah, "What doest thou here?"—thou art out of the path of duty. 5. How have you progressed? The surest way to know that we get on is to be very humble. When the wheat is ripe it hangs down: the full ears hang the lowest. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*) *The first question in the Bible*.—This is the first question in the Bible. It was addressed by God to the first man, and likewise to you. I. THAT GOD THINKS ABOUT YOU. A watchmaker sells the watches which he has made, and thinks no more of them. The same with a ship-builder and his ships, a shepherd and his sheep. Some say that as these men have acted, so does God. He has made you, but He never thinks about you. This is an error. The text proves that He thought of Adam, and there are many things which show that He thinks of you. A mother thinks of her children, and causes the gas to be lighted for them when the shadows of the evening have come. For the same reason God sends forth the sun every morning. As He thinks about you, so you ought to think about Him; in the morning when you awake, often during the day, and always before you sleep. II. THAT GOD SPEAKS TO YOU. He spoke to Adam. In what manner? Not like the severe slave-holder, the stern master, the passionate father; but like a loving mother to her children. He addresses you also, though not exactly in the same way. Men have many methods by which they communicate their thoughts to one another. The telegraph; letters; signs; the living voice. As it is with men in this respect so with the Lord. He speaks to you in nature, in events great and small. By conscience, parents, teachers, ministers. Sometimes thoughts come into your minds directly from God. Think of the honour thus put on you. The Queen speaking to that little boy. This is nothing when compared with the great God speaking to the same boy. III. THAT GOD KNOWS WHEN YOU ARE NOT IN YOUR RIGHT PLACE. More than all, Calvary. The Divine Father is there to meet you and save you. Have you never been there? IV. THAT GOD WISHES YOU TO TELL HIM WHY YOU ARE NOT IN YOUR RIGHT PLACE. As He dealt with Adam, so He deals with you. To Him you are responsible for all your actions as well as your words. (*A. McAulane, D.D.*) *The position of man as a sinner*.—I. A CHANGE IN MAN'S MORAL POSITION. 1. His one sin brought guilt upon his conscience, and anarchy into his heart. 2. This developed itself in a dread of God. (1) This dread of God accounts for all malignant theologies. (2) For atheistic speculations. (3) For the prevalence of depravity. (4) For the absence of a hearty enjoyment of life. (5) For the little religious interest men feel in the works of nature. II. A DIVINE INTEREST IN MAN, NOTWITHSTANDING HIS ALTERED POSITION. III. THE IMPORTANCE OF MAN FEELING HIS MORAL POSITION. (*Homilist.*) *Where art thou?*—1. The Christian ought always to be at his proper and assigned work. God fails not to mark every dereliction, to note every hour, every gift and power not given to the work of salvation. 2. The Christian ought ever to be in his proper place. He has his own place in the family circle, in the Church of Christ, in every sphere of Christian duty and enterprise, and in the world of guilt, misery, and ignorance around him. 3. The Christian ought ever to be in a state of mind to seek the Divine blessing. Sin cherished, or duty neglected, not only loses us the favour of God, but what is, if possible, worse still, robs us of the disposition to desire or seek it. 4. The Christian ought ever to be where he can meet God in judgment without fear. I. THE SINNER. 1. In his sins. 2. In the pathway of eternal ruin. 3. In a state of awful condemnation. 4. In a land of darkness and gloom. 5. Ever under God's immediate eye. 6. In

the hands of an angry God. (*W. B. Sprague, D.D.*) *The voice of God*.—I. THE VOICE HERE WAS DOUBTLESS AN AUDIBLE VOICE. And God has yet His voice. He can speak by awful providences; He can speak by terrific judgments; or He can speak by the "still, small voice" of love. II. THE VOICE OF GOD IS ALWAYS A TERRIBLE VOICE TO THE SOUL THAT IS OUT OF CHRIST. The voice of God is the voice of a holy God—the voice of a just God—the voice of a faithful God. And how can an unpardoned, unjustified, and unsanctified soul hear that voice and not tremble? III. HOW IS IT, THEN, THAT THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST JESUS CAN LISTEN TO THOSE WORDS, "WHERE ART THOU?" [AND CAN HEAR THEM IN PEACE? What answer does he give?—"Where art thou?"—In Christ. In Christ? Then "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (*J. H. Evans, M.A.*) *Observations*.—I. TERRORS MAY PREPARE A MAN'S HEART, BUT IT IS ONLY THE WORD OF GOD THAT INFORMS AND SUBDUES IT. 1. That this is God's ordinance, wherein He hath both discovered His will unto us, and annexed unto it the power of His Spirit, to subdue every thought in us to the obedience of Jesus Christ. 2. That it is the only means to bring unto God His due honour, by bearing witness to His truth in His promises, and to His righteousness in His laws, and to His authority in submitting to His directions. II. THE WAY TO GET OUR HEARTS AFFECTED WITH WHAT WE HEAR, IS TO APPREHEND OURSELVES TO BE SPOKEN UNTO IN PARTICULAR. 1. Because self-love is so rooted in us, that we slight and make little account of those things in which ourselves have not a peculiar interest. 2. Because it much advanceth God's honour (1 Cor. xiv. 25), when by such particular discoveries and directions it is made manifest unto us that God oversees all our ways, and takes care of our estates in particular, which cannot but work in us both fear, and care, and confidence. III. THOSE WHO ENDEAVOUR TO FLY FROM GOD, YET CAN BY NO MEANS SHIFT THEMSELVES OUT OF HIS PRESENCE. Let it then be every man's care and wisdom to take hold of God's strength, to make peace with Him, as Himself adviseth us (Isa. xxvii. 5), seeing He cannot be—1. Resisted (Isa. xxvii. 4). 2. Nor escaped (Jer. xxv. 35). 3. Nor entreated (1 Sam. ii. 25). 4. Nor endured (Isa. xxxiii. 14). IV. GOD LOVES A FREE AND VOLUNTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SIN FROM HIS CHILDREN, WHEN THEY HAVE TRESPASSED AGAINST HIM. 1. Because it brings God most honour, when we clear Him, and take the blame unto ourselves (See Josh. vii. 19), whereby every mouth is stopped, and His ways acknowledged, and His judgments to be just, in visiting men's transgressions upon them; and His mercies infinite, in sparing men upon their repentance. 2. It most justifies ourselves, when we condemn our own ways and actions (2 Cor. vii. 11), and are grieved in our own hearts, and ashamed of our folly, in the errors of our ways. V. GOD IS FULL OF MILDNESS AND GENTLENESS IN HIS DEALING WITH OFFENDERS, EVEN IN THEIR GREATEST TRANSGRESSIONS. 1. To clear Himself, that the whole world may acknowledge, that He afflicts not willingly (Lam. iii. 33). 2. Because the sin itself is burdensome and bitter enough to a tender conscience, so that there needs no mixture with it of gall and wormwood. VI. THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONSIDERATION OF ONE'S ILL CONDITION IS AN EFFECTUAL MEANS TO BRING HIM ON TO TRUE REPENTANCE. VII. ALL THOSE THAT DESIRE TO GET OUT OF THEIR MISERY MUST SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WITH THEMSELVES WHAT WAS THE MEANS THAT BROUGHT THEM INTO IT. 1. There can be no means of removing evil but by taking away the cause of it, neither is there any means to take that away till it be known. 2. Besides, God can no way gain so much honour, as when men, by searching out the cause of the evils that befall them, find and acknowledge that their destruction is from themselves (Hos. xiii. 9). Hence it is that the Lord oftentimes makes the judgment which He inflicts to point it out, either by the kind of the judgment, or by some circumstance of the time, place, instrument, or the like, by the observation whereof the evil itself that brought that judgment on us may be made manifest, especially if we take with us for the discovery thereof the light of God's Word. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Lessons*.—1. Jehovah may suffer sinners to abuse His goodness, but He will call them to judgment. 2. The eternal God only, who is the cause of every creature, who hath made, and knows man, He will be Judge. 3. Adam and all his sons shall be made to judge themselves by the Lord. 4. God is not ignorant of the lurking places of sinners (Psa. cxxxix). 5. God's inquiries are invincible criminations on sinners. 6. He that hides, cannot hide, and he that flieth, cannot fly from God. 7. Foolish sinners think themselves safe in hiding and flying from God, but God teacheth it must be by coming to Him. 8. Sin deals falsely in its speaking to the inquisition of God. 9. It is sin alone that makes God's voice so terrible, which sinners

would conceal. 10. Sinners pretend their fear rather than their guilt to drive them from God. 11. Sinners pretend their punishment, rather than their crime, to cause them hide. 12. Sin makes souls naked, and yet souls cover sin. 13. How hard it is to bring a soul to the true acknowledgment of sin! (*G. Hughes, D.D.*) *God's first words to the first sinner*:—1. Mark the alienation of heart which sin causes in the sinner. Adam ought to have sought out his Maker. He should have gone through the garden crying for his God, "My God, my God, I have sinned against Thee. Where art Thou?" But instead thereof, Adam flies from God. The sinner comes not to God; God comes to him. It is not "My God, where art Thou?" but the first cry is the voice of grace, "Sinner, where art thou?" God comes to man; man seeks not his God. 2. And while the text manifestly teaches us the alienation of the human heart from God, so that man shuns his Maker and does not desire fellowship with Him, it reveals also the folly which sin has caused. How we repeat the folly of our first parent every day when we seek to hide sin from conscience, and then think it is hidden from God; when we are more afraid of the gaze of man than of the searchings of the Eternal One, when because the sin is secret, and has not entrenched upon the laws and customs of society, we make no conscience of it, but go to our beds with the black mark still upon us, being satisfied because man does not see it, that therefore God does not perceive it. 3. But now, the Lord Himself comes forth to Adam, and note how He comes. He comes walking. He was in no haste to smite the offender, not flying upon wings of wind, not hurrying with His fiery sword unsheathed, but walking in the garden. "In the cool of the day"—not in the dawning of night, when the natural gloom of darkness might have increased the terrors of the criminal; not in the heat of the day, lest he should imagine that God came in the heat of passion; not in the early morning, as if in haste to slay, but at the close of the day, for God is long-suffering, slow to anger, and of great mercy; but in the cool of the evening, when the sun was setting upon Eden's last day of glory, when the dews began to weep for man's misery, when the gentle winds with breath of mercy breathed upon the hot cheek of fear; when earth was silent that man might meditate, and when heaven was lighting her evening lamps, that man might have hope in darkness; then, and not till then, forth came the offended Father. I. We believe that the inquiry of God was intended in an **AROUSING SENSE**—"Adam, where art thou?" Sin stultifies the conscience, it drugs the mind, so that after sin man is not so capable of understanding his danger as he would have been without it. One of the first works of grace in a man is to put aside this sleep, to startle him from his lethargy, to make him open his eyes and discover his danger. "Adam, where art thou?" Lost, lost to thy God, lost to happiness, lost to peace, lost in time, lost in eternity. Sinner, "Where art thou?" Shall I tell thee? Thou art in a condition in which thy very conscience condemns thee. How many there are of you who have never repented of sin, have never believed in Christ? I ask you, is your conscience easy?—is it always easy? Are there not some times when the thunder will be heard? Thy conscience telleth thee thou art wrong—O how wrong, then, must thou be! But man, dost thou not know thou art a stranger from thy God? You eat, you drink, you are satisfied; the world is enough for you: its transient pleasures satisfy your spirit. If you saw God here, you would flee from Him; you are an enemy to Him. Oh! is this the right case for a creature to be in? Let the question come to thee—"Where art thou?" Must not that creature be in a very pitiable position who is afraid of his Creator? You are in the position of the courtier at the feast of Dionysius, with the sword over your head suspended by a single hair. Condemned already! "God is angry with the wicked every day." "If he turn not, He will whet His sword: He hath bent His bow and made it ready." "Where art thou?" Thy life is frail; nothing can be more weak. A spider's line is a cable compared with the thread of thy life. Dreams are substantial masonry compared with the bubble structure of thy being. Thou art here and thou art gone. Thou sittest here to-day; ere another week is past thou mayest be howling in another world. Oh, where art thou, man? Unpardoned, and yet a dying man! Condemned, yet going carelessly towards destruction! Covered with sin, yet speeding to thy Judge's dread tribunal! II. Now, secondly, the question was meant to **CONVINCE** OF SIN, and so to lead to a confession. Had Adam's heart been in a right state, he would have made a full confession of his sinfulness. "Where art thou?" Let us hear the voice of God saying that to us, if to-day we are out of God and out of Christ. III. We may regard this text as the **VOICE OF GOD REMOANING MAN'S LOST ESTATE**. IV. But now I must turn to a fourth way in which no doubt this verse was intended. It is an **arousing**

voice, a convincing voice, a bemoaning voice; but, in the fourth place, it is a SEEKING VOICE. "Adam, where art thou?" I am come to find thee, wherever thou mayest be. I will look for thee, till the eyes of My pity see thee, I will follow thee till the hand of My mercy reaches thee; and I will still hold thee till I bring thee back to myself, and reconcile thee to My heart. V. And now, lastly, we feel sure that this text may be used, and must be used, in another sense. To those who reject the text, as a voice of arousing and conviction, to those who despise it as the voice of mercy bemoaning them, or as the voice of goodness seeking them, it comes in another way; it is the voice of JUSTICE SUMMONING THEM. Adam had fled, but God must have him come to His bar. "Where art thou, Adam? Come hither, man, come hither; I must judge thee, sin cannot go unpunished." (C. H. Spurgeon.) I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.—*The sad effects of yielding to temptation*:—I. THAT A YIELDING TO TEMPTATION IS GENERALLY FOLLOWED BY A SAD CONSCIOUSNESS OF PHYSICAL DESTITUTION. II. THAT A YIELDING TO TEMPTATION IS GENERALLY FOLLOWED BY A GRIEVOUS WANDERING FROM GOD. 1. After yielding to temptation, men often wander from God by neglecting (1) Prayer; (2) God's Word. 2. By increasing profanity of life. III. THAT A YIELDING TO TEMPTATION IS GENERALLY FOLLOWED BY SELF-VINDICATION. 1. We endeavour to vindicate ourselves by blaming others. This course of conduct is (1) ungrateful; (2) ungenerous; (3) unavailing. 2. By blaming our circumstances. IV. THAT IN YIELDING TO TEMPTATION WE NEVER REALIZE THE ALLURING PROMISES OF THE DEVIL. 1. Satan promised that Adam and Eve should become wise, whereas they became naked. 2. Satan promised that Adam and Eve should become gods, whereas they fled from God. (J. S. Exell, M.A.) *The wanderer from God*:—I. WHERE IS MAN? 1. Distant from God. 2. In terror of God. 3. In delusion about God. 4. In danger from God. II. GOD'S CONCERN FOR HIM. 1. His condition involves evil—God is holy. 2. His condition involves suffering—God is love. III. GOD'S DEALINGS WITH HIM. 1. In the aggregate—"Adam," the genius. 2. Personally. "Where art thou?" (W. Wytke.) *The dawn of guilt*:—I. A CONSCIOUS LOSS OF RECTITUDE. They were "naked." It is moral nudity—nudity of soul—of which they are conscious. The sinful soul is represented as naked (Rev. iii. 17). Righteousness is spoken of as a garment (Isa. lxi. 3). The redeemed are clothed with white raiment. There are two things concerning the loss of rectitude worthy of notice. 1. They deeply felt it. Some are destitute of moral righteousness, and do not feel it. 2. They sought to conceal it. Men seek to hide their sins—in religious professions, ceremonies, and the display of outward morality. II. AN ALARMING DREAD OF GOD. They endeavour, like Jonah, to flee from the presence of the Lord. 1. This was unnatural. The soul was made to live in close communion with God. All its aspirations and faculties show this. 2. This was irrational. There is no way of fleeing from omnipresence. Sin blinds the reason of men. 3. This was fruitless. God found Adam out. God's voice will reach the sinner into whatever depths of solitude he may pass. III. A MISERABLE SUBTERFUGE FOR SIN. "The woman," &c. And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me," &c. What prevarication you have here! Each transferred the sinful act to the wrong cause. It is the essential characteristic of moral mind that it is the cause of its own actions. Each must have felt that the act was the act of self. (Homilist.) *Sad results of disobedience*:—I. THE SENSE OF GUILT BY WHICH THEY WERE OPPRESSED. 1. There were circumstances which aggravated their guilt—they knew God—His fellowship—were perfectly holy—happy—knew the obligations—knew the consequences of life and death. 2. They felt their guilt aggravated by these circumstances. Their consciences were not hardened. Their present feelings and condition were a contrast with the past. In these circumstances they fled. They knew of no redemption, and could make no atonement. II. THE MELANCHOLY CHANGE OF CHARACTER WHICH HAD RESULTED FROM THEIR FALL. 1: Our moral attainments are indicated by our views of God—progressive. The pure in heart see God. Our first parents fell in their conceptions of God—omnipresence. "Whither shall I go?" &c. This ignorance of God increased in the world with the increase of sin (Rom. i. 21–32). This ignorance of God is still exemplified. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." He may worship outwardly; and there are gradations of the foolish—some shut God within religious ordinances—some exclude Him. III. THAT THEY HAD LOST THEIR COMMUNION WITH GOD. 1. One barrier interposed was guilt. 2. Another barrier was moral pollution. (Jas. Stewart.) *Hiding after sin*:—I. ADAM REPRESENTS THE AVERAGE SINNER. A man may do worse than Adam—hide from God after outraging Him by sin. Sense of God's presence, awfulness, greatness, still intact in soul. II. THEY HID THEM-

SELVES. An instinct; not the result of a consultation. Two motives: 1. Fear. 2. Shame. The greatness of God was the measure of Adam's fear; his own lost greatness was the measure of his shame. III. AMONGST THE TREES OF THE GARDEN. 1. Pleasure. 2. Occupation. 3. Moral rationalism. IV. ADAM'S CONDUCT WAS FOOLISH AND IRRATIONAL. 1. Attempting the impossible. 2. Flying from the one hope and opening for restoration and safety. (*Canon Liddon.*) *Hiding from God*:—As the account of Eve's temptation and fall truly represents the course of corruption and sin, so the behaviour of our first parents afterwards answers exactly to the feelings and conduct of those who have forfeited their innocence and permitted the devil to seduce them into actual sin. I. Any one sin, wilfully indulged, leads to profaneness and unbelief, and tends to blot the very thought of God out of our hearts. II. Much in the same way are backsliding Christians led to invent or accept notions of God and His judgment, as though He in His mercy permitted them to be hidden and covered, when in truth they cannot be so. III. The same temper naturally leads us to be more or less false towards men also, trying to seem better than we are; delighting to be praised, though we know how little we deserve it. Among particular sins it would seem that two especially dispose the heart towards this kind of falsehood; (1) sensuality; (2) dishonesty. IV. When any Christian person has fallen into sin and seeks to hide himself from the presence of the Lord, God is generally so merciful that He will not suffer that man to be at ease and forget Him. He calls him out of his hiding-place, as He called Adam from among the trees. No man is more busy in ruining himself, and hiding from the face of his Maker, than He, our gracious Saviour, is watchful to awaken and save him. (*Plain Sermons by Contributors to "Tracts for the Times."*) *Two kinds of retreats*:—I. THE SINNER'S RETREAT. 1. Complete thoughtlessness. 2. The occupations of life. 3. The moralities of life. 4. The forms and observances of religion. II. THE SAINT'S RETREAT. "I flee unto Thee to hide me"—(1) from the terrors of the law; (2) from the hostility and hatred of men; (3) from the trials and calamities of life; (4) from the fear and tyranny of death. (*A. Raleigh, D.D.*) *Hiding-places*:—I. Note here the anticipative sentence of the human conscience pronouncing doom on itself. The guilty rebel hides from the Divine Presence. II. The inexorable call which brings him immediately into the Divine Presence. III. The bringing to light of the hidden things of darkness. The soul has many hiding-places. There are—(1) The hiding-place of self-complacent propriety; (2) the hiding-place of the reasoner; (3) the hiding-place of theological dogmas. But the true hiding-place for the soul is Jesus. (*W. Hay Aitken, M.A.*) *The unconscious confession*:—I. ADAM'S HASTE TO MAKE EXCUSE WAS A PROOF OF HIS GUILT. The consciousness of evil leads to self-condemnation. II. ADAM'S CONFESSION OF FEAR PROVED HIS GUILT. If a child dreads its parent, either the child or the parent must be wrong. III. ADAM'S MORBID MORAL SENSITIVENESS PROVED HIS GUILT. The worst kind of indelicacy is in being shocked at what is natural and proper. Conclusion: 1. Sin cannot escape from God. 2. Sin cannot stand before God. 3. Sin may find compassion from God. (*A. J. Morris.*) *Observations*:—I. ALL MEN MUST APPEAR BEFORE GOD, AND ANSWER ALL THAT THEY ARE CHARGED WITHAL, WHEN HE COMES TO JUDGMENT. 1. That God by His power can enforce and draw all men before Him, and to confess Him too, no man can deny (Rom. xiv. 11). 2. Besides, it is fit that God should do it, for the clearing of His justice, both in rewarding His own and punishing the wicked and ungodly, when every man's work is manifest, and it appears that every man receives according to his deeds (Rom. ii. 8). Of this truth there can be no clearer evidence than the observation of that judgment which passeth upon every man in the private consistory of his own conscience, from which none can fly nor silence his own thoughts, bearing witness for him, or against him, no, not those which have no knowledge of God or His law (Rom. ii. 15). II. ALL MEN BY NATURE ARE APT TO COLOUR AND CONCEAL ALL THAT THEY CAN, AND THAT EVEN FROM GOD HIMSELF. 1. Because all men desire to justify themselves, and are by nature liars (Rom. iii. 4), and therefore easily fall into that evil to which their nature inclines them. 2. The want of the full apprehension of God's Providence. III. ONE SIN COMMONLY DRAWS ON ANOTHER. 1. Any sin committed weakens the heart, and consequently leaves it the more unable to withstand a second assault—as a castle is the more easily taken when the breach is once made, 2. And sins are usually fastened one to another, like the links of a chain; so that he who takes hold of one of them necessarily draws on all the rest. 3. And God in justice may punish one sin with another, and to that end both withdraw His restraining grace from wicked men, that being delivered over to the lusts of their own hearts they

may run on to all excess of riot, that they may fill up the measure of their sin, that God's wrath may come upon them to the uttermost, and many times for a while withholds the power of His sanctifying grace from His own children. IV. GOD'S WORD IS TERRIBLE TO A GUILTY CONSCIENCE. V. IT IS A HARD MATTER TO BRING MEN TO CONFESS ANY MORE THAN IS EVIDENT IN ITSELF. VI. MEN MAY BE BROUGHT MORE EASILY TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANYTHING THAN THEIR SIN. VII. NO MEANS CAN WORK ANY FARTHER THAN THEY ARE ACTED AND CARRIED ON BY GOD HIMSELF. (*J. White, M.A.*)

Conscience:—I. In briefly adverting then to the fact that it is the voice of the Lord which awakens conviction, let us attempt to ascertain exactly what is intended by such an expression. In the case of Adam it was, of course, the direct and audible voice of the Lord whereby he was aroused. There is no doubt that that voice had struck home to his conscience long before it fell upon his ear—as is proved by his sense of nakedness, which he pleaded as an excuse for his concealment; but that conviction of sin which drove him to the shade of the foliage immediately after he had eaten the fruit, and before the Lord called him from his hiding-place, was but the echo of the Almighty's previous warning, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." If it was the voice of God which awakened conviction in Adam, how does He make that voice heard by us? Is there not a steady monitor within us, and which at times the most hardened of us cannot stifle—which is constantly telling us, "thou shalt surely die"—which is ever reminding us that God's law requires perfection, absolute and unblemished purity, without which we cannot enter into His rest—which also shows us our own hearts, and forces us to bear them to the standard of God's law (a light in which we see in every part of ourselves the elements of eternal perdition and utter ruin)—which proclaims death to us at every step—which haunts our rest, disturbs our thoughts, distracts our minds, and terrifies our souls with the unceasing warning, "thou shalt surely die"? II. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE VOICE—FEAR. "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." There are two kinds of fear—the one generally termed reverence, or, as it is scripturally called, "godly fear,"—the other dread, or terror, induced by fear of punishment. The former always results from a suitable attitude before God in the contemplation of His majesty and power, and forms one of the most indispensable and becoming attributes in the character of the true disciple of God. The latter is an intangible indication of the absence of the Spirit from the heart, and of the consciousness of guilt without the wish for, or hope of, a remedy. It was this fear which engendered the slavish obedience of the Israelites, and induced that dogged and sullen compliance with the law's demands which characterized the spirit in which their services were rendered. A fear which urges nothing more than a bare fulfilment of a demand from a sense of coercion and compulsion, cannot fail to beget a spirit of enmity against its object. Hence it is that our churches are filled with unwilling worshippers, and the altar of Jehovah is insulted with constrained oblations. III. The next consideration suggested by the text was, THE MISERABLE AND HUMILIATING SENSE AWAKENED BY THE CONVICTION OF SIN—NAKEDNESS. It is a feeling which manifests itself under three aspects—bringing with it a sense of ignorance, of a want of righteousness, and of impurity. We may be extensively versed in what this world calls knowledge—may be widely acquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, and may even be deeply read in the Oracles of God; able to descant with subtilty and power upon the doctrines of revealed truth; but no sooner does the abiding conviction of sin break in upon us, than these attributes, upon which we once rested a hope of preference before our less favoured brethren, become only as so many scorpions to sting us with the reproach of having abused them, and leave us under a sense of ignorance even in the possession of the gifts of knowledge. But it is not only upon such as these that the sense of ignorance accompanies the voice of conviction. It creeps over those who, without worldly as well as spiritual knowledge of any kind, have never felt their ignorance before. There are many who, while they are of the night and know nothing, think there is nothing which their own strength is not sufficient to perform, and that there is no degree of excellence to which they cannot of their own power attain. When conscience speaks to such as these, the helplessness which they feel partakes largely of this sense of ignorance. They look back upon that career of self-sufficiency during which they have been arrested, like awakened sleepers upon the visions of a dream; and yet, amidst the realities to which they have been aroused, they feel a need; but know not where to turn for help. Our helplessness under conviction of sin is increased by a feeling of our want of

righteousness being super-added to this sense of ignorance. Self-dependence is the invariable accompaniment of an ungodly life. Ungodliness itself consists chiefly, if not entirely, in a want of faith in Christ; and if this want of faith in Him exists, our trust must be reposed elsewhere; we either consider ourselves too pure to need a Saviour, or else we trust in future virtue to redeem past transgression. When the floods of conviction all at once break down the sandy barriers of self-trust behind which we have sought to screen ourselves, one of the principal elements in the sense of helplessness resulting from it is a void within ourselves which we find widening more and more as conviction becomes the stronger. It brings with it, too, in an equal degree, a feeling of impurity. Before conviction has firmly fastened hold upon the mind; when, as it were, its first strivings for audience are all that can be experienced, it is apt to be checked by the trite expedient of comparing our own godliness with that of others. But such specious delusions are all overthrown when conscience has us completely in its chains. It leads us to measure ourselves, not by a relative standard, or by the contrast we present to our brethren around us; but by the contrast we present to the requirements of that law which demands perfect purity; a purity to which we feel we can never attain, and a law whereby we know we shall be ultimately judged. We look within, and see ourselves stained with every sin which that law condemns, and we feel that the very lightest of our transgressions is sufficient to crush us beneath its curse. It is in vain that we make future resolves. But, terrible as the situation of a mind thus disturbed may seem, it is in a far more enviable condition than that which is reposing in the lap of sin, and saying, "Peace, peace, when God has not spoken peace."

IV. But it will be necessary now to glance at the next head of discourse, namely, THE VAIN EXPEDIENT FOR ESCAPE MENTIONED IN THE TEXT. "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." This attempt at personal concealment on the part of our first parents, furnishes a striking example of the deceitfulness of sin. The supposition that the mere shade of the leaves could conceal them from the eye of God would have appeared to their reason, while unwarped by sin and shame, as preposterous and absurd; but now that the taint of guilt was on their souls they were ready to believe in the efficacy of any miserable subterfuge to cheat the omniscience of the Almighty. In like manner does sin lead its victims now from one degree of dissimulation to another, commending the mask of hypocrisy in its most attractive forms, and deluding the sinner into every species of sophistry, from which the purer mind would instinctively recoil. A more rigid observance of Divine ordinances is often resolved upon as a means of propitiating the monitions of the conscience. A more serious and attentive demeanour is likewise assumed. A closer vigil kept upon the words and actions. And determinations are made to conform more literally to the demands of the Divine law. Such resolves in themselves are admirable, and, inasmuch as they evidence a dissatisfaction with present godliness, are highly commendable. But in what spirit and for what reason are these reforms undertaken? Is it a glowing desire for the promotion of the glory of God; a zeal for the advancement of His kingdom; and an anxiety for the spread of His cause which animates us? Are these high resolves prompted by an indignant sense of our ingratitude to a merciful and beneficent Creator, and a childlike desire to return to Him from whom we have departed? No, my friends. It is from no contrition for past unthankfulness towards the giver of every good and perfect gift that these resolves are made; but their fulfilment is set about from a sullen and constrained sense of compulsion to satisfy the exorbitant demands of a hard taskmaster whose laws we hate, and whose sway we would fain be freed from; they are undertaken in our own strength, and prompted by a slavish fear of death. We have before seen that this servile dread, though productive of great apparent submission and obedience, generates enmity instead of love in the heart. It is only the light of revelation which can dispel that enmity, and shed abroad that love in the soul. (*A. Murcell.*)

Hidings:—I. Let us contemplate THE SINNER "HIDING HIMSELF." For is not this flight and concealment of Adam among the trees of the garden like a symbolical representation of what sinners have been doing ever since?—Have they not all been endeavouring to escape from God, and to lead a separated and independent life? They have been fleeing from Divine Presence, and hiding themselves amid any trees that would keep that Presence far enough away. 1. One of the most common retreats of the sinner is that of complete thoughtlessness. What countless thousands of human beings have fled to this retreat; and how easily and naturally does a man take part and place with "all the nations that forget God!" We have said

complete thoughtlessness; but it is not complete. If it were, there would be no conscious hiding, no more flight; the forest would then be so deep and dense that no Divine voice would be heard at all, and no Divine visitation of any kind felt or feared. But it is not so. Now and again a gleam of light will come piercing through. Now and again a voice from the Unseen Presence will summon the fugitive back. 2. The occupations of life furnish another retreat for man when fleeing from God. Man works that he may be hidden. He works hard that he may hide himself deep. The city is a great forest, in which are innumerable fugitives from God, and sometimes the busiest are fleeing the fastest; the most conspicuous to us may be the farthest away from Him. Work is right—the allotment of God, the best discipline for man. Trade is right—the dispenser of comforts and conveniences, the instrument of progress and civilization; and from these things actual benefits unnumbered do unceasingly flow; and yet there can be little doubt that the case is as we say. These right things are used at least for this wrong end—as a screen, a subterfuge, a deep retreat from the voice and the presence of the Lord. 3. The moralities of life form another retreat for souls hiding from God. Some men are deeply hidden there, and it is hard to find them; harder still to dislodge them. This does not appear to be an ignominious retreat; a man seems to retire (if, indeed, he may be said to retire at all) with honour. Speak to him of spiritual deficiency, he will answer with unfeigned wonder, “In what?” And if you say again, “In the keeping of the commandments,” he will give you the answer that has been given thousands and thousands of times since the young man gave it to Jesus, “All these things have I kept from my youth up. Not perfectly, not as an angel keeps them, but as well as they are usually kept among men; and what lack I yet?” So fair is the house in which the man takes shelter. So green is the leafage of the trees amid which he hides. He does not profess to be even “afraid,” as Adam was. He hears the Voice, and does not tremble. Why, then, should it be said that he is hiding? Because in deep truth he is. He is attending to rules, but not adopting soul principles of life. He is yielding an outward and mechanical compliance to laws, but he has not the spirit of them in his heart. 4. The forms and observances of religion constitute sometimes a hiding-place for souls. Men come to God’s house to hide from Him. They put on “the form of godliness, but deny its power.” They have a name to live, but continue dead. They seem to draw near, but in reality “are yet a great way off.” They figure to themselves an imaginary God, who will be propitiated and pleased by an outward and mechanical service—by the exterior decencies of the Christian life—when all the while they are escaping from the true God, whose continual demand is, “My son, give Me thine heart.” Ah, the deceitfulness of the human heart! that men should come to God to flee from Him! Yet so it is, and therefore let a man examine himself, whether he be in the faith or merely in the form; whether he have a good hope through grace, or a hope that will make him ashamed, whether he be in the very Presence reconciled, trustful, and loving, or yet estranged, deceiving himself, and fleeing from the only true Shelter. For we may depend upon it that in all these ways men do fly from God. And God seeks them, for He knows they are lost. He pursues them, not in wrath, but in mercy; not to drive them away into distance, condemnation, despair; but to bring them out from every false refuge and home to Himself, the everlasting and unchanging shelter of all the good. II. And many do turn and flee to Him to hide them. Adam is the type of the flying sinner. David is the type of THE FLEEING SAINT (Psa. cxliii. 9). Here we have the very heart and soul of conversion, “I flee unto Thee.” The man who says this has been turned, or he is turning. 1. “I flee unto Thee to hide me” from the terrors of the law. He alone can hide us from these terrors. But He can. In His presence we are lifted, as it were, above the thunders of the mountain; we see its lightnings play beneath our feet. He who finds his hiding-place with God in Christ does not flee from justice; he goes to meet it. In God, the saint’s refuge, justice also has eternal home; and purity, over which no shadow can ever pass; and law—everlasting, unchanging law—so that the trusting soul goes to meet all these and to be in alliance with all these. 2. “I flee unto Thee to hide me” from the hostility and the hatred of men. This was a flight that David often took, and, in fact, this is the fleeing mentioned in the text. “Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies. I flee unto Thee to hide me.” Believer, if you have David’s faith you have David’s Refuge. The Name of the Lord is an high tower, into which all the righteous run and are safe. 3. “I flee unto Thee to hide me” from the trials and calamities of life. A storm comes to a ship in mid-

voyage. She is driven far out of her course, and is glad at last to find shelter in some friendly port. But there would soon have been shipwreck in the fair weather. The sunken rock, the unknown current, the treacherous sand, were just before the ship. The storm was her salvation. It carried her roughly but safely to the harbour. And such is affliction to many a soul. It comes to quench the sunshine, to pour the pitiless rain, to raise the stormy wind and drive the soul away to port and refuge, away to harbour and home within the circle of Divine tranquillity—in the deep calm of the everlasting Presence. 4. "I flee unto Thee to hide me" from the fear and from the tyranny of death. This is the very last flight of the godly soul. It has surmounted or gone through every evil now but one: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death." (*A. Raleigh, D.D.*) *Terrors of conscience, and remedies*:—There is no cure for the terrors of conscience but from God. 1. Because these fears are seated in the soul, and are awakened there by the voice of God. "I heard Thy voice," said Adam. It is the voice of God in the mind that makes it so terrified: no created being can strike fear or convey comfort into the conscience. 2. The fears of the mind, being supernatural and spiritual, can admit only of a spiritual remedy. All outward applications will never cure inward distempers: the sickness of the mind can only be cured by Him who seeth into it. Jesus only can raise and comfort those whom the terrors of the Almighty have cast down and dejected. His peculiar work and office it is to release us from the terrors of conscience. He is entitled to the merit of doing it; He was made acquainted with fear, with trouble, with amazement, with agony of mind, that He might merit comfort for us under our fears. Christ is the end of the law for comfort, by conferring pardon; which pardon He is more fitted to give by reason of that compassion which is in Him; that pity and tenderness with which He is moved toward all that are under any kind of want, or sorrow, or misery. Another way to lessen our fears is to maintain our peace with God by such a regard to His law as will not suffer us to persevere in any known sin. For the conscience can never be at rest so long as wilful sin remains in the heart. The man who is at peace with God "fears no evil tidings," his "heart is fixed." I add this further rule: acquaint thyself much with God, and then thou wilt be less afraid when He visits Thee. If He be new and strange to thee, every appearance of Him will be fearful; but if thou art acquainted with Him, thou mayest then be confident. Next to this, nourish a voluntary religious fear of God in the heart, and that will prevent those other violent and enforced fears which bring torment. Feared He will be; all knees must bow to Him, all hearts must yield to Him; therefore a devout fear is the best way to prevent a slavish dread. The humble spirit that bows itself shall not be broken. Above all, take care to be of the number of those to whom His promises are made—that is, the Church. To them it is said, "they shall dwell safely," and none shall make them afraid. 1. In much pity and tenderness, like as a father catches up a child that is fallen, yea, "like as a father pitieth his own children, so is the Lord merciful to them that fear Him." He "taketh pleasure in the prosperity of His servants," and loves to see them in a comfortable condition. "For a small moment," saith He, "have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." 2. They are assured also of His care over them, lest they should be swallowed up and overwhelmed with grief and fear. Hear His words: "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the spirit should fail before Me and the souls which I have made. I will restore comforts to him and to his mourners." God brings His servants seasonably out of their distresses; because in them they are unfit and unable for any service. I have now only to observe that all these things are contrariwise with the wicked. No relief in their extremity, but fear and anguish. (*W. Jones, M.A.*) *Divine vision*:—Adam forgot that God could see him anywhere. Dr. Nettleton used to tell a little anecdote, beautifully illustrating that the same truth which overwhelms the sinner's heart with fear, may fill the renewed soul with joy. A mother instructing her little girl, about four years of age, succeeded, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, in fastening upon her mind this truth, "Thou God seest me!" She now felt that she "had to do" with that Being "unto whose eyes all things are naked," and she shrank in terror. For days she was in deep distress; she wept and sobbed, and would not be comforted. "God sees me, God sees me!" was her constant wail. At length one day, after spending some time in prayer, she bounded into her mother's room, and with a heavenly smile lighting up her tears, exclaimed, "Oh, mother, God sees me, God sees me!"

Her ecstacy was now as great as her anguish had been. For days her soul had groaned under the thought, "God sees me; He sees my wicked heart, my sinful life, my hatred to Him and to His holy law": and the fear of a judgment to come would fill her soul with agony. But now a pardoning God had been revealed to her, and her soul exclaimed exultingly, "God sees me, takes pity on me, will guide and guard me." (*W. Adamson.*) *Afraid of God*:—So there is a consistency in sin: they who bid themselves from one another hid themselves from the presence of the Lord. Sin is the only separating power. Goodness loves the light. Innocence is as a bird that follows the bidding of the sun. When your little child runs away from you, either you are an unlovely parent or the child has been doing wrong. Adam was afraid of the Lord (ver. 10). Afraid of Him who had made the beautiful garden, the majestic river, the sun, and the moon and the stars! How unnatural! Instead of running to the Lord, and crying mightily to Him in pain and agony of soul, he shrunk away into shady places, and trembled in fear and shame. We do the same thing to-day. We flee from God. Having done some deed of wrong, we do not throw ourselves in utter humiliation before the Lord, crying for His mercy, and promising better life; we stand behind a tree, thinking He will pass by without seeing us. This sin makes a fool of a man as well as a criminal—it makes him ridiculous as well as guilty. It makes its own judgment day. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) **Who told thee that thou wast naked?**—*The moral sense*:—What is significant, as I think, in the Bible narrative, is that the moment when man hears the voice of God in the garden is the moment when he feels himself estranged from Him; he is not happy in the presence of his Maker; he shrinks from Him, and seeks any covering, however feeble, to hide him from his God. And he who looks across the page of history, and seeks to read the secret of the human soul, will find everywhere, I think, this same contrariety between man's duty and his desire, the same consciousness that he has not performed the work God has given him to do. For what can be told as a truer truth of the human story, than that man has high desires and cannot attain to them; that he is living between two worlds, and is often false to what he knows to be most Divine in himself; or, in a word, that he has tasted of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and yet that between him and the tree of life stands a flaming sword which turns every way? I. **THE HUMAN CONFESSION.** It is not a little strange, upon the face of it, that man, who is the lord of the physical world, or counts himself so, should be visited by a haunting sense of failure. Why should he be ashamed of himself? Why conceive a Power needing propitiation? Why waste his time in penitence for sin? What is sacrifice—that venerable institution—but an expression of the discordance between man and his environment? We know we are sinners; we cannot escape the chiding of conscience. II. **THE DIVINE INTERROGATION.** Whence comes, then, this sense of sin, this longing for holiness? It is a testimony to the Divinity of our human nature. If the prisoner sighs for liberty and flight in the prison, the reason is that the prison is not his home. If the exile gazes with yearning eyes upon the waste of waters which parts him from his native land, the reason is that his heart is there beyond the seas. And if the human heart here in the body sighs and yearns for a perfectness of love and a joy Divine, the reason is, it is the heir of immortality. (*J. E. C. Welldon, M.A.*) *God's question*:—"Who told thee that thou wast naked?" or how is it that this nakedness is now a cause of shame to thee? Wast thou not clothed with innocence, with light, and with glory? Didst thou not bear the image of thy God, in whom thou gloriedst? Didst thou not rejoice in all the faculties which He had given thee? Why, then, art thou despoiled, covered with shame, and miserable? Hast thou sullied the garment of innocence and purity which I bestowed upon thee? Hast thou lost the crown with which I adorned thy brow? Who, then, hath reduced thee to this state? "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" Adam is confounded and speechless before his Judge. It is necessary, then, to deepen the conviction which he feels in his troubled conscience. It is necessary to give him a nearer view of the evil which he has committed, by putting to him a still more home question. It is necessary to set full before his eyes the mirror of the Divine law. "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" My brethren, what instructive lessons does this simple question contain! Let us pause here for a moment, and direct our thoughts to this important subject. And, first, remark that God, in order that "He might be justified even when He condemned," with a condescension which was intended to redound to His

own glory, pronounces no curse, nor even a sentence of condemnation upon man, until He has first convicted him in his own conscience. But this condescension of the Lord towards man was also intended to subserve the happiness of the creature, by leading him to repentance, and, through repentance, unto salvation. The Lord, by the question which He puts to Adam, confronts him with His holy law. Man, the sinner, will then no longer be able to withhold the confession of his guilt, under the plea of ignorance. "I commanded thee," saith his Judge, "thou knewest thy duty, the full extent of thy responsibility, even the tremendous sanction of the law and the penalty of its violation." If, then, Adam perish, it is his own fault. But the Almighty, in reminding man in so solemn a manner of the command which He had given him, designed not merely to lead him to confess that he had sinned knowingly and willingly, and that he had made no account of his awful responsibility, but also to show him the real nature of his sin. "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" I gave thee a command, hast thou violated it? This is sin—the violation of the law of God, disobedience, rebellion. That sin would have been the same, in point of nature, whatever had been the object of the command. For us, as well as for Adam, for every responsible being, sin is simply that which is opposed to the Divine law.

(*L. Bonnet.*) **Hast thou eaten of the tree?**—*Observations:*—I. MAN'S FROWARDNESS CANNOT OVERCOME GOD'S LOVE AND PATIENCE. II. GOD CAN EASILY, WITHOUT ANY OTHER EVIDENCE, CONVINCE MEN BY THEMSELVES. III. GOD SEES US EVEN WHEN WE SEE NOT HIM, AND TAKES NOTICE OF ALL OUR WAYS, AND OBSERVES THEM. Let all men walk as in God's presence, always beholding Him that is invisible (Heb. xi. 27), as sitting in His throne of majesty and power, and observing the ways of men with those eyes which are purer than to behold evil. This is indeed the only way—1. To give unto God the honour due to His glorious attributes. 2. To keep our hearts low that we may walk humbly with our God, as we are required (Mic. vi. 8). 3. To make us watchful in all our ways, that we may do nothing that may provoke the eyes of His glory (see Exod. xxiii. 21). 4. To encourage us in well-doing, when we know we walk in the sight of our Master, who both approves us, and will reward us, when our ways please Him (Psa. xviii. 24), and takes notice of a cup of cold water bestowed in His name upon any of His children (Matt. x. 42), or the least faithful service performed by a servant to his Master (Eph. vi. 6), and will defend and stand by us while we do Him service (Exod. xxiii. 22, 23). IV. GOD ACCEPTS OF NO CONFESSION TILL MEN SEE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE SIN OF THEIR ACTIONS, AND THAT TOO AS IT IS SIN. 1. Because without such a confession, God hath neither the honour of His justice in punishing sin (wherefore Joshua requires Achan to confess his sin, that he might give glory to God, Josh. vii. 19), as David doth (Psal. li. 4), nor of His mercy in pardoning it. 2. We cannot otherwise be in any state of security after we have sinned, but by suing out our pardon; which if He should grant, without our condemning and abhorring of our own evil ways, it would neither further our own reformation, nor justify God in pardoning such sins, as we have neither acknowledged, nor grieved for at all. V. MEN MUST BE DEALT WITHAL IN PLAIN TERMS BEFORE THEY WILL BE BROUGHT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND BE MADE SENSIBLE OF THEIR SINS. 1. Because the heart is never affected with sin till it be represented unto them in full proportion, but it may appear shameful and odious. 2. Because all men being by nature lovers of themselves, do all that they may to maintain their own innocency, and therefore endeavour what they can to hide sin from their own eyes, as well as from other men, as being unwilling to look upon their own shame. VI. WHOSOEVER WILL CONVINCE A MAN OF SIN MUST CHARGE HIM PARTICULARLY WITH THE VERY ACT IN WHICH HE HATH SINNED. VII. IN SINFUL ACTS OUR HEARTS OUGHT ONLY TO BE FIXED UPON OUR OWN ACTIONS, AND NOT UPON OTHER MEN'S SOLICITATIONS AND PROVOCATIONS THEREUNTO. 1. Because of the proneness of our own hearts to shift off the evil of our actions from ourselves, if possibly we can. 2. And while we do this, we harden our own hearts, and make them insensible of our sins, which affect us not, when we think the evil proceeds not from ourselves, but charge it upon other men that provoke us. 3. Other men's provocations cannot excuse us, seeing it is the consent of our own hearts and nothing else that makes it a sin. VIII. THE BREACH OF GOD'S COMMANDMENT IS THAT WHICH MAKES ANY ACT OF OURS A SIN. 1. Disobedience is not only an injury to God, but an injury to Him in the highest degree, wherein His authority is rejected, His wisdom slighted, His holiness despised, and His providence, and power, and justice, both in rewarding and punishing not regarded. 2. Disobedience knows no bounds, no more than waters do that have broken down their

banks. (*J. White, M.A.*) **She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.**—*Adam's mean excuse*:—1. Adam, we find, was not content to be in the image of God. He and his wife wanted to be as gods, knowing good and evil. He wanted to be independent, and show that he knew what was good for him: he ate the fruit which he was forbidden to eat, partly because it was fair and well-tasted, but still more to show his own independence. When he heard the voice of the Lord, when he was called out, and forced to answer for himself, he began to make pitiful excuses. He had not a word to say for himself. He threw the blame on his wife. It was all the woman's fault—indeed, it was God's fault. "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." 2. What Adam did once we have done a hundred times, and the mean excuse which Adam made but once we make again and again. But the Lord has patience with us, as He had with Adam, and does not take us at our word. He knows our frame and remembers that we are but dust. He sends us out into the world, as He sent Adam, to learn experience by hard lessons, to eat our bread in the sweat of our brow till we have found out our own weakness and ignorance, and have learned that we cannot stand alone, that pride and self-dependence will only lead us to guilt and misery and shame and meanness; that there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved from them, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*C. Kingsley, M.A.*) *A tardy and reluctant confession*:—Here is, it is true, a confession of his sin. It comes out at last, I did eat; but with what a circuitous, extenuating preamble, a preamble which makes bad worse. The first word is, "the woman," aye the woman; it was not my fault, but her's. The woman whom "Thou gavest to be with me"—It was not me; it was Thou Thyself! If thou had'st not given me this woman to be with me, I should have continued obedient. Nay, and as if he suspected that the Almighty did not notice his plea sufficiently, he repeats it emphatically: "She gave me, and I did eat!" Such a confession was infinitely worse than none. Yet such is the spirit of fallen man to this day. It was not me . . . it was my wife, or my husband, or my acquaintance, that persuaded me; or it was my situation in life, in which Thou didst place me! Thus "the foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord." It is worthy of notice, that God makes no answer to these perverse excuses. They were unworthy of an answer. The Lord proceeds, like an aggrieved friend who would not multiply words: "I see how it is; stand aside!" (*A. Fuller.*) *Observations*:—I. NO MAN CAN BEAR OUT SIN BEFORE GOD, HOWSOEVER HE MAY FOR AWHILE OUT-FACE IT BEFORE MEN. II. WHEN MEN'S SINS ARE SO MANIFEST THAT THEY CANNOT DENY THEM, THEY WILL YET LABOUR BY EXCUSES, TO EXTENUATE THEM WHAT THEY MAY. III. A MAN, IN THIS STATE OF CORRUPTION, RESPECTS NONE BUT HIMSELF, AND CARES NOT ON WHOM HE LAYS THE BURTHEN, SO HE MAY EASE HIMSELF. IV. SEDUCERS ARE JUSTLY CHARGEABLE WITH ALL THE SINS COMMITTED BY THOSE THAT ARE SEDUCED BY THEM. Beware, then, of that dangerous employment, to become a solicitor, or factor in sin, and tremble at the very motion of it, and avoid carefully the society of such agents—1. Who carry the mark and character of Satan, who is styled by the name of the tempter, and is the father of all that walk in that way of seducing. 2. Show themselves much more dangerous enemies to mankind than murderers, who destroy only the body, whereas these lay wait for the soul (Prov. xxii. 25). 3. Proclaim war against God, whom they fight against, not only by their own sins, but much more, by making a party against Him, by drawing as many as they can procure, to be companions with them in their evils. 4. And therefore are above others, children of wrath, reserved unto them by the just judgment of God, in a double proportion, according to the measure of their sins acted by themselves, and furthered in other men by their procurement. V. IT IS USUAL WITH MEN, WHEN THEMSELVES HAVE COMMITTED THE SIN, TO LAY THE BLAME OF IT IN PART EVEN UPON GOD HIMSELF. VI. IT IS A USUAL PRACTICE WITH MANY MEN TO CAST GOD'S BLESSINGS IN HIS TEETH WITH DISCONTENT. 1. Because many times, common blessings suit not with men's private ends and desires, so that we judge many things, which are blessings in themselves, to be crosses unto us. 2. Because our unthankful hearts, being not satisfied in all that they inordinately desire, scorn that which they have as a trifle, because it answers not to the full of what is desired. VII. MEN MAY EASILY BY THEIR OWN FOLLY TURN THE MEANS ORDAINED BY GOD FOR THEIR GOOD INTO SNARES FOR THEIR DESTRUCTION. Let it warn every one of us to use all the helps and blessings which we receive from God with fear and trembling. 1. Purging our own hearts carefully, for to those which are defiled nothing is pure (Tit. i. 15). 2. Sanctifying unto ourselves the blessings

themselves, by the word and prayer (1 Tim. iv. 5). 3. Using all things according to the rule laid down to us in the Word, and referring them to the end for which He gives them, His own glory, and the furthering of our sanctification, that He may bless us in those things, the fruit whereof returns unto Himself at last. VIII. IT IS VERY DANGEROUS TO EMBRACE ANY MOTION PRESENTED UNTO US WITHOUT EXAMINING THE WARRANT AND GROUND OF IT. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Adam's admission, not confession* :—He makes no direct and honest answer to God in freely confessing that he had eaten; yet he cannot deny the deed, and therefore, in the very act of admitting (not confessing), he casts the blame upon the woman—nay, upon God, for giving him such a tempter. Here let us mark such truths as these. 1. The difference between admitting sin and confessing it. Adam admits it—slowly and sullenly—but he does not confess it. He is confronted with a Being in whose presence it would be vain to deny what he had done; but he will go no further than he can help. He will tacitly concede when concession is extorted from him, but he will make no frank acknowledgment. It is so with the sinner still. He does precisely what Adam did; no more, till the Holy Spirit lays His hand upon his conscience and touches all the springs of his being. Up till that time he may utter extorted and reluctant concessions, but he will not confess sin. He will not deal frankly with God. 2. The artfulness of an unhumiliated sinner. Even while admitting sin, he shakes himself free from blame; nay, he thrusts forward the name of another, even before the admission comes forth, as if to neutralize it before it is made. How artful! yet how common still! Ah! where do we find honest, unreserved acknowledgment of sin? Nowhere, save in connection with pardon. 3. The self-justifying pride of the sinner. He admits as much of his guilt as cannot be denied, and then takes credit to himself for what he has done. He is resolved to take no more blame than he can help. Even in the blame that he takes, he finds not only an extenuation, but a virtue, a merit; for he fled because it was not seemly for him to stand before God naked! Nay, even in so much of the blame as he takes, he must divide it with another, thus leaving on himself but little guilt and some considerable degree of merit. Had it not been for another, he would not have had to admit even the small measure of blame that he does! 4. The hardened selfishness of the sinner. He accuses others to screen himself. He does not hesitate to inculcate the dearest; he spares not the wife of his bosom. Rather than bear the blame, he will fling it anywhere, whoever may suffer. And all this in a moment! How instantaneous are the results of sin! 5. The sinner's blasphemy and ingratitude to God. "The woman whom Thou gavest me," said Adam. God's love in giving him a helpmeet is overlooked, and the gift itself is mocked at. 6. The sinner's attempt to smooth over his deed. "The woman gave me the fruit, and I ate of it; that was all. Giving, receiving, and eating a little fruit; that was all! What more simple, natural, innocent? How could I do otherwise?" Thus he glosses over the sin. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Excuses* :—"Say not thou," says the son of Sirach, "it is through the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughtest not to do the things that He hateth. Say not thou, He hath caused me to err." This is just what Adam and Eve did say. When accused of disobedience they retorted, and dared to blame God for their sin. "If only Thou hadst given me a wife proof against temptation," says Adam. "If only the serpent had never been created," says Eve. Very similar are most of the excuses we make. We blame the gifts that God gives us rather than ourselves, and turn that free will which would make us only a little lower than the angels if rightly used into a "heritage of woe." A man has a bad temper, is careless about his home, and is led to eat the forbidden fruit of unlawful pleasures. When his conscience asks him, "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" he answers, "It's all my wife's fault. She provokes my temper by her extravagance, carelessness, and fondness for staying away from home. She does not make my home home-like, so I am driven to solace myself with unlawful pleasures." "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." And wives are not less ready to make the conduct of husbands an excuse for a low tone of thought and religion. They ask how it is possible for them to retain their youthful desire of serving Christ when their husbands make home wretched and sneer at everything high and holy. "Easy it is for others to be good, but for myself I find that a wife cannot be better than her husband will allow her to be." How often is ill-health pleaded as an excuse for bad temper and selfishness! If we are rich, we allow ourselves to be idle and luxurious. If poor, we think that while it is easy to be good on ten thousand a

year, it is impossible for us to resist the temptations of poverty. Is a man without self-restraint and self-control? He thinks it enough to say that his passions are very strong. In the time of joy and prosperity we are careless and thoughtless. When sorrow comes to us, we become hard and unbelieving, and we think that the joy and the sorrow should quite excuse us. Again, evil-doers say that no man could do otherwise were he in their position, that there is no living at their trade honestly, that their health requires this and that indulgence, that nobody could be religious in the house in which they live, and so on. If God wanted us to fight the good fight of faith in other places and under other circumstances, He would move us; but He wishes us to begin the battle where we are, and not elsewhere. There subdue everything that stands in conflict with the law of conscience, and the law of love, and the law of purity, and the law of truth. Begin the fight wherever God sounds the trumpet, and He will give you grace, that as your day is, so your strength shall be. As long as people say, "I cannot help it," they will not help it; but if they will only try their best they will be able to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." On comparing the excuses which we modern sinners make with those attributed in the text to the first sinners, Adam and Eve, we find one circumstance characterizing them both. We, as well as they, virtually say, that only for difficulty and temptation we would be very good. And yet how absurd it would be to give a Victoria Cross for bravery in the absence of the enemy. We would all laugh if we heard a man greatly praised for being honest and sober when in prison, because we would know that it was impossible for him to be anything else. It is just because the Christian life is not an easy thing that at our baptism we are signed with the sign of the Cross, in token that we shall have to fight manfully under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil. (*E. J. Hardy, M.A.*) *Adam's vain excuse for his sin*:—We have here the antiquity of apologies: we find them almost as ancient as the world itself. For no sooner had Adam sinned, but he runneth behind the bush. I. First, we will anatomize and dissect this excuse of Adam's. II. Next we will look into ourselves; take some notice of our own hearts, and of those excuses which we commonly frame. III. And then, to make an exact anatomy-lecture, we will lay open the danger of the disease, that we may learn to avoid what was fatal to our parents, and, though we sin with Adam, yet not with Adam to excuse our sin. Of these in their order. I. "And the man said, The woman," &c. I told you this was no answer, but an excuse; for indeed an excuse is no answer. An answer must be fitted to the question which is asked; but this is quite beside it. The question here is, "Hast thou eaten of the forbidden tree?" The answer is wide from the purpose, an accusation of the woman, yea, of God Himself: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." "I have eaten," by itself, had been a wise answer; but it is, "I did eat," but "the woman gave it," a confession with an extenuation; and such a confession is far worse than a flat denial. His apology upbraideth him, and he condemneth himself with his excuse. 1. For, first, *Mulier dedit*, "The woman gave it me," weigh it as we please, is an aggravation of his sin. We may measure sin by the temptation: it is always the greatest when the temptation is least. A great sin it would have been to have eaten of the forbidden fruit though an angel had given it: what is it, then, when it is the woman that giveth it? What a shame do we count it for a man of perfect limbs to be beaten by a cripple! for a son of Anak to be chased by a grasshopper! (Num. xiii. 33); for Xerxes' army, which drank up the sea, to be beaten out of Greece by three hundred Spartans! Certainly he deserveth not power who betrayeth it to weakness. "The woman gave it me," then, was a deep aggravation of the man's transgression. 2. Again: It is but, "The woman gave it." And a gift, as we commonly say, may be either taken or refused; and so it is in our power whether it shall be a gift or no. Had the man been unwilling to have received, the woman could have given him nothing. "The gods themselves have not strength enough to strive against necessity"; but he is weaker than a man who yieldeth where there is no necessity. "The woman gave it me," then, is but a weak apology. 3. Further yet: What was the gift? Was it of so rich a value as to countervail the loss of paradise? No; it was "the fruit of the tree." We call it "an apple": some would have it to be an Indian fig. The Holy Ghost vouchsafeth not once to name it, or to tell us what it was. Whatever it was, it was but fruit, and of that tree of which man was forbidden to eat upon penalty of death (Gen. ii. 17). "An evil bargain is an eyesore, because it always upbraideth him with folly who made it." And

such a bargain here had our first father made. He had bought gravel for bread, wind for treasure, "hope for a certainty," a lie for truth, an apple for paradise. The woman, the gift, the gift of an apple—these are brought in for an excuse, but are indeed a libel. 4. Further still: To aggrandize Adam's fault, consider how the reason of his excuse doth render it most unreasonable. Why doth he make so busy a defence? Why doth he shift all the blame from himself upon the woman? Here was no just detestation of the offence, but only fear of punishment. 5. In the last place: That which maketh his apology worse than a lie, and rendereth his excuse inexcusable, is, that he removeth the fault from the woman on God Himself. Not the woman alone is brought in, but "The woman whom Thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Which indeed is a plain sophism: that is made "a cause which is not a cause," but an occasion only. It is a common axiom, "That which produceth the cause, produceth also the effect of that cause"; and it is true in causes and effects essentially co-ordinate. But here it is not so. God, indeed, gave Adam the woman; but He gave him not the woman to give him the apple. "He gave her for a companion, not for a tempter"; and He gave her not to do that which He had so plainly forbidden. II. And now I wish that the leaves of those trees among which Adam hid himself had cast their shadow only upon him. But we may say, as St. Ambrose doth of the story of Naboth and Ahab, "This history of Adam is as ancient as the world; but is fresh in practice, and still revived by the sons of Adam." We may therefore be as bold to discover our own nakedness as we have been to pluck our first father from behind the bush. We have all sinned "after the similitude of Adam's transgression," and we are as ready to excuse sin as to commit it. Do we only excuse our sin? No; many times we defend it by the gospel, and even sanctify it by the doctrine of Christ Himself. Superstition we commend for reverence, profaneness for Christian liberty, indiscretion for zeal, will-worship for obedience. To come close home therefore, we will stay a little, and draw the parallel, and show the similitude that is betwixt Adam and his sons. We shall still find a *Mulier dedit* to be our plea as well as his. Some "woman," something weaker than ourselves, overthroweth us, and then is taken in for an excuse. "We all favour ourselves, and our vices too; and what we do willingly we account as done out of necessity of nature." If we taste the forbidden fruit, we are ready to say, "The woman gave it us." Again: it is some gift, some proffer, that prevaileth with it, something "pleasant to the eye," something that flattereth the body and tickleth the fancy, something that insinuateth itself through our senses, and so by degrees worketh upward, and at last gaineth power over that which should "command"—our reason and understanding. Whatsoever it is, it is but a gift, and may be refused. Further: As it is something presented in the manner of a gift which overcometh us, so commonly it is but an apple; something that cannot make us better, but may make us worse; something offered to our hope, which we should fear; something that cannot be a gift till we have sold ourselves, nor be dear to us till we are vile and base to ourselves; at the best but a gilded temptation; an apple with an inscription, with an *Eritis sicut dii*, upon it; with some promise, some show, and but a show and glimpse, of some great blessing; but earthy and fading, yet varnished with some resemblance of heaven and eternity. Lastly. The *Tu dedisti* will come in too. For, be it the world, God created it; be it wealth, He openeth His hand and giveth it; be it honour, He raiseth the poor out of the dust; be it our flesh, He fashioneth it; be it our soul, He breathed it into us; be it our understanding, it is a spark of His Divinity; be it our will, He gave it us; be it our affections, they are the impressions of His hand. But, be it our infirmities, we are too ready to say that that is a woman too of God's making. But God never gave it. For, suppose the flesh be weak, yet the spirit is strong. "If the spirit be stronger than the flesh," saith Tertullian, "it is our fault if the weaker side prevail." And therefore let us not flatter ourselves, saith he, because we read in Scripture that "the flesh is weak"; for we read also that "the spirit is ready" (Matt. xxvi. 41); that we might know that we are to obey, not the flesh, but the spirit." III. And thus ye see what a near resemblance and likeness there is between Adam and his posterity; that we are so like him in this art of apologizing that we cannot easily tell whether had most skill to paint sin with an excuse, the father or the children. Adam behind the bush, Adam with a *Mulier dedit*, is a fair picture of every sinner; but it is not easy to say that it doth fully express him. But now, to draw towards a conclusion, that we may learn "to cast off the old man," and to avoid that danger that was fatal to

him, we must remember that we are not only of the first Adam, but also of the second; not only "of the earth, earthy," but also of "the Lord from heaven: and as we have borne the image of the earthy, so we must also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. xv. 47-49). We must remember that we are born with Christ, that we are baptized and buried with Christ, and that we must rise with Christ; that the woman was given to be in subjection, the flesh to be subdued by us, and the world to be trodden under our feet; that we must not count these as enforcements and allurements before sin, lest we take them up as excuses after sin; that we must not yield to them as stronger than ourselves, that we may not need to run and shelter ourselves under them in time of trouble. 1. To conclude: my advice shall be—First, that of Arsenius the hermit: "Command Eve, and beware of the serpent, and thou shalt be safe; but, if thou wilt be out of the reach of danger, do not so much as look towards the forbidden tree." 2. But, if thou hast sinned, if thou hast tasted of the forbidden fruit, if thou hast meddled with the accursed thing, then, as Joshua speaketh to Achan, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him" (Josh. vii. 19). Run not behind the bush, study not apologies; make not the woman, who should help thee to stand, an excuse of thy fall; nor think that paint nor curtains can hide thy sin from Him whose "eyes are ten thousand times brighter than the sun" (Eccles. xxiii. 19), and in whose bosom thou art, even when thou runnest into the thicket of excuses. No; "Give glory to God," that God may seal a pardon to thee. Open thy sin by confession to God, and the mercy of God will hide it: condemn it, and judge thyself for it; and thy excuse is made, thou shalt never be judged for it by the Lord: lay it open before the Lord, and He will blot it out for ever. (*A. Farindon, D.D.*) *The resistance of temptation*.—You will observe how in this expression Adam directs attention to Eve as the more guilty of the two; as, if it had not been for her, had she not pressed and persuaded him to eat, that awful and fatal fruit would have remained untouched; as if she, the first to disobey, had urged him on, she leading, and he only following; she daring to pluck, to eat, and to give, and he only consenting to receive what she had taken. And no doubt he stated the case as it really was; the guilt did not begin with him; Eve led the way; her foot first crossed the forbidden line. But the question for us to consider is this: Did this defence, strictly true as it was, and in some sort placing with justice the greater blame on her, free him from condemnation in God's sight? Nay, however it was that he came to sin, sin was condemned in him; the sentence was passed, in all its awfulness, that he should die; there was no lesser death, no milder punishment decreed against him. When Eve enticed, it was his part to have withstood, to have resisted all the beguiling words; it was his to have refused the fruit, to have held back his hand, to have kept his hold of the commandments of God; concession to her was sin; and whether or not the greater blame was his, there was blame enough to bring down upon himself the awful vengeance of the Lord, and the awful decree of death. And should we not dwell upon this point, and see how, when Adam pleaded his wife's first step in sin as the cause and excuse for his, God's wrath fell upon him as well as her? For in this, as in all former times, men often weave the same flimsy web of self-defence, and think to screen themselves behind others who have led them into sin, to lighten their load of iniquity, and to blunt the sharper edge of the sword of punishment. The young, when pursuing youthful sins, point to the young already before them on the same sinful course, saying, "See you not that it was always so, that I am but as the young have ever been, that I am only doing what has been done by those before me?" The middle-aged, busied with the world, and in their worldly dealings showing a sharp, a grasping, an unscrupulous spirit, wanting in all that is generous, simple, and high-minded, point to what they call "the ways of the world," shelter themselves behind the customs of the age, the habits of other men, the examples that are around them, saying that others gave them of this low standard of morals, these sharp ways of dealing, these lax principles, and they did eat; that they did not of themselves begin thus to deal, thus to push their way; that they even wish things were different, but that they found the world a pushing world, and that they only followed in the train, doing what others did, and following in the lead. But what is the use of such defences of ourselves? How will this bear the light? How do we clear ourselves by such means as this? If it be sin to tempt, it is also sin to yield; if it be sin to give of forbidden fruit, it is also sin to take; if it be sin to suggest evil counsel, it is also sin to follow it. It is this very point that the case of Adam urges on us all. It may be our part to hear

evil counsel, to have evil friends, to live in an atmosphere of evil principles, to be offered in some form other forbidden fruit, to see others eating of it themselves; but are we at once to be led by the evil friend, to act on the evil advice, to imbibe the evil principles, to yield to the evil ways which others tread? Nay, we are called to the very opposite course; we are called to resist evil, to quit ourselves like men, to endure temptation, to drive off tempters, to bear witness to our Saviour, to confess Him in the world by opposing the spirit of the world. Yes, this often is our part, and to this we are called by God, to bear witness to the truth, to be surrounded by tempters and temptations, wrong views, wrong ways of going on, wrong habits, unchristian conduct, unchristian patterns, and, amid all this darkness of the world, to see by faith the true and narrow way, not to be beguiled, but to steer our vessel straight. We each, in one sense, stand alone. Every man has his own appointed course, to which the Spirit leads him on; from which, if he would be saved, he must not swerve to the right hand or to the left, whatever influences may be at work on either side. (*Bishop Armstrong.*) *False excuses for sin.*—The first thing which strikes us, on the perusal of this passage, is the extreme readiness and proneness of man to urge an excuse for sin, and to shift the blame from himself upon some other person or thing. One of the commonest grounds on which men rest their apology for irreligion and laxity is a defective education. They were not trained in youth to the way wherein they should go; parents did not teach it, did not walk in the way before them. Others, again, are thinking to throw the fault of their disobedience or their sinful habits upon the circumstances in which they are placed, upon their profession or trade, upon the maxims and habits of society, upon the companions with whom they must associate. And it is undeniable that many strong temptations are thus presented. But this can by no means justify a yielding to sin. Not a few there are who account for the frequency of their offences from an untowardness of disposition and temper, from the violence of passion, or from bodily infirmities; and there are allowances to be made on these grounds; but no free pardon, no license hereby for sin. (*J. Stade, M.A.*) *Man's readiness to invent excuse for sin.*—A traveller in Venezuela illustrates the readiness of men to lay their faults on the locality, or on anything rather than on themselves, by the story of a hard drinker who came home one night in such a condition that he could not for some time find his hammock. When this feat was accomplished, he tried in vain to get off his big riding-boots. After many fruitless efforts, he lay down in his hammock, and soliloquized aloud, "Well, I have travelled all the world over; I lived five years in Cuba, four in Jamaica, five in Brazil; I have travelled through Spain and Portugal, and been in Africa, but I never yet was in such an abominable country as this, where a man is obliged to go to bed with his boots on." Commonly enough are we told by evil-doers in excuse for their sins that no man could do otherwise were he in their position; that there is no living at their trade honestly; that in such a street shops must be open on a Sunday; that their health required an excursion to Brighton on the Sabbath because their labours were so severe; and so on, all to the same effect, and about as truthful as the soliloquy of the drunkard of Venezuela. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

Vers. 13-21. What is this that thou hast done?—The general results of the Fall.—I. **ETERNAL ENMITY BETWEEN SATAN AND HUMANITY** (ver. 14). 1. This curse was uttered in reference to Satan. 2. This address is different from that made to Adam and Eve. 3. There was to commence a severe enmity and conflict between Satan and the human race. (1) This enmity has existed from the early ages of the world's history. (2) This enmity is seeking the destruction of the higher interests of man. (3) This enmity is inspired by the most diabolical passion. (4) This enmity, while it will inflict injury, is subject to the ultimate conquest of man. II. **THE SORROW AND SUBJECTION OF FEMALE LIFE.** 1. The sorrow of woman consequent upon the Fall. 2. The subjection of woman consequent upon the Fall. 3. The subjection of woman consequent upon the Fall gives no countenance to the degrading manner in which she is treated in heathen countries. III. **THE ANXIOUS TOIL OF MAN, AND THE COMPARATIVE UNPRODUCTIVENESS OF HIS LABOUR.** 1. The anxious and painful toil of man consequent upon the Fall. 2. The comparative unproductiveness of the soil consequent upon the Fall. 3. The sad departure of man from the earth by death consequent upon the Fall. IV. **THE GRAND AND MERCIFUL INTERPOSITION OF JESUS CHRIST WAS RENDERED NECESSARY BY THE FALL.** LESSONS: 1. The terrible influences of sin upon an individual life. 2. The influences of sin upon the great communities of the

world. 3. The severe devastation of sin. 4. The love of God the great healing influence of the world's sorrow. 5. How benignantly God blends hope with penalty. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The first sin*:—I. THE RECORD BEFORE US IS THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST SIN. It needed no revelation to tell us that sin is, that mankind is sinful. Without, within, around, and inside us, is the fact, the experience, the evidence, the presence of sin. It is sin which makes life troublous and gives death its sting. The revelation of the Fall tells of an entrance, of an inburst of evil into a world all good, into a being created upright—tells, therefore, of a nature capable of purity, of an enemy that may be expelled, and of a holiness possible because natural. From man's fall we infer a fall earlier yet and more mysterious. Once sin was not; and when it entered man's world it entered under an influence independent, not inherent. II. THE FIRST SIN IS ALSO THE SPECIMEN SIN. It is in this sense, too, the original sin, that all other sins are copies of it. Unbelief first, then disobedience; then corruption, then self-excusing; then the curse and the expulsion. Turn the page, and you shall find a murder! III. THE ORIGINAL SIN IS ALSO THE INFECTIOUS SIN. Not one man of all the progeny of Adam has drawn his first breath or his latest in an atmosphere pure and salubrious. Before, behind, around, and above there has been the heritage of weakness, the presence and pressure of an influence in large part evil. Fallen sons of a fallen forefather, God must send down His hand from above if we are to be rescued ever out of these deep, these turbid waters. (*Dean Vaughan.*) *The moral and penal results of the Fall*:—I. ITS MORAL RESULTS. 1. Separation from nature (ver. 7). Things naturally innocent and pure become tainted by sin. The worst misery a man can bring on himself by sin is that those things which to pure minds bring nothing but enjoyment are turned for him into fuel for evil lusts and passions, and light the flames of hell within his soul. 2. Separation from God (ver. 8). Let the sceptic enjoy his merriment. To us there is something most touching in the statement that to our first parents in the most hallowed hour of the whole day the voice of God seemed like the thundering of the Divine anger. A child might interpret that rightly to himself. When he has done wrong he is afraid, he dares not hear a sound; a common noise, in the trembling insecurity in which he lives, seems to him God's voice of thunder. To the apostles the earthquake at Philippi was a promise of release from prison; to the sinful jailer, a thing of judgment and wrath—"Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" 3. Selfishness (vers. 12, 13). The culprits are occupied entirely with their own hearts; each denies the guilt which belongs to each; each throws the blame upon the other. The agriculturist distinguishes between two sorts of roots—those which go deep down into the ground without dividing, and those which divide off into endless fibrils and shoots. Selfishness is like the latter kind; it is the great root of sin from which others branch out—falsehood, cowardice, &c. II. THE PENAL CONSEQUENCES. 1. Those inflicted on the man. (1) The ground was cursed for his sake (vers. 13, 19). (2) Death. 2. Those inflicted on the woman. In sorrow she was to bring forth children, and her desire was to be to her husband, and he was to rule over her. This penalty of suffering for others, which is the very triumph of the Cross, know we not its blessing? Know we not that in proportion as we suffer for one another we love that other; that in proportion as the mother suffers for her child, she is repaid by that love? Know we not that that subjection which man calls curtailment of liberty is in fact a granting of liberty, of that gospel liberty which is born of obedience to a rule which men venerate and love? (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*) *Lessons of the Fall*.—I. It is profoundly significant that this narrative traces the first sin to an external tempter. Evil does not spring spontaneously in the unfallen heart. Sin is not, as some would have it, a necessary step in man's development, nor does it spring from his own nature; it is an importation. 2. Whatever more may be taught by the serpent form of the tempter, we may safely regard it as a kind of parable of the nature of evil. The reptile is a symbol both of temptation and of sin. Its colours, sometimes brilliant, but always weird; its lithe, insinuating motions; its slimy track, its sudden spring; its sting so slender, and leaving so minute a puncture, but so deadly; its poison, which kills, not by hideous laceration, as in a lion's rending, but by passing the fatal drop into the very life-blood—all these points have their parallels in the sinuous approaches, the horrid fascinations, the unnoticed wounds, and the fatal poison of sin. If we turn to the story, we find that it falls into three parts. I. THE SUTLE APPROACHES OF TEMPTATION. Notice that we have here, however, a picture of the way in which a pure nature was led away. The way taken with one which has already fallen may be much shorter.

There is no need for elaborate and gradual approaches then, but it is often enough to show the bait, and the sinful heart dashes at it. Here more caution has to be used. 1. First comes an apparently innocent question, "Is it so that God has said, Ye shall not eat?" The tempter might as well have asked whether the sun shone at midday. To cloud the clear light of duty with the mists of doubt is the beginning of falling. A sin which springs with a rush and a roar is less dangerous than one which slides in scarcely noticed. When the restrictions of law begin to look harsh, and we begin to ask ourselves, "Is it really the case that we are debarred from all these things over the hedge there?" the wedge has been driven a good way in. Beware of tampering with the plain restrictions of recognized duty, and of thinking that doubt may be admissible as to them. 2. The next speech of the tempter dares more. Questioning gives place to assertion. There is a flat lie, which the tempter knows to be a lie, to begin with. There is a truth in the statement that their eyes will be opened to know good and evil, though the knowledge will not be, as he would have Eve believe, a blessing, but a misery. So his very truth is more a lie than a truth. And there is a third lie, worse than all, in painting the perfect love of God, which delights most in making men like Himself, as grudging them a joy, and keeping it for Himself. In all these points we have here a picture of sin's approaches to the yielding will. Strange that tricks so old, and so often found out, should yet have power to deceive us to our ruin. But so it is, and thousands of young men and women to-day are listening to these old threadbare lies as if they were glorious new truths, fit to be the pole-stars of life! II. THE FATAL DEED. The overwhelming rush of appetite, which blinds to every consideration but present gratification of the senses, is wonderfully set forth in the brief narrative of the sin. The motives are put at full length. The tree was "good for food"; that is one sense satisfied. It was "pleasant to the eyes"; that is another. If we retain the translation of the Authorized and Revised Versions, it was "to be desired to make one wise"; that appealed to a more subtle wish. But the confluent of all these streams made such a current as swept the feeble will clean away; and blind, dazed, deafened by the rush of the stream, Eve was carried over the falls, as a man might be over Niagara. This is the terrible experience of every one who has yielded to temptation. For a moment all consequences are forgotten, all obligations silenced, every restraint snapped like rotten ropes. No matter what God has said, no matter what mischief will come, no matter for conscience or reason; let them all go! The tyrannous craving which has got astride of the man urges him on blindly. All it cares for is its own satisfaction. What of remorse or misery may come after are nothing to it. III. THE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES. These are twofold: (1) The appointment of toil as the law of life; (2) the sentence of physical death. 1. The change on the physical world which followed on man's sin is a distinct doctrine of both Old and New Testaments, and is closely connected with the prophecies of the future in both. Here it comes into view only as involving the necessity of a life of toilsome conflict with the sterile and weed-bearing soil. The simple life of the husbandman alone is contemplated here, but the law laid down is wide as the world. 2. The sentence of death is repeated in unambiguous terms. Physical death, and nothing else, is meant by the words. Observe the significant silence as to what is to become of the other part of man. The words distinctly refer to Genesis ii. 7, but nothing is said now as to the living soul. The curse of death is markedly limited to the body. The very silence is a veiled hint of immortality. (1) Learn that physical death is the outcome of sin. No doubt animal life tends to death; but it does not follow that, if man had been sinless, the tendency would have been suffered to fulfil itself. However that may be, the whole of what we know as death, which has far more in it of pain and terror than the mere physical process, is plainly the result of sin. (2) Learn, too, the analogy between the death of the body and the condition of the spirit which is given up to sin. Death is a parable—a picture in the material world of what sin does to the soul. Separation from God is death. When He withdraws His hand from the body it dies; when the soul withdraws itself from Him it dies. 3. Finally, the temptation in the garden reminds us of the temptation in the wilderness. Christ had a sorer temptation than Adam. The one needed nothing; the other was hungered. The one had nothing of terror or pain hanging over him, which he would escape by yielding; the other had his choice between winning His kingdom by the cross, and getting rule by the easy path of taking evil for His good. The one fell, and, as the most godless scientists are now preaching, necessarily transmitted a depraved nature to his descendants. The other stood, conquered, and gives of His spirit to

all who trust Him. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *Observations*:—I. NO ACTOR IN ANY SIN CAN ESCAPE GOD'S DISCOVERY. 1. He is able to search into the deepest secrets, seeing all things are naked in His sight (Heb. iv. 13). 2. It concerns Him to do it, that the Judge of all the world may appear and be known to do right, to which purpose He must necessarily have a distinct knowledge, both of the offenders and of the quality and measure of their offences, that every one's judgment may be proportioned in number, weight, and measure, according to their deeds. II. MEN'S SINS MUST AND SHALL BE SO FAR MANIFESTED AS MAY CONDUCE TO THE ADVANCING OF GOD'S GLORY. Let it be our care—1. To take heed of dishonouring God by committing of any sin. 2. If by human infirmity we fall into any sin by which the name of God may be blasphemed or the honour of it impaired, let us endeavour to take off the dishonour done to Him by laying all the shame upon ourselves. III. A GOOD MAN'S HEART OUGHT TO BE DEEPLY AND TENDERLY AFFECTED WITH THE SENSE OF HIS OWN SIN. Such a manner of the affecting of the heart by the sense of sin—1. Brings much honour to God. 2. Proclaims our own innocence (2 Cor. vii. 11). 3. Moves God to compassion towards us (Joel ii. 17). 4. Furthers our reformation. 5. Makes us more watchful over our ways for time to come. IV. THE SEDUCING, ESPECIALLY OF ONE'S NEAREST FRIENDS, IS A FOUL, AND SHOULD BE AN HEART-BREAKING SIN. V. SIN AND THE ENTICEMENTS THEREUNTO ARE DANGEROUS DECEITS, AND SO WILL PROVE TO BE AT THE LAST. Now this deceit of sin is twofold. First, in proposing evil under the name of good, calling light darkness and darkness light (Isa. v. 20), or at least the shadows of good, instead of that which is really and truly good, like the passing of gilded brass for perfect gold. Secondly, in proposing unto us a reward in an evil way, which we shall never find (see Prov. i. 13, 18), as they are justly accounted deceivers who promise men largely that which they never make good in performance. (*J. White, M.A.*)

Ver. 14. *Upon thy belly shalt thou go.—The Divine sentence on the serpent*:—1. I lay down the position that no punishment in the way of physical degradation was inflicted by God in His sentence upon the serpent tribe. No doubt this idea has been held by most of those in past days who knew very little of natural history or of science; and it is held still by some who have no capacity of understanding scientific evidence. They cherish still, it may be, some strange notion that serpents, once upon a time, walked upright and ate fruits in an innocent and becoming manner. I cannot argue with such. The testimony of science on this subject is so absolutely overwhelming, that one might just as well call in question the revolution of the earth round the sun, or the circulation of the blood. Unless all science is a lie, there were plenty of serpents on the earth ages before man was made, and these serpents precisely like the present ones in their general construction. If our serpents may be said to go on their bellies and eat dust, so might those. From the creation of the world—long ages ago—it has been “their nature to.” Further, I must maintain that the structure and habits of the serpent tribe bear no trace of any designed degradation. To the eye of one who has studied the “ways of God” in His fair and marvellous book of nature, who has learnt to recognize on every hand the exquisite adaptation of each tribe to the place of each, the serpent is as beautiful and perfect a piece of workmanship as any other creature. Admitting the fact (which no thoughtful observer could deny) that the animal tribes were made to prey upon one another to a great extent, and so to maintain the balance of life upon the earth—admitting this palpable fact, it is obvious that the serpent is most wonderfully adapted to play his own part and fulfil his own ends upon the earth. There is no more degradation about his means of progression, surprisingly swift and easy as it is, than about the downward swoop of an eagle, the ponderous rush of a lion, or the noiseless flight of an owl. Nor is his food in reality of a more disgusting nature than theirs; the creatures which he swallows, great or small, are as much his natural food as their prey is to the eagle, the lion, and the owl. He would not condescend to eat carrion like the vulture or the jackal. It may indeed be true, as St. Paul seems to teach us, that the whole creation suffers in some little-understood way from the fall of man; and no doubt the lower animals often suffer severely from the sinful passions of man; but to acknowledge this is a totally different thing from acknowledging that God deliberately and judicially decreed degradation and punishment upon a creature which had not really sinned. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 2. I lay down the position, which I think no one will seriously dispute, that the real tempter was not the serpent at all,

but the devil. It is true that there is no hint of this in Genesis, and this is very important to my argument. Had we no other information, we should have to assume that the serpent was in truth an intelligent being, supremely wicked, and capable of pursuing a most crafty policy. But the testimony of other Scriptures is clear and positive that it was the devil who tempted Eve (2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2; John viii. 44). There can be but one way of understanding the inspired testimony: the devil availed himself of the form of the serpent, and of his known character for natural cunning, to speak by his mouth, and so to gain a safer audience. Just as the demoniacs of the New Testament and the evil spirits who possessed them seemed to have a mixed personality which is reflected in the very words of the Evangelists, so the tempter and the serpent remain, as it were, confounded, and the one is called by the name of the other—"that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan." Nevertheless, the witness is clear that the devil was the real agent in the temptation of our first parents. 3. I conclude from the foregoing positions, and conclude with confidence, that the serpent was not really cursed at all, while the devil was. All I know of God tells me that He would not—all I know of nature tells me that He did not—inflit punishment on the unwitting victim of another's craft. All I know from reason or from revelation of His ways assures me that He would not and did not leave unpunished the malice which wrecked (for the time) His fairest work. 4. I proceed to argue that while the form of the sentence was accommodated to the outward and visible form of which the tempter made use, the real meaning of the sentence applied to the tempter himself, and to the tempter alone. To the educated eye, as I have said, there is no trace of degradation about the structure or habits of the serpent; he does not in any real sense go upon his belly or eat dust. But to the untutored eye of the "unlearned," *i.e.*, to the vast bulk of mankind in all ages, he appears to do both, and he is an object of natural loathing and disgust. As the upright position of man seems to raise him in dignity above the general level of animal life, so the prone and sinuous position of the snake seems to sink him below that level; having nothing degrading about it in reality, it is yet the accepted symbol of contempt. We, who are unacquainted with snakes, speak of a man as a "reptile" if we wish to express utter contempt and abhorrence of his ways; but a "reptile" is one that "goes upon his belly." Again, every student of nature knows that the serpent does not eat dust, but small animals which he often catches out of the dust and dirt; but, because he has neither hands nor anything in the nature of hands, he appears to swallow with his food a great deal of dust and dirt. The great difficulty we have to encounter in this Divine sentence on the serpent is that it is not really fulfilled in the literal serpent, though it is apparently. This difficulty seems to me to vanish wholly when we perceive that it is really fulfilled in the mystical serpent, the devil. 5. I am greatly confirmed in this understanding of the phrase by what we read in Isa. lxxv. 25. In that passage we are told that in the time of the "new heavens and new earth" "dust shall be the serpent's meat." It makes no difference to my argument whether we understand the prophecy to refer to the millennium or (as I think) to the future world. No one surely will maintain that serpents are to eat dust in that blessed state. Why should the unfortunate creatures be so ill-fated? Is it not clearly to be spiritually interpreted, that then, as now, only more clearly and absolutely than now, disgrace, disappointment, and disgust will be the portion of the tempter and accuser? And if this "eating dust" on the part of the serpent be of spiritual interpretation in Isaiah, why should it not be the same in Genesis? It is admitted by all that the latter part of the sentence must be applied parabolically to the tempter himself—why not the former part also, in which the parable is quite as simple and as easy to read? 6. Two other conclusions seem to be necessary in order to complete the subject, and in order to "justify" on every side the heavenly "Wisdom" which pronounced and recorded this ancient doom. (1) In the first place, we must believe that He who foreknew all things, and ordered all things according to His foreknowledge, did of purpose prepare the serpent to be to a guilty race the natural emblem of their own sin and of their degradation. (2) In the second place, we must acknowledge that God willed, in merciful consideration for the weakness and cowardice of fallen man, not to allow the existence and malice of his ghostly enemy to become known to him at that time. The disguise, which served the purposes of evil, was overruled to serve the purposes of good; clothed in the same disguise, the sentence upon the evil one became a parable, which only yielded its true meaning by degrees, as redeemed man was able to bear it. (R. Winterbotham, M.A.) *Observations*:—I. GOD MANY TIMES WILL NOT SO

MUCH AS REASON THE CASE WITH SUCH AS HE DESTINES TO DESTRUCTION. II. WHOMSOEVER HATH A HAND IN ANY SIN SHALL BE SURE TO HAVE A SHARE IN THE PUNISHMENT. 1. God is able both to convince and punish; and nothing can be hid from His pure eye, or escape His revenging hand. 2. The respect to His own honour necessarily moves Him to declare Himself to be just, in rendering to every man according to his deeds, and according to his works (Psa. lxxii. 12). III. EVERY INSTRUMENT IN THE ACTING OF SIN, AND WHATSOEVER IS DEFILED THEREBY, IS LIABLE TO GOD'S CURSE. IV. ONE MAN'S PUNISHMENT OUGHT TO BE OTHER MEN'S INSTRUCTION. Whether inflicted by men in a course of justice (Deut. xiii. 14), or laid on by God's immediate hand (Zeph. iii. 5, 6). V. GOD LAYS HIS JUDGMENT UPON NO CREATURE BUT UPON JUST DESERTS. Reason—1. His nature; fury is not in Him (Isa. xxvii. 4), but long-suffering and abundant goodness (Exod. xxxiv. 6; Psa. ciii. 8, 13). 2. Respect to His own honour, infinitely advanced by manifesting His justice, mercy, faithfulness, and truth, which appears when He dispenseth all His administrations according to men's deserts. 3. Neither could He otherwise encourage men to His service, but by accepting and rewarding them in well-doing, and punishing only their errors, and that too with so much moderation that it tends only to their good, and not to their destruction. VI. GOD'S CURSE UPON ANY CREATURE IS THE FOUNTAIN OF ALL PLAGUES AND MISERIES. VII. IT IS USUAL WITH GOD IN HIS JUDGMENTS SO TO ORDER THEM THAT THEY MAY POINT AT THE SIN FOR WHICH THEY ARE INFLICTED. 1. To justify Himself, that by such lively characters His righteousness in all His ways may be read by him that runs. 2. To further men's repentance, by pointing out unto them the sin that brings the judgment upon them. VIII. IT IS ONLY SIN THAT MAKES ONE MORE VILE THAN ANOTHER. IX. IT IS A SHAMEFUL ABASEMENT TO BE GLOUED TO THE EARTH. (*J. White, M.A.*) *The tempter in the presence of God:—*The serpent is now, so to speak, summoned into court. It would appear as if the power of fascination supposed to reside in his race had been reversed, and as if he had been compelled to draw near by the mightier fascination of justice, descended in the person of the great I AM. He has left, at least, the lurking-place into which he seems to have crept after the eating of the fruit, and appears now a crushed and crest-fallen worm, writhing in the sunlight of the face of his Creator. How singular the meeting in such circumstances of the two grand foes, the archangel of darkness and the God of light! It is their first meeting, probably, since Lucifer was thrust out of heaven. And what a contrast! Then Lucifer was a powerful, magnificent, though lost being; now he is in the form of a snake, in the likeness of one of earth's basest reptiles; then he had the trace of the morning on his brow; now his eye and bearing are sunken and sullen: then he was the ruined angel; now he is the mean tempter and base deceiver: then he was striking, or had newly struck, at the throne of God; now he has succeeded in ruining the peace, and injuring the position of a happy human pair; then he was raging in defiance, and lifting up his voice against the Highest; now he is cowering in His presence, and not daring to utter a word in his own defence. It is significant that during this scene the serpent is quite silent; no question is asked of him, no reply is given; he is caught, as it were, in the fact, and there is no need of trial. Judgment is immediately pronounced. And what waves of torment, shame, self-loathing, disappointment, and fear cross his soul, as he listens, helpless, hopeless, speechless, to the words of God. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *The curse:—*Though the serpent was but the instrument, yet he is cursed. And the words, "above all cattle," imply that the rest of the animal creation were made to share the curse which had come down upon it as Satan's special agent in the plot against man. And why this universal curse? 1. To show the spreading and contaminating nature of sin. One sin is enough to spread over a world. There is something in the very nature of sin that infects and defiles. It is not like a stone dropped in a wilderness, upon the sand, there to lie motionless and powerless. It is like that same stone cast into a vast waveless lake, which raises ripple upon ripple, and sends its disturbing influence abroad, in circle after circle, for miles on every side, till the whole lake is in motion. 2. To show how all the manifold parts of creation hang together and depend upon each other. One being displaced, all are ruined. The arch is not more dependent on the keystone than are the different parts of creaturehood dependent on each other for stability and perfection. It is as if the unity of the Godhead had its counterpart in the unity of creation. And, strange to say, it is the Fall that has so fully discovered this oneness, and made us acquainted with its manifold relations. 3. To be a monument of the evil of sin. Sin needs something visible, something palpable, to make known both its existence and its "exceeding sinfulness." It

must exhibit itself to our senses. It must stand forth to view, branded with the stroke of God's judgment, as the abominable thing which He hates. Thus He has strewn the memorials of sin all over the earth. He has affixed them to things animate and inanimate, that we may see and hear and feel the vileness and the bitterness of the accursed thing. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

Ver. 15. **I will put enmity between thee and the woman.**—*The believer's conflict with Satan*.—I. THAT THERE IS A CONTINUAL CONFLICT BETWEEN SATAN AND EVERY BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST, WHOM HE REPRESENTED IN THE FIRST PROMISE, ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE AND GRACE OF ALMIGHTY GOD. II. In that stern combat which the Lord of glory, God manifest in the flesh, was to wage with Satan, it was declared that the enemy should bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, and that Jesus should not get the victory un wounded. And thus it is with His spiritual offspring; as "He was, so are they in this world." We learn, therefore, secondly, THE CHRISTIAN'S SUFFERING IN HIS CONFLICT WITH THE OLD SERPENT. III. But although the conflict may be fierce, and long, and stubborn, we are not permitted to doubt on which side the victory will fall. Hence I would observe, thirdly, THE ASSURANCE OF TRIUMPH GIVEN IN THE TEXT TO THE SEED OF THE WOMAN—THE BELIEVING MEMBERS OF CHRIST. Satan will bruise their heel, but, as assuredly, they shall bruise his head. As Jesus assumed human nature, that He might avenge Himself and His people upon Satan, so shall they triumph in Christ. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly, who are in Christ Jesus. (*R. P. Buddicom, M.A.*) *The first promise*.—Here, in this verse, first springs a river which flows right through the broad wilderness of Time, refreshing every generation as they pass; and will yet, beyond the boundary, make glad for ever the city of our God. In this verse the gospel of grace takes its rise. If we saw only the tiny spring we should not be able fully to estimate its importance. It is our knowledge of the kingdom in its present dimensions and its future prospects that invests with so much grandeur this first, short message, of mercy from God to man. We know the import of that message better than they who heard it first. And yet, as the negro native on the mountains near the sources of the Nile can drink and satisfy his thirst from the tiny rill that constitutes the embryo river, while he who sails on its broad bosom near the sea can do no more; so those who lived in the earliest days of grace might satisfy their souls at the narrow stream then flowing, as well as those who shall be found dwelling on the earth at the dawn of the millennial day. From the feeble stream that burst through the stony ground near the closed gate of paradise righteous Abel freely drank the water of life: the same, and no more, shall they do who shall see the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth in the latter day. God opened a spring in the desert as soon as there were thirsty souls sojourning there. Here, as we have said, the gospel springs. But this is not the beginning of mercy. Its date is more ancient; its fountain-head is higher. "God is love": there, if you will trace mercy to its ultimate source—there Redemption springs, thence Redemption flows. One or two things of an introductory character must be at least stated, inasmuch as they are essential to the comprehension of the main lesson. And the first of these is the existence and agency of an evil spirit, the enemy of man. "Didst thou not sow good seed in thy ground?" said the surprised and grieved servants to their Master; "whence, then, hath it tares?" "An enemy hath done this," said the Lord. Man has been damaged by the impact of evil after he came from his Maker's hands; and the damage, now that help has been laid on the Mighty, may be removed. There is a healing for the deadly wound. The enemy, in this text and in other instances all through the Scripture, is impersonated as the serpent. Now a series of lessons directly practical. 1. There is a kind of friendship or alliance between the destroyer and his dupe. The root of the ailment lies here. If the first pair had not entered into a covenant with the wicked one, there would not have been a fall. Neither at the first nor at any subsequent period has the enemy come forward as an enemy, declaring war, and depending on the use of force. Not the power, but the wiles of the devil have we cause to dread. If either he or we should assume the attitude of adversary, our cause were won. 2. Enmity must be engendered between these two friends. The first and fundamental necessity of the case is that the friendship should be dissolved. As long as the adversary by his wiles succeeds in making it sweet, and as long as the dupe loves it, so long is the captive held. Nothing in heaven or earth can do a sinner any good until he has fallen out with his own sin! 3. God will put enmity between a

man and the enemy who has enticed, and so overcome him. When created beings are involved in sin, as a law of their being they cannot break off by an effort or wish of their own. The spirit that launches once into rebellion against God, goes on helplessly in rebellion for ever, unless an almighty arm, guided by infinite love, be stretched out to arrest the fallen—the falling star. It is profitable to remember that we are helpless. It is only a cry out of the depths that will reach heaven, and bring help from One that is mighty. "Lord, save me, I perish," is a prayer that reaches the Redeemer's ear: it melts His heart, and moves His hand. To put enmity between a man and the devil who inhabits his heart—to change his affections, so that he shall henceforth loathe what he formerly loved, and love what he formerly loathed—this is God's prerogative. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." 4. Notice now the relation which Christ our Redeemer bears to the breach of peace between a man and his Tempter. Over and above the promise that enmity will be put between the serpent and the woman, it is said in the text that enmity will be put between his seed and hers. We are guided by the Spirit of inspiration in the interpretation of this clause. We know certainly from Scripture "her seed" means first and chiefly the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. As enmity between the two friends must be generated, and as only God can efficiently kindle that enmity, so it is only through Christ the Mediator that such a breach could be made. He is Mediator between God and man, for reconciling the alienated; He is Mediator between man and Satan, for alienating the united. As His acceptance with the Father is our acceptance with the Father, when we are found in Him; so His breach with the adversary is our breach, when we are found in Him. His twofold mission is to break up one friendship and begin another. 5. The part which Christians act in the quarrel. Christ was the first-fruits in this enmity; but, afterwards they that are Christ's. In Him the strife began; and it is continued in His members after the Head is exalted. The feud is hereditary, inextinguishable, eternal. The Church on earth is the Church militant; that is, the Church soldiering. There is another wing of the grand army, called the Church triumphant. Those who remain in the body wield the sword: those who have been admitted into heaven wave the palm and wear the crown. The real business in hand for Christians is not heaven, but holiness. The issue may be left in the Leader's hands: the duty of the soldiers is to stand where they are placed, and strike as long as they see a foe. Until the trumpet shall sound, calling the weary to rest, our part is to fight. (*W. Arnot, D.D.*) *The beginning of the gospel*:—These words have been appropriately called the "Prote-vangelium," the first gospel. At first sight it seems strange that these words should be considered the beginning of the gospel. The form is not that of a gospel but of a curse. It is the first curse that we meet with in reading the Bible. But think a moment. On whom, on what is it a curse? It is a curse on the great adversary of mankind. It is a curse upon evil—on sin, and death and hell. It is a curse upon our curse. You will observe, and it is well worth noticing, that there is no curse pronounced upon the man, nor upon the woman either. But can the gospel come in the form of a curse? It can—nay, it must. There are those who, shutting their eyes to the terrible fact of sin with all its dreadful consequences, as they are seen in the world, please themselves and try to please others by preaching a gospel of easy good-nature, of love and mercy and good-will to all mankind—a sort of universal salvation on the easiest terms possible, or without any terms at all. But sin and its terrible consequences are fearful facts that cannot be ignored. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and the end of the gospel; but hatred—hatred of sin—is the only portal to true, and pure, and holy love. When the Spirit, the Comforter, comes, what is the first thing He does? He convinces of sin (*John xvi. 8, 9*). 1. As soon as we look at it, we recognize, speaking generally, a GREAT CONFLICT ENDING IN VICTORY. Of this conflict there is a threefold presentation. 1. First, there is a personal conflict: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Here it is worth while to notice that the Hebrew tense admits of a present as well as a future interpretation. So it is not only, "I will put enmity"; but, "I am putting and will put enmity between thee and the woman." The work is begun. The unholy alliance, into which Eve had been beguiled by the Evil One, is already broken. She is already a changed woman. She is no longer on the serpent's side. She is on the Lord's side. There is enmity between her and the serpent. 2. After the personal comes the general conflict: "Enmity between thy seed and her seed." What is meant by the two "seeds"? We would not have very much difficulty in guessing, but we are not left to guess-work. We are

very plainly told in the later Scriptures. For example, in the eighth chapter of the Gospel of John, the Jews had been congratulating themselves on belonging to the promised seed—"We be Abraham's seed" (verse 33). Our Saviour said, in reply: "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me." That is a strange thing for Abraham's seed. You may be Abraham's seed literally, but certainly not spiritually. "They answered and said unto Him: Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them: If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Notice how distinctly He recognized the spiritual sense of the term, not the literal. "If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning. That is the reason ye seek to kill Me." Or turn to Matthew xxiii. 33, where, addressing the same kind of people, the Saviour says—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers" (i.e., ye seed of the serpents), "how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Or take the parable of the tares (Matt. xiii. 38): "The good seed are the children of the kingdom. But the tares are the children of the wicked one." Perhaps most definite of all is a passage in the 3rd chapter of the 1st Epistle of John. Read from the 8th verse: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Then follows something like a definition of the two seeds. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother." You see how plainly it is stated that the seed of the serpent are those who follow the deeds of the serpent; they are those who inherit the wickedness of their father the devil, as it is put here. And, of course, if the seed of the serpent are those who inherit the wickedness of the evil one, the seed of the woman are those that inherit the saintliness of the woman. It is as plain as anything can be, that it is the spiritual, and not the literal, seed that is meant; that character is in view, and not simple descent.

3. Not only is there a personal and a general conflict, but there is a special one. "Thee and the woman"—personal. "Thy seed and her seed"—general. "It" (or he, because the pronoun is masculine) "shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"—special. Now, I do not say that Christ is very plainly indicated here. The time had not yet come for this. The hope of the coming personal Saviour was only gradually unfolded. But I do say that certain lines are drawn which, when produced, are found to converge on Christ, who occupies the point of sight, away on the distant horizon. Observe, further, that it is only at this point that victory comes in: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," only conflict there; no victory. "And between thy seed and her seed," only enmity, no victory. But come to the point of sight, and there is not only conflict, but victory—"He shall bruise thy head." Apart from the Captain of our Salvation, there was nothing for us but defeat. Though victory is finally assured to all the true seed of the woman, it will be His victory, made theirs by faith.

II. Let us now look at THE FACTS IN HISTORY, TO WHICH THE PROPHECY POINTS, AND WHICH CONSTITUTE ITS FULFILMENT. In the first place, we see the development of this conflict right along from the time of its first beginning; "from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, slain between the temple and the altar"; and from the days of the first martyr, Stephen, down to the present time, when in heathen lands converts still must seal, at times, their testimony with their blood, and when in Christian lands "those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer" certain kinds of persecution, and keep up a constant conflict with the powers of evil. The conflict will go on, and will not cease until the last of Satan's captives shall be rescued from his grasp and brought as sons to glory; when there shall be the great gathering of the people around Shiloh, the Prince of Peace, the Captain of our Salvation. But of all that long conflict, the crisis, the decisive action, is that to which our attention is specially called in the prophecy—the conflict that the Lord Jesus had to wage against the powers of darkness and the machinations of evil men when He was here upon the earth. Our Saviour, having taken our place, had this warfare to fight all through His life. Have you not often asked yourself the reason of the great difference between the death of the Lord Jesus and the death of so many martyrs, who endured unheard-of tortures without flinching or uttering a cry? Had the Master less courage than the servants? Was He less able to endure suffering than Stephen, or any of the martyrs? Oh, no! It was because He had sufferings to bear that none of them had any knowledge of. He had their battle

to fight as well as His own. As the Captain of their Salvation and ours, He stood in the front and thickest of the battle, and by His strong agony gained the victory for them and us. Now that He has gained the victory, that victory is secured for all the rest, who may well face death in any form bravely, now that the Captain of their Salvation has conquered all its terrors for them. It is secured for all the seed; and we have a picture of its consummation in the book of Revelation, where is celebrated in thrilling imagery the final victory of the saints of the Lord "by the blood of the Lamb." But while victory has been secured for us, it must also be accomplished in us. There must be a conflict and a victory in every human heart. There is not only the special conflict, which the Lord Jesus so victoriously waged, and the general conflict ending so triumphantly for all the seed, but there must be a personal conflict in each individual soul. (*J. M. Gibson, D.D.*) *Christ the conqueror of Satan*:—The promise plainly teaches that the Deliverer would be born of a woman, and, carefully viewed, it also foreshadows the Divine method of the Redeemer's conception and birth. So also is the doctrine of the two seeds plainly taught here—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed." There was evidently to be in the world a seed of the woman on God's side against the serpent, and a seed of the serpent that should always be upon the evil side even as it is unto this day. The church of God and the synagogue of Satan both exist. I. THE FACTS. The facts are four, and I call your earnest attention to them. 1. The first is, enmity was excited. Satan counted on man's descendants being his confederates, but God would break up this covenant with hell, and raise up a seed which should war against the Satanic power. Thus we have here God's first declaration that He will set up a rival kingdom to oppose the tyranny of sin and Satan, that He will create in the hearts of a chosen seed an enmity against evil, so that they shall fight against it, and with many a struggle and pain shall overcome the prince of darkness. The Divine Spirit has abundantly achieved this plan and purpose of the Lord, combating the fallen angel by a glorious man: making man to be Satan's foe and conqueror. 2. Then comes the second prophecy, which has also turned into a fact, namely, the coming of the champion. The seed of the woman by promise is to champion the cause, and oppose the dragon. That seed is the Lord Jesus Christ. The conflict our glorious Lord continues in His seed. We preach Christ crucified, and every sermon shakes the gates of hell. We bring sinners to Jesus by the Spirit's power, and every convert is a stone torn down from the wall of Satan's mighty castle. 3. The third fact which comes out in the text, though not quite in that order, is that our Champion's heel should be bruised. Do you need that I explain this? You know how all His life long His heel, that is, His lower part, His human nature, was perpetually being made to suffer. He carried our sicknesses and sorrows. But the bruising came mainly when both in body and in mind His whole human nature was made to agonize; when His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and His enemies pierced His hands and His feet, and He endured the shame and pain of death by crucifixion. Before the throne He looks like a lamb that has been slain, but in the power of an endless life He liveth unto God. 4. Then comes the fourth fact, namely, that while His heel was being bruised, He was to bruise the serpent's head. By His sufferings Christ has overthrown Satan, by the heel that was bruised He has trodden upon the head which devised the bruising. II. Let us now view OUR EXPERIENCE AS IT TALLIES WITH THESE FACTS. He means to save us, and how does He work to that end? 1. The first thing He does is, He comes to us in mercy, and puts enmity between us and the serpent. That is the very first work of grace. You began to hate sin, and you groaned under it as under a galling yoke: more and more it burdened you, you could not bear it, you hated the very thought of it. So it was with you: is it so now? Is there still enmity between you and the serpent? Indeed you are more and more the sworn enemies of evil, and you willingly acknowledge it. 2. Then came the Champion, that is to say, "Christ was formed in you the hope of glory." You heard of Him and you understood the truth about Him, and it seemed a wonderful thing that He should be your substitute and stand in your room and place and stead, and bear your sin and all its curse and punishment, and that He should give His righteousness, yea, and His very self, to you that you might be saved. 3. Next, do you recollect how you were led to see the bruising of Christ's heel and to stand in wonder and observe what the enmity of the serpent had wrought in Him? Did you not begin to feel the bruised heel yourself? Did not sin torment you? Did not the very thought of it vex you? Did not your own heart become a plague to you? Did not Satan begin

to tempt you? Did he not inject blasphemous thoughts, and urge you on to desperate measures; did he not teach you to doubt the existence of God, and the mercy of God, and the possibility of your salvation, and so on? This was his nibbling at your heel. He is at his old tricks still. He worries whom he can't devour with a malicious joy. 4. But, brethren, do you know something of the other fact, namely, that we conquer, for the serpent's head is broken in us? How say you? Is not the power and dominion of sin broken in you? Do you not feel that you cannot sin because you are born of God? Some sins which were masters of you once, do not trouble you now. Oftentimes the Lord also grants us to know what it is to overcome temptation, and so to break the head of the fiend. I ought to add that every time any one of us is made useful in saving souls we do as it were repeat the bruising of the serpent's head. In all deliverances and victories you overcome, and prove the promise true—"Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name." III. Let us speak awhile upon the ENCOURAGEMENT which our text and the context yields to us; for it seems to me to abound. 1. I want you, brethren, to exercise faith in the promise and be comforted. The text evidently encouraged Adam very much. Adam acted in faith upon what God said, for we read, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve (or Life); because she was the mother of all living" (verse 20). She was not a mother at all, but as the life was to come through her by virtue of the promised seed, Adam marks his full conviction of the truth of the promise though at the time the woman had borne no children. 2. Notice by way of further encouragement that we may regard our reception of Christ's righteousness as an instalment of the final overthrow of the devil. 3. Next, by way of encouragement in pursuing the Christian life, I would say to young people, expect to be assailed. If you have fallen into trouble through being a Christian, be encouraged by it; do not at all regret or fear it, but rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for this is the constant token of the covenant. 4. Still further encouragement comes from this. Your suffering as a Christian is not brought upon you for your own sake; ye are partners with the great SEED of the woman, ye are confederates with Christ. You must not think the devil cares much about you; the battle is against Christ in you. I have heard of a woman who was condemned to death in the Marian days, and before her time came to be burned a child was born to her, and she cried out in her sorrow. A wicked adversary, who stood by, said, "How will you bear to die for your religion if you make such ado?" "Ah," she said, "Now I suffer in my own person as a woman, but then I shall not suffer, but Christ in me." Nor were these idle words, for she bore her martyrdom with exemplary patience, and rose in her chariot of fire in holy triumph to heaven. If Christ be in you, nothing will dismay you, but you will overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil by faith. 5. Last of all, let us resist the devil always with this belief, that he has received a broken head. I am inclined to think that Luther's way of laughing at the devil was a very good one, for he is worthy of shame and everlasting contempt. Luther once threw an inkstand at his head when he was tempting him very sorely, and though the act itself appears absurd enough, yet it was a true type of what that great Reformer was all his life long, for the books he wrote were truly a flogging of the inkstand at the head of the fiend. That is what we have to do: we are to resist him by all means. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *The curse of Satan including a blessing to man.*—There are four things here intimated which are each worthy of notice—1. The ruin of Satan's cause was to be accomplished by one in human nature. This must have been not a little mortifying to his pride. If he must fall, and could have had his choice as to the mode, he might rather have wished to have been crushed by the immediate hand of God: for however terrible that hand might be, it would be less humiliating than to be subdued by one of a nature inferior to his own. The human nature especially appears to have become odious in his eyes. It is possible that the rejoicings of eternal wisdom over man was known in heaven, and first excited his envy; and that his attempt to ruin the human race was an act of revenge. If so, there was a peculiar fitness that from man should proceed his overthrow. 2. It was to be accomplished by the seed of the woman. This would be more humiliating still. Satan had made use of her to accomplish his purposes, and God would defeat his schemes through the same medium: and by how much he had despised and abused her, in making her the instrument of drawing her husband aside, by so much would he be mortified in being overcome by one of her descendants. 3. The

victory should be obtained not only by the Messiah Himself, but by all His adherents. Now if it were mortifying for Satan to be overcome by the Messiah Himself, considered as the seed of the woman, how much more when in addition to this every individual believer shall be made to come near, and as it were set his feet upon the neck of his enemy? 4. Finally: though it should be a long war, and the cause of the serpent would often be successful, yet in the end it should be utterly ruined. The "head" is the seat of life, which the "heel" is not: by this language therefore is intimated, that the life of Christ's cause should not be affected by any part of Satan's opposition; but that the life of Satan's cause should be that of Christ.

(A. Fuller.) *Blessings through Messiah*.—Through the promised Messiah a great many things pertaining to the curse are not only counteracted, but become blessings. Under His glorious reign, "the earth shall yield its increase, and God, our own God, delight in blessing us." And while its fruitfulness is withheld, it has a merciful tendency to stop the progress of sin: for if the whole earth were like the plains of Sodom in fruitfulness, which are compared to the garden of God, its inhabitants would be as Sodom and Gomorrah in wickedness. The necessity of hard labour too in obtaining a subsistence, which is the lot of the far greater part of mankind, tends more than a little, by separating men from each other, and depressing their spirits, to restrain them from the excesses of evil. All the afflictions of the present life contain in them a motive to look upwards for a better portion: and death itself is a monitor to warn them to prepare to meet their God. These are things suited to a sinful world: and where they are sanctified, as they are to believers in Christ, they become real blessings. To them they are but light afflictions, and last but for a moment; and while they do last, "work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." To them, in short, death itself is introductory to everlasting life. (*Ibid.*) *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*—*Bruising the head of evil; or, the mission of Christianity*.—That there were two grand opposing moral forces at work in the world, "the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent," is manifest from the following conceptions:—1. The universal beliefs of mankind. All nations believe in two antagonistic principles. 2. The phenomena of the moral world. The thoughts, actions, and conduct of men are so radically different that they must be referred to two distinct moral forces. 3. The experience of good men. 4. The declaration of the Bible. Now in this conflict, whilst error and evil only strike at the mere "heel" of truth and goodness, truth and goodness strike right at the "head." Look at this idea in three aspects:—I. AS A CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRISTIANITY. Evil has a "head" and its "head" is not in theories, or institutions, or outward conduct; but in the moral feelings. In the likes and dislikes, the sympathies and antipathies of the heart. Now it is against this "head" of evil, that Christianity, as a system of reform, directs its blows. It does not seek to lop off the branches from the mighty upas, but to destroy its roots. It does not strike at the mere forms of murder, adultery, and theft; but at their spirit, anger, lust, and covetousness. This its characteristic. II. AS A TEST OF INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANITY. Unless Christianity has bruised the very "head" of evil within us it has done nothing to the purpose. 1. It may bruise certain erroneous ideas, and yet be of no service to you. 2. It may bruise certain wrong habits, and yet be of no real service to you. III. AS A GUIDE IN PROPAGATING CHRISTIANITY. The great failure of the Church in its world-reforming mission may be traced to the wrong direction of its efforts. (*Homilist.*) *God's great patience, notwithstanding man's provocations*.—Suppose a man should come into a curious artificer's shop, and there with one blow dash in pieces such a piece of art as had cost many years' study and pains in the contriving thereof. How could he bear with it? How would he take on to see the workmanship of his hands so rashly, so wilfully destroyed? He could not but take it ill and be much troubled thereat. Thus it is that as soon as God had set up and perfected the frame of the world, sin gave a shrewd shake to all; it unpinned the frame, and had like to have pulled all in pieces again; nay, had it not been for the promise of Christ, all this goodly frame had been reduced to its primitive nothingness again. Man by his sin had pulled down all about his ears, but God, in mercy, keeps it up; man by his sin provokes God, but God, in mercy, passeth by all affronts whatsoever. Oh, the wonderful mercy—oh, the omnipotent patience of God! (*J. Spencer.*) *The first promise*.—The first promise (Gen. iii. 15) is like the first small spring or head of a great river, which the farther it runs the bigger it grows by the accession of more waters to it. Or like the sun in the heavens, which the higher it mounts the more bright and glorious the day still grows. (*J. Flavel.*)

First things:—What delight there is to us in first things! The first primrose pushing through the clods telling of winter gone, and summer on the way: the first view of the sea in its wondrous expanse of power: the first sense of peace that came by a view of Christ as Saviour. A certain authoress who became very famous, speaks of the exquisite sense of delight she felt when she began her first literary work in the reviewing of books: the opening of the first parcel was as the "bursting of a new world" on her eyes. (H. O. Mackey.) *The gospel preached in paradise*:—The words are considerable—1. For the person who speaketh them, the Lord God Himself, who was the first preacher of the gospel in paradise. The draught and plot was in His bosom long before, but now it cometh out of His mouth. 2. For the occasion when they were spoken. When God hath been but newly provoked and offended by sin, and man, from His creature and subject, was become His enemy and rebel, the offended God comes with a promise in His mouth. Adam could look for nothing but that God should repeat to him the whole beadrill of curses wherein he had involved himself, but God maketh known the great design of His grace. Once more, the Lord God was now cursing the serpent, and in the midst of the curses promiseth the great blessing of the Messiah. Thus doth God "in wrath remember mercy" (Hab. iii. 2). Yea, man's sentence was not yet pronounced. The Lord God had examined him (ver. 8-10), but before the doom there breaketh out a promise of mercy. Thus mercy gets the start of justice, and triumpheth and rejoiceth over it in our behalf: "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (James ii. 13). 3. They are considerable for their matter, for they intimate a victory over Satan, and that in the nature which was foiled so lately. In the former part of the verse you have the combat; in the text the success. (1) The conflict and combat: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." I shall not consider the conflict now as carried on between the two seeds, but between the two heads, Christ the Prince of life, and the devil "who hath the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14). It was begun between the serpent and the woman; it is carried on between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent: but the conflict is ended by the destruction of one of the heads; the prince of death is destroyed by the Prince of life. (2) The success and issue of the combat. Where observe—(a) What the seed of the woman doth against the serpent, "He shall bruise thy head"; (b) What the serpent doth against the seed of the woman, "Thou shalt bruise his heel." (a) There is something common to both; for the word bruise is used promiscuously both of the serpent and the seed of the woman. In this war, as usually in all others, there are wounds given on both sides; the devil bruise Christ, and Christ bruise Satan. (b) There is a disparity of the event, "He shall bruise thy head," and "Thou shalt bruise his heel"; where there is a plain allusion to treading upon a serpent. Wounds on the head are deadly to serpents, but wounds on the body are not so grievous or dangerous; and a serpent trod upon, seeketh to do all the mischief it can to the foot by which it is crushed. The wound given to the head is mortal, but the wound given to the heel may be healed. The seed of the woman may be cured, but Satan's power cannot be restored. The devil cannot reach to the head, but the heel only, which is far from any vital part. (1st.) For the first clause, "It shall bruise thy head." The seed of the woman crushed the serpent's head, whereby is meant the overthrow and destruction of his power and works (John xii. 31; 1 John iii. 8). The head being bruised, strength and life is perished. (2nd.) For the other clause, "Thou shalt bruise his heel." Where—(1) Note the intention of the serpent, who would destroy the kingdom of the Redeemer if he could; but he can only reach the heel, not the head. (2) The greatness of Christ's sufferings; His heel was bruised, and He endured the painful, shameful, accursed death of the cross. Doctrine: That Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, is at enmity with Satan, and hath entered the lists with him; and though bruised in the conflict, yet He finally overcometh him, and subverteth his kingdom. I. That Jesus Christ is the seed of the woman. That He is one of her seed is past doubt, since He was born of the Virgin, a daughter of Eve. That He is "The seed," the most eminent of all the stock, appeareth by the dignity of His Person, God made flesh (John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16). As also by His miraculous conception (Luke i. 35; Matt. i. 23). Now, if you ask what necessity there was that the conqueror should be the seed of the woman, because the flesh of Christ is the bread of life, and the food of our faith? I shall a little insist upon the convenience and agreeableness of it. 1. That thereby He might be made under the law, which was given to the whole nature of man (Gal. iv. 4). 2. That He might

in the same nature suffer the penalty and curse of the law, as well as fulfil the duty of it, and so make satisfaction for our sins, which as God He could not do. He was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21), and was "made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13; Phil. ii. 8). "He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." 3. That in the same nature which was foiled He might conquer Satan. 4. That He might take compassion of our infirmities, having experimented them in His own person (Heb. ii. 17, 18). 5. That He might take possession of heaven for us in our nature (John xiv. 2, 3). 6. That after He had been a sacrifice for sin, and conquered death by His resurrection, He might also triumph over the devil, and lead captivity captive, and give gifts to men in the very act of His ascension into heaven (Eph. iv. 8). II. That Christ is at enmity with Satan, and hath entered into the conflict with him. 1. We must state the enmity between Christ and His confederates, and Satan and his instruments. (1) There is a perfect enmity between the nature of Christ and the nature of the devil. (2) An enmity proper to His office and design. For He came "to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8); and was set up to dissolve that sin and misery which he had brought upon the world. 2. The enmity being such between the seeds, Christ sets upon His business to destroy Satan's power and works. (1) His power. Satan hath a twofold power over fallen man—legal and usurped. (2) His works. There is a twofold work of Satan—the work of the devil without us, and the work of the devil within us. III. That in this conflict His heel was wounded, bitten, or bruised by the serpent. 1. Certain it is that Christ was bruised in the enterprise; which sheweth how much we should value our salvation, since it costs so dear as the precious blood of the Son of God Incarnate (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). 2. But how was He bruised by the serpent? Certainly on the one hand Christ's sufferings were the effects of man's sin and God's hatred against sin and His governing justice; for it is said, "It pleased the Father to bruise Him" (Isa. liii. 10). Unless it had pleased the Lord to bruise Him, Satan could never have bruised Him. On the other side, they were also the effects of the malice and rage of the devil and his instruments, who was now with the sword's point and closing stroke with Christ, and doing the worst he could against Him. In His whole life He endured many outward troubles from Satan's instruments; for all His life long He was a man of sorrows, wounded and bruised by Satan and his instruments (John viii. 44). But the closing stroke was at last; then did the serpent most eminently bruise His heel. When Judas contrived the plot, it is said, the devil entered into him (Luke xxii. 3). When the high priest's servants came to take Him, He telleth them, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke xxii. 53). The power of darkness at length did prevail so far as to cause His shameful death; this was their day. 3. It was only His heel that was bruised. It could go no further; for though His bodily life was taken away, yet His head and mediatory power was not touched (Acts ii. 36). Again, His bodily life was taken away but for a while. God would not leave His soul in the grave (Psa. xvi. 10). Once more, though Christ was bruised, yet He was not conquered. So for Christians, He may divers ways wound and afflict us in our outward interests, but the inner man is safe (2 Cor. iv. 16). IV. Though Christ's heel was bruised in the conflict, yet it endeth in Satan's final overthrow; for his head was crushed, which noteth the subversion of his power and kingdom. To explain this, we must consider—1. What is the power of Satan. 2. How far Satan was destroyed by Christ. First: What is the power of Satan? It lieth in sin. And Christ destroyed him, as He "made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and made reconciliation for iniquities" (Dan. ix. 24). Secondly: How far was Satan destroyed or his head crushed? 1. Negatively. (1) *Non ratione essentiali*, not to take away his life and being. No; there is a devil still, and shall be, even when the whole work of Christ's redemption is finished (Rev. xx. 10; Matt. xxv. 41). Then eternal judgment is executed on the head of the wicked state. (2) *Non ratione malitiae*, not in regard of malice; for the enmity ever continueth between the two seeds, and Satan will be doing though it be always to loss, "The devil sinneth from the beginning" (1 John iii. 8). Therefore he is not so destroyed as if he did no more desire the ruin and destruction of men. He is as malicious as ever. 2. Affirmatively, it remaineth that it is *ratione potentiae*, in regard of his power. But the question returneth, How far is his power destroyed? for he still governeth the wicked, and possesseth a great part of the world. Therefore the devils are called "The rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. vi. 12). He molesteth the godly, whether considered singly or apart, or in their communities and societies. Singly and apart he may sometimes trouble them and sorely shake them as wheat is

winnowed in a sieve. "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke xxii. 31). And in their communities and societies. "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth" (Psa. cxxix. 1, 2). Use 1. Thankfulness and praise to our Mediator. 1. Satan's design was to dishonour God by a false representation, as if envious of man's happiness (Gen. iii. 5). And so to weaken the esteem of God's goodness. Now in the work of our redemption God is wonderfully magnified, and represented as amiable to man; not envying our knowledge and delight, but promoting it by all means, even with great care and cost (1 John iv. 8). 2. To depress the nature of man, that in innocency stood so near God. Now that the human nature, so depressed and abused by the malicious suggestions of the devil, should be so elevated and advanced, and be set up far above the angelical nature, and admitted to dwell with God in a personal union, oh! let us now cheerfully remember and celebrate this victory of Christ. Our praise now is a pledge of our everlasting triumph. Use 2. To exhort us to make use of Christ's help for our recovery out of the defection and apostasy of mankind. Oh! let Satan be crushed in you, and the old carnal nature destroyed. Use 3. To show us the nature of Christ's victory, and wherein it consisteth; not in an exemption from troubles, nor in a total exemption from sin for the present. 1. Not in an exemption from troubles. No; you must expect conflicts. Though Satan's deadly power be taken away, our heel may be crushed. 2. It is not a total exemption from sin. Necessary vital grace is only absolutely secured; you shall receive no deadly wound to destroy your salvation. Use 4. To animate and encourage Christ's servants in their war against Satan's kingdom, at home and abroad, within and without: "Not to give place to the devil" (Eph. iv. 27). Christ whom we serve is more able to save than Satan is to destroy. (*T. Mantou, D.D.*) *Man's restoration promised*.—The promise of the recovery of mankind out of Satan's bondage, and from under God's curse, contains in it these principal heads, all of them expressed or implied in those few words, being so many grounds of our faith. 1. That God's promise of grace is every way free, not solicited by Adam, and much less deserved, as being made unto him now, when he had offended God in the highest degree, and stood in enmity against Him, and therefore must needs proceed from God's free will. 2. That it is certain and infallible, as depending, not upon man's will, but upon God's, who speaks not doubtfully or conditionally, but positively and peremptorily, that He will do it Himself. 3. That it shall be constant and unchangeable: the inward hatred and outward wars between Satan and the holy seed shall not cease till they end at last in Satan's total and final ruin. 4. That it shall not extend to all the seed of the woman according to the flesh, but to some that are chosen out of her seed. For some of them shall join with Satan against their own brethren. 5. The effect of this gracious promise shall be the sanctifying of their hearts, whom God will save, manifested in the hatred of Satan and all his ways; which though they had formerly embraced, yet now they should abhor. 6. This work of sanctification shall not be wrought upon them as a statuary fashions a stone into an image; but God shall make use of their wills and affections to stir them up and to set them against Satan, as this word—enmity—necessarily implies. 7. Those affections shall not be smothered and concealed in the inward motions of the heart, but shall outwardly manifest themselves in serious endeavours for the opposing of Satan and his power, as the war here mentioned and intimated by the wounds on both sides, necessarily supposeth. 8. The work of sanctification, though it shall be infallible and unchangeable, yet shall be imperfect, as is implied in the bruises which the godly shall receive by Satan's hand, not only by outward afflictions, but by inward temptations, which shall wound their souls by drawing them into divers sins, all implied in that phrase of bruising the heel. 9. Those wounds which they receive at Satan's hands shall not be deadly, nor quench the life of grace, which the devil shall not be able to destroy, as is intimated in that part of the body which shall be wounded, which is the heel, far enough from any vital part. 10. The author of this work of sanctification shall not be themselves, but God by His Spirit. For it is He that shall put enmity into their hearts against Satan and his seed, as the words import. 11. This work of sanctification by the Spirit shall be established by their union with Christ their Head, with whom they shall be joined into one body, as is implied when Christ and His members are termed one seed. 12. By virtue of this union the holy seed shall have an interest in and a title to all that Christ works. For so, in effect, Christ's victory over Satan is called their

victory, when it is said the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, that is, Christ and His members shall do it. 13. For the making way to this union and communion between Christ and His members, He shall take on Him the very nature of man, so that He shall truly and properly be called the seed of the woman. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Lessons*.—1. Let us mark how God proceeds in His inquiries after sin. He first traces it out step by step, tracks it in all its windings, ere He utters one word of judgment. His dealings hitherto had been with Adam, as the head of creation. Therefore He speaks first to him. Then from Adam sin is traced to the woman, then from the woman to the serpent. By this process it was brought solemnly before the conscience of the transgressors, that they might see what they had done. Even in the order of judgment, how careful to mark His sense of the different kinds of criminality! Such is a specimen of the way in which He will judge the world in righteousness! 2. Let us mark the circumstances in which the sentence was given. It was given in the hearing of our parents. It was not specially directed to them. They were but hearers. Yet the scene was designed for them. This curse on the serpent was spoken in their ears, because "it contained in it God's purpose of grace towards them." (1) That God meant to save them, and not to give them up to the snares of their enemy; (2) That they could only be saved by their enemy being destroyed; (3) That this destruction would be attended with toil, and conflict, and wounds; (4) That it was easy to ruin a world, but hard to save and restore. 3. Let us mark how God hated that which Satan had done. "Because thou hast done this," are the words of awful preface to the sentence. God had no pleasure in the snare or the ruin it had wrought. His words are the expression of deep displeasure against him who had done the horrid deed, and at the deed which had been done. And let us not forget how much of that which Satan has since then been doomed to suffer, as well as of that which he shall hereafter suffer, has its origin here. His sin, by means of which he succeeded in casting man out of Eden, shall be the sin by which he himself shall be cast wholly out of earth, to deceive the nations no more. 4. In undoing the evil God begins at its source. The drying up of the stream will not do; the source must be reached. Sin was the real enemy, and love to the sinner must proceed at once against this enemy, not resting till it is utterly destroyed. 5. God shows that Satan shall not be allowed to triumph. His victory is only temporary and partial. God is taking the sinner's side; and this is the assurance that Satan's victory shall be reversed! 6. God Himself undertakes man's cause. It is not, "there shall be enmity"; but "I will put" it. God Himself will now proceed to work for man. The serpent's malice and success have but drawn forth the deeper love and more direct interposition in man's behalf. 7. God promises a seed to the woman. All that this implied she could not know at the time. But it is evidently declared that she was not to die immediately. The salvation was to come from God, and yet it was to come through man. 8. God is to put enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed. (1) The enmity between Satan and the Church. There can be no friendship with him, and no sympathy with his works. Thus the distinction between the Church and the world is as old as Eden; and it is not merely distinction, it is hostility. (2) The enmity between Christ and Satan; between Him who is the representative of heaven and him who is the representative of hell; between Him who is the friend and him who is the enemy of man. (3) The name given to the ungodly—"the seed of the serpent." And it was this expression that Christ took up when He spoke of the "generation of vipers," and said to the unbelieving Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil." By birth we are the serpent's brood, till grace transforms us, and we become the woman's seed; then our friendship with the accursed race is for ever broken. (4) The name of the Church—"the seed of the woman." Yes, the seed of her who sinned, who "was in the transgression"—offspring of Eve—of her who was first in apostasy. What tender favour is thus shown to her! (5) The name of Christ. The same as the Church's, the "seed of the woman." Yes, He was indeed "born of a woman"—the Son of Mary—the Son of Eve—the Son of her that had transgressed. 9. There is not only to be enmity, but conflict. That these two parties should keep aloof from each other was not enough. There must be more than this. There must be alienation and hatred; nay, there must be warfare, and that of the most desperate kind. Satan and the Church must ever be at open warfare. The world and the Church must ever be foes to each other. 1. The bruising of the heel of the woman's seed. It is not the woman's heel that is to be bruised, but the heel of her seed; neither is it the woman that is to bruise

the serpent's head, but her seed—"it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It was an inferior part that was to be wounded, not a vital one. Yet still there was to be a wound. The serpent's seed was to have a temporary triumph, and this was fulfilled when Jesus hung on the cross. Then the heel was bruised. Then Satan seemed to conquer. That was the hour and power of darkness. Then "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Then that wound was given which defeated him who gave it, and began our victory. 2. The bruising of the serpent's head. It was his most vital as well as his most honourable part that was to be bruised. An intimation this of utter defeat and ruin. He has received many a stroke. His deadly wound was given upon the cross, in that very stroke by which he bruised the heel of the woman's seed. So that from that moment our victory was secure. But the final blow is reserved for the Lord's second coming. Then it is that the great dragon, that old serpent, is to be bound in chains, and shut up in the abyss. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The remedy*:—Near the manchineel, which grows in the forests of the West Indies, and which gives forth a juice of deadly poisonous nature, grows a fig, the sap of which, if applied in time, is a remedy for the diseases produced by the manchineel. God places the gospel of grace alongside the sentence of death. (*W. Adamson.*)

Ver. 16. *In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.*—*Motherhood a blessing and an education*:—I. IN MATERNITY A WOMAN COMPLETES HER NATURE. Every sorrow of body or soul is made into a new thread in the web of affection which she weaves round the life of the child for whom she suffers. II. SHE HAS ANOTHER BLESSING IN A CERTAIN EASE IN LOSING SELF. Men find it less natural to be unselfish. The mother almost spontaneously drops off the robe of self. III. HER SORROW OF MATERNITY BRINGS A BLESSING TO THE WORLD. What silent, forceful lessons of the blessed life has motherhood given to the world! IV. THIS SORROW HAS BEEN AN EDUCATION TO THE WORLD. The great thought of Christianity is that only through sacrifice of self can life be given to others, or life be realized by the giver. Motherhood permits woman to live her life in another life. It is the likeliest thing to God's life. V. THE SORROW OF MATERNITY IS A PROPHECY. Her joy in self-surrender for another life, and her better life so won is the joy in which the whole world shall be when, leaping from the womb of the past, it will break into the perfect life—born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. (*Stopford A. Brooke, M.A.*) *Observations*:—I. ALL THE AFFLICTIONS OF CHRIST'S MEMBERS ARE DISPENSED UNTO THEM UNDER THE COVENANT OF GRACE. II. THOUGH GOD HAVE THROUGH CHRIST REMITTED TO HIS CHILDREN THE SENTENCE OF DEATH, YET HE HATH NOT FREED THEM FROM THE AFFLICTIONS OF THIS LIFE. III. ALL THE AFFLICTIONS THAT GOD LAYS UPON HIS CHILDREN IN THIS LIFE HAVE MIXED WITH THEIR BITTERNESS SOME SWEETNESS OF MERCY. As there is some mixture of mercy with the bitterness of the afflictions of this life, so is there a mixture of bitterness with the blessings of this life. It is the wife's duty to be subject to the will and direction of her husband. The subjection of the wife to the husband must be, not only in outward obedience to his commands, but besides in the inward affection of the heart. 1. It is a duty to be performed to God, who will be served, not only with the outward man, but with the heart (*Col. iii. 22, 23*). 2. Else the subjection must needs be burdensome, and the services done therein like that of Zipporah in circumcising her child (*Exod. iv. 25*). (*J. White, M.A.*) *The sentence on the woman*:—His sentence on the woman is, in part, a reversal of the first blessing, "Multiply and replenish the earth." God's blessing alone went out at first with the command to multiply, but now some drops of the curse are to be infused into it in remembrance of sin. The race was still to go on increasing; but henceforth it was to be in sorrow. The very perpetuation of the species was to be accompanied with marks of the displeasure of God. The dark cloud of sorrow was to take up its station above each man as he came into the world. And, kindred to these pangs of her corporeal frame, are the other varied sorrows which overshadow her lot—the weakness, the dependence, the fear, the rising and sinking of heart, the bitterness of disappointed hope, the wounds of unrequited affection—all these, as drops of the sad cup now put into her hands, woman has, from the beginning, been made to taste. The sentence falls on her specially as woman, not as one with the man, and part of the human race, but as woman. The things which mark her out as woman are the things which the sentence selects. It is as the mother and as the wife that she is to feel the weight of the sentence now pronounced. A mother's pangs (which

otherwise would have been unknown); a wife's dependence (which, in all save Christian countries, is utter degradation); sorrow, not joy, in that appointed process through which the promised seed is to be born into the world; inferiority, instead of equality, in that relationship in reference to which it had been said by her husband, "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh"; not henceforth the husband "cleaving to the wife," as at the first (ii. 24), but the wife cleaving to the husband, and the husband ruling over the wife. Such are the sad results of sin! (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Woman's subjection to man*:—The subjection of the woman to the man and his rule over her was a just check of that bold taking upon her, both to talk so much with the serpent and also to do as he bade her, without any privity and knowledge of her husband. And it is as much as if God should have said to her: Because thou tookest so much upon thee without advice of thy husband, hereafter thy desire shall be subject unto him, and he shall rule over thee. Yet this authority of the man may not embolden him any way to wrong his wife, but teacheth him rather what manner of man he ought to be—namely, such an one as for gravity, wisdom, advice, and all government is able to direct her in all things to a good course. And her subjection should admonish her of her weakness and need of direction, and so abate all pride and conceit of herself, and work true honour in her heart toward him whom God hath made stronger than herself and given gifts to direct her by. This, I say, this authority in the man and subjection in the woman should effect. But alas, many men are rather to be ruled than to rule, and many women fitter to rule than to be ruled of such unruly husbands. On the other side, many men for ability most fit and able to rule, yet for pride in the heart, where subjection should be, shall have no leave to rule. So fit we sometimes to the order appointed of Almighty God. Amendment is good on both sides, for fear of His rod, whose order we break. (*Bishop Babington.*)

Ver. 17. *Cursed is the ground for thy sake.*—A curse which proves a blessing:—This was almost the first curse revealed to us as pronounced by God, and yet it is almost the first blessing. I. AT FIRST SIGHT WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO ADMIT THAT LABOUR IS A BLESSING. We shrink from the misery of task work which must be got through when we are least fitted to carry it on; the very word "repose" suggests all that is most coveted by men. It was a true instinct which led the old mythologist to invent the fable of Sisyphus and his stone, and to see in that punishment an image of horrible torture. Labour which is only laborious is and always must be grievous to endure. II. ON ALL THE SONS OF ADAM THERE IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF LABOUR IMPOSED. We may recognize the necessity and submit to it with gratitude, and then we find in it every hour a blessing; or we may rebel against it, and then we turn it as far as we can into a curse. The sweetness of leisure consists in the change from our ordinary employments, not in a cessation of all employment. III. LYING SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE BLESSING OF LABOUR THERE IS ALSO A CURSE—"Thorns also and thistles," &c. Work is grievous and irksome when unfruitful—when, after much toil, there is nothing to show. But let us be sure that if the work is done for God's glory, and in His name, the fruit will spring up in His time. (*A. Jessopp, D.D.*) *Need of toil*:—The ground is our first lesson-book. Notice—1. A man does not cultivate the land by waving his hand majestically over it. The land says, "If you want anything out of me you must work for it. I answer labour, I respond to industry, I reply to the importunity of toil." That is the great law of social progress. 2. The ground does not obey the dashing and angry passions of any man. The green field does not turn white, though you curse over it till you foam again at the mouth. We cannot compel nature to keep pace with our impatience; man cannot hasten the wheel of the seasons; he cannot drive nature out of its calm and solemn movement; his own fields keep him at bay. 3. Then I see God stooping and writing with His finger on the ground, and when He erects Himself and withdraws, behold the Bible He has written. "Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain"; "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." See the earth inscribed with terms like these, and learn from the land how to live. 4. Spiritual cultivation, like the culture of the land, cannot be hastened. You cannot extemporise moral greatness; it is a slow growth. 5. Spiritual cultivation is sometimes very hard. Circumstances are heavily against us; we are not placed in favourable localities, or under very gracious conditions. Let us be thankful to God if, though faint, we are still pursuing. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) 4

curse, yet a blessing:—I. The text suggests some of the mysteries by which we are surrounded. There is (1) the universal fact of sin everywhere existing; (2) the sorrow which is stamped upon the whole race; (3) the toil that is a condition of humanity. II. The text supplies a solution by which these mysteries are brought into reconciliation with right views of the nature and character of the Eternal. Out of man's evil and man's transgression God contrives blessing. Sorrow in itself is an apparent evil; as God manages it, it is the harbinger of joy. It was the curse, but it also brings the blessing. There is hardness and difficulty in toil, but in occupation God has given us enjoyment. It keeps the mind and heart in active and energetic power. Even the curse of sin becomes in God's hands a blessing. There is no brighter happiness for man than the sense of being forgiven. (*A. Boyd.*) *The curse on the ground for man's sake*:—The king is punished by a curse upon his kingdom in addition to the personal woe falling on himself, just as Pharaoh was cursed in the plagues inflicted on his people. The ground, out of which he was taken, is cursed on his account, as if all pertaining to him had become evil. It is not he that suffers on account of his connection with the soil, but it is the soil that suffers on account of its connection with him, affording proof that it is not from matter that evil flows into spirit, but that it is from spirit that evil flows into matter. That soil from which he had sprung, that soil which God had just been strewing with verdure and flowers, that soil whose fruitfulness had produced the tree whose beauty and desirableness had been the woman's beguilement and his own ruin, that soil must now be scourged and sterilized on his account; as if God had thus addressed him: "I can no longer trust thee with a fruitful soil, nor allow the blessing with which I have blessed the earth to abide upon it; thou art to remain here for a season, but it shall not be the same earth; in mercy I will still leave it such an earth as thou canst inherit, not a wilderness nor a chaos as at first, but still with enough of gloom and desolation and barrenness to remind thee of thy sin, to say to thee continually, O man, thou hast ruined the earth over which I had set thee as king." 1. The earth is to bring forth the thorn and the thistle. Whether these existed before we do not undertake to say, nor whether they are given here merely as the representatives of all noxious plants or weeds, nor whether the object of the curse, in so far as they were concerned, was to turn them into abortions, which they really are. Taking the words as they lie before us, we find that the essence of the curse was the multiplication of these prickly abortions till they should become noxious to man and beast and herb of the field; mere nuisances on the face of the ground. Elsewhere in Scripture they are referred to as calamities. As the effects of judgments Job refers to them (xxxi. 40), and Jeremiah (xiii. 13). As the true offspring of a barren soil the apostle speaks of them (Heb. vi. 8). As injurious to all around our Lord Himself alludes to them (Matt. xiii. 7-22). And it is evident that all these passages connect themselves with the original curse, and are to be interpreted by a reference to it. They are tokens of God's original displeasure against man's sin, so that the sight of them should recall us to this awful scene in Eden, and make us feel how truly God hates sin, and how impossible it is for Him to change in His hatred of it. 2. Man is to eat the herb of the field. Originally, the fruit of the various trees was to have been man's food; the "herb" was for the lower creation, if not exclusively, at least chiefly. But now he is degraded. He is still, of course, to eat fruit, but in this he is to be restricted. Whether it were that, the earth being less productive in fruit, he must betake himself to inferior sustenance; or whether it might also be from a change in bodily constitution, requiring something else than fruit, we cannot say. The sentence is, "Thou shalt eat the herb of the field, not the pleasant fruits of paradise." 3. He is to eat in sorrow. There was to be no glad feasting, but a bitter eating, or, if there might be feasting, it should be like Israel's, "with bitter herbs"—the sweet and the bitter mingling. 4. He is to eat in toil—to wring a stinted subsistence out of the reluctant earth with sore labour and weariness. He cannot live but in a way which reminds him of his primal sin. Each day he hears the original sentence ringing in his ears. And yet all this hard toil serves barely to sustain a "dying life;" and even that only for a little, until he return to the dust. This is the end of his earthly toil! 5. He is to die. Grace does not remit the whole penalty. It leaves a fragment behind it in pain, weakness, sickness, death, though at the same time it extracts blessing out of all these relics of the curse. Besides, in thus leaving men subject to death, it leaves open the door by which the great Deliverer was to go in and rob the spoiler of his prey. By death is death to be destroyed. Man must

dle! He came from the dust, and he must return to it. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The first transgression condemned:—I. THE CRIME PROVED.* The judge condemns the criminal's conduct in several particulars. 1. His listening and yielding to temptation. 2. His neglect of God's Word. 3. His open, positive transgression of a known law. II. *THE SENTENCE PRONOUNCED.* 1. Deprivation of all the fruits and pleasures of Eden. 2. Toil. 3. Disappointment. 4. Sorrow. 5. Increasing infirmity. 6. Death. 7. Justice is tempered with mercy. Let the subject teach us—1. A lesson of humility. We are the degenerate children of such a parent. 2. A lesson of caution. (1) Mark the process of falling. Satan presents some suitable object. We appear, desire, covet, throw off restraint, and transgress, in intention, and in fact. (2) Mark the danger of falling. Our first parents fell from their paradisiacal state, and by a small temptation. Wherefore, "watch," &c. (*Matt. xxvi. 41*). (3) For, mark the consequences of falling. All the evils we feel or fear. 3. A lesson of encouragement. Respited, we may recover our Eden, by means of "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven." Contrast—the first involving himself and us in guilt, pollution, and misery—the second the reverse of this (*Rom. v. 12–21*). (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Observations:—I. THE CURSE, AS WELL AS THE BLESSING UPON ALL CREATURES, PROCEEDS FROM THE WILL AND DECREE OF GOD ALONE.* 1. It can be no otherwise, seeing in Him all things consist (*Col. i. 17*), and have their being (*Acts xvii. 28*). 2. And it is fit it should be so, that all men might fear before Him (*Jer. v. 24*), depend on Him (*Jer. xiv. 22*), and praise Him alone (*Psa. cvii. 32–34*). 3. And it is every way best for us, who know that God judgeth righteously (*Psa. lxxvii. 4*), and that those that fear Him shall want no good thing (*Psa. lxxxiv. 1*). II. *IT IS OUR OWN SIN THAT BRINGS THE CURSE OF GOD UPON ALL THAT WE ENJOY.* 1. God's mercies are over all His works (*Psa. cxlv. 9*), and His hand in itself is not shortened (*Isa. lix. 1*), neither is there anything that He hates but sin, or for sin (*Psa. v. 4, 5*). 2. And it is fit that God should so show His detestation of sin, by manifesting His wrath every way against such as provoke Him thereby, as He did in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and upon His own land (*Deut. xxix. 23, 25*). III. *THE GREATEST OF ALL CREATURES ARE UNDER GOD'S COMMAND.* 1. They are all creatures (*Jer. xiv. 22*), even the work of His hand (*Job. xxxiv. 19*). 2. He could not otherwise be an absolute Lord over all (*Psa. ciii. 19*) if any creature were out of His command. IV. *THE CURSE OF GOD UPON THE CREATURES IS A PART OF MAN'S PUNISHMENT.* 1. We have interest in them, so that their destruction is our loss. 2. Our subsistence is by them, so that to lose them, is to lose the means by which our lives should be supported. V. *MAN'S LIFE IN THIS WORLD IS A LIFE OF PAIN AND SORROW.* 1. To make us the more sensible of sin, by our daily tasting the bitter fruits of it. 2. To move to a holy delight, and earnest seeking after things that are spiritual, the ways whereof are pleasant and the paths peace (*Prov. iii. 17*; *Psa. cxix. 165*). VI. *THE SHORT PLEASURE OF SIN DRAWS AFTER IT A LONG AND LASTING PUNISHMENT.* VII. *MAN'S FOOD IS OUT OF THE EARTH.* (*J. White, M.A.*) *Weeds:—*It is the law of nature that plants should be diffused as widely as possible wherever the circumstances are favourable for their growth and welfare. For this purpose they are provided with the most admirable contrivances to maintain their own existence, and to propagate the species. But man interferes with this law in his processes of gardening and horticulture. His object is to cultivate beautiful or useful plants within inclosures, from which all other plants are excluded, and where an artificial soil and climate have been prepared. He wishes to separate from the struggle of the elements, and from the competition of other species, certain kinds of flowers or vegetables which are good for food or pleasant to the eye. In this he is only partially successful, for into the plot of ground which he has set apart from the waste common of nature a large number of plants intrude; and with them he has to maintain a constant warfare. These plants are known by the common name of weeds, a term which, curious enough, is etymologically connected with Wodan or Odin, the great god of the northern mythology, to whose worship in former ages, in this country, our Wednesday, or Odinsday, was specially dedicated. Any plant may become a weed by being accidentally found in a situation where its presence is not desired; but true weeds form a peculiar and distinct class. They are at once recognized by their mean and ragged appearance; their stems and foliage being neither fleshy nor leathery, but of a soft, flaccid description, and by the absence in most of them of conspicuous or beautiful blossoms. A look of vagabondage seems to characterize most of the members of the order, which at once stamps them as belonging to a pariah class. In the vegetable kingdom they are what gipsies are in the human world, and the same mystery

surrounds them which is connected with that remarkable race. Like the gipsies they are essentially intruders and foreigners; never the native children of the soil on which they flourish. They may have come from long or short distances, but they have always been translated. There is no country where they are not found, and everywhere they have to encounter the prejudices which the popular mind invariably entertains against foreigners. There is one peculiarity about weeds which is very remarkable, viz., that they only appear on ground which, either by cultivation or for some other purpose, has been disturbed by man. They are never found truly wild, in woods or hills, or uncultivated wastes far away from human dwellings. They never grow on virgin soil, where human beings have never been. No weeds exist in those parts of the earth that are uninhabited, or where man is only a passing visitant. The Arctic and Antarctic regions are destitute of them; and above certain limits on mountain ranges they have no representatives. To every thoughtful mind the questions must occur, "Have the plants we call weeds always been weeds? If not, what is their native country? How did they come into connection with man, and into dependence upon his labours?" No satisfactory answer can be given to these questions. As a class there can be no doubt that weeds belong to the most recent flora of the globe. Their luxuriant and flaccid look indicates their modern origin; for the plants of the older geological ages are characterized by dry leathery leaves, and a general physiognomy like that of the existing flora of Australia. Indeed, the flora of Europe during the Eocene period bears a close resemblance to that of Australia at the present day; so that in paying a visit to our southern colony, we are transporting ourselves back to the far-off ages when our own country had a climate and vegetation almost identical. The flora of Australia is the oldest flora at present existing on our globe. Our weeds came upon the scene long subsequent to this Australian or Eocene vegetation. In our own country they form part of the Germanic flora which overspread our low grounds after the passing away of the last glacial epoch, driving before them to the mountain-tops the Alpine and Arctic plants, suited to a severer climate, which previously had covered the whole of Europe. They came from Western Asia and Northern Africa. They made their appearance in company with the beautiful and fruitful flora that is specially associated with the arrival of man, and spread from the same region which is supposed to be the cradle of the human race. In this way they are co-related with the Scripture account of the fall of man. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," was the sentence pronounced by God upon man's sin. We are not to suppose from this circumstance that these noxious plants were specially created then and there for the express purpose of carrying out the punishment of man. They were previously in existence, though they may be said to belong very specially to the human epoch; but since that mournful event they have received a new significance, and are bound up with man in a new moral relation. Most of our weeds possess all the characteristics of a desert flora; special adaptations to a dry soil and arid climate. And the reason why they find a congenial home in our gardens and cultivated fields is because the soil of such places is made artificially like the natural soil of their native country. Our fields and gardens are divested of all unnecessary vegetation, and drained of all superfluous moisture, and thus are possessed of the dry, warm, exposed soil, to which the provisions for drought with which weeds are specially furnished are admirably adapted, and where in consequence they luxuriate and overcome other plants less specially endowed. They follow in the train of man, and show a remarkable predilection for his haunts, become domesticated under his care, not merely because of the abundance of the nitrogenous and calcareous substances to be found in the vicinity of human dwellings and in manured fields and gardens, but chiefly because he provides them with the dry soil and climate in which they can best grow. It is an essential qualification of a weed that it should grow and spread with great rapidity. For this purpose it is endowed with marvellous contrivances in the way of buds and seeds. A very large number of our weeds, such as the thistle, groundsel, dandelion, colts-foot, scabious, daisy, ragwort, are composite flowers. The apparently single blossom is in reality a colony of separate blossoms, compressed by the obliteration of their floral stems around one central axis. In most of our weeds the floral parts are small and inconspicuous. The reproductive act is so arranged as to economise material and to exhaust the vital force as little as possible, and the organs concerned in it are reduced to the simplest forms consistent with efficiency. Most of the species can be fertilized by the wind, which is always available, or by

the help of insects that have a wide range of distribution and are abundant everywhere. In consequence of this floral economy, the vegetative system acquires a greater predominance in this class of plants than in almost any other, so that the life of the individual is carefully preserved even amid the most untoward conditions. A weed, by reason of the strength of its vegetative system, is able to stand extremes of heat and cold, and to recover from the roughest usage. It will hold on to life in circumstances which would prove fatal to most other plants; and in this way it can abide the most favourable time for the development of its blossoms and seeds. Nay, it can propagate itself as well without blossoms as with them. Many of our weeds form long creeping stems, giving off at every joint buds which will produce perfect plants, and greatly extend the area which they occupy. That weeds belong to the most recent and specialized flora of the world is evident from their wide distribution and wonderful powers of colonization. In our own country they number about two hundred and thirty, and constitute about a seventh part of our native flora. We are constantly receiving accessions from the continent, along with the seeds of our cultivated plants. In company with the wheat and barley that can be cultivated in India down to the tropic zone, because they can be sowed and reaped during the coldest quarter of the year, have been introduced a crowd of the common annual weeds of our country, such as the shepherd's purse, the chickweed, the spurge, and the corn-pimpernel, which also run through the cycle of their lives in the winter quarter. Half the weeds of American agriculture have been imported from Europe; and of the 2,100 flowering plants of the Northern United States, 320 are European. Australia and New Zealand have sent us no weeds, and America only a very few. The solution of this mystery, as Dr. Seemann clearly proves, is not to be found in any consideration of climate, soil, or circumstances. It is a question of race. The present flora of the United States and of Australia is older than the Germanic flora which now constitutes the principal vegetation of Europe. It is very similar to, if not absolutely identical with, that of Europe during the Miocene and Eocene epochs. America and Australia have not yet arrived at the degree of floral development to which Europe has attained; consequently plants coming to our country from Australia and America would not come as colonists, with a new part to play in it, but as survivors of an older flora whose cycle of existence had ages ago run out there. Our system of the rotation of crops is based upon the fact that the soil which has borne one kind of harvest will not produce the same next year, but requires another kind of crop to be grown on it. And Nature in her wilds carefully observes the same law. Whatever our weeds were in the original state, they are now like the corn which man sows in the same field with them, endowed with habits so long acquired that they will part with their life sooner than abandon them. The original wild plant of the corn—if there ever was such a thing, and this admits of grave doubts—from which our corn was developed, may have been able to propagate and extend itself freely independent of man; but we know that without man's agency, the corn, as it is now modified, would perish. It does not grow of its own accord, or by the natural dispersion and germination of its seed. Left to itself, it would quickly disappear and become extinct. The one condition of its permanency in the world, of its growth in quantities sufficient for man's food, is that it be sown by man in ground carefully prepared beforehand to receive it. The same rule would appear to hold good in regard to the weeds which, in spite of himself, he cultivates along with it, and whose persistent presence makes the cultivation of the soil so difficult to him. We know them only in an artificial condition as abnormal forms of original wild types; and as such as they are incapable of continuing themselves without man's help. Left to grow in soil that has reverted to its original wild condition, they would soon be overpowered by the surrounding vegetation, the grasses and mosses, and in a shorter or longer space of time they would inevitably disappear. I have seen many ruins of dwellings in upland glens from which the nettles and all the weeds that once grew in the field and garden-plot have utterly vanished, leaving only a dense thicket of bracken, or a lovely smooth carpet of greensward, to indicate among the heather that man had once inhabited the place. We are bound, therefore, to believe that so long as man cultivates the ground, so long will these weeds make their appearance, and in striking correlation with the primeval curse, compel him in the sweat of his face to eat his bread. When he ceases to till the ground, they will cease to grow in it. (*H. Macmillan, LL.D.*) *Consequences of the Fall*:—The world was made for man, and man for God. The upper link gave way, and all that depended on it fell. Man rebelled, and carried away from its allegiance a

subject world. (W. Arnot.) *The Fall robbed man of his glory*:—The harp of Eden, alas! is broken. Unstrung and mute an exiled race have hung it on the willows; and Ichabod stands written now in the furrows of man's guilty forehead, and on the wreck of his ruined estate. Some things remain unaffected by the blight of sin, as God made them for Himself; the flowers have lost neither their bloom nor fragrance; the rose smells as sweet as it did when bathed in the dews of paradise, and seas and seasons, obedient to their original impulse, roll on as of old to their Maker's glory. But from man, alas! how is the glory departed? Look at his body when the light of the eye is quenched, and the countenance is changed, and the noble form is festering in corruption—mouldering into the dust of death. Or, change still more hideous, look at the soul! The spirit of piety dead, the mind under a dark eclipse, hatred to God rankling in that once loving heart, it retains but some vestiges of its original grandeur, just enough, like the beautiful tracery and noble arches of a ruined pile, to make us feel what glory once was there, and now is gone. (T. Guthrie, D.D.) *Testimony to man's Fall*:—No man that takes a view of his own dark and blinded mind, his slow and dull apprehension, his uncertain staggering judgment, roving conjectures, feeble and mistaken reasonings about matters that concern him most; ill inclinations, propension to what is unlawful to him and destructive, aversion to his truest interests and best good, irresolution, drowsy sloth, exorbitant and ravenous appetites and desires, impotent and self-veking passions, can think human nature, in him, is in its primitive integrity, and as pure as when it first issued from its high and most pure original. (J. Howe.)

The doctrine of the Fall, commended to man's reason:—The two great systems of nature and revelation are sometimes supposed to clash—to be opposed to each other; as if the revealings of the one were inconsistent with the discoveries of the other; as if they were two volumes, of which the principles and details of one were opposed to the principles and details of the other. The truth of this matter seems to be, that revelation differs from nature only in this, that revelation pours a broader and a clearer light upon the mysteries of creation. When we look forth upon the face of nature in the dim and shadowy twilight of morning, and when again we look forth upon the same scene in the bright and unclouded splendour of noon, there is no actual change in the landscape; the mountains have not changed their place, the forests have not changed their trees, the rivers have not changed their course; the only difference is, that the splendour of noon has flung a brighter and a clearer light than the grey mists of the morning. We are too often met with high panegyrics upon the qualities and the powers of man, and we are told in every variety of language of the lofty virtues of man—of the dignity of human nature—of the towering intellect, the refined feeling, and the virtuous heart of man; and we are told of all this, as if his powers had never been impaired, or as if his intellect had never been shattered, or as if his virtues had never been blighted, or his heart been corrupted, or his feelings debased, and his whole nature become the wreck and ruin of what it once had been. The line of argument, along which we shall endeavour to conduct you, shall go to prove that this great principle of revelation is also a principle of nature; and that though it lies unexplained in the pages of natural religion, it is explained and accounted for in the pages of revealed religion. We shall consider the subject, first, in reference to the world, and then in reference to man. 1. And first we argue, that nature is ever presenting to us evidences of the Fall, and that those evidences discover themselves to us in the present aspect of our world. It is very true, that as the eye wanders throughout all the departments of nature, it can trace the evidences of the love and the benevolence of the great Creator. In the language of the apostle, "He gives rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." And not only this, but we find that the smallest flower of the field has all that is required for its existence and its loveliness, as much as the stateliest tree of the forest; and the minutest insect of creation has all that enables it to fulfil the ends of its being, as much as the mightiest and the noblest in the animal world. But in the midst of all this living and breathing evidence, he will discover evidences of an opposite character; he will discover evidences of the going forth of wrath—that some evil has befallen our world; and he will discover that the evidences of Divine benevolence are not more palpable than these evidences of Divine wrath. We allude not now to the poverty, the wretchedness, the helplessness, the diseases, the deaths, that press and crush the family of man; but we allude to those physical phenomena, that are everywhere discoverable throughout all the fields of creation. If there be lands where all is beauty and fertility, there are also lands where all is waste and sterility. If there

be climates where all is balmy and delicious and calm, there are also climates where all is darkened with clouds and disturbed by storms. There are wide regions of our globe, so enwrapped in the mantle of eternal snows, and so defended by vast icy barriers, that like the very battlements of nature, they resist the foot of man. There are wide regions of our globe, even in the most delicious climes, where the stateliest trees of the forest and the loveliest flowers of the field and the richest fruits of the ground grow spontaneously with a strange luxuriance, where yet at the same time the fatal vapours and the envenomed atmosphere preclude the presence of man, as effectually as the angel with the flaming sword precluded him at the gate of paradise. And while these characteristics are discernible throughout the face of creation, there are at the same time mighty and tremendous agents of evil, called into existence by the Creator and sent abroad into our world; agents more destructive than the angel of the Passover that slew the first-born of Egypt; and more terrible than the angel of destruction that smote the host of Sennacherib. If the going forth of these angels from heaven is to be regarded as a going forth of wrath from the Creator, what shall we think of the spirit of the simoon, that from time to time has lifted the sands of the African deserts, and has borne them onward like the waves of the sea, till the stateliest cities of Egypt and the most gigantic architecture the world has ever seen, lie even to this hour buried deep, deep, within their bosom? What shall we think of the spirit of the volcano, pouring forth rivers of burning lava and clouds of smoking dust, enwrapping whole regions in terrific conflagration, and, as in Italy, beautiful Italy, burying cities with all their miserable inhabitants? What shall we think of the spirit of the earthquake by which whole districts have been wasted, mighty nations submerged beneath the waves, stately cities sunk into ruins, and whole continents "frighted from their propriety"? But where nature is thus silent, revelation speaks. Where the volume of nature closes, the volume of revelation opens. Nature reveals to us the fact that our world is a fallen and a ruined world; revelation gives the explanation of that fact: that in consequence of sin our world has fallen under the curse of its Creator, that it has been a bright and a beautiful and a happy world, but that in consequence of sin a curse was uttered, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life," and that from henceforth a darkening destiny has been enchained to our planet. Wrath has gone forth against it; and our once beautiful world has become a fallen world. 2. But, as we intimated at the commencement, this argument may be carried further, and may be applied to the moral condition of man, quite as conclusively as to his physical condition. Or perhaps, to speak more correctly, it may be applied to the present condition of man, quite as conclusively as to the present condition of the world in which he lives. The destiny of man is a destiny of trouble. The experience of every man justifies the statement of the patriarch, that "man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward." It is the belief of the heathen; it is the creed of the Christian; it is the record of the historian; it is the maxim of the philosopher; it is the song of the poet. We will not believe—we cannot believe, that a God of benevolence and love, a God who must delight Himself in the comforts and not in the sorrows, in the happiness and not in the miseries of His creatures, originally created man for so melancholy a doom. And the same remark will apply to his moral condition. There are in the heart of every man the workings of evil passions, the strugglings of carnal tendencies, the violence of feelings that are not good: licentiousness of thought, the constant resistance to the empire of holiness, the striving of the flesh against the spirit. There are the anger, the malice, the hatred, the revenge, the covetousness, the ambition, the wars, the bloodshed, that characterize the whole history of man, so that it is little else than a history of the wars and the bloodshed that ambition and pride and revenge and every foul and hateful passion have called into existence. We will not believe—we cannot believe—that a God of benevolence and love, a God of holiness and of peace, could have originally created man in this state, or planted in his heart unholy passions like these. This sad condition of man is a fact that may be read in the pages of natural religion; but the explanation of the fact, and the causes of this sad condition, are a mystery in natural religion. But it is here that revelation interposes and resolves the mystery. Natural religion, like the astrologers of Chaldea, could not read the mysterious handwriting on the wall: but revealed religion, like the prophet of the Lord, reads and interprets the writing. The words of the Creator, as addressed to Adam, were—"In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life"; and again—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread"; and again, to the woman—"In

sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." (*M. H. Seymour, M.A.*) *Natural evidence of the curse*.—I. If this sentence was executed upon man and the earth, without all doubt it may at this day be distinguished; therefore let us inquire in the first place whether there are any signs of a "curse upon the ground"? Towards the latter end of the fifth chapter of Genesis we read, that when a son was born to Lamech, he called his name Noah, which signifies comfort, because he was to "comfort them concerning their work, and toil of their hands, because of the ground which the Lord had cursed." Lamech knew, therefore, that a curse had been pronounced upon the ground, for the transgression of Adam; and he knew also, either by tradition, or the spirit of prophecy, that it should take place more fully in the days of Noah, whose favour and acceptance with God should give comfort to men, and render more tolerable that toil and labour which should be the necessary consequence of this curse upon the ground; which, therefore, was brought upon the earth by the general deluge. When the wickedness and violence of the human race had wearied out the patience and long-suffering of God, and obliged His justice to inflict the punishment which had been threatened, He declared in His revelation to Noah that He would destroy man with the earth. St. Peter also confirms the same, where he takes occasion to inform ungodly men, that the "world which then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Whence it appears that the flood should, and actually did, amount to a destruction of the earth, of which destruction and the manner of it, the earth in all parts has so many signs at this day, that a man endued with eyesight, understanding, and a very little experience, cannot choose but to see and acknowledge it. II. A second consequence of the Fall, as it stands in the words of the text is, Sorrow to man in the eating of the fruit of the ground. And here it may be useful to observe how the punishment of man is suited to the nature of his crime. His first and great act of disobedience was eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree; and it was surely just and proper that he who had eaten in sin should thenceforth eat in sorrow. We are indeed upon terms with our Creator quite different from the lilies of the field, or the fowls of the air: they are now as He made them at first, but we are not so; and hence it comes to pass that labour and travel is a law of universal obligation, and that "if any man will not work neither should he eat." III. The third part of the sentence pronounced upon man's disobedience, is the prevailing of thorns and thistles upon the ground. If the powers and properties of these two sorts of vegetables be well considered, it will soon appear how well they are fitted to propagate a curse, by increasing the trouble and labour we are obliged to bestow in the cultivation of the earth. For these are much more strong and fruitful than such herbs and grain as are of the greatest use; and they are more apt to disperse themselves abroad and overrun the ground. With respect to thistles in particular, we shall discover a very plain reason for this, if we compare their seeds with the seeds of wheat. For the grain of wheat ought to be lodged at some little depth in the earth, to which it cannot easily reach without human assistance. It can only be shed, and fall down from the ear upon the surface of the ground, where it would be exposed, and ready to be devoured by the birds of the air, or the vermin of the earth, or perhaps lie till it rotted and perished with rain and frost for want of being covered with earth. But the seeds of thistles presently strike down roots in the earth wherever they happen to light, and need no such care and assistance. Then again the grains of wheat are naked and heavy, and can fall only as a dead weight at the foot of the plant which bore them, without being able to stir any farther, and shift themselves to a place fit for their reception and growth. But the case is much otherwise with the seeds of thistles. These are small and light, and are furnished with a fine downy plume, which serves them as wings, by means of which they are borne up and wafted about from place to place by every breath of wind, till they are transplanted to every corner of the field where the parent thistle grew, inasmuch that when this plant is ripe, and its seeds hanging loose and disposed to fall off, it is common to see large fields covered all over with them, after any little wind. Nor ought it to be passed over that there is a great difference in the multiplication of these two kinds of seed. Some sorts of thistles bear thirty, some fifty, and some upwards of a hundred heads, with a hundred (and in some kinds several hundred) seeds in each of the heads. And if a moderate reckoning be made, and we suppose all the seeds to take rightly, grow up and fructify, then one single plant would produce at the first crop above twenty thousand: which succeeding in like manner, would bring a second crop of several hundreds of millions; an increase so enormous

as can hardly be imagined: and it is plain that a few crops more, if not hindered by some means, but carried regularly on, would in a very short time stock the whole globe of the earth in such a manner as scarcely to leave room for anything else. But some thistles have other ways of planting and spreading themselves, besides that of propagating by their seeds. The common way-thistle, as it is called, besides its innumerable seeds, all winged and prepared for flight, hath its roots spreading to great lengths, and sending up suckers or new plants on every side of it. In a little while these, if suffered to continue, send up others, and they more, without tale or end. So that by this method only, one plant will overrun a vast tract of land in a very short time, suppressing, stifling, and destroying all other good and useful herbage. Besides, it is not every soil that is fit for the nourishment of wheat, and scarcely any will produce it for more than two or three years together, without great expense being bestowed on its cultivation: whereas there is hardly any ground or soil whatsoever, high or low, hill, valley, or plain, where thistles will not take and flourish for ages together. Having said so much upon thistles, I may be shorter in my remarks upon thorns; the rather because a great deal of what has been offered concerning the former is as true of the latter; which grow in almost every kind of soil, running on and increasing of themselves, and endued with the same worthless nature and mischievous qualities. For a proof of this we need only look upon the bramble, which occurs everywhere, and throws itself about without measure. The berries it bears are innumerable, and each of them contains a large mass of seeds. The roots push forward under ground, and the branches and suckers running on to great lengths, trail upon the ground, and send down fresh roots out of their sides; by which means they are diffused about, and multiplied without bounds. But as to thorns, the chief example we have is in that species which is known by the name of the gorse or furze. This is the vilest and most mischievous shrub upon the face of the earth. It will let nothing thrive or prosper, or so much as grow near it. It is so beset with prickles, that it is hardly possible to approach it in any way without hurt: and so fruitful withal, that for almost half the year it is covered or rather loaded with flowers, all of which go off into pods, charged with seeds. It shoots forth stubborn roots far and near, from which other young plants are growing up: these send up others as fast as the mother plant, so that we need the less wonder to see this noxious thorn so plentifully abounding, and such large tracts of land wholly covered and overrun by it. Other thorns are of so hard and stubborn a nature as to render it exceedingly difficult, and always impracticable without great labour and expense and patience, ever wholly to extirpate and clear the ground of them. If these things are duly reflected upon, it must be allowed that the sentence upon Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it, thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," was effectually put in execution; and that not only upon him, but more especially upon us, his posterity to the end of the world. When we think of this curse upon the ground, we should also remember that it extends to our own heart, which, since the Fall, is by nature barren and unprofitable. It is a soil in which every ill weed will take root and spread itself. There the thorns of worldly care, and the thistles of worldly vanity, will grow and flourish. As the husbandman watches his land, so should the Christian search and examine his heart, that he may cast out of it all those unprofitable weeds and roots of bitterness which will naturally get possession of it. If this work is rightly performed, the soil will be ready for the good seed of the word of God, which will spring up and prosper under the influence of Divine grace, as the corn groweth by a blessing of rain and sunshine from the heaven above. (*W. Jones, M.A.*)

Thorns the curse of Adam and the crown of Christ:—Nature is a mirror in which we behold both the skill and character of the Divine Artificer; but the reflected image—owing to the peculiarity of the material, or of the angle of vision—is not always a true one. In every part of creation we find examples of wasted energy and frustrated design; foundations laid, but the building never completed; the skeleton formed, but never clothed with living flesh; an unceasing production of means that are never used, embryos that are never vivified, germs that are never developed. We cannot, however, in such things, measure the Divine proceedings by our human standards; for, taking a larger view of the subject, we find that the imperfection of particular parts is necessary for the perfection of the whole scheme, and all instances of failure are made to work together for the general good. It is to this tendency of nature to overflow its banks, to attempt more than she can execute, to

begin more than she can finish, that we owe our own daily bread. For if the corn-plant produced only a sufficient number of seeds barely to perpetuate the species, there would be no annual miracle of the multiplication of the loaves; and man, always at the point of starvation, could neither replenish and subdue the earth, nor accomplish any of the great purposes of his existence. Thorns are among the most striking examples of failure on the part of nature to reach an ideal perfection. They are not essential organs, perfect parts, but in every case altered or abortive structures. They are formed in two different ways. When the hairs that occur on the stem of a plant are enlarged and hardened, they form rigid opaque conical processes such as those of the rose and the bramble. The so-called thorns of these plants are not, however, true thorns, but prickles, for they have only a superficial origin, being produced by the epidermis only, and having no connection with the woody tissue. They may be easily separated from the stem, without leaving any mark or laceration behind. True thorns or spines, on the contrary, have a deeper origin and cannot be so removed. They are not compound hardened hairs, but abnormal conditions of buds and branches. A branch, owing to poverty of soil, or unfavourable circumstances, does not develop itself; it produces no twigs or leaves; it therefore assumes the spinous or thorny form, terminating in a more or less pointed extremity, as in the common hawthorn. In some cases, as in the sloe, we see the transformation going on at different stages; some branches bearing leaves on their lower portions and terminating in spines. A bud by some means or other becomes abortive; there is a deficiency of nutriment to stimulate its growth; it does not develop into blossom and fruit. Its growing point, therefore, is hardened; its scaly envelopes are consolidated into woody fibre, and the whole bud becomes a sharp thorn. Leaves are also occasionally arrested in their development and changed into thorns, as in the stipules of Robinia, of the common barberry, and of several species of acacia. The middle nerve of the leaf in a few instances absorbs to itself all the parenchyma or green cellular substance, and therefore hardens into a thorn; and in the holly all the veins of the leaves become spiny. In all these cases thorns are not necessary, but accidental appendages, growths arrested and transformed by unfavourable circumstances; and nature, by the law of compensation, converts them into means of defence to the plants on which they are produced—not very effective defences in most instances, but still analogous to the spines of the hedgehog and the quills of the porcupine, and typical of the plan according to which nature supplies some method of preservation to every living thing that is liable to be injured. By cultivation many thorny plants may be deprived of their spines. The apple, the pear, and the plum tree, in a wild state are thickly covered with thorns; but when reared in the shelter of the garden, and stimulated by all the elements most favourable for their full development, they lose these thorns, which become changed into leafy branches, and blossoming and fruit-bearing buds. In this way man acquires the rights assigned to him by God, and nature yields to him the pledges of his sovereignty, and reaches her own ideal of beauty and perfection by his means. But when, on the other hand, he ceases to dress and keep the garden, nature regains her former supremacy, and brings back the cultivated plants to a wilder and more disordered condition than at first. A garden abandoned to neglect, owing to the absence or the carelessness of the owner, presents a drearier spectacle than the untamed wilderness; everything bursting out into rank luxuriance; stems originally smooth covered with prickles, and buds that would have burst into blossoms changed into thorns. It is a remarkable circumstance that whenever man cultivates nature, and then abandons her to her own unaided energies, the result is far worse than if he had never attempted to improve her at all. No country in the world, now that it has been so long let out of cultivation, has such a variety and abundance of thorny plants, as the once-favoured heritage of God's people, the land flowing with milk and honey. Travellers call the Holy Land "a land of thorns." This tendency of nature to produce a greater variety of thorny plants in ground let out of cultivation, as illustrated by the present vegetation of Palestine, throws considerable light upon the curse pronounced upon Adam when he had sinned: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Many individuals believe that we have in this curse the origin of thorns and thistles—that they were previously altogether unknown in the economy of nature. It is customary to picture Eden as a paradise of immaculate loveliness, in which everything was perfect, and all the objects of nature harmonized with the holiness and happiness of our first parents. The ground yielded only beautiful flowers and fruitful trees—every plant reached the

highest ideal of form, colour, and usefulness of which it was capable. Preachers and poets in all ages have made the most of this beautiful conception. It is not, however, Scripture or scientific truth, but human fancy. Nowhere in the singularly measured and reticent account given in Genesis of man's first home do we find anything, if rightly interpreted, that encourages us to form such an ideal picture of it. It was admirably adapted to man's condition, but it was not in all respects ideally perfect. The vegetation that came fresh from God's hand, and bore the impress of His seal that it was all very good, was created for death and reproduction; for it was called into being as "the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree bearing fruit, whose seed was in itself." We must remember, too, that it was before and not after the Fall that Adam was put into the garden to "dress and keep it." The very fact that such a process of dressing and keeping was necessary, indicates in the clearest manner that nature was not at first ideally perfect. The skill and toil of man called in, presuppose that there were luxuriant growths to be pruned, tendencies of vegetation to be checked or stimulated, weeds to be extirpated, tender flowers to be trained and nursed, and fruits to be more richly developed. The primeval blessing consisted in replenishing the earth and subduing it; and in no other way could man subdue the earth than by cultivating it. But the process of cultivation of necessity implies the existence of thorns and weeds. For in cultivating any spot we have to contend against the great law of nature which spreads every plant as widely as its constitution will permit. What then, we may ask, is implied in the language of the curse, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee"? The Hebrew form of the curse implies, not that a new thing should happen, but that an old thing should be intensified and exhibited in new relations. Just as the rainbow, which was formerly a mere natural phenomenon, became after the flood the symbol of the great world covenant; just as death, which during all the long ages of geology had been a mere phase of life, the termination of existence, became after the Fall the most bitter and poisonous fruit of sin: so thorns, which in the innocent Eden were the effects of a law of vegetation, became significant intimations of man's deteriorated condition. It is in relation to man, solely, that we are to look at the curse; for though the production of briars and thorn-bearing plants may add to man's labour and distress, it supplies food and enjoyment for multitudes of inferior creatures, and especially birds and insects. Man, in Eden, was placed in the most favourable circumstances. It was a garden specially prepared by God Himself for his habitation, and stocked with all that he could reasonably require. It was to be a pattern after which his own efforts in improving the world were to be modelled—a coign of vantage, a select and blessed centre, from which he was by degrees to subdue the wild prodigality of nature, and make of the earth an extended paradise. And, therefore, though the native tendencies of vegetation were not altogether eradicated, they were so far restrained that the dressing and keeping of the garden furnished him with healthful employment for all his powers of body and mind, and conferred upon him the dignity of developing the perfection, which potentially, though not actually, existed in nature, and thus becoming a fellow-worker with God. But when excluded from Eden, he had to encounter, with powers greatly weakened by sin, the full, merciless force of nature's untamed energies; energies, too, excited into greater opposition against him by his own efforts to subdue them. For, as I have already said, the very process of cultivation, while it removes the thorns and briars of the soil, will, if it be given up, produce a greater variety and luxuriance of thorns and thistles than the ground originally produced. The very fertility imparted to the soil would, if allowed to nourish its native vegetation, result in a greater rankness of useless growth. And therefore the tiller of the ground must never relax his efforts. I believe that the thorns and briars thus introduced in connection with the human epoch, but before the Fall, were anticipative consequences, prophetic symbols of that Fall. We err greatly, if we suppose that sin came into the world unexpectedly—produced a sudden shock and dislocation throughout nature, and took God as it were by surprise—that the atonement was a Divine after-thought to remedy a defect in God's creative foresight and natural law. He who sees the end from the beginning, knew that such a mournful moral lapse would happen—that Creation would fall with its king and high priest, and had therefore made preparations for it, not only in the plans of heaven, but also in the objects and arrangements of earth. There are many things in the scheme of nature which have a reference to the fact of sin before it became a fact; which remind us unmistakably that God, in fitting up this world to be the habitation of a moral being who should fall through sin, and be restored through

suffering, had filled it with types and symbols of that fall and that restoration. When God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," He acted according to a plan uniformly pursued by Him in all His subsequent dispensations and dealings with men; by which in gracious condescension to our twofold nature, and to the carnal and spiritual classes of mankind. He associated the natural with the spiritual, gave the outward sign of the inward spiritual truth. He set the field of nature with types of degeneracy and arrested growth, which should symbolize to man the consequences upon his own nature of his own sin. What then are the thorns, looking at them in this typical aspect, produced by the sinful, accursed soil of man's heart and life?

1. Labour is one of the thorns of the curse. "All things," says the wise man, "are full of labour." Without it life cannot be maintained. Unremitting labour from day to day and from year to year—except in the case of a few races into whose lap nature pours, almost unsolicited, her prodigal stores, and who therefore continue children in body and mind all their lives—is the condition upon which we receive our daily bread. Much of this labour is indeed healthy. In work alone is health and life; and it is for work that God has created faculties. But how much of it, nevertheless, is terrible drudgery, effectually hindering the development of the higher faculties of the mind and soul, wearisome effort, vanity, and vexation of spirit! How much of failure is there in it, of disproportion between desires and results! How much of it is like rolling the fabled stone of Sisyphus up the steep hill only to roll down again immediately—like weaving ropes of sand! How often does the heart despair amid the unprofitableness of all its labour under the sun! We plough our fields and sow our seed; but instead of a bountiful harvest to reward us, too often comes up a crop of thorns and thistles, to wound the toiling hand and pierce the aching brow.

2. Then there is the thorn of pain—the darkest mystery of life. Some maintain that pain exists by necessity, that it has its root in the essential order of the world. It is the thorn that guards the rose of pleasure—the sting that protects the honey of life. But ask any martyr to physical suffering if that explanation satisfies him. Why, if the purpose of pain is a purely benevolent one, should it be so excessive? Why should it rend and rack the frame with agony? Why should it last so long? Methinks, if pain were meant merely to warn us of the presence of evil, and guard us against it, that a much less degree and a shorter duration of it would suffice. The Bible, and the Bible alone, tells us the cause and the origin of it. It tells us that it is nothing else than a witness for sin—the thorn which man's body, weakened and palsied by sin, produces. Man feels in his body the physical consequences of the death which his soul has died. He has the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, that he may be reminded continually of his sin and mortality, and be induced to walk softly all the days of his life.

3. Then there is the thorn of sorrow. Every branch of the human tree may be arrested and transformed by some casualty into a thorn of sorrow. The staff of friendship upon which we lean may break and pierce the hand. The bud of love which we cherish in our heart, and feed with the life-blood of our affections, may be blighted by the chill of death, and become a thorn to wound us grievously. That civilization which has lessened physical troubles, has rendered us more susceptible to mental ones; and side by side with its manifold sources of enjoyment, are opened up manifold sources of suffering. And why is all this? Why is man, so highly cultivated, the possessor of such vast resources of science and art, still born to trouble as the sparks fly upward? There is no possible way of accounting for it save by the primeval curse: "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life."

4. And lastly, as the climax of all life's evils, is death, the prospect and the endurance of it, from both of which our whole nature, originally made in the image of God, and destined to live for ever, revolts with the utmost abhorrence. Such are the thorns which man's nature, under the withering, distorting curse of sin, produces. Cursed is the ground within, as well as the ground without, for man's sake; and in labour, in pain, in sorrow, and in death, does he eat of its fruit. From all these thorns Jesus came to deliver us. The second Adam in the poverty of His condition has recovered for us all that the first Adam in the plenitude of his blessings lost. The Roman soldiers platted a crown of thorns and put it upon the head of Jesus; but they little knew the significance of the act. Upon the august brow of man's Surety and Substitute was thus placed in symbol, what was done in spiritual reality, a chaplet woven of those very thorns which the ground, cursed for man's sake, produced. None of these thorns grew in the sacred soil of Jesus' heart. But He who knew no sin was made sin for us. He

was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He could, no doubt, by the exercise of His almighty power, remove the thorns of man's life. He who created the world by a word, had only to command, and it should be done. But not in this way could the necessities of the case be met. It was no mere arbitrary power that called the thorns into existence; it was justice and judgment; and, therefore, mere arbitrary power could not eradicate them; it required mercy and truth. And mercy and truth could be reconciled with justice and judgment only by the obedience and sacrifice of the Son of God. Jesus had, therefore, to wear the thorns which man's sin had developed, in order that man might enjoy the peaceful fruits of righteousness which Christ's atonement had produced. And what is the result? By wearing these thorns He has blunted them, plucked them out of our path, out of our heart, out of our life. By enduring them He conquered them. The crown of pain became the crown of triumph; and the submission to ignominy and suffering became the assertion and establishment of a sovereignty over every form of suffering. Evil is now a vanquished power. Every woe bears upon it the inscription "overcome." He bore the thorny crown of labour, and labour is now a sacred thing, a precious discipline, a merciful education. It is the lowest step of the ladder by which man ascends the Edenic height from which he fell. He wore the thorny crown of pain, and pain is now robbed of the element that exasperates our nature against it. By His own example He teaches us that we must be made perfect through suffering; and knowing this, we do not feel pain to be less, but we feel a strength and a patience which enable us to rise superior to it. As the Prince of sufferers, He wore the thorny crown of sorrow, and He has made, in the experience of His afflicted ones, that abortive thorn to produce the blossom of holiness and the fruit of righteousness. Sorrow is no more to the Christian the curse of Adam, but the cross of Christ. It is the crown and badge of his royal dignity, the proof of Divine sonship. And, lastly, He wore the thorny crown of death; and therefore He says, "If a man keep My sayings, he shall not see death." He has indeed to pass through the state, but the bitterness of death for him is past. He has only to finish his course with joy; to fall asleep in Jesus; to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. (*H. Macmillan, LL.D.*)

A lesson from the ground:—"If my horse, if my ox, if my dog, do not do as I want them to do," says the angry man, "I make them," and then with his blood boiling hot he goes out into the fields, and he can do nothing! The ground says, "If you want to do anything with me you must do it with hopeful patience; I am a school in which men learn the meaning of patient industry, patient hopefulness. I never answer the anger of a fool or the passion of a demented man. I rest." We cannot compel nature to keep pace with our impatience; man cannot hasten the wheel of the seasons; man cannot drive nature out of its calm and solemn movement; his own fields keep him at bay. He would like to get on faster, faster—it would please him to have three wheat harvests every year, it would delight him to have an orchard-stripping on the first day of every month. He makes his dog go out when he likes—his own trees put out their branches without him and mock his fury. Nature says, "I must have my long holiday"; nature says, "I must have my long, long sleep." Without recreation and rest, man's life would not be solidly and productively developed; he may be lashed and scourged and overdriven and maddened, but broad, massive, enduring growth he never can realize unless he operates upon the law of steady slowness. Such is the great lesson of nature. We sometimes think we could improve the arrangements of Providence in this matter of the ground. A man standing in his wheat-field is apt to feel that it would be an exceedingly admirable arrangement if he could have another crop of wheat within the year. He thinks it could be managed: he takes up the roots out of the earth and he says, "This will never do; why, I have lost my year herein—now I will command the ground to bring forth another crop," and this agricultural Canute, having waved his hand over the fields, is answered with silence. That must be your law of progress. There is the very great temptation to hasten to be rich. I see a man in yonder corner, not half so able as I am, never had half the education I have had, and by a lucky swing of the hand he makes ten thousand pounds, and I am labouring at my mill, or at my counter, or in my field, and am getting very little—and very slowly. I look in the other corner and see exactly such another man, and he, too, by a lucky twist of the hand, makes ten thousand a-year; and I never make one, by long, patient, steady work. I know what I will do; I'll put off this old labourer's coat, and buy a new fine one, and go and join these men and do as they do, and I will have a hundred thousand pounds in a month, and horses and

carriages and estates, and I will not go at this slow snail pace any longer—why should I? I go—and I fail, as I deserve to do. Society never could be built upon the action of such men as have now been described. They may be doing nothing dishonourable, they may be acting in a very proper way, there are no laws that have not exceptions attached to them—I broadly acknowledge the honourableness of many exceptions to this law of land-like slowness of cultivation and growth, but the solid everlasting law of human life is labour, patience, expenditure, hopefulness, little to little, a step at a time, line upon line, and if you trifle with that law you will bring yourself into a state of intellectual unhealthiness, into a condition of moral exaggeration, and you will labour upon wrong principles, and reach, by rapid strides, unhappy conclusions. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Spiritual cultivation.—So it is in spiritual cultivation—you cannot grow a character in a week. There are some long thin stalks that you can buy in a garden market for about a shilling a dozen, and you put up these, and say, “Do grow, if you please; do get up, and do broaden yourselves and make something like a garden about us,” and the long thin stalks, spindle-shanks, look at you, and cannot be hastened, though you mock them with their leanness, and scourge them with your unruly tongue. Look at those grand old cedars and oaks and wide-spreading chestnuts. Why are they so noble? Because they are so old. They have been rocked by a hundred wintry nurses, blessed by a thousand summer visitants, and they express the result of the long processes. They have told their tale to fifty winters, caught the blessing of fifty summers, waved musically in the storm, guested the birds of the air, and all the while have been striking their roots deeper and deeper, farther and farther into the rich soil. So must it be with human character; you cannot extemporise moral greatness, it is a slow growth. Money cannot take the place of time; time is an element in the development and sublimising of character; time stands alone and cannot be compounded for by all the wealth in all the gold mines of creation. This spiritual cultivation not only cannot be hastened, but sometimes it is very hard. As a general rule, indeed, it is very difficult; it is not easy to grow in grace. Some of us live too near the smoke ever to be very great trees, or even very fruitful bushes. Circumstances are heavily against us; we are not placed in favourable localities or under very gracious conditions. The house is small, the income is little, the children are many and noisy, the demands upon time and attention and patience are incessant, health is not very good and cheerful, the temperament is a little despondent and very susceptible to injurious influences, and how to grow in Christ Jesus under such circumstances as these, the Saviour Himself only knows. Be thankful to God, therefore, that the bruised reed is not broken, that though you are faint, still you are pursuing, that though you are very weak in the limb and cannot run hard in this uphill race, your eyes are fixed in the right quarter; and the fixing and sparkling of your eye has a meaning which God’s heart knows well. (*Ibid.*)

Observations.—I. THORNS AND THISTLES, AND ALL UNPROFITABLE WEEDS, ARE THE EFFECT OF GOD’S CURSE UPON MAN FOR SIN. 1. Seeing all creatures are His servants, as David calls them (*Psa. cxix. 91*), He can bring them up, and plant them where He pleaseth, who doth whatsoever He will in heaven and earth (*Psa. cxxxv. 6*). 2. Neither can God in respect to His own honour, do less injustice than to withhold His blessing from the creatures, that should be for our service, as we withhold from Him our service of obedience, which we owe Him by our covenant. II. AS WE ARE MORE OR LESS SERVICEABLE UNTO GOD, SO WE MAY EXPECT THAT THE CREATURE SHALL BE MORE OR LESS SERVICEABLE UNTO US. 1. God’s blessing upon the creatures, is that only by which they are made useful unto us. Now God in justice can do no less than recompense all men according to their deeds (*Isa. lix. 17-18*; *Psa. lxiii. 12*), and that not only in that great day of judgment, but even at present, and in outward things, that men may see and acknowledge it, as *Psa. lxxviii. 11*. 2. Neither is there a means more effectual to prevail with men in general, to walk in a course of obedience, than when they find all the creatures against them in a course of rebellion. III. GOD MAKES GOOD HIS PROMISES, BY WHICH HE HATH ENGAGED HIMSELF UNTO US, THOUGH WE FAIL IN OUR COVENANT BY WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED UNTO HIM. See *Psa. lxxviii. 37, 38*, and *lxxxix. 32, 33, 34*; *2 Tim. ii. 13*. Reason—1. God’s promises are founded upon His own goodness and truth which cannot fail (*Psa. cxix. 89, 90, 160*). 2. God knew beforehand what we are, even before He engaged Himself unto us (see *Psa. ciii. 13, 14*). 3. And if He should take advantage of every forfeiture, He must necessarily undo His children, who trespass daily against Him. 4. And hath therefore given His Son

Christ to take away our sins; if we hold fast the covenant, and do not wickedly depart from it though we fail many ways (1 John ii. 1, 2). IV. **THOUGH GOD WHEN HE PARDONS OUR SIN, RESTORES US HIS BLESSINGS WHICH WE FORFEITED THEREBY, YET WE ENJOY THEM WITH SOME DIMINUTION AND ABATEMENT.** (*J. White, M.A.*) **IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT BREAD.**—*The ordinance of toil.*—I. **THE NECESSITY OF TOIL IS AT FIRST CONNECTED WITH TRANSGRESSION.** Like death, the child of sin. Yet there is blessing in toil to him who can get up into the higher regions, and see how out of the very extremity of human pain and endurance God can bring forth fruits which shall be rich and fair throughout eternity. II. **CONSIDER WHAT IS THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF THIS ORDINANCE OF TOIL.** 1. Toil is ordained to restore man to a true and living relation with the whole system of things around him. On this sentence of labour God bases all His culture of our spirits; by this He keeps alive the desire and the hope of deliverance. 2. Toil is ordained to draw forth the full unfolding of the whole power and possibility of man's being, with a view to the system of things before him, the world of his eternal citizenship, his perfect and developed life. Be sure that it is the last strain that drags out the most precious fibre of faculty, or trains the organs to the keenest perception, the most complete expansion, the most perfect preparation for the higher work and joy of life. (*J. B. Brown, B.A.*) *Labour an earthward pilgrimage.*—I. **LOOK AT THE HOPELESSNESS OF MEN'S LABOUR ON THE EARTH.** 1. It cannot revoke the sentence of death. 2. It is degrading because of its necessarily sordid aims and occupations. 3. It is itself a living, lingering death. II. **THINK OF THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THIS SORROW, SUFFERING, AND HOPELESSNESS.** 1. To convince men of the fruitlessness of the life he had chosen. 2. To show him his need of the mercy of God, and prepare him to receive it. (*St. J. A. Frere.*) *Observations.*—I. **MAN'S EMPLOYMENT IN THIS LIFE IS IN WEARISOME AND PAINFUL LABOURS.** 1. The curse that is laid upon the earth for sin, by which without hard labour it yields no fruits for the sustaining of man's life. 2. The Lord hath so appointed it for man's good. (1) To humble him by leaving him that remembrance of sin. (2) To make him long for heaven (Rom. viii. 22, 23). (3) To preserve the body in health (see Eccles. v. 12), and to keep the mind in frame (2 Thess. ii. 11), which unless it be exercised in useful and profitable things, is filled with vain and evil thoughts. First, this reproves all idle slothful persons living without callings, or idle in their callings, or in unprofitable callings. Secondly, and should stir us up to diligence in such employments as we are called unto. 1. In obedience to God's command. 2. And as therein serving God, and not men (Eph. vi. 7). 3. And being profitable (Prov. xiv. 23) to ourselves (Prov. x. 4) and others (Prov. xxi. 5). 4. And thereby procuring us a just title to what we possess (2 Thess. iii. 12). Only—(1) Labour that which is good (Eph. iv. 28). (2) And with a desire to be profitable to community (Psa. cxii. 5, 9; 1 Tim. vi. 18). (3) In a way of justice (1 Thess. iv. 6). (4) Depending on God for His blessing on our labours, which only makes them prosperous (Psa. cxxvii. 2). Thirdly, long for heaven, where we shall cease from all our labours (Rev. xiv. 13). II. **THERE IS PROFIT IN ALL THE DUTIES WHICH GOD ENJOINS US.** 1. God who is in Himself all-sufficient and perfectly blessed, neither needs, nor can be profited by any creature. 2. Neither is it for His honour that His service should be unprofitable, as wicked men unjustly slander Him (Job xxi. 15). 3. Neither could His servants have otherwise any encouragement to go on in His service with cheerfulness, which God requires (Deut. xxviii. 47) and delights in (2 Cor. ix. 7). III. **WHATSOEVER WE UNDERTAKE IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDMENT SHALL NOT WANT EFFECT.** 1. That God is able to give success, and by His blessing to prosper men's endeavours, no man can deny. 2. That it concerns Him in point of honour to prosper that which He commands, is as clear as the former. 3. It is needful to be so, lest otherwise men should be discouraged in His service, if they should labour therein without bringing anything to effect. IV. **GOD'S SANCTIONS ARE CERTAIN, AS WELL OF JUDGMENT AS OF MERCY.** 1. Both the threats of judgment, as well as the promises of mercy, are founded on the same grounds of God's truth, and immutability, and power. 2. And have the same scope, the honouring of God in the manifestation as well of His justice as of His mercy, giving to every man according to his deeds (see Psa. lviii. 11; Isa. lix. 18, 19). V. **THOUGH GOD HATH FREED HIS CHILDREN FROM ETERNAL DEATH, YET HE HATH LEFT THEM, AS WELL AS OTHERS, UNDER THE SENTENCE OF TEMPORAL DEATH.** 1. That by it they might be put in mind of sin that brought death upon them (Rom. v. 12). 2. They have no harm by death, which is at present but a sleep, wherein they rest from their labours (Isa. liii. 2), and which severs them not from Christ (1 Thess. iv. 14), through whom it is sancti-

fied to them (see 1 Cor. xv. 55), and is made an entrance into life (Rev. xiv. 13), and hurts not the body, which shall be raised up in glory (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43).

VI. MEN'S BODIES ARE BASE EVERY WAY, BOTH IN THEIR ORIGINAL, IN THEIR PRESENT CONDITION, AND IN THEIR DISSOLUTION. 1. To humble us (Gen. xviii. 27). 2. To magnify God's mercy, in abasing Himself to look on such vile wretches (see Psa. cxlii. 6, 7, 8), to give His Son for them, to advance dust and ashes to such a glorious condition, as the apostle describes (Cor. xv. 42, 43, 49). 3. To move us to long for heaven (see 2 Cor. v. 1, 2). VII. THE DISPOSING OF MAN'S LIFE IS IN GOD'S HAND. Which God challengeth to Himself (Deut. xxxii. 39). David acknowledgeth (Psa. xxxi. 15). Daniel testifies to Belshazzar (Dan. v. 23), and is clearly manifested by all experience (Psa. civ. 29); so that it is not in the power of men to cut it off at their pleasure (1 Kings xix.; Dan. iii. 27, and vi. 22), though God use them to that end sometimes as His executioners (Psa. xvii. 13, 14). VIII. THOUGH DEATH BE CERTAIN TO ALL MEN, YET THE TIME OF DEATH IS UNCERTAIN. 1. That men might not be hardened in sin, as usually they are when judgment is deferred (Eccl. viii. 11), but walk in fear, as being not assured of life for one moment of an hour. 2. To be assured of the term of life would not profit us any way. IX. THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD ARE JUST AND EQUAL, ALL OF THEM IN ALL THINGS. 1. He cannot wrong His own creatures, no more than the potter can the clay; nay, much less. 2. His nature will not suffer Him to do otherwise; He that is God must necessarily do good (Psa. cxix. 68); out of the Lord's mouth proceed not good and evil (Lam. iii. 38). 3. Nor the respect to His own honour, magnified as well in His justice (Psa. lxi. 8, 9), as in His mercy and truth. 4. It would otherwise discourage His own servants (see Matt. xxv. 24, 25), as the opinion of God's favouring of the wicked and afflicting His own servants, had almost discouraged David (Psa. lxxiii. 13, 14). (*J. White, M.A.*)

The curse and the blessing of labour:—I. The universal necessity of labour. The earth no longer produces fruit independently of labour. II. The fact, asserted in the text, that labour is a curse. It is part of our punishment for the Fall that it should be so. III. The manner in which we may lighten this curse, and cause it to be borne. We may not escape from it; but it may be lightened by—1. Religion—personal, practical, and real. 2. The cultivation of knowledge. 3. The maintenance of good health. 4. The practice of economy. (*J. Maskell.*)

The penal clauses:—Then come the penal clauses, and it is wonderful how the curse is tempered with mercy, so much so indeed that it is difficult to tell whether there is not more blessing than cursing in the sentence. The seed of the woman is to be mighty enough to crush the serpent; and the ground is to be difficult of tillage for man's sake. Hard agriculture is a blessing. To get harvests for nothing would be a pitiless curse indeed. To be sentenced to "hard labour" is really a blessing to great criminals; it breaks in upon the moodiness that would become despair; it taxes invention; it keeps the blood moving; it rouses energy. Many a man has been made by the very hardness of his task. But terrible are the words—"unto dust shalt thou return." According to these words it is plainly stated that man was to be exactly what he was before he was made at all—he was to be dead dust, by reason of his sin. Whether any way of escape can be found out remains to be seen. The law is plain; whether mercy can modify it will be revealed as we proceed in the wondrous story. Perhaps there may yet be made a Man within a man, a Spirit within a body, a Son within a slave. That would be glorious, surely! Night has fallen upon the guilty pair, but in the night there are stars, large, bright, like tender eyes shining through the darkness—perhaps these stars will lead on to a manger, a Child, a Saviour! (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

The curse in labour:—The curse in labour is the excess of it; labour itself is enjoyment. You will find that the horse feels it enjoyment to put forth its strength; and so man felt it enjoyment to put forth his energies in rearing the flowers that God had planted in the midst of Eden. The curse is not labour, but the excess of labour. It is a very absurd notion that prevails, that labour is a sort of mean thing: it is a most honourable thing; it was a feature of Adam in his innocent and Eden state; and the poorest labourer is just as honourable as the greatest noble, if he be a Christian. We must not estimate men as we do the cinnamon-tree, the whole of whose value is in its bark, but by the heart that beats beneath, and the intellect that thinks, and the life that shines out in obedience to the will of God. (*J. Cunningham, D.D.*)

Labour a blessing to man:—Man is condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow. He is doomed to procure it with labour and fatigue. But what would he have become, had he not been subjected to that salutary labour, which distracts his thoughts from himself, occupies his mind, mortifies his passions,

and puts a certain restraint upon the corruption which dwells within him? A pray to his own reflections, master of his own life, and burdened with the weight of his days, he would have become the sport of his passions, and have plunged into every species of iniquity which a corrupt imagination could have invented. The punishment of sin, to a certain extent, deprives him of the power and opportunity of doing evil, in spite of himself, and sometimes becomes, in the hands of God, the means of bringing him to salvation. And what dissatisfaction, what weariness, what an insupportable feeling of emptiness must continually have attended an idle and useless existence! On the contrary, what a source of enjoyment and satisfaction, what a means of developing and perfecting his faculties does he now find in a life consecrated to useful labour! Blessed be God! Blessed be God for the thunders of His justice! Blessed be God for His curse denounced against sin! (*L. Bonnet.*) *Labour necessary to success*:—Turner, the great painter, was once asked the secret of his success. He replied, "I have no secret but hard work." *Labour the best seasoning*:—Dionysius the tyrant, at an entertainment given to him by the Lacedæmonians, expressed some disgust at their black broth. "No wonder," said one of them, "for it wants seasoning." "What seasoning?" asked the tyrant, "Labour," replied the citizen, "joined with hunger and thirst." *Eminence and labour*:—When we read the lives of distinguished men in any department, we find them almost always celebrated for the amount of labour they could perform. Demosthenes, Julius Cæsar, Henry of France, Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton, Franklin, Washington, Napoleon, different as they were in their intellectual and moral qualities, were all renowned as hard workers. We read how many days they could support the fatigues of a march; how early they rose; how late they watched; how many hours they spent in the field, in the cabinet, in the court; how many secretaries they kept employed; in short, how hard they worked. (*Everett.*) *The idealization of labour*:—The conception of labour as the creative intention, or "end" of human nature, is a comparatively late one, due to revelation or to philosophic reflection upon an already lengthened experience. And the feelings of persons born in these later ages of the world are not to be taken as an infallible guide as to what may have been the primitive instinct, the motive that impelled to human activity and invention. Carlyle, for instance, in a letter to his mother, when he was at the commencement of his career (1821), asks the striking question, "Why do we fret and murmur and toil, and consume ourselves for objects so transient and frail? Is it that the soul, living here as in her prison-house, strives after something boundless like herself, and finding it nowhere, still renews the search? Surely we are fearfully and wonderfully made!" Now, as the process of idealization in respect of the aims of labour is closely connected with the sense of its influence upon temporal well-being, we cannot be far wrong in concluding that it is largely due to the experience of the advantages it secures. Work is the most direct and certain avenue to the satisfaction of bodily wants, to the acquisition of wealth, and to the social consideration and general influence that attend the possession of wealth. Upon the industrial energy of its people a city or a nation in the main builds its prosperity and its political power. Another source of dignity and consideration consists in the tendency labour reveals to enlarge the scope and the possibilities of life. In this respect it meets and fosters the growing, expanding faculties of our nature. To the young it opens up many a vista for vague longings and ambitions; and the great centres of industry are invested with a romantic, indefinite fascination, because of the careers they hold forth. Not only the legitimacy, but the social consideration of trades, professions, and occupations, is determined by their perceived tendency to promote civilization. Were it not for this criterion the secondary products of human skill and effort would go to the wall. So much of their value, their worth, is relative only to the circumstances and culture of their owners, that it would otherwise be all but impossible to appraise them. When the day's task is seen to be a Divine appointment (*Ps. civ. 23*) equally with birth and death, then shall a man rejoice in it, and labour on "as in the great Taskmaster's eye," looking diligently the meanwhile for the message it may enshrine, the glimpse of higher things it is sure to give, and waiting patiently for the last, the sure reward. In the great book manifold histories and teachings set forth for us the ideals of labour, and the commonest occupation is seen to have some spiritual significance. The diligence and faith of the husbandman, the daring quest of the miner (*Job xxviii.*), the far venture of the mariner, the thoroughness of the builder, the care and compassion of the shepherd, are all given in illustration of the qualities and duties of our heavenly service. But

not until that service itself is, according to our gifts and adaptation, revealed as our individual vocation, is the idealization of labour perfected. "That is a new day, the dawn of a new life to the boy, when he has taken himself out of the routine of the child, and resolved to be something in lessons, or play, or conduct; and the thrill with which the young man puts his hand on his earnest life-work tingles yet along the very nerves of age. It makes us almost a giant to feel the birth-throe of a living purpose. The lioness reproached because she gave but one at a birth, replied, 'Yes, but that a lion.' And the one lion purpose born to a man, to grow into the one thing of life, is a birth to be proud of and never forgotten. After it we are never the same. It has lifted out of old conditions, limitations; it has put a new spirit in us, as the new inspiration towards a broader life, the quick play of whose pulses, vibrating through the whole man, impels us to thought and deed. . . . It is a proud, a solemn, a sublime moment that sees the soul register its purpose and write it as with imperishable letters, 'This one thing I do, come weal, come woe, come ban of man or shock of time, come sorrow and distress and loss, though I stand alone, here I stand, this I do'; and the life of slow, earnest, arduous toil that follows partakes of the grandeur of the birth." (*Homiletic Magazine*.)

Man, labour, sorrow.—Look into the country fields, there you see toiling at the plough and scythe; look into the waters, there you see tugging at oars and cables; look into the city, there you see a throng of cares, and hear sorrowful complaints of bad times and the decay of trade; look into studies, and there you see paleness and infirmities, and fixed eyes; look into the court, and there are defeated hopes, envyings, underminings, and tedious attendance. All things are full of labour, and labour is full of sorrow; and these two are inseparably joined with the miserable life of man. (*Timothy Rogers*.)

Fallen man.—In some respects manifestly made for a sphere higher than he fills, he appears to us like a creature of the air which a cruel hand has stripped of its silken wings. How painfully he resembles this hapless object which has just fallen on the pages of a book that we read by the candle on an autumn evening! It retains the wish, but has lost the power, to fly. Allured by the taper's glare, it has brushed the flame, and, dropping with a heavy fall, now crawls wingless across the leaf, and seeks the finger of mercy to end its misery. Compare man with any of the other creatures, and how directly we come to the conclusion that he is not, nor can be, the same creature with which God crowned the glorious work of creation. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*)

Man fallen.—No man in his senses will venture to assert that man is to-day just as man originally was. He is a dismantled fane, a broken shrine, still lingering about him some gleams of the departed glory sufficient to give an idea of what he once was, and probably left as faint prophecy of what he will again be. But notwithstanding this, man is a changed, and fallen, and degenerate creature. Nothing we know explains this seemingly inexplicable phenomenon, except the Word of God, which tells us that man sinned, and fell, and has become what we now find him. The gold, in the language of a prophet, is become dim, and the crown is fallen from his head. He has exchanged the beautiful, the fertile, the happy Eden which earth once was, for the desert and the bleak and blasted condition in which we now find it. He must now water it with the tears of his weeping eyes, and fertilize it with the sweat of his aching brow, in order to gather bread from it. This was a penal and just retribution, and yet it embosomed the hope of an ultimate and sure deliverance. (*Dr. Cumming*.)

Man damaged.—If you should see a house with its gable ends in ruins, with its broken pillars lying in heaped-up confusion on the ground, half covered up with trailing weeds and moss, you would not hesitate to say, "This building has suffered damage at some time; it was not like this when it came from the hand of the builder." I say this of man. His is not in a normal condition. (*Hepworth*.)

Mercy in the curse.—We are inclined to believe that it was not wholly in anger and in righteous severity that God made the cursing of the ground the punishment of Adam. We think it will not be difficult to show that the Almighty was consulting for the good of His creatures when He thus made labour their inevitable lot. We need not limit our remarks to the single case of agriculture; for we may safely affirm that there is nothing which is worth man's attainment which he can attain without labour. I. Now there is, perhaps, an universal consent upon one proposition—that idleness is the fruitful source of every kind of vice; and it follows from this that the placing it in a man's power to be idle—supplying him, that is, with the means of subsistence without extracting from him any labour—is simply to expose him to the greatest possible peril, and almost ensuring his moral degeneracy. We know

that there are fine and frequent exceptions to this statement, and that many whose circumstances preclude all necessity of toiling for a livelihood carve out for themselves paths of honourable industry, and are as assiduous in labour as if compelled to it by their wants. There is evidently a repressing power in abundance, and a stimulating power in penury; the one tending to produce dwarfishness of intellect and mental feebleness, the other to elicit every energy and intellectual greatness. We will not say that the battle for subsistence has not borne hard on genius, and kept down the loftiness of its aspirations; but we are assured that the cases are of immeasurably more frequent occurrence in which the man has been indebted to the straitness of his circumstances for the expansion of his mental powers. I wish no son of mine to be exempt from the sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." And the family which we regard as left in the best condition when death removes its head is, not the family for whom there is a fine landed estate or an ample funded property, but the family which has been thoroughly educated in the principles of religion, and trained to habits of piety and industry, and in which there is just as much wealth as may preserve from want those members who cannot labour for themselves, and start the others in professions which open a broad field for unwearied diligence. We would yet further observe, before quitting this portion of our subject, that after all God did not so much remove fruitfulness from the soil as make the development of that fruitfulness dependent on industry. The earth has yielded sufficiency for its ever-multiplying population, as though the power of supply grew with the demand; nor has it only yielded a bare sufficiency, but has been so generous in its productions, that one man by his tillage may raise bread for hundreds. This is amongst the most beautiful and wonderful of the arrangements of Providence. Why can one amongst us be a clergyman, a second a lawyer, a third a merchant, a fourth a tradesman? Only because, notwithstanding the curse, there is still such fertility in the ground, that more corn is produced than suffices for those by whom the ground is cultivated. The whole advance of civilization is dependent on a power in the earth of furnishing more food than those who till it can consume. A people who are always on the border of starvation must be manifestly a people always on the border of barbarism; and just as manifestly a people must be always on the border of starvation if every individual can only wrench from the ground enough for himself. Thus, when we come to examine into and trace the actual facts of the case, the mercy of the dispensation exceeds immeasurably the judgment. II. We propose, in the second place, to examine WHETHER THERE BE ANY INTIMATION IN SCRIPTURE THAT THE SENTENCE ON ADAM WAS DESIGNED TO BREATHE MERCY AS WELL AS JUDGMENT. We are disposed to agree with those who consider that the revelation of the great scheme of redemption was contemporaneous with human transgression. We believe that, as soon as man fell, notices were graciously given of a deliverance to be effected in the fulness of time. It is hardly to be supposed that Adam would be left in ignorance of what he was so much concerned to know; and the early institution of sacrifices seem sufficient to show that he was taught a religion adapted to his circumstances. But the question now before us is, whether any intimations of redemption were contained in the sentence under review, and whether our common father, as he listened to the words which declared the earth cursed for his sake, might have gathered consolation from the disastrous announcement. There is one reason why we think this probable, though we may not be able to give distinct proof. Our reason is drawn from the prophecy which Lamech uttered on the birth of his son Noah: "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." And therefore did he call his son Noah, which signifies rest, to mark that he connected him with deliverance and respite from that curse which sin had brought on the ground. But in what way was Noah thus connected? How could Noah comfort Lamech in reference to the ground which God had cursed? Some suppose the reference to be to instruments of agriculture which Noah would invent after the flood, and which would much diminish human labour; but this could hardly be said to be a comfort to Lamech, who died before the flood: and we may fairly doubt whether a prediction, having reference only to the invention of a few tools, would have been recorded for the instruction of all after-generations. But Noah, as the builder of the ark, and the raiser of the new world, when the old had perished in the deluge, was eminently a type of Christ Jesus, in whose Church alone is safety, and at whose bidding new heavens and a new earth will succeed to those scathed by the baptism of fire. And as an illustrious type of the Redeemer, though we knew not in what other capacity, Noah

might console Lamech and his cotemporaries; for the restoration after the deluge, in which they had no personal interest, might be a figure to them of the restitution of all things, when the curse was to be finally removed, and those who had rode out the deluge receive an everlasting benediction. Thus it would seem highly probable, from the tenour of Lamech's prediction, that he had been made acquainted with the respects in which his son Noah would typify Christ, and that therefore he had been taught to regard the curse on the ground as only temporary, imposed for wise ends, till the manifestation of the Redeemer, under whose sceptre "the desert should rejoice and blossom as the rose." And if so much were revealed to Lamech, it cannot be an over-bold supposition that the same information was imparted to Adam. Thus may our first parent, compelled to till the earth on which rested the curse of its Creator, have known that there were blessings in store, and that, though he and his children must dig the ground in the sweat of their face, there would fall on it sweat "like great drops of blood," having virtue to remove the oppressive malediction. It must have been bitter for him to hear of the thorn and the thistle; but he may have learnt how thorns would be woven into a crown, and placed round the forehead of One who should be as the lost tree of life to a dying creation. The curse upon the ground may have been regarded by him as a perpetual memorial of the fatal transgression and the promised salvation, reminding him of the sterility of his own heart, and what toil it would cost the Redeemer to reclaim that heart, and make it bring forth the fruits of righteousness; telling him while pursuing his daily task what internal husbandry was needful, and whose arm alone could break up the fallow ground. And thus Adam may have been comforted, as Lamech was comforted, by the Noah who was to bring rest to wearied humanity; and it may have been in hope as well as in contrition, in thankfulness as well as in sorrow, that he carried with him this sentence on his banishment from paradise—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." (*H. Melvill, B.D.*) **Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**—*Man's nature and destiny*:—I. **THE FRAILTY OF OUR NATURE.** 1. Its origin. However glorious our Maker, however exquisite the human body, God made that body of the dust of the earth. 2. Its liability to injury. No sooner born than fierce diseases wait to attack us. If not destroyed—injured—accidents. All the elements attack us. 3. Its tendency to dissolution. Behold the ravages of time. Human life has its spring, summer, autumn, and winter (*Psa. ciii. 14, 15; xc. 5, 6; xxxix. 4, 5*). II. **THE CERTAINTY OF OUR END.** 1. We are born to die. Our first breath is so much of nature exhausted. The first hour we live is an approach to death. 2. The perpetual exit of mortals confirms it. 3. God hath decreed it. 4. Learn rightly to estimate life. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Man's origin and doom*.—I. **MAN'S ORIGIN.** 1. How wonderful. 2. How humbling. II. **MAN'S DOOM.** 1. Inevitable. 2. Just. 3. Partial. 4. Temporary. (*W. Wythe.*) *The fearfulness of death*:—I. Men know not that they shall die, even though they confess it with their lips almost daily. If we consider what death is, we see that men who know its approach will act in all things as in the fear of it. There is no more startling paradox in the wonders of our nature than this, that men in general are thoughtless about death. When our own turn comes, and there is no escape, then, for the first time, we really believe in death. II. Death is a fearful thing, because of the great change that it implies in all our being. Life is that power by which we act, and think, and love, and intend, and hope. And suppose that all our energies have been wasted on things that cannot follow us into the grave, then how can we conceive of any life at all beyond this? When we know that we must die, we feel about for something in us that shall not perish, some thread of continuity to knit our present and future life into one; and if we have never lived for God, never realized the difference between treasures of earth and treasures of heaven, we find nothing that shall assure us of that other life. We start back in horror from a grave so dark and so profound. III. If these two terrors were all, some at least would not fear to die, would even court death as a repose. But there is yet another terror. Death means judgment. To die is to meet God. You tremble because you stand before a Judge of infinite power, whose wrath no man can resist; before a Judge of infinite wisdom, who shall call back your acts out of the distant past and lay bare the secret thoughts of your spirit. IV. Accept the salvation purchased for you with Christ's passion; then death cannot come suddenly upon you, for the thought of it will have sobered all your days. The day of account will still be terrible, but the belief that you are reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus will sustain you. (*Archbishop Thomson.*) *The frailty*

of human nature :—The words do plainly show God's offence and displeasure upon occasion of Adam's miscarriage; and are in themselves partly declaratory and convictive, partly minatory and instructive. 1. They are declaratory and convictive. What! thou that art but dust, that so lately received thy being from God, not to listen to Him, but to follow thy own will, and rebel against the law of thy Sovereign? So they are declaratory and convictive. 2. They are minatory, and consequently instructive. For when God threatens, His meaning is, that we should repent, and turn to Him (Jer. xviii. 7). But to come to the words themselves, "Dust thou art." Of this I shall give you an account in two particulars. 1. The meanness of it. For dust is a thing of little or no perfection, nor of any esteem, account, and value. Dust we are, every day sweeping away, as the refuse, as that of which there is no use. Dust, the ultimate term of all corruption and putrefaction. Dust—you cannot resolve a thing into anything of less entity and being. Yet all of man is not here to be understood, but only his worse part. 2. "Dust thou art," which respects the weakness of this bodily estate. For dust can make no resistance. It may offend us, but it is of itself so light and empty that it is scattered up and down of every wind, as it is said (Psa. xviii. 42). Who can defend himself against the arrow that flieth by day, or the pestilence that walketh in darkness, or the plague that destroyeth by noonday? Neither is this all, but we have a principle that tends to corruption and putrefaction within us. To which also let us add the violence that we are exposed to from abroad, either by the contagion of others or from the force and violence of those that can overpower us. For we are so weak, that if any man despise God and the laws, he may soon be master of our lives: For all that they can do is but to inflict punishment upon the transgressor. But that will make us no satisfaction nor restitution. When we are assaulted by any sickness, then we are sensible of this our weakness; and we cry out with Job, "What is my strength, the strength of a stone, or my flesh of brass" (Job xxi. 23). Though, when our bones are full of marrow, we put the thoughts of sickness far from us, yet so it often falleth out that "One dieth in his full strength, being in all ease and prosperity," as Job speaketh (xxi. 23). Furthermore, what are we when bodily pain approach? So weak and frail are we, that we are not able to hold up our heads; and if to all this we shall have the sense of guilt upon our consciences, our condition will be intolerable. Now for application. 1. It is a ground of humility. If it be so, that "Dust we are, and unto dust we must return," it is fit that we know it so to be; and that upon three accounts. (1) That we be not proud and conceited. (2) That we do not trust to ourselves or any fellow-creatures whatsoever. (3) That we may take the best course we can to make a supply. 2. It is matter of satisfaction to us to know that we are but dust; and that lies here, that God doth not look for much from us, but accordingly—not more than He did at first make us. He knows that we were finite and fallible; and therefore, as the Psalmist saith, God "considers our frame, He remembereth that we are dust" (Psa. ciii. 14), and makes allowance accordingly. 3. It is matter of great thankfulness to God that He doth so much consider such worms as we are; that He hath regard to us, that are but dust; and that He hath such patience with us, who are so inconsiderable, that He might bring us to repentance; and that He doth graciously accept from us any motion towards Him, or any good purpose. and that He is so ready to promote it. 4. This will give us an account of the folly and madness of those men who neglect themselves. We are dust. If there be not the remedy of culture and education to tame the wildness and exorbitancy of man, he will grow savage, wild, and ungovernable, unless the established government of reason shall be set up in his soul. Wherefore, let our great care and daily employment be to refine our spirits, by entertaining the principles of religion; and to inform our understandings, and to regulate our lives, by holding ourselves constantly to the measures of nature, reason, and religion. (B. Whichcote, D.D.)

The rationale of man's corporeal life and dissolution :—I. WHY MAN WAS TO HAVE A BRIEF EMBODIED LIFE. How was this arrangement likely to affect his ultimate spiritual well-being? 1. Man's earthly life is his probation-period. The opportunity of choice exists while soul and body are joined, but no longer. Death is the beginning of destiny. 2. A probation-period, to be just, satisfactory, merciful, must—(1) Show the true nature and fruits of the objects to be chosen; (2) bring out the true character and intentions of the individual choosing. 3. The body is a valuable agent in the accomplishment of this design. (1) It brings out the nature of the objects to be chosen. (2) It compels man to a religious decision. II. WHY MAN, AFTER

HAVING SPENT HIS PROBATION-PERIOD IN THE BODY, HAD TO SUFFER PHYSICAL DEATH.

1. Death in relation to the saved—(1) Delivers the soul from many sinful habits. (2) Delivers the land from a fruitful nurse of sin. (3) Introduces the soul to higher enjoyments. 2. Death in relation to the lost. A wicked spirit disembodied seems the most miserable, pitiable thing in God's universe; like a man suddenly expelled from a brilliant and warm room, to shiver naked in the cold and darkness of a winter night—a night, too, that shall know no dawn, and to the fierce blast of which no stupor can ever render the wretched outcast insensible! (*Homilist.*)

The frailty of human nature.—I. THE FRAILTY OF OUR NATURE. This may be inferred from—1. Its origin: dust. 2. Its liability to injury. 3. Its tendency to dissolution. II. THE CERTAINTY OF OUR END. 1. We are born to die. 2. The perpetual exit of mortals confirms this. 3. God has decreed and declared it. III. THE GREAT BUSINESS OF LIFE. 1. To know and serve God. 2. To seek and obtain salvation. 3. We should always be living in reference to death and eternity. (*Sketches of Sermons.*)

Dust of death.—Dust may be raised for a little while into a tiny cloud, and may seem considerable while held up by the wind that raises it; but when the force of that is spent, it falls again, and returns to the earth out of which it was raised. Such a thing is man; man is but a parcel of dust, and must return to his earth. Thus, as Pascal exclaims, what a chimera is man! What a confused chaos! And after death, of his body it may be said that it is the gold setting left after the extraction of the diamond which it held—a setting, alas! which soon gives cause in its putrescence for the apostrophe: How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! Yet "there is hope in thine end," O Christian gold, however dimmed. There is a "resurgam" for thy dust, O child of God! (*W. Adamson.*)

Ver. 20. Adam called his wife's name Eve.—*Man's undying hope*.—Consider that aspect of this terrible calamity which is afforded us in the action of Adam. It is clear that he understood what was involved in the act he had just committed. Scarcely are the words uttered by God, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," &c., than he seems to turn to his wife and say, "Eve, the mother, the living one; because she is mother of all living." There is no defiance here. It is not because the man refused to accept the judgment of God, not because he refused to submit to the doom. He did not refuse, he did not set himself up against God. He caught the tenderness of the Divine voice even as it pronounced the judgment. He saw the gleam of grace in the darkness of the doom. It is then that he turned to his wife and said, "Eve, the living one." "Her seed shall bruise the serpent's head; shall yet triumph over the evil power that has almost destroyed her; and though this day we die, beyond is a life eternal, for she is the mother of all that shall live." How true this is to human nature! It is illustrated, it is constantly illustrated, in the experience through which we pass. Who has not known it?—Men turning back to their wives in the hour of trouble. Man, suddenly stripped of his glory and possessions, stands amongst the wreck of all his life; that moment, with a fresh trust, he puts his hand in his wife's and says, "Well, the future is still before us, we shall not lose hope." "Eve, the living one. Mother of all that live." Is there not, in the first place, a recognition of the dignity of the woman? Her name is not mentioned before. She is simply "the woman"; the other side of human nature—the man and the woman. Adam had his name, the general name of humanity centring in him. But when the loss comes, woman takes her place. She is no longer woman only, she is "Eve." She is herself. Bound by a closer tie than ever to her husband, but with a dignity of her own. And is it not also the assertion of the dignity of motherhood? What is woman's highest dignity? To be the mother of men. She had been the wife of man before, but a wife is not perfected until she is a mother. And so she receives her name when she is recognized as mother. It is also the immediate acceptance on the part of Adam of the promise of God. God has confirmed his earthly nature. "Earth thou art," God had also declared that there was to be a continuance of the race by reference to immediate hope. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." But had there not been before this these words: "I shall put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel"? Then came the judgment upon the man, and yet, the moment the judgment is uttered, he calls his wife "Eve." He sees the promise that is contained in the motherhood, and in the conflict of the seed and the serpent. He seals with his own word the promise of God. The chief subject of our con-

sideration, however, is the aspect in which Adam seemed to regard his wife, "mother of all living!" As we speak the word, there rises before us the vast multitude of the human race! The mother of all living—all who shall live! All in the past—all now—all in the future! Mother of all living! How the generations move along the road of life in the great march of mankind—like a river rolling swift with ever broadening stream into the vast ocean of eternity! Wave after wave rolls up and breaks upon the shore of time from the exhaustless tide of life! The life that is around us, in our own city. Multiply these teeming millions by all the cities of the world, or all the ages of human existence, and think of them all gathered up within this woman's name. Has our first father been prophetic? Did he, for a moment, see down the vistas of centuries, the masses of humanity enfolded in the motherhood of Eve? Then the thought would come that all these living ones would die. You remember the story of Darius, who, when he reviewed those mighty hosts that followed his standard when he marched to the invasion of Greece, was observed to weep. The squadrons were there, their arms all flashing in the sun, and round about them in the outlying regions the multitudes of followers that attend an army. Magnificent battle array! Vast concourse of men all obedient to his will, and yet the monarch weeps! "Why weepest thou, O king?" "I weep because in one hundred years not one of this great host will be alive." And many feel as felt the king when they contemplate a crowd. When the people are out upon a gala day, and from some high window we look down upon them, a strange melancholy creeps into the heart. When we visit foreign lands, and passing from city to city behold everywhere human life teeming in countless millions, a sense of awe comes over the spirit, and a sense of sorrow. And yet, I am not quite sure that this is right. I would rather catch the gleams of light that the eye of Adam saw shining in the promise of God. I would rather hear the words of cheer of our first father when he gathers up the hope of humanity within his soul, and though the judgment had been only a moment uttered, called her who stood beside him—Eve, because she was the mother of all living, and seals his acceptance of the promise and the hope, in the name he gave to his wife. And man generally has been true to this Divine instinct of the Father. The hope of human life has been unquenchable. Read history, and you will find that no misfortune has daunted men. They remain always hopeful. In the increase of poverty, in the presence of disaster, after war, accidents, oppression, life re-asserts itself, and in that upspringing of life, mankind declares its hope. You never can crush it out. To-day, the victorious foe may spread desolation over the homes of people whom they destroy, but let the tide of war roll back, and hope will return, and the very battlefield will grow green with harvest promise, and the streets down which the destroying legions thundered, echo with the voice of the children at their play. You cannot crush out life, you cannot destroy man's hope in himself. This name of "Eve," the "mother of all living," is only the hope that sprang to being in Adam's breast, and which, since that moment, has never died from human hearts. Hence it seems to me that human nature is a perpetual gospel. Life is full of evangel. The very vastness and fulness of humanity are the large letters in which God's promise and Adam's interpretation of it, are written out that all may read. (*L. D. Bevan, D.D.*)

Observations:—I. GOD LEAVES NOT HIS CHILDREN WITHOUT MEANS TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR WORST CONDITION. II. THE GRACE WHICH GOD ESPECIALLY WORKS AND PRESERVES IN HIS CHILDREN'S HEARTS, IS FAITH. III. GOD'S PROMISES MUST BE EMBRACED BY FAITH, AS REAL PERFORMANCES. IV. A GODLY MAN MUST BE CAREFUL TO PRESERVE MEMORIALS OF GREAT MERCIES. To this end God ordained the Sabbath, and divers other festivals, as likewise did the Church in imitation of Him (*Esther ix. 20, 21, 27, 28*); for the same end they gave names to the places where those mercies were performed (*1 Sam. vii. 12*; *2 Chron. xx. 26*). Upon the same ground God appoints a pot of manna to be kept in the tabernacle, to remind posterity of that miraculous feeding of their fathers with bread from heaven (*Exod. xvi. 33*). V. IT IS FIT IN GIVING NAMES, TO MAKE CHOICE OF SUCH AS MAY GIVE US WITHAL SOMETHING FOR OUR INSTRUCTION. Of this God Himself gives us a precedent, in changing Abraham's and Sarah's name (*Gen. xvii. 5, 15*), and Jacob's (*Gen. xxxii. 28*), in giving Solomon his name (*1 Chron. xxi. 9*), and the name of Jesus to our Saviour (*Matt. i. 21*), which holy persons have followed (*Gen. xxi. 3, 6, and xxix. 32*). Reason 1. We need all helps, to mind us either of God's mercies, and acts of His providence, or of our own duties; which God Himself implied, in causing His people to write the commandments on the posts and gates of their houses (*Deut. xi. 20*), and to make fringes to their garments, to put them in mind

of them (Numb. xv. 38, 39). 2. And there is no readier means to mind us of such things than our names, which we have daily in our mouths and memories. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Eve named by Adam* :—The fact that it was not God but Adam that gave the name to Eve teaches us much. Why did not God give Eve her name, as He had done to Adam? God did not allow Adam to name himself, even in his innocence; yet now in his fall He permits him to name the woman, nay, sanctions his so doing. This was for such reasons as the following—1. To show His grace. What grace, what tender love is displayed in allowing man to give a name to his wife—and such a name—Eve—LIFE! 2. To show that Adam was not to be deprived of his headship. He was still to be “head of the woman,” even in his fall, and as such he names her. 3. To show, that though Adam had so cruelly flung blame upon her before God, yet no estrangement had followed. She was still bone of his bone. They had been companions in guilt, they were to be companions in sorrow, and they were fellow-heirs of the hope just held out to them. Thus they were reunited in new bonds of mingled sadness and joy. 4. To show the direction in which Adam’s thoughts were running, that from this manifestation of the current of his thoughts we might learn how the promise had taken hold of him. This versegives us unequivocal insight into the state of Adam’s feelings. It exhibits him to us as one who understood, believed, prized, rested on the Divine promise which he had just heard. He stands before us as a believing man; and we might say of him, “By faith Adam called his wife’s name Eve.” (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Coats of skins*.—*Man clothed by God* :—The whole mystery of justification is wrapped up in the details of this story. I. We have the fact as in a parable that MAN IS UTTERLY IMPOTENT TO BRING TO PASS ANY SATISFYING RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HIS OWN. He can see his shame, but he cannot effectually cover or conceal it. The garments of our own righteousness are fig-leaves all, and we shall prove them such. Let God once call to us, and we shall find how little all these devices of our own can do for us. We shall stand shivering, naked and ashamed, before Him. II. While we thus learn that man cannot clothe himself, we learn also that GOD UNDERTAKES TO CLOTHE HIM. As elsewhere He has said in word, “I am the Lord that healeth thee,” so here He says in act, “I am the Lord that clotheh thee.” He can yet devise a way by which His banished shall return to Him. III. We note in this Scripture that the clothing which God found for Adam could only have been obtained at THE COST OF A LIFE, and that the life of one unguilty, of one who had no share or part in the sin which made the providing of it needful. We have here the first institution of sacrifice; God Himself is the Institutor. It is a type and shadow, a prelude and prophecy of the crowning sacrifice on Calvary. IV. Are not the LESSONS which we may draw from all this plain and palpable enough? 1. There is no robe of our own righteousness which can cover us and conceal our shame. 2. That righteousness which we have not in ourselves we must be content and thankful to receive at the hands of God. 3. Not Christ by His life, but by His life and death, and mainly by His death, supplies these garments for our spirit’s need. (*Archbishop Trench.*) *Man clothed by God* :—I come, then, to the conclusion that these vestments which the Lord God provided for our first parents, are emblematic of nothing less than the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ. But there might be a second object in thus arraying our first parents in coats of skin; and that was, to keep alive in their minds the sentence of death, which would be ultimately executed upon them. The dying struggles of the poor animals, whose skins they were to appropriate to themselves, could not fail to remind them of their own deserts; but then this feeling might be too soon effaced; it was essential, therefore, to their continuance in humility, that they should carry with them wherever they went a memorial that death was come into the world—a death which was the effect of sin, a death to which they must at last submit. And sadly they must have gazed upon the throes of every slaughtered creature, as they beheld the fate to which they were hastening themselves. Yet there was a wonderful provision made for securing both the glory of God and the comfort of His creatures. Death was the fruit of sin, sin was the work of Satan; and I may say concerning the honour of the Creator, that Satan may not triumph as a destroyer, it was so ordained that the first things which died should be emblematical of the death of Christ, by whom death itself should be virtually abolished. (*F. J. Stainforth, M.A.*) *Sin and civilization* :—I. The clothing of the first man and woman in skins of beasts, is in the first place, symbolical of the dominance of that nature which is the sole possession of the beast. In the beast, there is only a life, which informs the body for the purpose of bodily ends. In the man there is a spirit, which informs the body

through the soul, for the ultimate ends of the higher and spiritual life. The body of the beast is for itself. The body of the man is for the spirit. It is the spirit's instrument. But, by sin, man had set body against spirit, over spirit. Man had chosen the material instead of the spiritual. II. It was, also, the insistence of God upon the propriety of the shame, which had prompted them to cover themselves with clothes. It is as if God had said: "You are right; the material body which you have put on over the spiritual—conceal it! You have set it in the forefront; put it in the rear. Cover it! hide it!" III. It is, besides, the symbol of the conflict between the higher and lower, which makes up the whole of man's moral discipline. IV. But there was still another meaning in this clothing of skins, for it is to be noted that while Adam and Eve covered themselves with leaves God makes coats of skins and clothed them. Were it only for the purpose of symbolism, they might have worn these clothes of leaves. Why must these coats of skins have been made for them? I shall not raise here questions as to man's relation to the animals in his innocent state. Naturally, by physical constitution, man is a flesh-eating animal, and I cannot accept the opinion, that till his sin, he was fed only by the food of the garden. But, at last, the narrative brings out a striking distinction between the demand made on man's powers, when innocent, and that which was made upon him after the Fall. In the garden all seemed spontaneously easy. He had only to put forth his hand, and take the food, the fruit. It was simple work—gathering a few leaves: fastening them together and making a covering. But now, there is the further difficulty of securing the skins of beasts. These must supply their coverings; they will have to be captured, killed, and the skins prepared. There may be some relation here to sacrifice as well as to food. At least the idea is suggested of man coming into relation to the animal world. The creatures must be caught and trained, and fed, and slain. Now this is the elementary fact of all material civilization. Man's first victory over the world is over the animals. Man makes his first step in culture in conquering the brutes. The domesticity of the lower world, and the dominance of the human race over the animal, is the first step in progress. It is, then, with no fanciful interpretation that I base upon this passage some thoughts concerning the progress of humanity in material civilization, as related to the Fall. Man's fallen condition has certainly borne in some way upon his material development. I am anxious to show that in God's mercy the Fall has been the condition of a greater rising. 1. The historic proof of this doctrine. If you review the history of civilization and the physical progress of man, you will find that it has been rendered in a large degree possible by sin, and, we may almost say that, had it not been for sin, man could not have advanced to the degree, or in the manner, in which that advance has been made. We do not say that material development necessarily accompanies a sinful condition of humanity. This is disproved by the fact that the highest form of material civilization has been pressed into service of the highest moral and spiritual life, and the further fact that the noblest instances of culture have been found to manifest the most distinguished virtues. Still, the general relation of religious and material well-being has been such as to suggest, what we think the incident of our text indicates, that the presence of sin in our human nature has been the condition upon which God has made the development of man's external good to be dependent. Had it not been for sin, we had not been so wise, or so wealthy, or strong, nor smitten with so many passions—not summoned to such weary conflicts; but also, and by reason of these, not such masters of an external world of use and ornament, of beauty and grace. 2. That which is shown in this historical review is also seen in the nature of the case. Let us restate the position we are endeavouring to sustain. Out of the Fall God has caused to issue man's material well-being. We have seen, that the essence of the first sin consisted in the elevation of the physical nature into the supreme regard. Thereupon God thrust man out into a world which demanded his energy to conquer its hostile forces, and to bring it into subservience to his will. Civilization is the result of the assertions of man's physical needs, and the endeavour on the part of man to compel the physical world to supply those needs. When, in the person of his first parents, he set the body above the spirit, then he lost his natural condition. Now, he must win back this material empire; he must overcome everything, himself included. Nothing submits freely, spontaneously. His nature, especially his physical nature, becomes imperative. He hungers, he thirsts; his passions are imperious, and yet there is no response from the things about him. In Eden, hunger would have been immediately satisfied, thirst immediately assuaged. I

doubt if ever there was hunger or thirst. All the emotions of the soul would have been in complete rhythm and harmony, and the spirit, and the soul, and the body, would have been in perpetual melody of goodness and innocence. But now he must set himself to contrive. He has to contend. He must become an artist. He must call in the aid of his fellows. He must unite with others, and here is the source of organization, development of art, the inventions of science, the formation of political arrangement, the submission of the governed, the rule of the king. All must be produced to content the cravings of that nature which has been aroused and will be satisfied. There is no government among the angels, except the immediate government of God. There can be no art among beings who are not created at once in fellowship with the Divine, and yet part of the material world about them. Government and art are the result of the fact that this lower nature of ours has been lifted into supremacy. They are the means of supplying its desires; the answer to its emphatic claim. But, moreover, the lower nature thus aroused, heightened, intensified, must again be brought under the control of the higher nature. If that does not result, there will be confusion, chaos, death. The body has been made prominent, brought forth; it must be set back, hidden. God taught man this lesson first, when He made coats of skins and clothed him. Hence there follows not only the development of the physical, but the subjugation of this physical to the spiritual. CONCLUSION: 1. Are we not taught here the lesson, which no age more than our own has needed, that a civilization which is chiefly materialistic must have in it the gravest perils? 2. And will not these thoughts help us to understand the meaning of the perplexed and changeful condition through which the development of the race has moved? Is it some strange and malicious spirit that has driven man to struggle with the beasts, and compelled him to the arduous conflict, often renewed, with the hard outer world? Not at all. It is the will of God, wise and loving, which would thus cover his nakedness and set once more the brutal nature in its proper place of retirement and subjection. Every race-decay and national decline is only part of the discipline of man. It is a long struggle to regain the proper relation of spirit and body. But it is the Divine will. 3. It shows us, too, the need of a Divine help for the undoing of the evil man has brought upon himself, and which the clothes of his own invention will not supply. The man had already clothed himself with leaves. But man found hiding of shame to be not enough. A devil brought the sin, and a God must make its covering. Man's leaf garment is a poor defence against the cold, hard world into which he is driven. God therefore gives him clothes of skins. And so ever He is ready to supply that remedy, that salvation which man must find or perish, but which no man can himself secure. 4. And so, finally, I learn by these words to fill all things with the evangel which God proclaims in the very utterance of doom. Some men go everywhere only to find a Divine law and a Divine condemnation. Wherever I turn I see written up God's gospel. I know no human story which is not a comment upon grace. I know no voice, even though it comes from the depths of hell, which is not an echo of the pity of our God. (*L. D. Bevan, D.D.*) LESSONS:—1. In the midst of death God's thoughts have been to direct sinners unto life. 2. God's thoughts are not only to give life but to reveal it in His own way. 3. God's goodness prevented sin from turning all into disorder. He keeps relations. 4. Grace makes the same instrument be for life, which was for death (ver. 20). 5. God pitieth His creatures in the nakedness which sin hath made. 6. God makes garments where man makes nakedness. 7. Garments are a covering of nakedness, but a discovery of sin. 8. Raiment should humble and not make men proud. The mischief of sin is to forget nakedness under fine clothes. It makes nakedness appear fine. 9. Suitable clothing was God's work for several sexes. For Adam and his wife. The law afterwards sheweth this. 10. Gracious providence puts on clothes upon sinners' backs. Much of love (ver. 21). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) OBSERVATIONS:—I. THE VERY CLOTHES THAT WE WEAR ARE GOD'S PROVISION. II. NECESSARY PROVISION IS AS MUCH AS WE CAN LOOK FOR AT GOD'S HAND. III. OUR CLOTHES FOR THE MOST PART ARE BORROWED FROM OTHER CREATURES. . To humble and keep our hearts low, when we consider that we have nothing but what we borrow, and that of our basest vassals. 2. To move us to take care of the creature, without the help whereof we must need starve with hunger and cold. (*J. White, M.A.*)

Ver. 22. Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil.—*Man's gain through loss*:—I. Consider SOME OF THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL, as

they are suggested in the statements of this narrative. You have here, then, four facts. We shall adopt the order of their logical relation rather than that of the history. 1. The first is man's moral condition resulting from the Fall. "Man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil." 2. The second is the prime original elements of the moral development of the race. "Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." That is the beginning of social life. Humanity naked is humanity without the possibility of improvement. Clothe man, and he enters upon the road of progress. Here is the germ of all the arts of culture, of science, and of social growth. 3. The third is the profound hope, the inextinguishable hope, that springs within the human heart. "Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." The fulness, the multitudinousness of life everywhere affords the hope, without which human restoration were not possible. 4. The fourth is the condition of human perfecting which is to be found in the unalterable past, "He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." These are the results of the Fall according to Scripture. They are of course connected with, though different from, the guilt which followed sin. That I do not propose to consider particularly, though the thought of it must underlie all our discussion. II. Consider the Word of God in which He declares that "The man has now become like one of Us." THE EFFECT OF THE FALL UPON MAN'S MORAL NATURE IS TO MAKE MAN LIKE GOD. These are striking words. In the moment of a Divine judgment there is also a Divine declaration of great significance concerning man. "Behold, the man is become as one of Us." The sneer of the serpent first of all introduces us to this likeness of man to God. "Has God said, You shall surely die?" "Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." They listened to Satan, and all they gained was the knowledge of their nakedness. That is all the serpent can give you. His promise of godlikeness ends in the discovery of your shame. And yet God takes these words first used by Satan and gives them a profound meaning. In Satan's mouth they were a lie. In God's they are an awful and yet a gracious truth. Some hold that God used these words ironically, "They have become like Us." The sneer of earth was answered by a sneer from heaven. I cannot believe it. I cannot believe that in an hour like this God would reproach. What then is God's knowledge of good and evil? It must be perfect. He would not be God if He did not completely know what good and evil were in nature, in all their results, in all their issues and relations. He knows the moral consequence of evil. He knows the degradation of the soul that sins. He knows the wild troop of mischiefs that follow in the train of iniquity. He sees the end from the beginning, and thus He knows. But in all this knowledge God has certain elements in His nature which must be remembered when we speak of God's knowing. While He knows the good and evil, and knows them completely, He is at the same time absolutely set for righteousness. Though knowing good and evil God remains for ever God. But God is not only in Himself free from any attack of evil, He also has complete power over it. He can restrain it, so limiting its scope and so bending it to the purposes of His holy will, that out of it He can bring good; and however deep may be the mystery to us, still evolve a higher good to the universe than it would have known had there been no evil. Then in all this it must be further noted there is no loss of the Divine power and vitality. God possesses every fulness of resource and every fulness of life. These in Him are not affected by the evil which He knows. Indeed, though we cannot say that He becomes more mighty, more vital by reason of evil, because that would be to deny the perfection of being to Him in His original and absolute nature, yet its presence produces a higher manifestation of Divine power and life than an innocent and unfallen world would otherwise have known. Such is God's knowledge of good and evil with some of its relations to other attributes of the Divine Being. When we turn to that knowledge which man has gained of the dark and dreary subject, we find that, in a sense, he too knows evil as God knows it. Sin in itself is an experience, a teaching. Without it man had never known conditions which now become clear and distinct to him. Think of the course of temptation, the allurements and enticings of sin, the hints and suggestions of the tempter! Through what a series of self-revelations does not the soul tempted to falling pass! How in temptation the unfolding of the wily nature comes into the clear perception of the tempted one! And then, when the temptation's force has fully issued in

the sin, what a further knowledge is gained! What spheres of action, closed to the innocent, are then opened! What experiences of inner life and circumstances of outward condition the sin displays! This is the knowledge which sin brings. It is Divine in its awfulness, its infinite reach. Now are they like gods, knowing good and evil. But man, like God, is further related to the object of his terrible knowing. The contrast, however, is noteworthy. The light, lurid and alarming, has burst upon his mind, and the mephitic vapours which arise from the horrible pit poison and overcome him. And besides this man's power is limited. By his sin he has opened the sluice-gates of the flood, and nothing that he can do can close them, or stay the mad stream that rushes forth and on. This is the power of every sin. "Like God," a word of terrible doom! being like God in the knowledge we have gained; but we who have gained it, how helpless we stand before the evils which we ourselves have produced! Another terrible result of sin in its relation to us, as contrasted with God's knowledge of it, is that the continuance of evil is out of all proportion to the continuance of that life during which alone we can cope with it. God knowing sin, has eternity in which to deal with it. We knowing it by our sin, even if we attempt to undo it, are often cut off long before we have begun to stay its mischievous effects: "The evil that men do lives after them." Think of it: your sin overwhelms thousands yet unborn. It may work out its dread succession of evil long after you have been forgotten. But remember it is your sin; you called it up, you set it going. But you are powerless to deal with it. "Like Us." Yes, in knowledge. But, oh! how bitter the thought of the contrast when we still find ourselves to be Divine in knowledge, but in all else human, and even less than human, by our sin. And is this our final learning from these words? Must this dark message be the end of our meditation? It is indeed all that philosophy can give us. The historian can furnish us no other teaching, the poet sing no other song than this tragedy of human loss. But, blessed be God! there is another light to shine upon this awful fact. It is the Son of God who can give to this terrible dignity into which we rise its true significance, and change it from its original doom to a blessed evangel. If we have nothing but the record of what this Word of God has uttered, all we gain is to become like God in knowledge, and in the rest to be smitten in the very essence of our life. But Christ by His word, and life, and death, made it possible for us to know the evil and the good, and to share in the Divine nature in its triumph over the evil, even as in its knowledge.

(*L. D. Bevan, D.D.*) *The Fall considered as a development*:—"God made man in His own image." But the deepest power, the free power, was yet latent. By a dark act of rebellion he developed it; and the Lord God testifies that he had thereby become something which the words "as one of Us" alone describe. And yet that act was deadly. Man, aiming at the height of God, fell perilously on the very edge of the abyss. No more awful condition of life, in point of grandeur and power can be conceived than the words "become as one of Us" set forth; and yet the penalty of aiming at it was death. It was a step out, a step on for man in the unfolding of the latent powers and possibilities of his being as an embodied spirit; but it brought him within peril and under the hand of woes and evils, which have made his history one long wail, and his life one long night. Adam, the child of Eden, made in God's image, could find the completeness of his life in Eden. The mould of his being was perfect as an image; the compass of his powers presented him as the likeness of God in this material world. Adam, the child of the wilderness, having become by the act of freedom that which our text describes—having by the actual experiment of what power might be in him, by the actual unfolding of a life whose character and ends were expressly self-determined, grown into something which, if grander on the one hand than the estate in which he was created in the garden, was most terrible and sorrowful on the other—could find the completeness of his life alone in Christ and heaven. "God made man in His own image," is the original description of the constitution of man. Then follows the dread history which the third chapter of the Book of Genesis records; and then it is stated, "Man is as one of Us, knowing good and evil." The words imply, though they do not express, a growth. Man is said to have grown to something which is in one sense nearer to God, nearer to the Divine level—and the last clauses of the verse seem to imply that he was within reach of that which would bring him still nearer to the level; but, on the other hand, there was a new spot of weakness where he had become vulnerable to foes, whom in his innocence he might safely have despised; there was a new element of disorder, which would bring discord and dire confusion into the harmonious sphere of his powers; there was a

new taint of decay and death which, grand as he might seem to have grown by his experiment of freedom, would eat like a canker into his godlike constitution, and unless from Him who made him at the first some renewing, restoring influence should descend, must lay its proud structure in ruins in the dust. "Ye shall be as gods," was the devil's promise, "knowing good and evil." The text affirms that there was a truth in it. "Behold, the man is become as one of Us." And yet it was a lie to the heart's core. None but God could stand on that Divine level. Man should stand there one day, partaker of the Divine nature. But for the man who in native, naked, human strength should stand there, there could be no issue but death. The devil was right as to the development. Man brought himself into the sphere of higher and more Divine experiences than his life in paradise could have afforded him. But the devil said nothing about the death. The devil said to the prodigal, "Wander freely, spend, enjoy; that is life." The prodigal found it, as every sinner finds it, to be death. What life has come out of it has been born, not of it, but of the strength, the tenderness, the quickening power of the Father's redeeming love. Man seems to be so organized inwardly that his purest joys spring out of his sorrows, his riches grow by his losses, his laurels bloom in the sphere of his sternest conflicts, his fullest development is the fruit of his hardest toils, and his noblest becomings of his most utter sacrifices—while God completes the cycle, and ordains that his immortal life shall spring out of his death. Thus man is organized. The question then arises, Is this condition of things the accident of sin? Is this the full account of it—that man being in a sinful state, God has thus adapted his mental and moral organization, as the best expedient which the case allows, with a view to his restoration? Or was this contemplated in his first constitution and endowment? Was man made, were all his powers ordained, with a view to this life of toil, struggle, suffering, sacrifice, and Divine experience? Was man made for it? Was the world made for it? Was heaven made for it? Is this the one way through which we are bound to believe that the highest end of God in the constitution of man and of all things is to be gained? And the answer must be, Yes. Man was made for it. Had he remained in Eden the highest interest of heaven in man's career would have been lost; and more would have been lost, the highest, fullest, most absolute manifestation of God. Him, redemption alone could fully declare. If man comes forth into full manhood through that perverse exercise of his freedom, which leaves human nature suppliant for redemption under peril of imminent death, God, in redeeming man from the penalties and fruits of that perverseness, reveals Himself most fully as God. The whole system of things around us seems to me to be constituted with a view to redemption—which comprehends the discipline and education of souls. The wilderness was there waiting, and all the physical order of the world. That was before man, and was made for man. And it is all set to the same keynote of struggle, toil, and suffering. There is not a bit of rock or a blade of grass, there has not been from the creation, which is not a mute memorial of struggle, wounds, and death. All things travail, not simply because man has sinned, but because the redemption of the sinner is the work for which "the all" has been prepared by the Lord. Redemption is no accident. The need of being a Redeemer lies deep in the nature of God; and not only was man's sin foreseen, but all things were ordered with a view to the great drama of redemption from before the foundation of the world. But was sin pre-ordained? The sun was ordained to shine, the moon to embosom and radiate his tempered beams. The flowers were ordained to bloom, the rain to fertilize, the lightning to scathe, the whirlwind to uproot and to destroy. Is it part of the Divine plan of creation, that as the sun shines and the rain descends, some men should blaspheme, and some rob, hate, and murder? Are these dark shadows of life but the inevitable attendants of its virtues, brought out into sharpest outline where the light is clearest—and their necessary foil; or else the stages through which God leads the development of nascent virtues, purifying them in the crucible of each as they pass through? To this question the answer of the Bible and of the Church is "No! a thousand times no!" God has set His witness against this in the picture of Eden and the history of the Fall, and to this witness the history of sin adds an emphatic Amen. Man has never been able in the long run to shake off the horror which sin inspires, as his own hateful and accursed work. Responsibility, in the fullest sense which that word will bear, is the broadest, strongest, most insoluble fact in the spiritual history of our race. "God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions," and nothing can deliver man from the consciousness that the

"I" which has sought them out represents something which, whatever it may be, distinctly is not God. "Father, I have sinned," is the only confession which reaches the depths of the human consciousness; and the gospel which demands the confession, and begins its ministry by deepening the conviction of sin, alone seems to him to be able to undertake the cure. As a matter of history it is palpably true that the convincing of sin, the inspiring a horror of sin—a horror which took many grotesque and ghastly forms in the early Christian centuries—was the first work of that gospel which was God's message to all mankind. The history of conscience, then, I hold to be conclusive—the profound, universal, unalterable conviction of the moral consciousness in man, that his sin springs out of an "I" which is not God; that his sin is his own, his creature, for which he is as responsible as God is for the order of the world. Sin then is, and is not God's creature. The being capable of sinning is God's creature. For making him capable of sinning God is responsible, and there His responsibility, as concerns Adam's transgression, ends. For making me as I am, capable of sin, for bringing me into a sinful world in a body of sinful flesh, God is responsible; not for my sin, that grows up of myself in me. There are but two solutions possible. Either man must lie where his sin must sink him, in a deeper depth of shame and anguish than even a fiend can fathom, or man must rise through Redemption to a higher, Diviner manhood, and eating of the tree of life in Christ, live before the face of God for ever. The first Adam is by grace abolished; the elder glory is done away by reason of the glory that excelleth. (*J. B. Brown, B.A.*)

Ver. 24. So He drove out the man.—*Man's expulsion from Eden*.—Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden teaches—I. THAT WHEN COMFORTS ARE LIKELY TO BE ABUSED, GOD SENDS MEN FROM THEM. There was danger lest Adam should put forth his hand and eat of the "tree of life" and live for ever. The fallen man must not be allowed to eat of the tree of life in this world. It can only be tasted by him in the resurrection; to live for ever in a frail body would be an unmitigated woe. There are many trees of life in the world from which God has to drive men, because they are not in a proper condition to make the designed use of them. Government and law must be preventive as well as punitive, they must regard the future as well as the past. It is better for a man to be driven from a mental, moral, or social good than that he should make a bad use of it. Many a soul has lost its Eden by making a bad use of good things. II. THAT IT IS NOT WELL THAT A SINNER SHOULD LIVE AND RESIDE IN THE HABITATION OF INNOCENCE. Adam and Eve were out of harmony with the purity and beauty of Eden. Such an innocent abode would not furnish them with the toil rendered necessary by their new condition of life. Men ought to have a sympathy with the place in which they reside. Only pure men should live in Eden. Society should drive out the impure from its sacred garden. Commerce should expel the dishonest from its benevolent enclosure. Let the wicked go to their own place in this life. A wicked soul will be far happier out of Eden than in it. Heaven will only allow the good to dwell within its walls. III. THAT SIN ALWAYS CAUSES MEN TO BE EXPELLED FROM THEIR TRUEST ENJOYMENTS. Sin expels men from their Edens. It expels from the Eden of a pure and noble manhood. It drives the monarch from his palace into exile. It exchanges innocence for shame; plenty for want; the blessing of God into a curse; and fertility into barrenness. It makes the world into a prison-house. It often happens when men want to gain more than they legitimately can, that they lose that which they already possess. In trying to become gods, men often lose their Edens. Satan robs men of their choicest possessions and of their sweetest comforts. This expulsion was—1. Deserved. 2. Preventive. 3. Pitiable. IV. THAT THOUGH EXPELLED FROM EDEN MAN'S LIFE IS YET BESET WITH BLESSINGS. Though the cherubim and the flaming sword closed up the way to paradise, Christ had opened a new and living way into the holy place. Christ is now the "way" of man—to purity—to true enjoyment—to heaven. Heaven substitutes one blessing for another. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The plan of redemption exhibited at Eden*.—I. THE EVENT HERE RECORDED. 1. The expulsion was not forcible. We may infer from the entire narrative that Adam had by this time been brought to penitence. 2. Neither are we to suppose that this event occurred merely as a carrying out of the curse which had been pronounced. The principal reason was, that access to the tree of life might be barred. By this man was taught the full consequence of sin. II. THE TRANSACTION THAT FOLLOWED. 1. Cherubim (see Ezek. i. 22, x. 1; Rev. iv. 6). 2. Flaming sword, "Turning every way"—literally "back on itself"; the fire of

wrath, kindled by transgression, instead of burning out to consume man, would turn back and expend itself on "God manifest in the flesh." III. THE DESIGN OF THIS TRANSACTION. 1. To teach the principles of redemption. 2. To keep the divinely-appointed way to eternal life in remembrance. 3. That it might serve as a temple of worship. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Fallen, yet redeemed*:—I. MAN'S *FALLEN LIFE*. 1. Externally. Condemned to toil and sorrow, no longer fed by sacramental food of the tree of life, exiled from garden, &c. 2. Internally. Strange and terrible possibilities of sin lurking within. Two wills, and two men, in each of us. II. MAN'S *REDEEMED LIFE*. In Christ we have—1. Forgiveness. 2. An emancipated will. (*Bishop W. Alexander.*) *The irretraceability of human life*:—Adam could not go back. True of all men. They cannot retrace their steps. I. We cannot go back into the past PERIODS OF LIFE. II. We cannot go back into past CONDITIONS OF LIFE. 1. Physical. 2. Social. 3. Mental. 4. Moral. Conclusion: 1. How great is human life. 2. How obvious our duty. To make the best of the stage in which we find ourselves. Take care of the Eden, for when we leave it, the "flaming sword" will render return impossible. (*D. Thomas, D.D.*) *Man's banishment*:—I. *WHENCE DID HE DRIVE HIM?* From Eden. 1. It was a garden of pleasure. 2. A scene of wholesome occupation. 3. A temple of blissful communion. And out of all this he was driven. II. *WHEREFORE DID HE DRIVE HIM?* 1. The act of man's disobedience was the ground of this expulsion. 2. This act of disobedience, if properly considered, will be found to be an act of high demerit and aggravated criminality. 3. The awful indications of Divine displeasure that have followed this act, plainly demonstrate to every considerate mind what must have been its malignant nature. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" III. *WHITHER DID HE DRIVE HIM?* He drove him into this blighted wilderness of our present abode; He drove him without the precincts of the garden that was formed for him, and in which he was first placed—He drove out the man—sent him forth to till the ground, and He "placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This world is a wilderness, because—1. So inferior to Eden. 2. A scene of labour. 3. A scene of vicissitude. 4. A scene of vexation. IV. *WHETHER THERE IS ANY DOOR OF HOPE AND ESCAPE?* 1. It is my delightful task and happiness to announce to you that the gospel reveals Him who is the second Adam. The first Adam was a figure of Him that was to come—in Adam all died, in Christ all are made alive. What the first Adam destroyed, the second Adam repaired. 2. By His perfect obedience, and meritorious sacrifice for sin, He has actually declared the right and title of reinstatement to this inheritance in behalf of all His people. 3. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is the appointed means of our personal restoration to God's favour, and the pleasure and delight of communion with Him. 4. Regeneration and sanctification are the feet by which we are to retrace our steps to celestial felicity. 5. There is a blessed certainty in all this—a certainty upon which you may depend, and upon which you may venture your immortal souls without scruple or hesitation, and which the second Adam has secured by His all-perfect obedience, atonement, and death. (*G. Clayton, M.A.*) *Redemption typically seen at the gate of paradise*:—I. THE REAL CAUSE OF MAN'S EXPULSION FROM THE EARTHLY PARADISE (see vers. 22, 23). II. THE SINGULAR MANIFESTATION THAT NOW SUCCEEDED. It was not a flaming guard of angels that was placed, but the Shechina, or Divine presence of Him who dwelt between the cherubim. III. THE IMPORTANT AND CONSOLATORY DOCTRINE WHICH THIS APPEARANCE TAUGHT. O cheering object to the eye of faith! O glorious hope, and balmy consolation to dry the tears of penitence, and wake the harp of joy! O hallowed spot, where God vouchsafed to dwell! O blissful seat, where mercy smiled on man. Yes, for there he "looked and lived"; there he learnt that in due time the sword should awake (that very sword), and smite the man who was Jehovah's fellow; should turn from the sinner upon the surety; and, as was here seen, should be revolvable upon itself! Yes, and there he first saw the cherubims! now first revealed as the covenanting three in the mysterious one. Each conditionally bound to their sacred office; emblems of those great ones, as should hereafter be more particularly unfolded to the captive prophet, as he mourned and wept for Israel's sons, beside the banks of Chebar! Captives of every clime and race! here behold the dispensations of Providence, and the design of mercy, grace, and peace! Yes, and with the cheering vision, the very place where it was seen would impart instruction, and might assuage their grief; for see, like the star of Bethlehem, it appeared in "the East," emblematic of another sun than they saw; even the Sun of Righteousness, who should hereafter arise to heal,

to fructify, to irradiate, guide, and cheer His Church; and who should "keep," preserve, and show "the way" of everlasting life! Yes, here Christ was preached in type and figure as "the way, the truth, and the life." For He whom "the tree of life" represented, was still seen as the same source of being and blessedness to their souls; for though, as has been repeatedly enforced, our first parents could no longer approach as heretofore, and when clad in innocence, yet the blessings it prefigured were still preserved, though shown in another, and even in a superior way. Here, then, was a standing type of redemption; and to this they did approach; for here profoundest wisdom was discovered, and covenanting mercy was displayed. And here, too (for where else?), was that presence of the Lord, from which Cain afterwards departed, while it long continued as the place before which Abel and every pious worshipper would delight to bring his sacrifice, to pay his adoration, and to perform his vows. (*W. B. Williams, M.A.*) *The closed Eden, the opened heaven*:—You remember the old legend of Greek mythology, of one to whom, when he had pleased the gods, they said: "Ask what you will, and we will give it." And he said, "Give me immortality." They did so, and he lived on and on, and could not die. He had immortality, but it was immortality with mortal woes. How wretched was his lot! How wearily did he go along his way of weakness and distress! How he prayed for the revoking of the favour that was only a curse! The woes of man are such that the only immortal who can bear them must be God. It is therefore God's infinite pity and tenderness, that when man had taken of the tree of knowledge, he is forbidden the tree of life. The very form of the words is striking. It is an unfinished sentence. God says, "Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he should put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever——" The sentence is unfinished. God did not conclude the awful hypothesis. Man had sinned, and were he now to put out his hand and take of the tree of life and live for ever—the eternal. One drops a veil on that dread scene of sorrow into which the immortal sinner would be plunged. It is not only judgment that puts the tree of life beyond man's reach; it is an act of pitifulness, an act of divinest grace. The punishment of sin further involved the labour of reducing the earth by tillage and toil expended upon it to supply man's need. "He sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken." He had been put into the garden to keep it. Now he is set to till the earth. Is there not here also a gracious mitigation of man's suffering? We find ever the traces of mercy blended with the righteous indignation of the offended law. The cloud has always its silver lining. Suppose God had not only permitted the gift of immortality to remain with man after his sin, but had left him also without toil. Suppose everything had been ready to his hand, and he needed only to put out his hand and take the fruit of the garden, the fruit of the tree! No labour! no death! A world of sin, a world of immortality, and a world without work. Can you conceive of a more awful judgment than that? Labour is the mitigation of our woe. Labour is in many cases the cure of the evil. Work will often wean you from sorrow, which comes from sin. Work, good wholesome toil—the hand, the brain—will heal the wounds that sin has made. It was not in wrath, but in pity; it was not with wrath but with grace, that God sent forth the man to till the ground whence he came. God finally pronounces the sentence that the way of the tree of life was to be kept by a flaming sword. Man was not willing to go. We will not leave our Eden unless we are driven forth. God had to drive man out of the garden which he had spoiled, and then keep the way to the tree of life by the flaming sword and the burning cherubim. Now, it suggests in the first place that the man had the desire to return upon his past. If man had not wanted to remain in Eden, he would not have been driven out at all. If he had not wanted to return, it would not have been kept by the cherubim. Man always seeks again his past. We always are returning to it. How we dwell in the reminiscences of life! How we look back upon childhood's days with a certain longing! Who has not, again and again, called up in memory's affection those who were with us in the years that have departed? Who is there that would not recall the past? "If I could only begin life again! If I could only have back those hours I wasted—those childhood's impressions I allowed to vanish! When I was a child, how tender the heart—how quick the conscience—how pure the life! Oh! give it back to me. Let me inherit the Eden from which I have been driven!" My friends, it is vain. Eden is closed. The cherubim are at the gate; there is always the flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. Old friendships! Who would not return to these? Friends we have lost, whose hearts we have

broken—whom we neglected—whom we injuriously treated—who would not give his right hand to get them back again, that we might undo the wrong we did, that we might increase the little service we had rendered? It is impossible! The cherubim are keeping the gate: you cannot go back. Oh! the lost opportunities of life! Who has used every chance? Who, even in the things of time and sense, has always been watchful? That golden hour in life, you only had it once. You had it then, you lost it then. The time of the flood, the prosperous breeze, the chance that was given you: it is gone. You look back with regret. The cherubim keep the gate; you cannot go back. The wasted lives. The injury that cannot be undone. It may be you wrecked for ever the peace of some soul, and in the wreck destroyed your own. Oh! to have had the day before that fatal hour! Oh! to be able to pause again before that false step! It is done! it is done! and the tree of life is guarded by the flaming sword of the cherubim. And this is so, not only with the individual, but with the entire race. All men look back. It is a poor nation that has no history. It is a very savage tribe that has no tradition. The men who have forgotten the golden age are scarcely worthy of the name. All nations recall it. The poets sing of it, and the philosophers meditate upon it, and all mankind look back upon it, and still remember the Eden that was lost. When Adam and Eve went out, they went out with unwilling steps, and ever gazing at the vanished paradise. Man's life is a reminiscence. Man's life is a longing regret. And it illustrates also the impossibility of return. If that past be so delightful, let us go back to it. Let us be to friends whom we have lost, what we were once to them. No, never! The cherubim are there. What were these cherubim? I do not know. There are many orders of being in the service of God; but whatever they were, they stand between the departing man and woman, and for ever bar the way of their return. And whatever were the cherubim, the poet is right, that between us and the past there stands ourselves, our "former selves." For what is it that really stands between us and the past, towards which we would move if it were possible? What but ourselves? It needs no angel from heaven, no flaming sword to bar the way. We are our own barriers. It is ourselves who stop the way to the tree of life. It is our deed. We lost the chance, we threw away our opportunity, we sacrificed innocence, we destroyed the soul of our friend, and well-nigh have destroyed our own—

"Our former selves, wielding a two-edged sword."

Is that all? Are we come to this? Is the promise to the woman, is the voice of the serpent, is the word to Adam, is the command to labour, all to be gathered up in this, and is this the end? Combine the longings for return, combine the obstacles that lie between man and his past, but surely with these we may blend the ever-recurring tone of the story. Does it not point to another gospel? Is there no restoration of life in the future? Is God, who has given to man original life, is He to be stayed in His purpose by human sin? He may have closed the way back to Eden, because there is another way which shall be opened. He may have said to Adam, "No step backward to the Eden thou hast lost," because every step forward, perpetually forward, would bring him round again to that Eden into which he would enter. Ah, yes! We must go forward; backward thou canst not go. Go forward. Is time lost? Time is still ours; and though the past has vanished, and though the present is slipping from our grasp, the future is our own. That we still possess. You cannot go back, says God. You have lost innocence; you cannot be innocent again. But, better than innocent, you can be sanctified. Is life lost? Has it wholly perished? Yes, wholly. But life lies beyond. The moment we were born we began to die, and the first cry of the child is but the prelude to the groan with which the man shall pass away. But he dies only to live in the nobler life; there alone, in that great future, shall the restoration be. Eden is closed behind you, but all the world and all the heaven lie before you. Here is the gospel—the gospel of the barred tree of life, the guarded Eden, barred and guarded that we may seek the eternal life, the Eden that our God has given. (*L. D. Bevan, D.D.*) *Lessons:—*

1. Sin alone puts God upon separating souls from their comforts, antecedent and consequent.
2. When comforts are like to be abused, God prevents it by sending them from them.
3. The habitation of innocency is no place for sinners.
4. Jehovah is the disposer of all places and conditions, He puts in and sends out.
5. A cursed earth is the sinner's place of correction; or his bride-well, as we may

say. 6. Sin hath brought a sentence for miserable toil on men in this place. 7. Man's base original corrupted with sin, fits him for a base servile condition (ver. 23). 8. God hath actually separated sin from the place of pleasure. From the first Adam until now, sin is out of paradise. 9. God doth not only throw out sinners from Eden or the place of pleasure, but keeps them out. 10. God hath His guard of angels to resist sinners, and drive them from rest. 11. Terrible are the means and active by which God drives off sinners from their pleasures. 12. No life can be recovered by man in looking to the former means of life in innocence. Therefore we must to Christ (ver. 24). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The expulsion—its character and lessons*:—I. First, it is a word this of SOLEMN DIVINE JUDGMENT. "He drove out the man." It was a Divine expulsion from the primeval paradise. Nor was this Divine expulsion one from the delights merely, the endlessly varied beauties and satisfactions, of that choicest part of a world which, everywhere, God had Himself pronounced to be very good. It was this, indeed; and in this judgment of course appeared. But there was a great deal more of judgment in the expulsion than this. Principally it was judgment, in that it was the final shutting out of the man, and in him, as we are too well assured of man, our whole race fallen, from all possibility of life by the law—by the first covenant of the law. II. But now, if there was judgment thus, many ways in the "driving out of the man," there was also glorious MERCY in it—not simply notwithstanding of it, but in it—mercy along with the judgment, and divinely rejoicing against the judgment. 1. For, first, what was it but the gracious shutting of him out from now delusive, vain, and ruinous hopes of life by the way of the law—a thing this of the very last moment in reference to any possibility of his being saved by grace. 2. I observe, secondly, that the driving out of the man was rich mercy, in that it was in effect the shutting of him now also in to Christ, the one name given under heaven among men fallen whereby we must be saved. 3. But we have not yet reached by any means the full mercy which was in the driving out of the man. So far we have seen its gracious design and tendency more doctrinally, as it were, under the grace of the Holy Ghost to shut out from delusive hopes of life, and shut in to Him who is the eternal life—the way, and the truth, and the life. And this truly was of unspeakable importance. How very large a portion of the Bible bears one way or other towards this double design! It might be said to be the grand scope and drift of it, doctrinally, from first to last. But then, the text opens up at least another class of means altogether for effecting the design. For, practically, what is it that to a very large extent holds us back from Christ, and prevails with us to leave Him and His salvation neglected and despised? Is it not some dream of finding a portion, a good, a happiness, in this world—in the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life—for the sake of which we are prepared to run the risk of losing our never-dying souls? But now behold the still further import of the driving out of the man. See how it was just a kind of summary, in effect, of that whole providential discipline which the Lord is administering from age to age in our fallen world, in connection with His Word, towards the same great end of driving us out from our vain delusive hopes of life and blessedness, on the one side, and shutting us in to the faith and love and obedience and enjoyment of the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the other. For observe, first, what it was the Lord drove out the man from. It was from the paradise of earth, as from a scene now no longer suited to his state—which, however profitable as well as pleasant before, when all earthly comforts did but raise his soul in love and thankfulness to God, could now have proved but a deadly snare to him. Hence, in rich mercy as well as judgment, "He drove out the man"—as if He should say, Outside that paradise of earth, away from its delights, now unfit for thee, thou mayest be shut in to desire a better country, even an heavenly. And just thus it is that the Lord is driving forth His children still from their Edens of earth, withering their gourds, teaching them painfully that—

"They build too low who build beneath the skies,"

in driving them out, only shutting them in to Him who is their alone life, and in whom they are yet to reach a better Eden than the primeval one. But what, further, did God drive out the man to? To till the ground now by the hard toil of his hands and the sweat of his brow—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." And, in addition, to endure many a hardship and profound sorrow—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow

shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." And "unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." Ab, it is judgment, indeed, but at least as much, mercy. "Driven out" thus we are to a lot of toil and sorrow. But it is a lot only the more in keeping, because sorrowful, with our state here, as at the best sorrowfully sinful—ever ready we, even after having tasted that the Lord is gracious, to depart from the living God, and take up our rest here, and put some idol in the place of God, and worship the creature more than the Creator, and prefer the things which are seen and temporal to the things unseen and eternal. How merciful the "driving out of the man"! (C. G. Brown, D.D.)

Paradise shut, guarded, and reopened.—I. PARADISE SHUT. What did man lose when shut out of paradise? 1. He lost the happiness of his external condition. 2. When man was excluded from paradise, he lost, too, the uprightness and purity of his moral nature. 3. Man then lost his approving conscience. 4. When paradise was lost, intercourse with God was lost. II. PARADISE GUARDED. The subject is not unprofitable to us in the present day. Paradise is guarded, as to you, by all the awful, all the terrible perfections of God; so that, except by the dispensation which I shall have occasion to mention, if man is left to himself, it is impossible for him, in any instance, to regain the favour of God. As for Adam, the verse says, there were flaming swords, and bands of flaming cherubim, to prevent his entering that state of blessedness from which he was driven. From the contemplation of God's perfections, revealed under aspects so terrific, no sinner can find the least hope of regaining the Divine favour. Not from any single perfection of the Divine character, or from all His perfections together, can the transgressor derive the least hope of pardon, purity, or happiness. III. PARADISE REOPENED. The Redeemer appears, removing these guards, and throwing open the gate of heaven to the tree of life itself. (R. Watson.)

Paradise lost.—I. THE PLACE OUT OF WHICH MAN WAS DRIVEN. Eden, the fairest spot in the new-made world, and frequently referred to, in the Christian Scriptures, as an emblem of that paradise which God has planted in the skies. 1. Every object which it contained, was intended and calculated to afford him the sweetest gratification, and to remind him of the benevolence and holiness of his great Creator. 2. This garden was not merely a place of residence and contemplation, but also of wholesome and pleasurable employment. 3. "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept." And it was during that "deep sleep," that she passed through his side, and smiled upon his slumbers, who was destined, when he woke, to be to him another paradise, far beyond the first in beauty and in loveliness. 4. But the crowning joy of paradise was the presence and the friendship of Jehovah. It was a temple, illumined and blessed with the Divine glory, as well as a fruitful and a fragrant garden. There God descended, not as afterward on Mount Sinai, amidst tempest, and fire, and frowning clouds, but with all His glories softened, so that man might see His face, and feel safe and happy in His society. II. THE REASON WHY HE WAS DRIVEN OUT. The sole reason was his disobedience to God. 1. The law which he transgressed had been distinctly and authoritatively declared to him. 2. The law which he transgressed was peculiarly adapted to his condition. He was allowed to pursue the knowledge of good in all its varieties, but he was prohibited from seeking an acquaintance with any degree of evil. 3. The law which he transgressed was enforced by most powerful motives. God, who had graciously given him existence, had provided ample and various supplies of food for his necessities and for his gratification, to all of which he had free access, so that every temptation arising from scarcity, or even from want of variety, was utterly prevented by his bountiful Creator. As obedience was his duty, he had been divinely created with a disposition to obey, and with a capacity to increase his happiness and his spiritual strength by obedience, so that he was in no danger from any deficiency of moral ability. His Almighty Creator was always at hand, ready to assist him whenever temptation offered, and to furnish him with grace to help in time of need, whenever he requested it, so that he might successfully wrestle even with "principalities and powers." He had the means and the prospect of increasing and confirming every holy principle, and of rendering himself less and less liable to fall, by resisting temptation when it appeared, and by making God his refuge whenever he was exposed to danger. III. THE CONDITION IN WHICH HE WAS PLACED BY HIS EXPULSION. 1. He was driven out of the garden to spend the remainder of his days amidst the

condemned and uncultivated parts of the earth. 2. He was driven out in a state of depravity and guilt, and exposed to all their awful consequences. 3. He was driven out accompanied with the promise of a Redeemer. The time when this promise was given, as well as the promise itself, affords an interesting evidence that, in the midst of wrath, the Lord remembers mercy; for it was repeated whilst He was pronouncing sentence upon the serpent, and before He had pronounced the sentence upon man. (*J. Alexander.*) *Observations*:—I. GOD OFTENTIMES WITHHOLDS FROM US, OR DEPRIVES US OF MANY BLESSINGS FOR OUR GOOD. II. WHEN MEN HAVE ONCE BROKEN OUT INTO ONE SIN, THEY ARE IN DANGER TO FALL INTO ANY OTHER. III. GOD, AS HE ALWAYS FORESEES, SO OFTENTIMES HE PREVENTS MEN'S FALLING INTO SIN. IV. THE SUREST WAY TO PREVENT MAN'S FALLING INTO SIN, IS TO BE FAR FROM THE ALLUREMENTS THAT MIGHT ENTICE HIM UNTO SIN. V. MEN ARE NATURALLY APT TO THINK THEMSELVES SAFE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF OUTWARD ACTS OF HOLY DUTIES. VI. GOD CANNOT ENDURE THE DEFILING OF HIS ORDINANCES BY SUCH AS HAVE NO RIGHT TO THEM. (*J. White, M.A.*) *Observations*:—I. THERE IS NO BLESSING SO FIRMLY ASSURED UNTO US, WHEREOF SIN MAY NOT DEPRIVE US. II. MEN'S DWELLINGS AND EMPLOYMENTS ARE BOTH ASSIGNED BY GOD. III. GOD EVERYWHERE LEAVES REMEMBRANCES, TO MIND US WHAT AND HOW BASE WE ARE. (*Ibid.*) *Observations*:—I. GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE NOT TO BE PASSED OVER SLIGHTLY, BUT TO BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY, AND OBSERVED AND REMEMBERED CAREFULLY. II. GOD LOVES TO LEAVE MONUMENTS, BOTH OF HIS MERCIES AND JUDGMENTS, FOR THE JUSTIFYING OF HIMSELF, AND THE CONVINCING OF MEN OF THEIR UNWORTHY CONDUCT TOWARDS HIM. III. IN SEARCHING INTO GOD'S JUDGMENTS, OUR SPECIAL CARE MUST BE TO OBSERVE THE PRECEDENTS AND CAUSE OF THEM. IV. THE BEST OF GOD'S SERVANTS HAVE NEED OF THE TERRORS OF HIS JUDGMENTS TO RESTRAIN THEM FROM SIN. V. IT IS A GREAT HELP TO BE INFORMED BY SENSE OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE TO WORK EFFECTUALLY UPON OUR HEARTS. VI. THE ANGELS THEMSELVES ARE MINISTERING SPIRITS FOR THE GOOD OF THE SAINTS. VII. THERE IS NO MEANS TO ESCAPE THE HAND OF GOD'S JUSTICE, IF MEN WALK ON IN A COURSE OF REBELLION AGAINST HIM. (*Ibid.*) *Man's banishment*:—There is unspeakable mercy here in every respect for the erring race. The present life in the flesh was now tainted with sin and impregnated with the seeds of the curse, about to spring forth into an awful growth of moral and physical evil. It is not worth preserving for itself. It is not in any way desirable that such a dark confusion of life and death in one nature should be perpetuated. Hence there is mercy as well as judgment in the exclusion of man from that tree which could have only continued the carnal, earthly, sensual, and even devilish state of his being. Let it remain for a season until it be seen whether the seed of spiritual life will come to birth and growth, and then let death come and put a final end to the old man. But still farther, God does not annihilate the garden or its tree of life. Annihilation does not seem to be His way. It is not the way of that Omniscient One who sees the end from the beginning, of that infinite wisdom that can devise and create a self-working, self-adjusting universe of things and events. On the other hand, He sets His cherubim to keep the way of the tree of life. This paradise, then, and its tree of life are in safe keeping. They are in reserve for those who will become entitled to them after an intervening period of trial and victory, and they will reappear in all their pristine glory, and in all their beautiful adaptedness to the high-born and new-born perfection of man. The slough of that serpent nature which has been infused into man will fall off, at least from the chosen number, who take refuge in the mercy of God; and in all the freshness and freedom of a heaven-born nature will they enter into all the originally congenial enjoyments that were shadowed forth in their pristine bloom in that first scene of human bliss. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) *The banishment*:—Behold man exiled from Eden! Behold the most heart-rending banishment that was ever denounced against any of the human race! We understand your grief and your tears, O unhappy beings, whom an inexorable arrest of the law snatches from all the endearments of a beloved land, where the hours of childhood have been spent, from all the joys of a family and friends tenderly beloved, from all the indescribable charms of the place where you learned to feel and to love, and removes you to some inhospitable clime, where the severest privations are the least of your evils, and where you languish, rather than love. But what are your afflictions, compared with those of our first father, when he went out of Eden at the voice of his Judge, to wander with his unhappy companion in the desert countries of an accursed earth! O delights of Eden, life of innocence and love, blissful retreats where the Lord revealed Himself to the soul, where everything

was ravishing beauty without, and harmony and peace within, favours of God, happiness of His love and of His presence; you are lost for ever! Bitter regret! profound misery! Oh, could Adam find again the way to Eden! Oh that the flaming sword of eternal justice no longer glittered! But no, it is not so, my brethren; Adam can no longer even desire the abode in Eden; and this is the completion of his misery! To fallen man, Eden has no more attractions, no more glory, no more happiness. What avail the beauties of man's first abode? his heart, deprived of innocence and peace, could no longer enjoy them. What does it avail that the glorious majesty of the Lord still shines forth in all His works? man is despoiled and ashamed. What does it avail that he still beholds over his head the azure firmament of heaven, and the brightness with which it sparkles, while darkness reigns in his soul, and gloomy clouds hide from him the glory of the Most High? What does it avail that all created beings unite to send up on high one melodious hymn of praise? there is nothing now in the heart of man but discord, anguish, and grief. What does it avail what riches and abundance replenish Eden? man is poor, miserable, and naked. What avails the tree of knowledge? man sees in it an accusing witness of his crime. What avails the tree of life? man reads in it the sentence of death against himself. What avails even the presence of God! man now only sees in Him a Judge; he feels in His presence only the fear of a slave, the shame of a criminal, the terror of a condemned malefactor. He has fled at the voice of God; he has gone to hide his disgrace among the trees of Eden. Flee, Adam, flee far from thy God, far from Eden, which sin has made an abode of misery to thee; flee, and let the gates of Eden be closed upon thy footsteps, let the flaming sword for ever guard its entrance against thee! O my beloved brethren! how hateful is sin in the sight of God! how bitter are its fruits! how disastrous its effects! Let the expulsion of Adam explain to us the incomprehensible mystery of a world sunk in evil, a world whose sufferings seem to fling an accusation against Providence; a world full of sin, crimes, injustice, animosities, war, and murders. Let this fact explain to us the contradictions, the continual afflictions of a life whose sources sin has poisoned, and whose relations with God it has destroyed! Let this fact explain the grief which has invaded the whole human race, and the numberless sufferings which result from man's want of harmony with himself and with his God! Let this fact explain to us disease and death—death, that mystery inscrutable to human wisdom, that abyss which has yawned beneath the feet of man, ever since he was banished from Eden! Ah! my brethren, deny it not, we also have been banished from Eden, or rather, we are born in this land of exile; Adam's lot has become ours; he has bequeathed unto us this sad heritage of sin, corruption, misery, and death! (*L. Bonnet.*) *Expulsion from Paradise, but not from Eden.*—His expulsion is not to be viewed, as is generally done, as mere ejection from a happy dwelling, his own special home, as if this were his punishment. No, it is banishment from God and from His presence, that is the true idea which the passage presents to us. Paradise was not so much Adam's home as Jehovah's dwelling. Man is banished from paradise, yet he is left within sight of it; he is allowed to remain in Eden. He is not driven into some desert, as if there were nothing for him but wrath. There is favour for him in spite of his sin; and the expulsion does not cancel the pardon he has received, or intimate that God has begun to frown. It merely showed that before the full consequences of that favour could reach man, time must elapse, and barriers be thrown down. It is not the "outer darkness," neither is it the full sunshine, into which he is brought. It is the twilight that surrounds him; and that twilight assures him of the coming noon. He is left to linger at the gate, or wander round the sacred fences of that forbidden ground. For paradise is not swept off nor swallowed up. It is left as God's temple, now shut up and empty, but still within sight of man. Probably it shared the common blight of creation; though, like primeval man, it took long to wither; till, having waxed old and being ready to vanish away, the deluge came and swept it from the earth. It remained as a specimen of God's original handiwork, reminding man of the glory which he had lost. It stood as a monument of what sin had done in blighting God's perfect creation, and turning man into an exile. It showed how God estimates the material creation, and that matter is not the degrading and hateful thing which some conceive it to be. It proclaimed that God had not wholly left the earth, and that in His own set time He would return to it; nay, that man, though for a season dethroned and banished, should yet repossess earth as king and lord. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The garden of Eden left.*—I. THE TREE OF LIFE GUARDED. When mankind were driven out of paradise, the tree of life was not removed nor destroyed,

but still left there: to show that there was still immortal life left for man, though out of his reach. To this our own nature bears witness; for there lies at the bottom of the heart of man the inextinguishable desire for happiness and immortality; and that desire still implanted within us proves that it is not altogether lost. Thus Aristotle inferred from this universal desire in the very constitution of man's nature, that there is a happiness for which he is born; and that though it be never attained, yet it must in some way be attainable by man. The principle must exist, though every access to that life is closed to mankind; or, in other words, is guarded by the sword which turns every way. II. THE CHERUBIM OF SCRIPTURE. Of the different figures we may observe, that in the holy of holies they are at rest; in Ezekiel in motion; in St. John in adoration. Over the ark they seem to indicate inquiry; in the prophetic vision judgment; in the Church of the redeemed thanksgiving. In the holy place they seem as if inquiring of each other, and at the same time as if the subject of their inquiry was the propitiation or mercy-seat. Thus it is said to Moses, "their faces shall look one to another, toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be." To which St. Peter is supposed to allude when he says that the angels "desire to look into the things" of our salvation. And thus the two angels were seen by Mary Magdalene, "the one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain," which is the true mercy-seat. But the four cherubims afterwards are described as "full of eyes," instinct with knowledge, and adoring wonder. Again, in the holy of holies not only are they entirely withdrawn from sight by the veil, but even when the High Priest entered once a year within that veil, they are hid from view by the smoke and the cloud of incense; but in the Apocalypse all is open, and they are glorifying God, for the gospel is then manifested. It appears then from all these passages, that by the term cherubims we must understand some symbols or representation of the incarnation. So was it in the holy of holies; so was it in the prophet Ezekiel, and in the Apocalypse; and therefore we may conclude that the same is meant in this place in the garden of Eden. III. THEIR FORM AND CHARACTER. We may further infer, that not only did those cherubims which appeared in the beginning in Eden bear the same kind of significance with those which are introduced in the rest of Scripture, and at the close in the Apocalypse, but also are of a similar form and character. Now these in the latter instances were expressly composite forms of animal life, or creature-combinations, and in all probability those in the temple were likewise of the same kind. The compound figures keeping the entrances of Assyrian and Egyptian temples or palaces, so utterly inexplicable on any other grounds, were probably derived from some tradition of the cherubims that kept the gate of paradise. To these might be added mythological fables, as that of the brazen-footed bulls breathing fire, that kept the golden fleece. And what was that golden fleece but some record of that clothing of God, some memory of that mystery of great price, in Eden guarded by cherubim? IV. SIGNIFICATION OF CHERUBIMS. It will then be granted that by the cherubims were signified some manifestation of Christ. And it has always been considered that the four cherubims of Ezekiel and St. John had reference to the four Gospels or Evangelists; for it is they that bear the manifestation or knowledge of Christ throughout the world; they may be said to bear His throne as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, or to encompass it as by St. John. In like manner the two cherubims in the Temple have been considered by St. Augustine to mean the two Testaments. We may therefore infer that the cherubims in Eden had the like intent. But though they may have been afterwards seen and partially fulfilled in four Evangelists, yet this does not explain the meaning of such appearances; they must have some peculiar signification in themselves in addition to, or independently of, the four Gospels. For we may ask, Why should figures of this kind be chosen? And what do their curious shapes imply? What are they? They are in some sense angelic, inasmuch as they bear messages of God, and the only way we can represent angels is by some form of human youth in a spiritual body; yet they are not angelic, for they are human and animal. They are not human, because there are among them the countenances of animals; they are not animal, for they are full of knowledge; the very name implies multitude of knowledge, as also do their many eyes; and they bear in their hand a sword; they are human as well as animal; they are spiritual as well as human, as their spiritual movement indicates. They are called by the prophet and by the evangelist "the living creatures,"—not, as improperly translated, "beasts," but living creatures—creatures gifted with excessive life, "the living ones." But we may observe, that though that which is animal and spiritual be mixed up with

these appearances, yet the prevailing character is man; the basis, so to speak, of all these symbolic figures is man. They seem to represent the perfection of animal life, yet gifted with a spiritual body, as to be found in the new man, the last Adam, who shall reinstate again in paradise; man by the manhood of Christ reconciled unto God, and admitted into union and fellowship with God, wherein is eternal life. It is therefore the pledge and covenant of the seed that should come, admitting again to immortality, by union of God with man, the life of life, spiritual life, in the perfection of the creature united with the Creator. V. THE ANIMAL CREATION RESTORED. See Rom. viii. 19, 21, 22; Col. i. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17; Rev. iii. 14, v. 13; Isa. xi. 5-6, lxv. 25. The animals partake of the sentence passed on man of labour; they labour and suffer for us and with us, sharing our toil and relieving it in their lives, and in their deaths sustaining our frail bodies, setting forth the atonement, and thereby our deliverance from death. Thus they are connected both with our death by sin, and with the promise of that better life which is in God. It is then through animals that God clothes fallen man; it is through animals slain that He receives a sacrifice in Abel; and both these as setting forth Christ;—"the secret of the Lord" which "is with them that fear Him." It is not therefore inconsistent with this that something of an animal character should also be found in these cherubims, which kept the way of the tree of life, and which must in some sense be symbols of Christ's incarnation. (I. Williams, B.D.) *The cherubim*.—1. The cherubim are real creatures and not mere symbols. In the narrative of the Fall they are introduced as real into the scenes of reality. Their existence is assumed as known. For God is said to place or station the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden. The representation of a cherub too in vision as part of a symbolic figure implies a corresponding reality (Ezek. x. 14). A symbol itself points to a reality. 2. They are afterwards described as living creatures, especially in the visions of Ezekiel (i. 10). This seems to arise, not from their standing at the highest stage of life, which the term does not denote, but from the members of the various animals, which enter into their variously described figure. Among these appear the faces of the man, the lion, the ox, and the eagle, of which a cherubic form had one, two or four (Exod. xxv. 20; Ezek. xli. 18, i. 16). They had besides wings in number two or four (Exod. xxv. 20; 1 Kings vi. 27; Ezek. i. 6). And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides (Ezek. i. 8; x. 8). Ezekiel also describes their feet as being straight, and having the soul like that of a calf. They sometimes appear too with their bodies, hands, wings, and even accompanying wheels full of eyes (Ezek. i. 18; x. 12). The variety in the figuration of the cherubim is owing to the variety of aspects in which they stand, and of offices or services they have to perform in the varying posture of affairs. 3. The cherubim are intelligent beings. This is indicated by their form, movement, and conduct. In their visible appearance the human form predominates. "They had the likeness of a man" (Ezek. i. 5). The human face is in front, and has therefore the principal place. The "hands of a man" determine the erect posture, and therefore the human form of the body. The parts of other animal forms are only accessory. 4. Their special office seems to be intellectual and potential rather than moral. The hand symbolizes intelligent agency. The multiplicity of eyes denotes many-sided intelligence. The number four is evidently normal and characteristic. It marks their relation to the Kosmos, universe or system of created things. 5. Their place of ministry is about the throne, and in the presence of the Almighty. Accordingly, where He manifests Himself in a stated place, and with all the solemnity of a court, there they generally appear. 6. Their special functions correspond with these indications of their nature and place. They are figured in the most holy place, which was appropriated to the Divine presence, and constructed after the pattern seen in the mount. They stand on the mercy-seat, where God sits to rule His people, and they look down with intelligent wonder on the mysteries of redemption. In the vision of the likeness of the glory of God vouchsafed to Ezekiel, they appear under the expanse on which rests the throne of God, and beside the wheels which move as they move. And when God is represented as in movement for the execution of His judgments, the physical elements and the spiritual essences are alike described as the vehicles of His irresistible progress (Psa. xviii. 11). All these movements are mysteries to us, while we are in the world of sense. We cannot comprehend the relation of the spiritual and the physical. But of this we may be assured, that material things are at bottom centres of multiform forces, or fixed springs of power, to which the Everlasting Potentate has given a local habitation and a name, and

therefore cognate with spiritual beings of free power, and consequently manageable by them. 7. The cherubim seem to be officially distinct from angels or messengers who go upon special errands to a distance, from the presence chamber of the Almighty. It is possible that they are also to be distinguished in function from the seraphim and the living beings of the Apocalypse, who like them appear among the attendants in the court of heaven. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) *The way of life and its guardian forces*:—Let us try to analyse the spiritual ideas represented by these words of the text: "Life," "Tree," "Way," "Cherubims," "Flaming Sword." 1. What is life? The true life of man is to partake of the Divine life of God. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God." 2. The power of the Divine life in its relation to the being of man is here represented by a "tree." A tree represents a germ, a growth, and a fruitfulness. So the Divine life, implanted in the being of humanity as a hidden germ, grows, casting forth branches in the formation of habits and tendencies of character, and brings forth fruits in the energies of a spiritual being reflecting the image of God; that is, "the fruits of the Spirit." 3. Alienation from the life of God, and reconciliation to it, imply a departure and a return. These ideas are here represented by the word "way." The "way" would seem to represent those means of grace, and that mediatorial system, by the power of which alone man is able to reach the realization of the Divine presence. 4. This way is subject to conditions. "The cherubims" keep the way. The winged forms of the cherubims would seem to represent the spiritual supernatural forces which elevate the soul of man out of the earthly, lower life, into the communion of the Most High. The wings of the "cherubims" alone can waft the soul of man into the presence of "The Most High." 5. There is another guardian force represented by the flaming sword. What is the spiritual power symbolized by the sword? The knife, or sword, is the symbol of sacrifice. Our love of any object may be measured by the sacrifices which we are willing to make for it. Now, the life of man stands in the reflection of the attributes of God. The one all-comprehensive attribute of God is love. Therefore the one all-comprehensive duty of man is sacrifice. Sacrifice is the reflection by humanity on earth of the Divine love in heaven. The sword keeps the way of life. But it is the "flaming" sword. The flame would seem to represent the motive spirit of true sacrifice. The cold sacrifice, which is not prompted by the ardour of burning love, is not the power that keeps the way, but the unquenched spirit of fervent love, symbolized by the flame. In all the ages of the Church's life, the access of the human soul to the secret place, in which dwells the eternal life, has been by the same way, and subject to the same conditions. Let us, then, endeavour to trace the same verities, as they are presented under various forms, in successive ages. I. Where did THE PATRIARCHS, who lived on earth before the flood, find the source of spiritual, undecaying life? In the presence of God. Their souls drew near to realize the image of the eternal life, in order that, gazing on its glory, they might be changed into the same image. In the motions of his consciousness Enoch walked with God, and Noah walked with God. On the other hand, when Cain by transgression lost the higher life of his being, that perdition is described as departure from the presence of God: "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord." In that alienation the tree of life ceased to grow within the reach of his soul, and its spiritual fruits no longer strengthened and gladdened his being. What, then, constituted the "way" of access for these patriarchs? The means of grace which God had ordained. The forms in which the means of grace consisted in those ages are not revealed to us. The spiritual forces which encircled that "way," as the conditions of approach, were essentially the same as in our own and in every age of the Church. The human consciousness cannot realize the presence of God without the revealed knowledge of God and the ordained exercises of devotion. The wings of the eternal cherubims, then as now, in the shadowing power of reverence, and in the elevating power of spiritual aspiration, were the guardian forces, without whose activity the soul could not draw near to the Most High. The other force which keeps the way was also present in the antediluvian Church. The "sword" of sacrifice appears in an early page of religious history. In the religion of Cain and Abel sacrifice is seen. The sword was not wanting in the religion of Cain. Why, then, did he lose the "respect" of the Divine presence? His was the cold sword of a heartless, formal sacrifice, which cost him no self-denial. On the other hand, the soul of Abel had seen dimly the mighty truth of the Cross. In the progress of his soul the sword

of sacrifice is seen baptized with the flames of the tongues of fire, kindled by the one eternal Spirit of God. II. In the Church of the POSTDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF MAN WAS QUICKENED, AND FROM TIME TO TIME REVIVED BY THE REALIZATION OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD. Again and again in the religious history of the patriarchs we read of remarkable spiritual epochs in their lives. How are these epochs described? In the oft-repeated phrase: "God appeared unto Abraham"—Isaac—Jacob. These appearances of God, that is, realizations of His presence, are marked as the points of spiritual illumination and spiritual revival. In each of those manifestations, the tree of the Divine life casts forth branches, and brings forth new spiritual fruit in the patriarch's soul. But, let us ask, how were the souls of these patriarchs entitled to draw near, so that God manifested His countenance to the inward eye of faith in their spiritual consciousness? By the diligent use of the Divinely appointed means. The system of Divine doctrine and worship, as far as its forms are concerned, which prevailed in the Church of the patriarchs, is very dimly revealed to us. But there are many expressions which clearly show that such a system existed. Special seasons, and special places, were evidently consecrated to the pursuit of illumination and the exercises of worship. In that system the soul found the "way" of the tree of life. The spiritual forces, which come forth from the eternal throne "to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," were ever surrounding the "way of the tree of life" in the history of the patriarchs. In the elevating powers which came in response to meditation, prayer, and praise, the cherubic wings made their presence felt during the waking and dreaming hours of the patriarchs. In the most remarkable passage in the life of Abraham, we also behold the guardian agency of "the flaming sword." As in the New Testament, the incarnate God has taught us that we cannot reach His presence except upon the condition of entire self-sacrifice, in the "forsaking of all," so this mighty principle appears in the trial of Abraham. In the ascent of Mount Moriah he rose to the height of self-sacrifice, and there won the richest promises of life. By the mighty faith of that act he won the smile of the eternal countenance, and inherited the highest blessing vouchsafed to man. His self-surrender proved that burning love of God had absorbed his entire being.

III. IN THE MOSAIC ECONOMY OF THE JEWISH CHURCH, the presence of the Lord is ever represented as the source of the Church's life. The promise of that abiding sacramental presence was given in the words, "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony." This Divine presence was also realized by the Church in the days of Solomon. At the opening of the Temple, "The glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." That central presence was the life of the Church. The far-extending and fructifying influences of that mysterious presence in the Church were as the branches of the tree of life. That presence first manifested to Moses in the burning brightness of the tree on Horeb continued to abide in the growing Church, the increase of which the Psalmist sang in these words: "Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. . . . She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river." The "way" of the tree of life was sacramentally represented in the entrance into the holy of holies on the great day of the Atonement. On that day the high priest drew near into the presence of the eternal Life according to the appointed order of access. That order represented "the way." As in the patriarchal Church, the "way" was kept by the guardian forces. The golden cherubims, resting upon the ark of the testimony, cast their shadow over the "way" of approach. Those golden figures, with wings out stretched, as if for mounting into the realms of the Eternal Life of the Most High, and resting upon the ark of the testimony, symbolized the truth that the elevating forces of spiritual worship and aspiration must have as their basis the solid ground of Church witness and dogmatic truth. Thus we find that in the Jewish Church the "way" of access to the Presence was kept by the cherubims. Was the power of the flaming sword also represented in the typical teaching of the Tabernacle? Yes. As a condition of entrance, the high priest was commanded to bear the sword and the fire. "Into the second tabernacle went the high priest alone, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people." IV. So likewise in the INCARNATION. When the fulness of time was come, the everlasting Son, who is the eternal Word and fountain of life, entered our humanity: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . . In Him was life." In Jesus Christ was embodied the image of the eternal life, for the participation of which

man was created. The tidings of His mission are, "The glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God." If we regard the progressive manifestation of the Divine life in the manhood of Jesus Christ, He is also the "tree" of life. The hidden Godhead dwelt bodily in the ungrown form at Bethlehem. The manifestation of the Godhead, according to the conditions of humanity, was gradual: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Of His earthly course John the Baptist said: "He must increase." In that increase He appears as the "tree" of life. The holy nativity was the germ, containing within itself the tree, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. The successive glories, or manifestations, of His Divinity were as the branches which the growing tree put forth. By the power of these man is saved. In the ascension the tree of life reached the fulness of its height; and in the coming of the Holy Ghost began to shed upon human nature the fruits of the everlasting life. In His mediatorial power, as opening the Divine life to the human nature, Jesus Christ is the "way" of the tree of life: "For through Him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father." His flesh and blood are the media of access to the invisible eternal life. Therefore Jesus Christ is also the "way" of the tree of life for man. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." In the history of the incarnation we also behold the presence and agency of the ministering spirits that were appointed to keep the "way." In the temptation the power of the ministering spirits is seen keeping the "way": "Behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." In Jesus Christ we behold also the spiritual powers represented by the flaming sword. From Bethlehem onwards every act of Jesus was a sacrifice. But the crowning act, which gathered into itself the significance of all His previous acts, was His self-surrender unto the death of the cross. The original life of the unfallen man flowed from the image of the one eternal Life, whose name is Love. The mighty power that redeems man from that unloving self-will, which is the "law of sin and death," is the manifestation of the infinite love. The expression of love is sacrifice, and all love may be measured by the value of the victim sacrificed. Blood is the true exponent of love. In the eternal Being of God, love holds a place analogous to that of blood in the physical being of man. Love permeates the infinite system of God's eternal Being, giving motion and vitality, as it were, to all the other attributes. Power, justice, wisdom, holiness, and all the other attributes of the Eternal, are quickened by His all-circulating love. On Calvary we see the flaming sword, under the strokes of which humanity in Christ found entrance into the secret recesses of the eternal life. Christ "by His own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." V. The eternal life, lost by man in nature, is brought near in that "ONE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC СНУРА," which is the Body of Christ. Wherein does that life dwell? Where is the throne upon which He is seated? The Presence dwells sacramentally in the holy mysteries. The Divine life, communicated from Christ to the being of man, is a life that grows. The tree of life in the soul of the young communicant may be but a weak and tender plant. As the outward form of flesh and blood in which the eternal Word chose to come into humanity was lowly and feeble to the eye of man, so the sacramental "way" in which the eternal life is communicated to us hath no form or splendour that our natural hearts would desire. The sacramental "way" to the Presence is also guarded by the "cherubims." Unless you have sought the influence of the ministering spirits that elevate and waft the soul from its earthliness into the light and air of the higher life, you cannot realize the presence of Christ. The other condition of access that keeps the "way" is the mighty power of sacrifice. That flaming sword must be known in our personal being, before we can reach the presence of the Life. When you draw near along the sacramental "way," you are commanded to acknowledge and bewail your manifold sins and wickednesses. If that confession be a genuine act of the soul, then you are willing to sacrifice the dearest sins, and, taking the sword, to cut off the right hand, and to cut out the right eye, in order to enter into the hidden life. On that condition alone can you worthily draw near. But whence can we draw the power to wield this sword? We have no sufficient motive power in our own nature. We must draw inspiration by a living faith from the one omnipotent sacrifice on Calvary. (*H. T. Edwards, M.A.*) *The guarded way:*—Observe, the tree of life was not cut down; nor was it withdrawn from the trees of the field—no, the tabernacle of God was left with men upon the earth. Well was the way watched until the time should come for approach: strait is the gate

and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, yet men may travel now up to the blessed tree and take the fruit of immortality! God has never taught us to set little store by life. He has always watched it and guarded it as with hosts of armed angels. It is not to be wantonly plucked. It is God's choice gift. He has, too, always kept the line very distinct between Himself and His creatures—"the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil"; not really as "one of Us," but imaginatively so; he thinks he now knows all that there is to be known, but this imagination must be corrected by the imposition of high discipline: he thinks he has discovered the sham and failure of things and found out the scheme of God; he must be undeceived; throw a skin upon his back, drive him out of the garden, keep the tree of life, and let him learn by long and bitter experience that there is no short road to dominion and immortality. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 1-16. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.—*The story of Cain and Abel*:—I. RELIGION ACTUATED MEN IN THE VERY EARLIEST TIMES. II. THE MERE NATURAL RELIGION IS ESSENTIALLY DEFECTIVE. 1. In its offerings. 2. In the power which it exercises over the passions. 3. In its sympathy (ver. 9). III. SPIRITUAL RELIGION ALONE COMMENDS A MAN TO GOD. This is illustrated in the life of Abel. 1. He possessed faith. 2. He offered an acceptable sacrifice to God. 3. Spiritual religion has a favourable influence on character. The quality of Abel's piety, its depth and spirituality, cost him his life, and made him at the same time the first martyr for true religion. (*D. Rhys Jenkins.*) *The two sacrifices*:—I. The first question to be asked is this: WHAT DID CAIN AND ABEL KNOW ABOUT SACRIFICE? Although we should certainly have expected Moses to inform us plainly if there had been a direct ordinance to Adam or his sons concerning the offering of fruits or animals, we have no right to expect that he should say more than he has said to make us understand that they received a much more deep and awful kind of communication. If he has laid it down that man is made in the image of God, if he has illustrated that principle after the Fall by showing how God met Adam in the garden in the cool of the day and awakened him to a sense of his disobedience, we do not want any further assurance that the children he begat would be born and grow up under the same law. II. It has been asked again, WAS NOT ABEL RIGHT IN PRESENTING THE ANIMAL AND CAIN WRONG IN PRESENTING THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH? I must apply the same rule as before. We are not told this; we may not put a notion of ours into the text. Our Lord revealed Divine analogies in the sower and the seed, as well as in the shepherd and the sheep. It cannot be that he who in dependence and submission offers Him of the fruits of the ground, which it is his calling to rear, is therefore rejected, or will not be taught a deeper love by other means if at present he lacks it. III. THE SIN OF CAIN—a sin of which we have all been guilty—WAS THAT HE SUPPOSED GOD TO BE AN ARBITRARY BEING, WHOM HE BY HIS SACRIFICE WAS TO CONCILIATE. The worth of Abel's offering arose from this: that he was weak, and that he cast himself upon One whom he knew to be strong; that he had the sense of death, and that he turned to One whence life must come; that he had the sense of wrong, and that he fled to One who must be right. His sacrifice was the mute expression of this helplessness, dependence, confidence. From this we see—1. That sacrifice has its ground in something deeper than legal enactments. 2. That sacrifice infers more than the giving up of a thing. 3. That sacrifice has something to do with sin, something to do with thanksgiving. 4. That sacrifice becomes evil and immoral when the offerer attaches any value to his own act and does not attribute the whole worth of it to God. (*F. D. Maurice, M.A.*) *Lessons from the history of Cain*:—From the story of Cain we gather the following thoughts—I. EVE'S DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE BIRTH OF CAIN SHOULD BE A WARNING TO ALL MOTHERS. Over-estimate of children may be traced sometimes to extreme love for them; it may also arise on the part of parents from an overweening estimate of themselves. II. We see next in the history of Cain what a FEARFUL SIN THAT OF MURDER IS. The real evil of murder (apart from its theftuous character) lies in the principles and

feelings from which it springs, and in its recklessness as to the consequences, especially the future and everlasting consequences, of the act. The red flower of murder is comparatively rare, but its seeds are around us on all sides. III. NO ARGUMENT CAN BE DEDUCED FROM THE HISTORY OF CAIN IN FAVOUR OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS. We object to such punishments—1. Because they, like murder, are opposed to the spirit of forgiveness manifested in the gospel of Christ. 2. Because, like murder, they ruthlessly disregard consequences. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. CAIN AND ABEL AT THE ALTAR. II. CAIN AND THE LORD AT THE ALTAR. III. CAIN AND ABEL IN THE FIELD. IV. CAIN WITH GOD IN THE FIELD. Conclusion: 1. The secret of right living is faith in God. The acceptable sacrifice is the life of faith. 2. That which makes sacrifice acceptable is faith. A formal sacrifice is a vain thing. It is Cain's offering. 3. Faith prepares men to die well. Be ready to die in faith, for the faith. How much may hinge upon it. Have you religious convictions for which you are ready to lay down your life? When Martin Luther went to his historic trial in the Hall of the Diet at Worms, the people crowded the windows and housetops of the city to see him pass. They knew his danger. But they knew of a higher danger, theirs and his, of the cause of pure religion on the earth. Their concern for him was: "Will he stand firm for us? Will he stand for the faith to the death?" "In solemn words," says Carlyle, "they cried out to him not to recant. 'Whosoever denieth Me before men,' thus they cried to him as in a kind of solemn petition and adjuration." Luther stood for the human race. Would his faith fail? Then the faith of the people would fail. Would his stand? Then theirs would stand, the Reformation would triumph. It was not so important that he should live, as that he should stand in unconquerable faith. How much depended upon one man! How much depended on the faith of Abel! Where should Eve find hope again, with Cain a murderer and Abel dead? Where Seth an example, and Enoch and Noah, and the antediluvian saints? Where Abraham and the patriarchs an inspiration? Abel's faith shone out as a beacon light through all those early centuries. The heroes of faith all lived in loyalty. But how did they die? These all died in the faith. Thank God for that sentence! Covet a faith to live by. But be sure of the faith of Abel to die by. (*G. R. Leavitt.*) *Naming of children*:—She called her eldest Cain, which signifieth a possession, and her second son when she had also borne him, Abel, which signifieth vain or unprofitable. By which diversity of names evidently appeareth a diversity of affection in the namers, and so teacheth us two things. First, the preposterous love that is in many parents, esteeming most oftentimes of those children that are worst, and least of them that deserve better. Their Cains be accounted jewels and wealth, but their Abels unprofitable, needless, and naught. Secondly, it teacheth the lot of the godly in this world many times, even from their very cradle, to be had in less regard than the wicked are. So was here Abel, so was Jacob of his father, so was David and many more. Such and so crooked are men's judgments often, but the Lord's is ever straight, and let that be our comfort: He preferreth Abel before Cain, whatsoever his parents think, He loveth Jacob better than Esau, and He chooseth little David before his tall brethren: He seeth my heart, and goeth thereafter when men regard shows and are deceived. Care away then, if the heart be sound, God esteemeth me, and let man choose. (*Bishop Dabington.*) *Antiquity of husbandry*:—Their trade of life and bringing up we see, the one a keeper of sheep, the other a tiller of the ground, both holy callings allowed of God. Idleness hated then from the beginning, both of the godly and such as had but civil honesty, or the use of human reason. The antiquity of husbandry herein also appeareth, to the great praise of it, and due encouragement unto it. But alas our days! many things hath time invented since, or rather the devil in time hatched, of far less credit, and yet more use with wicked men, a nimble hand with a pair of cards, or false dice, is a way now to live by, and Jack must be a gentleman, say nay who shall. Tilling of the ground is too base for farmers' sons, and we must be finer. But take heed we be not so fine in this world, that God knows us not in the world to come, but say unto us, "I made thee a husbandman, who made thee a gentleman? I made thee a tiller of the ground, a trade of life most ancient and honest, who hath caused thee to forsake thy calling wherein I placed thee? Surely thou art not he that I made thee, and therefore I know thee not, depart from Me, thou wicked one, into everlasting fire." (*Ibid.*) *Two kinds of offerings*:—They both offer, but the one thinketh anything good enough, and the other in the zeal of his soul and fulness of his Lord thinketh nothing good enough. He bringeth his gift, and of the fattest, that is, of the best

he hath, and wisheth it were ten thousand times better. This heat of affection towards God let us all mark and ever think of: it uncaeth such as in these days think any service enough for God, half, a quarter of an hour in a week, &c. (*Ibid.*)

The first age of the conflict:—In the Eden prophecy (Gen. iii. 15) there was shadowed forth a great conflict between good and evil that should last through coming ages. Of that long conflict this is the first age. It covers the whole time of antediluvian history. It is important for us to keep in our minds the length of the time, sixteen hundred years and more—over sixteen centuries at the very lowest computation. So, of course, we cannot expect anything in the shape of a continuous history. A few chapters cover the whole ground; and while each chapter is undoubtedly historical, the whole is not, properly speaking, history. It is not continuous, but fragmentary. First we have the story of Cain and Abel. We find here a picture, I may say, exhibiting the nature of the conflict that there is to be between good and evil. We see there the early development of evil in its antagonism with good. First, what is the great lesson of Cain's history? Is it not the fearful nature of sin? On the other hand, what is the great lesson of Abel's history? He comes before us, apparently, as an innocent man. There is nothing said against him at all events. Yet he is required to bring an offering. He is accepted, apparently, not on the simple ground of his goodness, but in connection with the offering that he brings. It is the offering of "the firstlings of his flock." Here we have the first record of sacrifice. Next, what is the difference between Cain and Abel? Some are inclined to think it lay entirely in the offering: not in the men at all; but if you look at the narrative you will find there was a difference in the men. "Unto Cain and his offering" the Lord had not respect; but "the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering." Abel and his offering, Cain and his offering. But what was the difference in the men? The great difference in the men, as we are taught in the Epistle of the Hebrews, was faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain." So whatever difference there may have been in the men in other respects (and there no doubt was very much), the fundamental contrast between them was, that Abel had faith, while Cain had not. (*J. M. Gibson.*)

Domestic life:—I. THAT IT IS DESIGNED FOR THE NUMERICAL INCREASE OF HUMANITY. 1. The position of Adam and Eve prior to the birth of their two sons was unique. Alone in the great world. 2. Their position was interesting. A great crisis in their lives. Fallen, yet encircled by Divine mercy. II. THAT IT SHOULD BE CAREFUL AS TO THE NOMENCLATURE OF ITS CHILDREN. 1. Child nomenclature should be appropriate. "Cain" signifies "possession." A moral possession. The gift of God. 2. Child nomenclature should be instructive. "Abel" signifies "vanity." Our first parents' verdict on life, gathering up the history of their past and the sorrows of their present condition. 3. Child nomenclature should be considerate. In harmony with good taste and refined judgment. Pictures of goodness and patterns of truth. III. THAT IT SHOULD JUDICIOUSLY BRING UP CHILDREN TO SOME HONEST AND HELPFUL EMPLOYMENTS. 1. These two brothers had a daily calling. 2. A distinctive calling. 3. A healthful calling. 4. A calling favourable to the development of intellectual thought. IV. THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE UNMINDFUL OF ITS RELIGIOUS OBLIGATIONS (vers. 3, 4). 1. These offerings are rendered obligatory by the mercies of the past. 2. These offerings should be the natural and unselfish outcome of our commercial prosperity. 3. These offerings ought to embody the true worship of the soul. LESSONS: 1. That domestic life is sacred as the ordination of God. 2. That children are the gift of God, and are often prophets of the future. 3. That working and giving are the devotion of family life. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

The true and false worshipper of God:—I. THAT BOTH THE TRUE AND THE FALSE AMONGST MEN ARE APPARENTLY WORSHIPPERS OF GOD. The false come to worship God—1. Because it is the custom of the land so to do. 2. Because men feel that they must pay some regard to social propriety and conscience. 3. Because men feel that their souls are drawn out to God in ardent longings and grateful praises. These are the true worshippers of God. Followers of Abel. II. THAT BOTH THE TRUE AND THE FALSE AMONGST MEN PRESENT THEIR MATERIAL OFFERINGS TO GOD. 1. The trade of each brother suggested his offering. (1) Some take their offerings for parade. (2) They take their offerings to enhance their trade. (3) They take their offerings to increase their social influence. (4) They take their offerings with a humble desire to glorify God. III. THAT BOTH THE TRUE AND THE FALSE AMONGST MEN ARE OBSERVED AND ESTIMATED BY GOD IN THEIR WORSHIP AND OFFERINGS. 1. The worship and offerings of the one are

accepted. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering." And why? (1) Because it was well and carefully selected. Men should select carefully the offerings they give to God. (2) Because it was the best he could command. He brought the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. (3) Because it was appropriate. His sacrifice preached the gospel, foreshadowed the Cross. (4) Because it was offered in a right spirit. This makes the great point of difference between the two offerings. The grandest offering given in a wrong spirit will not be accepted by God, whereas the meanest offering given in lowly spirit will be welcome to Him. Thus the younger brother was the best. He was better than his name. 2. The worship and offering of the other was rejected. "But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." The men who make their religious offerings a parade, who regard this worship as a form, are not welcomed by God.

IV. THAT THE TRUE, IN THE DIVINE RECEPTION OF THEIR WORSHIP AND OFFERINGS, ARE OFTEN ENVIED BY THE FALSE. 1. This envy is wrathful. "Why art thou wroth?" 2. This envy is apparent. "Why is thy countenance fallen?" 3. This envy is unreasonable. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" 4. This envy is murderous. "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." (*Ibid.*)

Cain and Abel.—I. THE PARITY OR EQUALITY OF CAIN AND ABEL IS FOURFOLD. 1. In their original, as both born of the same parents. 2. In their relation, they were brothers. 3. In their secular condition: both had honest employments, and not only lawful, but laudable particular callings. 4. In their religious concerns: both were worshippers of God, both brought sacrifices to God. (1) Their particular callings (Gen. iv. 2). (a) That parents ought not to bring up their children in idleness, but in some honest calling wherein they may both serve themselves and their generation, according to the will of God (Acts xiii. 36). (b) That every man must have his trade and calling in the world, as those two sons of Adam had. Though their father was lord of the world, yet he brought up both his sons in laborious callings. (c) It is a sin for any man to live without a calling. One that lives in idleness (without an honest calling) is but an unprofitable burden of the earth, and seems to be born for no other end save to spend the fruits of the world as a useless spendthrift. Why Moses recordeth this service done to God (by way of sacrifice) in all its circumstances by those two sons of Adam, Cain and Abel? 1. To demonstrate the antiquity of religion. That it is no new devised fable, but is as ancient as the world. Hence may be inferred—(1) The grossness of atheism. (2) The absurdity of irreligion. 2. The account why Moses records this history, is to show the mixture of religion, that among men who profess and practise religion there ever hath been a mixture thereof. 3. Moses records this history to declare the disagreements and contentions that do arise about religion in the world. (1) That quarrels about religion are the greatest quarrels in the world. The dissensions about religion are the most irreconcilable dissensions. (2) This affordeth us the clear and true character of the true religion from the false. Outrage and cruelty is the black brand wherewith God's Word stigmatizeth the false and formal religion, and here it begins, showing how Cain did most maliciously oppose Abel, but Abel offered no affront at all to Cain, for the badge and cognizance of true religion is meekness and love. The second inquiry is, concerning the service of those two sons of Adam, what Moses doth record of it. This their service and success thereof, are the two principal parts of this sacred record touching Cain and Abel. Now, concerning the service two particulars are very remarkable. 1. Of the circumstances of it, which are four. (1) The persons who they were. (2) The second circumstance is, the time when they did so. The Scripture telleth us it came to pass in process of time (Gen. iv. 2). 2. What motive they had at this time to sacrifice to God; 'tis probable they did so either—(1) By an express command of God spoken, but not written; otherwise their service had been will-worship; so Abel's sacrifice had been rejected of God as well as Cain's; but more of this after. Or—(2) They did it by their father's example, whom God taught so to do, and who might teach his sons to do the like; otherwise, how could they all have coats of skins to clothe them, if they had not the skins of sacrificed beasts for that end? Or—(3) They might do so by the dictates of their own natural reason. Hence the very instinct of nature might suggest to them, that it was but a rational service to offer up to their Creator something of those creatures that God had graciously given them, as a due acknowledgment of their homage to Him who is Lord of all (Acts x. 36). Hence may be inferred—1. The mischief on mankind by the Fall, to wit, man's dulness to learn anything that is good. 2. The misery of those persons who want instruction in families and assemblies! How blind and brutish must all

such be, and how unskilful at this celestial trade! 3. Oh, what a blessing is the ministry to men, which teacheth them this trading and trafficking with heaven, that cannot be learnt all at once, but by degrees! The (3) circumstance is the place where, which the Scripture of truth mentions not. The (4) circumstance is the manner how, which leads me to the second particular, to wit, the substance of their service, wherein this circumstance is spoke to, the success of *THEIR* service. The (5) circumstance is the matter what, to be spoke unto, in the substance. Now, as to the substance of it, look upon it in common, and both brothers concerned together therein. So there is still a parity and congruity as to the substance of it. For—1. Their service was equally personal, they both made their personal address to God, and to His altar of oblation; they did not serve God by a proxy. They did not transmit this their duty to their father Adam. Hence, observe, no man stands exempted from his personal attendance on God's service, but everyone owes a homage which he must pay in his own person. This is proved both by Scripture and reason. (1) By Scripture, every man under the law (whether Israelite or proselyte) was to appear personally and offer to the Lord for himself at the door of the tabernacle, and whoever did not so, was to be cut off from his people (Levit. xvii. 3, 4). And in their more public feasts, God expressly enjoined them, that three times in a year all their males shall appear before the Lord in a place which He shall choose, and none shall appear before the Lord empty, every man shall give according to the gift of his hand (Deut. xvi. 16, 17). The (1) reason is, every one is personally God's creature, so the bond of creation obligeth all to pay their personal respects to their Creator. No man is his own, but God's; therefore every man must glorify God with their own bodies and spirits (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). The (2) reason is, every one is a sinner, and sins against God in their own persons; therefore everyone must serve God in their own persons, and sue to Him for pardon and reconciliation. No man can redeem his brother (Psa. xlix. 7). The (3) reason, everyone hath personal dependency on God for a supply both of their temporal and spiritual wants. Now, 'tis but reasonable service (Rom. xii. 1), that all persons should carry their own pitchers to this fountain of life, and should turn the cock both of grace and mercy for their own supply. The (4) reason is, every man is already a great debtor to God (his Benefactor); God is behindhand with none, but much beforehand with all, and therefore as we all have received mercy from God in our own proper persons, so we should return duty to God in our own proper persons also. 2. As the service of those two brothers was equally personal, so it was equally warrantable and lawful service. The second inference is, to look for Divine warrant for every part of Divine worship. That primitive simplicity which is in Christ and in His gospel-worship, ought not to be corrupted (2 Cor. xi. 3). All modes and rites of worship which have not Christ's stamp upon them, are no better than will-worship. How exact was God in tabernacle-worship (Exod. xxxix. 43), and will He not be so in gospel-worship? The third propriety, in the substance of this service is, it was also costly worship; there was cost in both their sacrifices, they put not God off with empty compliments, and verbal acknowledgments of superficial and perfunctory shows. All men can willingly give God the cap and the knee, yea and the lip too, but when it comes to cost, then they shuffle off His service: men naturally love a cheap religion. The fourth property of their service is, there was unity in their worship. Cain did not build one altar, and Abel another, but one served both; they both offered in one place, and at one time. Hence, observe, it makes much for the honour of religious worship, when it is performed in the spirit of unity. The first inference is—oh, let it not be told in Gath, nor published in Askelon—that there is altar against altar, and prayer against prayer, amongst professors in our day. The apostle presseth to unity with many arguments (Eph. iv. 3, 4, &c.). The second inference is, Yet unity without verity is not unity, but conspiracy. There is no true concord but in truth. The third inference is, that narrow principles undo unity. The fifth property, 'twas equally a solemn service by way of sacrifice; both these sons paid their homage to their Maker, the one in a sheaf, and the other in a sheep. Hence observe, holy sacrifices and services have been tendered and rendered up to the great God in all ages of the world by the Church of God. 1. As the sacrifice was a real acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over the sacrificer (Isa. xvi. 1). 2. As it was a sad remembrancer of the sacrificer's sin, to wit, that he deserved to be burnt (as his burnt-offering was) even in everlasting burnings. 3. As it was a solemn protestation of their faith in Christ, whom all their sacrifices did prefigure, as He was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world (Rev. xiii. 18). 4. As it was also an offering of thank-

fulness; those sacrifices were eucharistical as well as propitiatory, thank-offerings as well as sin-offerings. What shall I render? saith David (Psa. cxvi. 12). (1) The gospel sacrifice of repentance, wherein the penitent soul offers itself up on God's altar. The (2) gospel sacrifice is praying for what we want, and praising for what we have. The (3) gospel sacrifice (in a word) is all the good works both of piety and charity. Now, the success of it shows a foul disparity; the one is accepted, the other is rejected. God had respect to Abel, and to his offering, but, &c. (Gen. iv. 4, 5). This disparity is demonstrated by three remarkable passages or particulars. 1. Of the order inverted; until now, it was Cain and Abel, the eldest is named first, the order of nature is observed. Hence observe—(1) Though amongst many worshippers of God in public worship man can discern no difference, but one is as good as another in both attendance and attention, yet God can, both in intention and retention. All fit as God's people (Ezek. xxxiii. 31). And no mortal eye can distinguish which is a Cain and which is an Abel, yea, a Cain may be the fore-horse in the team, and be most forward as to personal attendance and attention of body. The fifth inference is, this shows us whom we ought to please in all our works or worship. It must not be man, but God, who knoweth the heart (John ii. 25; Acts i. 24). The second particular is the ground of that inversion, or the reasons of this disparity; the causes why the one was accepted, and the other rejected. There is a twofold difference here very remarkable. 1. In regard to their persons; and that is also twofold. (1) God put or set the difference. And—(2) He saw the difference betwixt those two persons; unto Abel God had respect, but unto Cain He had not (Gen. iv. 4, 5). It is the free grace of God that is the main fundamental cause of difference, preferring Abel before Cain. 2. As God putteth the difference, so He beholdeth the difference betwixt good and bad, and here between Cain and Abel. 3. It is the piety or impiety of men's persons that do commend or discommend their actions and services to God. It is not the work that so much commends or discommends the man, but the man the work. As is the cause so is the effect, and the better that the cause is, the better must the effect be. These are maxims in philosophy, which hold true in divinity also. A good man worketh good actions, and the better the man is, the better are his actions. As the temple is said to sanctify the gold, and not the gold the temple (Matt. xxiii. 17), so the person gives acceptance to, and sanctifies the action, not the action the person. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. xv. 8). Both do offer, the one a sheaf, and the other a sheep; yet the one is accepted, the other rejected from a threefold difference in the action. 1. In regard of the matter of their sacrifice, Abel made choice of the best he had to present unto God. Hence observe, it cannot consist with a gracious heart to shuffle off the great God with slight services. Alas! men do but trifle with God, when they think anything will be sufficient to satisfy Him. 1. Such as spend many hours in vanity, yet cannot spare one hour for God and the good of their souls. 2. Such as are profuse in villainy upon their lusts, yet can find nothing to bestow in pious and charitable uses upon the Lord. 3. Such as swatter away all their youth-time (while the bones are full of marrow and veins full of blood, both as ponderous sheaves) in ways of both vanity and villainy, and think to put off God with the poor pined sheaf of their old age, as if the great God would be put off with the devil's leavings. The second difference in their action was in respect of their devotion and affections; Abel offered in sincerity, but Cain in hypocrisy. The third and principal difference that distinguished Cain and Abel's action was faith, which is indeed the prime cause of all the other differences. Abel offered in faith, but Cain did not so (Heb. xi. 4). It was faith that dominated Abel a righteous man, and Cain was a wicked man, because he wanted faith. How comes faith to put this difference? There is a twofold faith. 1. The faith upon God's precept. Abel offered sacrifice, not so much because Adam, but because God commanded. This is called the obedience of faith (Rom. xvi. 26). 2. There is the faith upon God's promise. Thus Abel did not only lay a slain sacrifice upon the altar, but he put faith under it. He considered Christ to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. xiii. 8). The inference hence flowing is, it is Christ, and Christ alone, that gives to all our services acceptance with God. It is faith in Christ that pleaseth God (Heb. xi. 16). Now, the third and last particular is the success (which is the second general, as service was the first), or acceptance, which, as to Abel, is evident in three things. 1. The Divine allowance or approbation of Abel. He being a righteous man (Matt. xxiii. 35). Both his person and oblation (through Divine grace) was—(1) Approvable; hence the first observation is, it is a special vouch-

saferment and condescension in God to look on, and allow of the poor services of man. (2) As God gave allowance and approbation of Abel's sacrifice, so He had delight and complacency in it. This also is signified by the word "respect." But 2. Unto Cain and his offering God had not respect. To demonstrate the equity of God in His dealing with wicked men. His ways are always equal with us (Ezek. xviii. 25, and xxxiii. 17). As Cain respected not God in his sacrifice, so God respected not him nor his sacrifice. Inferences hence are—1. If the sweet success of our services be God's acceptance, then, oh, what an holy carefulness should we all have about our services and duties. 2. Oh, what holy cheerfulness should we have to work all our works in God (John iii. 21), that they may be accepted of Him, and respected by Him. 3. Oh, what an holy inquisitiveness should we all have, whether God accept or reject our duties! Our acceptance may be known by these characters. Hath God inflamed our sacrifice as He did Abel's, some warm impressions of God's Spirit upon our hearts, some Divine touch of a live coal from God's altar? (Isa. vi. 6). The second sign or character of acceptance is the joy of duty; injections of joy, as well as inspirations of heat, are sweet demonstrations of acceptance; blessed are they that near the joyful sound of God, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance (Psa. lxxxix. 15). A third sign is, when God gives in any supply of that grace which is sued for, either strengthening it, or weakening sin that wars against it. 2. As there is no life in a wicked man's duty, so there is no warmth in it; he puts off God with cold dishes, such as God loves not. As there is no heart, so there is no heat in any of his services; it is not a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord, so no sweet savour to Him (Levit. i. 13, 17, and ii. 2, 9, 10, &c.). 3. A wicked man (as Cain here) regardeth iniquity in his heart, therefore God regardeth not his prayer (Psa. lxxvi. 18). This is the dead fly that spoils never so sweet ointment (Eccles. ix. 1). (C. Ness.) *Formal worship an immense curse:—*I. IT INVOLVES OFFENCE TO GOD. "He abhors the sacrifice where not the heart is found." II. IT INVOLVES CRUELTY TO MAN. From real, spiritual worship it would be impossible for a man to pass to persecution and murder, for genuine piety is the root of philanthropy. But the distance between formal worship and murderous passions is not great. Formal worship—1. Implies bad passions. 2. Strengthens bad passions. Selfishness. Superstition. Pride. Bigotry. (Homilist.) *Cain and Abel:—*I. THEIR DIFFERENT WORSHIP. 1. Cain's was no more than a mere thankoffering, and such, probably, as Adam himself might have offered in a state of innocence: it implied not any confession of guilt, or any application to the Redeemer. 2. Abel's offering was a sacrifice presented in faith, not only with respect to the appointment of God, who had ordained sacrifices in representation of that method of redemption by which He would deliver man, but also with dependence on "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," who in the fulness of time "by the sacrifice of Himself should take away the sins of the world." Abel's offering, therefore, is to be considered as a type of Christ. II. THEIR DIFFERENT MORAL CHARACTERS. III. THEIR DIFFERENT END. Lessons: 1. Let us examine what is the worship we are offering to God. It is not enough that we are attentive to religious ordinances: but are we, like Abel, worshipping by faith? 2. Let us inquire, Are none among us discovering the temper of Cain? Are there none who, like him, are persecutors of God's people? 3. Let us bless God that the blood of Jesus Christ "speaketh better things than that of Abel" (see Heb. xii. 24). (Essex Remembrancer.) *The first patriarchal form of the new dispensation—the seat, the time, the manner of worship—the contest begun between grace and nature, between faith and unbelief:—*I. There can be no doubt that THE STATED PLACE OF WORSHIP under the new order of things was the immediate neighbourhood of the garden, eastward, within sight of the cherubim and the flaming sword (chap. iii. 24). And it would seem that this primitive holy place was substantially identical with the sanctuary and shrine of the Levitical ritual, and with the heavenly scene which Ezekiel and John saw. It was within the garden, or at its very entrance, and it was distinguished by a visible display of the glory of God, in a bright shining light, or sword of flame—on the one hand, driving away in just displeasure a guilty and rebellious race; but on the other hand, shining with a benignant smile upon the typical emblems or representations of a people redeemed. II. The brothers, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GREAT CLASSES into which, in a religious view, the family of man is divided, manifest their difference in this respect, not in the object, nor in the time, but in the spirit of their worship (vers. 3, 4). They worship the same God, and under the same revelation of His power and glory. Their seasons of worship also are the same; for it is agreed on all hands that the

expression "in process of time," or "at the end of days," denotes some stated season—either the weekly Sabbath or some other festival. Again, their manner of service was to a large extent the same. They presented offerings to God; and these offerings, being of two kinds, corresponded very remarkably to the two kinds of offerings ordained under the Levitical dispensation, the burnt-offerings, which were expiatory, and the meat-offerings, which were mainly expressive of duty, gratitude, and devotion (Lev. i., ii.).

III. The two brothers, then, worshipped God according to the same ritual, but not with the same acceptance. How the Lord signified His complacency in the one and His rejection of the other does not appear. It may have been by sending fire from heaven to consume Abel's offering; as in this way He acknowledged acceptable offerings on different occasions in after times (Lev. ix. 24; Judg. vi. 21; 1 Kings xviii. 38). Why the Lord put such a distinction between them is a more important point, and more easily ascertained. It is unequivocally explained by the Apostle Paul (Heb. xi. 4). Abel's sacrifice was more excellent than Cain's, because he offered it by faith. Therefore his person was accepted as righteous, and his gifts as well pleasing to the Lord. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*)

The religion of nature, and the religion of the gospel.—Introduction: Cain's religion, in common with many false religions, was one—1. Which had in it some good. 2. Of expediency. 3. Which lacked faith. 4. Abounding in self-righteousness. 5. That persecuted others. Abel's religion—1. Embodied all the good that was in the other. 2. Surpassed it, even in its own excellencies—"more plenteous sacrifice." 3. Recognized the existence of guilt, and its merited doom. 4. Was actuated by faith. 5. Was approved of by God. Consider, then—

I. NATURAL RELIGION. Look at—1. The principle upon which it is founded—practical goodness. This principle is intrinsically excellent, is one upon which all men should act; is one to which no one can object. 2. The standard by which it is to be tested—the moral law of creation, love to God and man. In order to "do well," the act itself must be perfect; the motive must be good; and the rule must be good. 3. Its reward to its faithful adherents—"shalt thou not be accepted?" Such a religion will command the approval of God; and will secure immortality for all its votaries. Now measure your conduct by this religion; and are you perfect? Think of sin in its nature, its effects, and its ultimate consequences, and see if you have not sinned. And can natural religion justify you? No; something else must be found, and something else is to be found. Look then at—

II. REVEALED RELIGION. Notice—1. That revealed religion assumes that men are guilty. It also recognizes their liability to punishment. 2. That it has provided a sin-offering—a substitution of person, of sufferings. 1. The acceptance of this is accompanied with Divine evidence. 2. It is efficient for all purposes for which it is presented. 3. Having accepted it, the sinner is treated as though he himself had suffered. 4. That the sin-offering reposeth at the door. This implies that Christ's atonement is accessible to the sinner; that it rests with man to avail himself of it; that men often neglect it; that God exercises great patience towards the sinner; that the sinner cannot go to hell without first trampling on the Cross; and that he will be for ever deprived of every excuse for his destruction. (*D. Evans.*)

Cain and Abel.—I. THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE OFFERING DEPENDS ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE OFFERER. God had respect to Abel and his offering—the man first and then the offering. God looks through the offering to the state of soul from which it proceeds; or even, as the words would indicate, sees the soul first and judges and treats the offering according to the inward disposition. God does not judge of what you are by what you say to Him or do for Him, but He judges what you say to Him and do for Him by what you are. II. Again, we here find a very sharp and clear statement of the welcome truth, THAT CONTINUANCE IN SIN IS NEVER A NECESSITY, that God points the way out of sin, and that from the first He has been on man's side and has done all that could be done to keep men from sinning. Observe how He expostulates with Cain. Take note of the plain, explicit fairness of the words in which He expostulates with him—instance, as it is, of how absolutely in the right God always is, and how abundantly He can justify all His dealings with us. God says as it were to Cain, Come now, and let us reason together. All God wants of any man is to be reasonable; to look at the facts of the case. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not (as well as Abel) be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," that is, if thou doest not well, the sin is not Abel's nor any one's but thine own, and therefore anger at another is not the proper remedy, but anger at yourself, and repentance. Some of us may be this day or this week in as critical a position as Cain, having as truly as he the making or marring of our future in our hands, see-

ing clearly the right course, and all that is good, humble, penitent, and wise in us urging us to follow that course, but our pride and self-will holding us back. How often do men thus barter a future of blessing for some mean gratification of temper or lust or pride; how often by a reckless, almost listless and indifferent continuance in sin do they let themselves be carried on to a future as woeful as Cain's; how often when God expostulates with them do they make no answer and take no action, as if there were nothing to be gained by listening to God—as if it were a matter of no importance what future I go to—as if in the whole eternity that lies in reserve there were nothing worth making a choice about—nothing about which it is worth my while to rouse the whole energy of which I am capable, and to make, by God's grace, the determination which shall alter my whole future—to choose for myself and assert myself. III. The writer to the Hebrews makes a VERY STRIKING USE OF THIS EVENT. He borrows from it language in which to magnify the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, and affirms that the blood of Christ speaketh better things, or, as it must rather be rendered, crieth louder than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood, we see, cried for vengeance, for evil things for Cain, called God to make inquisition for blood, and so pled as to secure the banishment of the murderer. The Arabs have a belief that over the grave of a murdered man his spirit hovers in the form of a bird that cries "Give me drink, give me drink," and only ceases when the blood of the murderer is shed. Cain's conscience told him the same thing; there was no criminal law threatening death to the murderer, but he felt that men would kill him if they could. He heard the blood of Abel crying from the earth. The blood of Christ also cries to God, but cries not for vengeance but for pardon. And as surely as the one cry was heard and answered in very substantial results; so surely does the other cry call down from heaven its proper and beneficent effects. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. THE FIRSTBORN OF EARTH, AND THE FIRSTBORN OF HEAVEN. All is expectation of the promised Deliverer that shall destroy the serpent; and Eve says, "I have gotten a man." Nor is God slow to give a prototype of that great redemption, and to set forth His gospel in earnest and sign, but in far different manner to the anticipations of man, by Abel's death. This is the deliverance! this is the victory! Here is the promise. II. THEIR OCCUPATIONS. These were both conditions of life equally acceptable with God. But the question will occur to us, why it is that through the Scripture there is something of a sacred character on the shepherd. Perhaps owing in some degree to the fostering care and gentleness required in such occupation, or the character of the animal itself; so as to be meet figures of the Good Shepherd who layeth down His life for the sheep. Such were Abel, Abraham, Jacob, and David. Or it may be from their connection with sacrifice itself. But when sacrifices were about to cease, and "the Lamb of God" appeared, then from the fishermen were chosen those who should feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock. III. THE INSTITUTION OF SACRIFICE. It must have been, in some manner, originally of God. That "to obey is better than sacrifice," is a Divine law; so that sacrifice itself would have scarcely been acceptable but as the result of obedience. Add to which, that death itself being then new, presented its awful character more strongly that we can now imagine; it was stamped with all its vivid significance, and could not have been thus occasioned without a Divine warrant. Nor does the case of Abel stand alone in this respect; for others afterwards in succession accepted of God approached Him with sacrifices, as did Noah, and Abraham, and the patriarchs, without its being mentioned in Holy Writ that it had been so commanded of God. But there is what amounts to something like a command in the marked acceptance of God. This knowledge of His will is the mode of access open to the suppliant, which is all that he needs to know. If the Divine appointment is not expressly recorded, yet instances are mentioned where God was pleased with such offerings. IV. THE ACCEPTED SACRIFICE. What God requires of us is some answer to His own love for us. "My son, give Me thine heart." This is the return which God required of Adam in paradise; this He renews again, but it must be now through offering and sacrifice, as expressive of his changed condition. God is no respecter of persons, but He looks to the heart of the worshipper. The gifts are nothing to Him, but He prizes the intent of the giver. The heart is the altar that sanctifies the gift. V. FAITH IN THE ATONEMENT. It is not given us to infer that Abel had explicitly this knowledge; but the question is how far any sense of this hallowing his heart gave efficacy to that sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ alone imparted acceptableness to the animal sacrifices of old. And we may inquire how far any instinctive apprehension of this was in that faith of Abel by which he was justified. Our Lord says of

Abraham, he "rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad." The same was probably true of Abel, the first of martyrs. And why should not the secret of the Lord have been in the heart of Abel as it was in that of St. Peter, when our Lord said unto him, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven"? not by express declaration, but by the secret leading of the Spirit. It would be practically difficult to make a distinction between explicit and implicit acts of this nature. But the sanctifying of the heart under its secret influence is the same, and shown in like actions and feelings. Thus the knowledge of God in Christ became the measure of man's acceptance; and faith the seal of forgiveness, although as yet they could not understand that He should die. It may be that a sense of the Incarnation is not in itself alone the proof of saving faith; for God appearing as Man was the fond dream of heathen poets; but that there is no access to God but through His atonement, marks the faith of the redeemed. And what is much to be noticed—as with Abel in this sacrifice, with Noah in the ark, with Abraham in the offering of his son, with the children of Israel looking to the brazen serpent in the wilderness—God made the act of faith to be itself a resemblance of Christ; even it may be beyond all thought of those that took part in them. So is it with our lives; they are made of God to set forth great things, which as yet we know not of. "Thou shalt show us wonderful things in Thy righteousness." They have a connection with Christ crucified more than we can now understand. Seeing what was in the heart of Abel, God led him on to set it forth on the altar in the slain animal, which represented "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; and then prepared him for a yet higher sacrifice, even that of his own life; a martyr to God, being slain because his "works were righteous," whereby "he being dead yet speaketh." Thus is he lifted up before all the world to the end of time as representing the Great Shepherd of the sheep. (*I. Williams, B.D.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. THE CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL MIND. II. THE RELIGION OF EACH. III. THEIR LIVES. (*A. Jukes.*) *The two offerings*:—The act mentioned here is evidently not one, but a series of acts, as if it had been said, "they were in the habit of bringing." Here let us mark such things as the following: 1. Both worship professedly the same Jehovah. 2. Both worship Him at the same place. 3. Both come at the same appointed times and seasons. 4. Both bring an offering in their hands, thereby acknowledging the allegiance which was due to Jehovah. Thus far they are alike. But now the difference begins. 1. Abel comes as a sinner, having no claim upon God, and feeling that it is only as a sinner that God can deal with him. Cain approaches as a creature only; not owning sin, though willing to acknowledge the obligations of creaturehood. 2. Abel comes acknowledging death to be his due; for he brings a lamb, and slays it before the Lord, as a substitute for himself. Cain recognizes no sentence of death; he brings only his fruits, as if his grapes or his figs were all that he deemed God entitled to. His offering might cost him more toil than his brother's, but it spoke not of death. It was meant to repudiate the ideas of sin and death, and salvation by a substitute. 3. Abel comes with the blood in his hand, feeling that he dared not appear before God without it; that it would not be safe for him to venture nigh, nor honourable for God to receive him otherwise. Cain brings no blood—doubtless scorning his brother's religion as "the religion of the shambles"; a religion which increased instead of removing creation's pangs. 4. Abel comes resting on the promise—the promise which revealed and pledged the rich grace of God. Cain comes as one that needs no promise and no grace. His is what men call "the religion of nature"; and in that religion there is no room, no need for these. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The best offering*:—A proud king resolved that he would build a cathedral, and, while most anxious that the credit of it might be all his own, he forbade even from contributing to its erection, and on it his name was carved as the builder. But he saw in a dream an angel who came down and erased his name, and a name of a poor widow appeared in its stead. This was three times repeated, when the enraged king summoned the woman before him and demanded, "What have you been doing, and why have you broken my commandment?" The trembling widow replied, "I loved the Lord, and longed to do something for His name, and for the building up of His church. I was forbidden to touch it in any way; so, in my poverty, I brought a wisp of hay for the horses that drew the stones." And the king saw that the same God who accepted the offering of Abel and not of Cain regarded the widow as having done more for the building of the cathedral than he had done with all his wealth. So he commanded that her name should also be inscribed upon the tablet.

Vers. 4, 5. The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect.—*The two offerings*.—I. THE CAUSE OF CAIN'S REJECTION. His total want of the true spirit of faith. Too inflated with pride to see and confess himself a grievous sinner. Could not bring himself to believe the plan God had formed for the salvation of mankind. Preferred his own kind of offering to that ordained by God. II. THE CAUSE OF ABEL'S ACCEPTANCE. Abel believed the word of his God, and presented not a thank-offering alone, but a sin-offering. He cast away all idea of self-justification, and acknowledged the truth of his extreme sinfulness by nature. He came before God with deep convictions of the need of a crucified Redeemer, to save him from the wrath to come. Lessons: 1. The great necessity of using only the means appointed in the Word of God. 2. The value of a right faith. 3. The duty of considering well the motives which lead us to come before God. (R. Jones, B.A.) *Cain and Abel at their worship*.—

I. THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN CAIN AND ABEL AT THIS TIME IS OUTWARDLY VERY CLOSE. 1. They both worship the same God. 2. They both bring an offering with them. 3. They both desire that themselves and their worship should find acceptance with God. II. YET THERE WAS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. 1. They differed in their offerings. 2. They differed in the principle which actuated them. 3. They differed in the reception they and their offerings met with from God. III. THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH FOLLOWED THIS ACT OF WORSHIP. 1. Not sorrow or shame—envy takes possession of Cain's mind; anger and hatred soon follow envy; and though God comes and mercifully expostulates with him, this man, but lately so devout and grateful in appearance before God's altar, ends with defying God, lifting up his arm, and becoming his brother's murderer. 2. But look now at Abel. He has been humbly and faithfully worshipping the Lord his God; and what, we may ask, does he get by it? First hatred, and then a cruel death. Hatred, observe, from a fellow worshipper; death from a brother's hand. (C. Bradley, M.A.)

The rejected offering and the accepted sacrifice.—I. In attempting to assign the true reasons why Cain and his offering were rejected, I would observe, once for all, that that rejection seems to have been attributable entirely to his UNBELIEF, in presenting the fruits of the ground, instead of an animal sacrifice. II. PRACTICAL INFERENCES. From the rejection of Cain and his offering, it is clear that God will not be served by just what we choose to give Him. There are some, for example, who place their trust in what they call the goodness of their heart, and their unimpeachable integrity in all the transactions of life; there are many also who content themselves with rendering to God the tribute of a sincere, but imperfect, obedience; there are not a few who rely entirely upon the infinitude of the Divine mercy, forgetting, at the same time, the infinitude of the Divine justice; and while several look forward to repentance, as furnishing thereby an adequate price for their absolution, others there are who make it their boast and their hope that, following the light of revelation, only in subordination to the light of reason, they perform only those actions which their moral principles can approve of, and they believe only those doctrines which their understanding can comprehend. 1. Now, while all these are just so many fallacious grounds, upon which men build their hopes of acceptance with God, they are every one of them in direct opposition to the only divinely appointed way. They are "the fruits of the ground," if I may so speak, and not the institution of heaven; which institution most plainly is, that by faith alone in the finished work of the Redeemer can the sinner expect to be saved. (J. R. Brown, D.D.)

Cain and Abel.—I. THE POINTS OF AGREEMENT TRACEABLE BETWEEN THE TWO BROTHERS. 1. They agree in the fact that they are the descendants of a fallen and guilty ancestry. 2. Cain and Abel agree, as they are alike placed under a dispensation of mercy and salvation. 3. They agree also in acknowledging that God had a claim upon them, that He ought to be worshipped, and that stated times ought to be employed for that purpose. II. WE NOTICE THE POINTS OF DIFFERENCE THAT EXISTED BETWEEN THEM. 1. They differed in the method of their approach unto God. Cain's offering was eucharistic, Abel's peculiar. The one was a thank-offering, the other sacrificial. It is of importance that we are thankful for providential blessings; but it is of infinitely greater importance that we form correct views of God's method of justifying the ungodly, and cordially acquiesce in His appointment. 2. They differed in the treatment they met with at the hands of God.—"And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." 3. They differed also in the influence by which they were actuated. "Cain was of that wicked one." He was led captive by the devil at his will. (R. Jackson.)

*Abel : or, the language of sacrifice :—*I. THE COMPREHENSIVENESS AND COMPLETENESS OF THE SCHEME OF OUR SALVATION. Abel, the leader of the noble army of martyrs, and the first human being that reached that glory that is to be revealed, was saved through that same atonement, and through the very same faith in the same atonement, as Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Paul, Peter, John—as the saint of God who this day winged his triumphant flight to the mercy seat—as the latest human being that shall “wash his robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.” II. HOW POWERFUL AND HOW PRECIOUS IS THE GRACE AND GIFT OF FAITH! Like the philosopher's stone, like the fabled touch of Midas, it turns into gold all it touches. It is the instrument of our justification, adoption, sanctification; it transforms the inner man, and fits him for communing with God on the heavenly Zion! III. HOW INDISPENSABLE WAS THE SACRIFICE, THE SHEDDING OF THE BLOOD, THE TAKING OF THE LIFE! His example is an eminent exhortation. He was dutiful to his parents, and in all the relationships of life, he was “diligent in business”—the keeper of sheep—he was “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,” not with mere vain and empty words, but with his substance. Let us “go and do likewise.” (*J. T. Brown, M.A.*)

*Abel's sacrifice :—*1. First, consider the offerings of Cain and Abel, and the way in which they were received by the Almighty. But very different were the feelings with which they brought them. Cain came with feelings not unlike those of the Pharisee, spoken of by our blessed Lord, when he went up into the temple to pray, thinking neither of his hereditary defilement nor of his personal transgressions; whereas Abel gave evident signs of his deep sense of both, by bringing not only the meat-offering as an acknowledgment to God of his obligations to Him for temporal benefits, but also the firstlings of his flock, as an atoning sacrifice for his sins. 2. I will now, in the second place, make a few observations upon this Scripture narrative; and, first, I would observe that it is sufficiently clear, from this passage of Scripture, that not all who worship God are acceptable worshippers. Natural conscience, which cannot be pacified without the observance of the outward forms of religion, leads not a few to join in the public worship of Almighty God, and custom induces still more. “They come unto God as His people come, and they sit before Him as His people, and they hear His words; but,” as the prophet goes on to say, “they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness” (*Ezek. xxxiii. 31*). Now, hence arises an important duty to all the professing people of God, namely, that of examining themselves as to the motives which influence them in all their approaches to the Most High, and in all the services of religion. You are accustomed to pray to God in public and in private. Is this mere habit? Is it the pacification of conscience that causes you thus to bow the knee before Him, and to utter words in which your heart has no part? Or does a sense of your manifold daily wants bring you to His footstool, and does the tongue give utterance to the feelings of the heart? The next observation which I would make upon these offerings of Cain and Abel is, that do we desire to serve God acceptably, we must serve Him with our best. It is the especial commendation of good Josiah, King of Judah, that he “turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might”; and for that he is preferred before all the kings who were before or came after him. I would observe, lastly, that our persons must be rendered pleasing unto God, or our offerings will not be accepted by Him. “God had respect to Abel and to his offering”; first to Abel, and then to his offering. The reasoning of Manoa's wife was sound, when she said, in answer to the fears of her husband, “If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands” (*Judges xiii. 23*). She infers the acceptance of the person from the acceptance of the service. It is said, in the Epistle to the Hebrews (*xi. 4*), that Abel “obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.” Thus we read in the Book of Leviticus (*ix. 24*), “And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat”; in *Chron. vii. 1*, “When Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.” And the same we know occurred in the case of the prophet Elijah, when he met the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. This, indeed, was the great prerogative of Abel and the Old Testament saint; but, though we have not this, we have what all will allow to be far better, that of which this was but the figure; for the believer now has assuredly the fire of God, that is, the Spirit comes down into his heart day by day—not visibly, but spiritually—and burns up in his heart his sins and

corruptions, and lights up the light of true faith, never to be extinguished. 3. I must now proceed to point out some of the lessons of instruction derivable from this subject. And, first, we may learn from this narrative that none can stand before God with acceptance except through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. It is no uncommon thing to hear people say that if they diligently follow an honest calling, do no one any harm, and pay every one his due, it is sure to be well with them; that is to say, that they will certainly find acceptance with God at the last, and be received into His kingdom. Learn, secondly, from this subject, that "the visible Church of God hath ever been a mixed company, consisting of the evil as well as the good." Learn, lastly, from this subject, that a sacrifice has been appointed of God for the sins of the whole world, and that, through it, all who believe shall assuredly be saved. (*T. Grantham, B.D.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. CAIN AND ABEL WORSHIPPING. 1. The time of worship. "In the process of time"; literally, "from the end of days." (1) This may denote the end of the week, of the year, or of some longer period. (2) Probably the end of the week—i.e., on the Sabbath-day. (a) This suggests habits of worship taught by their parents. (b) Regular periods of worship. 2. Cain's offering. 3. Abel's offering. 4. God's dealings with the worshippers. (1) Both were observed of God. (2) Abel's accepted, and Cain's rejected. Why? (a) Heb. xi. 4 explains. Faith, in Scripture, always signifies to believe and to obey God's Word. (b) Abel's offering was expressive of both these characteristics of faith. (c) Cain's offering was expressive of his wilful rejection of both. (d) But without faith it is impossible to please God. Hence the acceptance of the one and the rejection of the other. (e) A Divine revelation of the necessity of blood in an acceptable sacrifice for sin is implied in the Divine acceptance of Abel's offering, and that this acceptance was conditioned on his faith. II. CAIN'S ANGER AND JEHOVAH'S EXPOSTULATION. 1. Cain's anger suggests two things: (1) That the Divine acceptance and rejection were manifested in some outward form which humiliated him—probably by fire from heaven, as on Carmel in Elijah's time. (2) That his self-will led him, even in his worship, to insult Him whom he professed to worship. 2. Jehovah's expostulation. (1) It was full of mercy; graciously designed to lead him to reflect, to repent, to accept God's plan. (2) Full of encouragement to the well-doer. (3) Full of warning to the evil-doer. III. ABEL MURDERED BY CAIN HIS BROTHER. 1. The dreadful crime and its preliminaries. 2. The retribution. 3. God's reply to the despairing man. Lessons: 1. All forms of worship, however sincere, are not equally acceptable. 2. No form of worship is acceptable which does not recognize the guilt of sin and the need of blood for its expiation. 3. The spiritual effect of the religion of faith and the religion of reason upon the moral character is exemplified in Cain and Abel. 4. How vain is the sinner's hope to escape either the eye or the hand of a just and holy God. (*D. C. Hughes, M.A.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. THE FIRST RECORDED SACRIFICE. The need of sacrifice felt, and the nature of it revealed. Without doubt Adam had offered sacrifices in the presence of his children. From him they learned what to select, and how to offer it, and the sign of acceptance. Plain from Heb. xi. 4 that both a right feeling and a right thing are needed to constitute an acceptable sacrifice. The right sacrifice without faith, or faith without the right sacrifice, would have failed. The presence of both made the sacrifice of Abel more acceptable than Cain's. Cain a daring innovator. He chose what God had not appointed, and offered it in a wrong spirit. II. THE FIRST RECORDED DEATH. 1. A violent death. Death in any form the occasion of deep sorrow. Such a death most appalling. The more so that it was now unprecedented. A serious subtraction from the world's population at that time. 2. Probably unintentional. Cain evidently meditated violence, but not death. Hence a lesson to us on the consequences of ungoverned rage. What has passion done since this event! III. THE FIRST MURDERER. 1. Could not undo the deed. 2. His dreadful remorse and despair. 3. The criminality of the act may be judged by the curse pronounced. 4. Cain himself felt that, though his life was spared, he must leave the society of men. 5. At last has a son, Enoch (=dedication). May we not indulge the hope that this was indicative of his true repentance? 6. Ceased to be a wanderer; built a city, also called Enoch. (*J. C. Gray.*) *Cain and Abel*:—Cain was not without a kind of religiousness, remember. He did go to the unroofed church sometimes; but he went so unwillingly, so slouchingly, so coldly, that it was no church to him. He begrudged the few roots and fruits that he took, just as we begrudge the weekly offering, and therefore God let him take them home, just as we would do if we could get secretly at the box. God takes nothing from our unwill-

ing hand. He loves a cheerful giver! He will take two mites, He will take a cup of cold water, He will take a box of ointment if given gladly; but none of your grudging, none of your dropping a penny as if it were a half-crown, none of your grunting, none of your porcupinishness: all must be free, glad, honest, open, and joyous; then the fire will come down and take back to heaven the gift of your love. Abel was religious in the right way. He gave the best he had with an open heart, and the Lord said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now, observe, if you please, for it will help you through your whole life, that brothers are not necessarily akin. The greatest contrasts I have perhaps ever known have been between brothers. Yes, and they have been utter strangers to one another, have been these very brothers. And if you think of it, the thing is reasonable enough: the human family in all its bearings is one; human nature is not incoherent, but consolidated. We live in flats, and think that one flat has no connection with another; that is our foolish and ruinous mistake. Your brother may be on the next continent; your mate-heart may be a stranger you have never seen. Cain and Abel were not akin. Cain did things with his hand; Abel did them with his heart. Cain flung his gifts at you, and if you did not catch them so much the more pleased was he; Abel gave them with a hearty love, and was sorry he had not more to give. So Cain killed Abel, and will kill him to the end of the world, spite of all preachers and moralists, but now in a cunning enough way to escape the gaoler and the gibbet. But he will kill him! The man who lost the prize for which his essay was written will kill the man whose essay was accepted; he will sneer at him, and a sneer may be murder. The man who lost the election, being "defeated, not disgraced," will kill the man who got in; he will shrug a shoulder when his name is up, and a shrug may be homicide! You and I may have killed a good many people, and a good many people may have tried to kill us; they will take away our trade, they will say unkind things of us, they will close an eye or pucker a lip villainously, and then dry their mouths as those who have been drinking in secret. It is very horrible; it smells sulphurously; hell cannot be far away, and we are not to windward. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The superiority of Abel's sacrifice*.—1. Some have said that the superiority of Abel's sacrifice consisted in this: that he brought the best to God. He brought the "firstlings of his flock," while, it is said, Cain did not bring the best products of the soil, it being simply stated that "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground," making no selection of the best. Abel was careful out of his flock to select the firstlings, while Cain was careless, and in the spirit of "anything will do," "brought of the fruit of the ground." Now, this looks very much like the invention of an explanation, and is far from satisfactory, for there is no statement to indicate that Cain did not bring as superior a production as the ground afforded, and there is nothing either in the narrative or elsewhere, which shows that the virtue of Abel's offering consisted in the fact that he brought "the firstlings of his flock." But while we must reject this as the true explanation, the view here brought before us is deeply suggestive of important practical lessons. We, doubtless, whether Cain did or not, frequently fail to offer God our best. The man of business immerses himself for six whole days out of every seven in exclusively worldly cares, and then on the Sabbath boasts that he gives to God its sacred hours, whereas prudential considerations render it advisable, and physical laws determine it necessary, that he should take one day's rest in seven. So in reality he gives to God the time that he cannot spare for the world. In the disposal of wealth, too, we sadly fail to think first of God. Men are prodigal of their wealth in providing splendid mansions for themselves, and fruitful fortunes for their families, and only think of giving God what is to spare after these selfish distributions are made. 2. Others affirm that the difficulty is to be solved by referring it to the difference of material used in the sacrifices offered. Abel's was flesh, and Cain's was fruit. In this view, Cain's was merely a eucharistic, while Abel's was an expiatory sacrifice: the former only a thank-offering, the latter an offering for sin. We have failed to find scriptural support for this opinion. It seems to us that the advocates of this theory must, to make it tenable, prove at least three things. First, that there was that in a thank-offering which was necessarily offensive to God. Secondly, it must be shown that Cain's employment was a dishonourable one, for if the fruit of the ground could not be acceptably offered, it must be because to till the ground was an illegitimate occupation. But this cannot be shown, for it was an employment to which God had Himself committed man only in the previous chapter, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Thirdly, in order to make it believable that the blood-

shedding of Abel's sacrifice was the ground of his acceptance, it must be shown that Abel had been made acquainted with the Divine regulation, "Without shedding of blood is no remission," whereas there is nothing either stated or implied to show that he had this knowledge, and it is not likely that God would accept Abel's sacrifice on the grounds of which Abel himself could know nothing. 3. The reason of Cain's defective and unacceptable sacrifice was to be found in Cain's defective and unacceptable character, and the cause of Abel's acceptable and pleasing offering was to be found in Abel's acceptable and pleasing person. It was his goodness that made his sacrifice "more excellent" than Cain's. This view seems adequate to account for the difference in Divine estimation, and it only remains to derive arguments in its support from the sources which are available for the purpose, and which, in their cumulative character, will be considered sufficiently conclusive. These are three in number. (1) The general tendency of Scripture teaching shows that sacrifice is only acceptable to God when the person of the sacrificer is acceptable; that the offering is valueless unless the offerer be in true religious accord. (2) Let us turn to the narrative itself, and we shall find its testimony to be to the same effect. And the record preserved in Gen. iv. supplies us with two sorts of evidence. (a) The terms of the statement which sets forth Abel's acceptance and Cain's rejection, are proof. From these it appears that their persons as well as their offerings are regarded, nay, that their persons are first regarded. "Unto Abel and to his offering He had respect." "Unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." Obviously Abel's sacrifice pleased because Abel pleased; Cain's offering was unacceptable, because Cain's person was unacceptable. (b) The explanation offered to Cain is further proof. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Here Cain's rejection is fully accounted for by God. Had he, like his brother, been a good man, his offering, like his brother's, would have been accepted. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" What is this but a declaration that well-doing is the condition of acceptance? "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." (3) It remains to adduce confirmatory evidence from New Testament writers.—(a) The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews abundantly testifies in support of the view now presented. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (xi. 4). The conclusion can be no other than that Abel's sacrifice was more excellent, because Abel was himself more excellent. He was righteous, and in sacrificing obtained witness of his righteousness. Cain was unrighteous, and therefore by his sacrifice could obtain no such witness as, on account of the rectitude of his character, was awarded to his brother. (b) The testimony of St. John may finally be quoted in confirmation of the view that the different moral character of the parties was the reason of the different estimation in which their sacrifices were respectively held. "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother, and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." On the plan adopted in this particular instance, God ever proceeds. He is pleased to accept the offerings of righteousness: He refuses to recognize the sacrifices of sin. Let us first realize that rectitude of heart and life, without which all outward efforts at pleasing will be of no avail. And realizing this, we shall be prepared to offer our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. And this reasonable service of sacrifice is the old institution Christianized. (*W. Brooks.*) *One sin leads to another*.—Sins are like circles formed in the water when a stone is thrown into it; one produces another. When anger was in Cain's breast, murder was not far off. (*Eliza Cook.*) *The origin of sacrifice*.—Respecting the origin of sacrifice, it has been made a point by some to contend strenuously for its being of human device. The argument on which reliance is chiefly placed by those who advocate this view is that no mention is made in Scripture of the Divine institution of sacrifice—an omission which, it is contended, would not have occurred had such been the case. To this it may be replied, That the whole of this argument rests on an unsound assumption, viz., that nothing can be held to be of Divine institution which is not expressly announced as being so in Scripture. Now to this assumed premise we can by no means assent. God has in various ways conveyed to us the intimation of His will in His Word; and whilst in some cases he has explicitly enacted what He would have us believe and practise, He has in other cases left us to gather His will by induction and inference from various statements of His Word. But shall we say that in cases of

the latter sort we have less His will than in cases of the former sort? May not the very fact that an institution is of such a kind that, if God had not appointed it, it never would have existed at all, be reason sufficient for omitting all formal announcement of its Divine origin? It may be remarked, further, that if Scripture nowhere expressly asserts the Divine origin of sacrifice, it as little asserts the human origin of it. The question, then, fairly rises before us, Have we any good grounds for the inference that animal sacrifice is of Divine origin? In reply to this the following things deserve to be carefully pondered.—1. Reason constrains us to exclude all other possible sources of such a practice. It will occur to you as a safe and guiding principle that no such universally prevalent usage can be accounted for except on one of two suppositions: either that it has been dictated by some conviction or necessity common to all mankind, or that it has been presented by some authority to which all mankind in common have felt themselves bound to defer. (1) Now, with regard to the former hypothesis, it is to be observed that a universal conviction must be founded in the reason of things, and a universal necessity must arise from some of the original appetites or desires of the human mind. We inquire then, first, whether there is anything in the reason of the thing to induce a universal conviction among mankind that sacrifice is a proper method of approaching and worshipping the Deity. Suppose the earliest tribes of men believed God to be altogether such an one as themselves, does this furnish any grounds for supposing that they would naturally think of seeking His favour by the offering of sacrifice? Would men naturally think of acting so to their fellow-men? Would a son seek the favour of his father, a subject the protection of his sovereign, by taking an innocent creature, and killing it and burning it before the party he sought to make propitious to him? Would not men rather naturally recoil from the suggestion of such a thing as more likely to prove offensive to the object of their homage than agreeable? And if so, does not the very supposition that mankind, in the early ages of the world, were under the influence of anthropomorphic notions render improbable the position that they were led by the reason and propriety of the thing to offer sacrifices to the Deity? If they thought God altogether such an one as themselves, how comes it to pass that they were led to seek His favour by methods which they would have recoiled from using in regard to one of themselves? In reply to this question various suggestions have been offered as hypotheses by way of rationally accounting for the human origin of sacrifices. (a) It has been suggested that sacrifice might have originally been presented as a gift or present to the Deity, and it has been asked whether it might not very naturally occur to man to present of his flocks and herds to God, as a token of acknowledgment of His bounty? To this it may be replied, in the first place, that this is altogether irrelevant, inasmuch as the question relates, not to the offering of gifts, but to the slaying of sacrifices, between which there is no sort of analogy, nor any affinity that might lead to the one growing out of the other; and then, secondly, this is an attempt to remove one difficulty by suggesting another equally great; for it is just as far from probability that a man should, from the reason of the thing, conclude that the great Being to whom he acknowledged he owed everything would be pleased by his destroying part of what he had received, by laying it on the altar as a present, as it is that He would be pleased by its being destroyed as a sacrifice. It may also be observed that there is reason to doubt whether the idea of sacrifice is not historically anterior to that of a gift. Gifts can come into existence, and the idea of them into men's minds, only when property is possessed. In the Adamic family there might be differences of occupation, and each might contribute his share to the common fund; but there is no probability that anything of the nature of property was claimed by any of them in what he produced. We cannot conceive of Abel appropriating his sheep, and Cain his fruits, and the one bartering with the other, or bestowing a portion on the other as a gift. At this early period, then, men could have no experience of gifts or of their effects on men, and hence could not have the idea suggested to them from such experience of procuring the Divine favour by a gift. But as sacrifice already was known and practised, the idea of it must have preceded the idea of a gift. (b) Not less valueless is a second suggestion, viz., that sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly meal shared by the Deity and His worshippers. For not only is there nothing in the reason of things to suggest such an idea to the mind, but it seems excluded by the very form in which sacrifice, in its most ancient as well as most solemn and highest form, was presented, viz., in that of a holocaust or whole burnt offering. Where the whole animal was consumed on the altar, it is obvious that the idea of a partition of it between the offerer and his

God is excluded. Apart from this, however, this idea seems so little natural that it would be absurd to trace to it the spontaneous origin of this universal usage. The idea is undoubtedly a true one, and we find it to a certain extent recognized in the Mosaic offerings, where the priest, in certain cases, as the mediator between God and the offerer, and who had appeared for the latter, partook of the sacrifice in token of the reconciliation having been effected between God and the worshipper; but the idea, though true, is wholly artificial; it is learned by education and from the sacrificial institute, and can never be regarded as a natural conviction of reason giving spontaneously birth to that act. It may be added, that it leaves wholly unexplained the practice of human sacrifices—a practice which prevailed most in the earliest periods, and extended through nations the most widely separated from each other; as well as the fact that among some nations the highest of all sacrifices were of animals which either are or were never used as food, such as the horse, which among the Brahmanical worshippers is called the King of Sacrifice, and that some of the most important sacrifices were of the same kind, as that of the wolf to Mars, the ass to Priapus, and the dog to Hecate. The considerations are conclusive against the hypothesis that sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly feast between God and the worshipper. When the oldest, the most sacred, and the most solemn sacrifices were such as were either wholly consumed or were of animals which never were eaten, it is absurd to say that the practice could have originated in the idea of a feast. (c) The only other suggestion worth noticing, which has been offered as accounting on grounds of natural reason for the practice of sacrifice, is that of Abraham Sykes, who in an essay on Sacrifice explains sacrifices as “federal rites,” “implying the entering into friendship with God, or the renewal of that friendship when broken by the violation of former stipulations” (p. 59). In accordance with this he suggests that sacrifices had their origin in the fact that eating and drinking together were common and accredited modes of contracting covenants or cementing alliances among the ancients (p. 73). This theory of the origin of sacrifice rests on the assumption of the theory last considered, viz., that the sacrifice was of the nature of a friendly meal shared between God and the worshippers, and is consequently liable to all the objections which may be urged against that. Sykes’s theory is thus inconsistent with itself. It makes sacrifice at once the procuring cause of the feast of reconciliation; and it makes the feast of reconciliation the source and origin of the sacrifice. If there had been no reconciliation there would have been no feast; and there would have been no reconciliation had there been no sacrifice. How was it possible in such circumstances for the feast to originate the sacrifice—the effect to give birth to the cause? The fatuity of these hypotheses shows how untenable is the attempt to find the origin of sacrifice in the reason of the thing itself. As little can it be sought for in any natural and universal conviction or felt necessity of the human mind; for there is nothing in the common natural workings or passions of the mind which would of itself suggest such a mode of serving and worshipping God. On the contrary, to the natural reason and heart of man it is rather repugnant than otherwise. (2) Having thus disposed of the one side of the alternative formerly proposed, we now come to the other. If sacrifices have not their origin in their inherent reasonableness or in any common affection of the human mind, they must have had their origin in some other authoritative appointment to which all men in common felt constrained to yield. (a) We cannot assume such an authority to have resided in any priestly body so as to resolve sacrifices into an invention of priestcraft, because (a) sacrifices were known and practised long before the priesthood became a separate profession; they were practised when each individual acted as his own priest, or when at the utmost each father acted as the priest of his own household; so that there was no room for the operation of any priestcraft in the case. (3) Any benefit accruing to the priest from the sacrifices brought by the worshippers is so small that we cannot suppose a sufficient inducement to have been found in that to lead to their inventing and inculcating such a usage. And (γ) supposing some one priest or body of priests had fallen on this invention, that will not account for the universality of the practice; it is as difficult to account for all the priests in the world adopting it as it is to account for all the people in the world following it. (b) But if we exclude the supposition of priestcraft, we are shut up to the supposition of some common father of the race, such as Adam or Noah, by whom the rite was practised, and from whom it was handed down to all mankind. But as the rite was practised in the family of Adam, and as Noah himself derived it from him, we must go back to the very cradle of the human race for the com-

commencement of this practice. From whom, then, did Adam derive it? Only from Him from whom Adam derived everything—from God Himself. 2. In support of the conclusion at which we have arrived we may appeal to the authority of Scripture. It is true that nowhere there is the origin of sacrifice ascribed to God, but there are certain principles laid down and certain facts recorded which lead to the conclusion that this rite was not of human invention, but was one enjoined on man by God. Of these the following may be mentioned:—(1) There can be no doubt that God approved of this mode of worshipping Him (Gen. iv. 4, 5; viii. 21). Is it not a principle of true religion distinctly recognized in the Bible that it is God who alone has the right to prescribe how He is to be worshipped, and that, consequently, spontaneous contrivances on the part of man to do Him honour are rather presumptuous invasions of His prerogative than grateful acts of homage to Him? The inference from this is, that had sacrifice been a mere human contrivance it would not have been acceptable to God. The Divine acceptance, therefore, is a demonstration of a Divine institution. (2) It has been suggested, and there is great probability in the suggestion, that sacrifice was instituted by God on the occasion when, after His first interview with man after he had sinned, He took off the skins of animals and converted them into clothing for Adam and his wife. Assuming the propitiatory and typical character of sacrifice, it cannot be denied that the occasion was a fit one for inculcating the practice of it on man, inasmuch as God had just given to him the promise of that great Deliverer of whose work on behalf of man animal sacrifices were designed to be the memorial, symbol, and foreshadow. (3) It is worthy of notice that in the Mosaic institute, whilst there are many injunctions concerning sacrifices, all these relate to the mode and occasion of the sacrifice, not one to the ordinance itself as something then newly appointed. In every case the law proceeds on the assumption that sacrifice was already known and practised among the Hebrews; and that all that was needed was discretion as to the proper occasions for the offering of sacrifices, the sacrifices proper for each occasion, and the fitting manner in which the rite was to be observed. (4) If we assume the Divine origin of the sacrificial rite, and suppose that it was made known to Adam by God as soon as that great event which it was designed to commemorate and prefigure was announced, we can at once see how it would become a rite the observance of which should be co-extensive with the race. Adam would enjoin it upon his posterity, and all who did not assume the position of actual apostasy and infidelity, of which Cain set the example, would religiously observe it. The rite would thus be handed down to Noah, from whom again, as the second father of the race, it would be propagated through the world. In the first place, it is not correct to state that the prohibition to shed human blood formed part, still less an important part, of the covenant made by God with Noah; it was simply a moral injunction rendered peculiarly necessary in consequence of the permission now granted to man to slay animals for food, and formed no condition or part of the covenant at all. What makes this certain is, that it is not until after the injunction had been given that we find mention made of God's entering into a covenant with Noah; this forms a distinct part of the narrative, and the language employed in it is such as to show that it was with reference to totally different matters that that transaction took place. Now, it is quite conceivable that the nations might remember the covenant and the rites connected with it, whilst they forgot or did not choose to observe the moral prohibitions given by God to their ancestor. Secondly, it is fallacious to argue that because God forbade the shedding of man's blood, it is impossible to conceive that the nations should come to think they might please and satisfy Him by offering human victims, because the prohibition was not a special prohibition in the case of sacrifices, but a prohibition in general of the taking of human life—a prohibition therefore which, as it admitted of exceptions in the case of war and judicial executions, might be reasonably held to admit of exception in the case of sacrifice. Certain it is that we find the two beliefs harmoniously coexisting in the minds of men; for among those nations which practised human sacrifices there were none who did not at the same time believe that the gods had forbidden the shedding of man's blood; a fact which could not have occurred had the position assumed been sound. Nay, we may go farther, and say that this very prohibition, instead of deterring men from human sacrifices, was probably the reason which mainly suggested it to them, inasmuch as it was the fence thus placed around human life which made it so precious, and hereby rendered it so valuable as an offering to the gods. Thirdly, it may be admitted that human sacrifices were "of high antiquity," and yet it may also be maintained that

this was "a late abuse" of the primitive tradition; for "high" and "late" are relative terms, and as it is quite possible for the same object to be in space high relatively to one standard and low relatively to another, so in time the same event may be both early and late according as we measure it from one point or another. In fine, it is competent to ask, if human sacrifices were not an abuse of the rite of sacrifice as practised by Noah, to what is their early existence to be attributed? There can be no doubt that Noah would hand down to his posterity the tradition of what he himself religiously practised. Now, of this traditional usage human sacrifice is either an abuse or it is a rite totally distinct in its nature from ordinary animal sacrifice, and having another meaning. But it is not a rite differing in nature and insignification from ordinary animal sacrifice; all history and testimony assure us that it was intended to express in the highest degree the ideas embodied in and adumbrated by that usage. It follows that it must be regarded as a corruption of this usage; for we cannot believe that it is both in nature and signification identical with the usage of animal sacrifice handed down to the descendants of Noah by tradition, and an original independent invention of the nation by whom it was practised. If we suppose the tradition to have existed we render unnecessary the hypothesis of an independent and a simultaneous invention of the rite; if we suppose such an invention, we have to account for the non-preservation by the family of Noah of the most solemn rite of their ancestral worship. It seems impossible to doubt which of these two hypotheses should be adopted as the most probable. (*W. L. Alexander, D.D.*)

Of the deep hatred some have conceived against their own brethren:—Sir Henry Blunt, in his voyage to the Levant, tells us that at Belgrade, in Hungary, where Danubius and Sava meet, their waters mingle no more than water and oil; and though they run sixty miles together, yet they no way incorporate, but the Danube is clear and pure as a well, while the Sava, that runs along with it, is as troubled as a street channel. After the manner of these rivers it is with some brethren; though bred up together, and near enough each other in respect of their bodies, yet their minds have been as distant from each other as the poles are; which, when opportunity hath served, they have shewn in the effects of an implacable hatred. On the death of the Emperor Severus, his two sons, Bassianus and Geta, could not agree about the parting of the empire, nor did they omit any means whereby they might supplant each other; they endeavoured to bribe each other's cooks and butlers to poison their masters; but when both were too watchful to be thus circumvented, at last Bassianus grew impatient, and burning with ambition to enjoy the rule alone, he set upon his brother, gave him a deadly wound, and shed his blood in the lap of Julia, their mother; and having executed this villainy, threw himself amongst the soldiers, and told them that he had with difficulty saved his life from the malice of his brother. Having parted amongst them all that Severus, his father, had been eighteen years heaping up, he was by them confirmed in the empire. (*N. Wanley.*)

The man makes the sacrifice:—The heathens had a notion that the gods would not accept the sacrifice of any but those who were like themselves; and therefore none could be admitted to the sacrifices of Hercules who were dwarfs, and none to those of merry Bacchus who were sad and pensive. An excellent truth may be drawn from this folly. He that would please God must be like God. (*W. Gurnall.*)

The true temper of an accepted offering:—The offering of Cain was like a beautiful present, but there was no sorrow for sin in it—no asking for pardon—and so God would not receive it. "Mother won't take my book," once sobbed out a little boy—holding in his hand a very beautiful little volume prettily bound, with gilt edges to the leaves. It was a pretty present, purchased with the pocket-money which he had been for weeks saving for his mother's birthday; and now she would not have it. But she did take the needle-book and purse which her little daughter presented to her. Why did she refuse the beautiful gift of her boy? He had been naughty—selfish, passionate, false—and had not at all repented; and so when he brought his offering, she put it gently on one side, saying, "No, Charlie." He turned away sullenly, muttering that he did not care, and beginning to cherish feelings of a bad kind towards his sister. But after a while he came to himself—stole into the room, flung himself on her shoulder, confessed his fault with tears, and found favour with his mother. By-and-by, she tenderly whispered, "You may bring your present." So God acted with Cain, but he would persist in obduracy of heart. (*W. Adamson.*)

Unacceptable offerings:—Some people are very curious to know what these sacrifices were, and grey-headed commentators, who ought to have known

better, have spent no end of time in trying to gratify their idle curiosity. Some have thought that the virtue was in the thing taken, as if that could be! No; you must find out what the heart is, what the motive is, what the will is. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." It is for ever true that God abhors the sacrifice where not the heart is found. If you want to find out Cain's condition of heart you will find it after the service which he pretended to render; you know a man best out of church; the minister sees the best side of a man, the lawyer the worst, and the physician the real. If you want to know what a man's religious worship is worth, see him out of church. Cain killed his brother when church was over, and that is the exact measure of Cain's piety. And so, when you went home the other day you charged five shillings for a three-shilling article, and told the buyer it was too cheap: and that is exactly the value of your psalm-singing and sermon-hearing. You said you enjoyed the discourse exceedingly last Thursday; then you filled up the income-tax paper falsely: and you will be judged by the schedule, not by the sentiment. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.—

Sin lying at the door:—The key to the interpretation of these words is to remember that they describe what happens after and because of wrong-doing. They are all suspended on, "If thou doest not well." The word translated here "lieth" is employed only to express the crouching of an animal, and frequently of a wild animal: "Unto thee shall be its desire, and thou shalt rule over it." Words like these were spoken to Eve: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." In horrible parody of the wedded union and love, we have the picture of the sin that was thought of as crouching at the sinner's door like a wild beast, now, as it were, wedded to him. I. THINK OF THE WILD BEAST WHICH WE TETHER TO OUR DOORS BY OUR WRONG-DOING. Every human deed is immortal; the transitory evil thought, or word, or act, which seems to fleet by like a cloud, has a permanent being, and hereafter haunts the life of the doer as a real presence. This memory has in it everything you ever did. A landscape may be hidden by mists, but a puff of wind will clear them away, and it will all be there, visible to the farthest horizon. II. The next thought is put into a strong and, to our modern notions, somewhat violent metaphor—THE HORRIBLE LONGING, AS IT WERE, OF SIN TOWARD THE SINNER: "Unto thee shall be its desire." Our sins act towards us as if they desired to draw our love to themselves. When once a man has done a wrong thing it has an awful power of attracting him and making him hunger to do it again. All sin is linked together in a slimy tangle, like a field of seaweed, so that the man once caught in its oozy fingers is almost sure to be drowned. III. THE COMMAND HERE IS ALSO A PROMISE. "Sin lies at thy door—rule thou over it."

The text proclaims only duty, but it has hidden in its very hardness a sweet kernel of promise. For what God commands God enables us to do. The words do really point onwards through all the ages to the great fact that Jesus Christ, God's own Son, came down from heaven, like an athlete descending into the arena, to fight with and overcome the grim wild beasts, our passions, and our sins, and to lead them transformed in the silken leash of His love. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *Sin, guilt, and retribution*:—Sin finds in the very constitution of the human mind the enginery of its own retribution. I. The very consciousness of sin is destructive of a sinner's peace. II. Sin tends to develop sin. III. The consciousness of guilt is always more or less painfully attended with the apprehension of its discovery. IV. A foreboding of judicial and eternal retribution is incident to sin. V. From all this we see the preciousness of the work of Christ. He becomes a reality to us, only because He is a necessity. He gives Himself to blot out the past. (*A. Phelps.*)

God's expostulation with Cain:—I. THAT THOSE WHO DO WELL CANNOT FAIL TO SECURE DIVINE ACCEPTANCE. What is it to do well? We must not suffer our judgments to be biased by the opinions of men. To do well, with some, is to succeed in business. "He is doing very well," is a common phrase applied to a successful tradesman. Jonah thought he did well to be angry even unto death. To do well, in the sense in which the expression must be understood here, is—to bring an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, and to offer it in an acceptable manner. II. THAT THOSE WHO NEGLECT TO DO WELL WILL HAVE TO BLAME THEMSELVES ALONE FOR IT. 1. Those neglect to do well who offer to God no acceptable sacrifice. Sinners offer to God nothing but insults. Their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory; their souls and bodies, time and talents, are all desecrated from their original purpose. 2. Those neglect to do well who offer their sacrifices in an unacceptable manner. Cain did this. In conclusion we observe:

1. God's expostulation with Cain reminds us of His willingness to save sinners. Expostulations, containing similar sentiments, may be found, Ezek. xviii. 29, 31; Hos. xi. 8; Matt. xxiii. 37. 2. It also serves as a ground of encouragement for those who have been doing ill, but wish to do better; If thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted? Let not the evil actions of the former part of thy life discourage thee. 3. It leaves sinners without reasonable excuse. (*Sketches of Sermons.*)

The croucher at the door:—Cain is here warned that, while he is nursing his angry, jealous thoughts, sin, like a ravening beast, as crafty as it is cruel, is crouching outside the door of his heart, only waiting for the door to be opened by any touch of passion to spring in; and he is admonished to keep the door shut lest he be overcome of evil. He is warned that the "desire" of the sin, which looks so fair and tempting to the eye stained and discoloured by passion, is against him, that his only safety consists in subduing and ruling over it. I. THE COMPARISON. 1. Craft. Sin is subtle, full of wiles and "all deceivableness." (1) Like a wild beast, beautiful in outward seeming, lithe and graceful in its motions; its feet shod with velvet, its strength robed in a coat of many colours. (2) Like a stealthy crouching beast, lurking in ambush, stealing unheard and unseen from thicket to thicket, or gliding softly through the long tangled grass, availing itself of every inequality of the ground, hiding behind every trunk or bush, approaching its victim like a fate—silent, invisible, unerring. 2. Cruelty, no less than craft, characterizes the croucher at the door. The most crafty beasts are the most cruel. They crouch that they may spring, and rend, and tear. And sin is cruel, and fatal in its cruelty. If it crouch, it is that it may spring; if it spring, it is that it may destroy. II. THE WARNING. "If thou doest not well, sin is a croucher at the door; and his desire is against thee, but thou shouldest rule over him." 1. The warning points out our danger. (1) He who does not well, is very near to doing ill. A merely negative virtue is in peril of becoming positive vice. He who neglects opportunities of doing good, by his very neglect of them does evil. The holy war admits no neutrals; we must be for God, or against Him. (2) The warning suggests another thought of a much more hopeful cast. For it implies that sin is external to man, not an essential part of his nature, but a foreign, adverse power which has only an usurped authority; it represents evil as a croucher without the door, and capable of being kept out. We need to remember and to emphasize the fact that sin is not of the essence of our nature; for much depends upon it. It makes redemption possible; for how should they be redeemed from evil of whose nature evil is an essential and inseparable quality? 2. The warning indicates our safety. "His desire is against thee, but thou shouldest rule over him." The croucher cannot be tamed. It must be caged, starved, slain. But how is this wily foe to be caught? how are the strength and fierceness of this cruel foe to be subdued? Truly, if we were called to the task alone, we might well despair. Sin has too firm a hold on us to be readily dislodged. But our comfort is that we are not called to the task alone. He who warned Cain that the croucher was at his door, would have helped Cain to repel him. And He who warns us that sin is our subtle and implacable antagonist, will help us to detect its wiles and to withstand its assaults. It only needs that Christ show Himself on our side, and evil will not court another overthrow. (*S. Cox, D.D.*) To those who are angry with their godly friends:—Sinners are not all of the laughing sort: Cain's mind was angry, and his heart was heavy. The short life of the vicious is not always a merry one. The present does not content them, and they have no future from which to borrow the light of hope. They have a religion of their own, even as Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground; but it yields them no comfort, for God has no respect to their offering, and therefore they are displeased about it. They would like to have the enjoyments of religion very much, they would like to have peace of conscience, they would like to be uplifted beyond all fear of death, they would like to be as happy as Christian people are; but they do not want to pay the price, namely, obedience to God by faith in Jesus Christ. They are in a bitter state of heart, and it is fair to ask each one of them, "Why art thou wroth?" Alas! they are not angry with themselves, as they ought to be, but angry with God; and often they are angry with God's chosen, and envious of them, even as Cain was malicious and vindictive towards Abel. "Why should my neighbour be saved, and not I? Why should my brother rejoice because he has peace with God, while I cannot get it?" Now, I want to call attention to a very gracious fact connected with this text; and that is, that, although Cain was in such a bad temper that he was very wroth, and his countenance fell, yet God, the infinitely gracious One, came and spoke with him, and reasoned with him patiently. God

gives none up until they fatally resolve to give themselves up, and even then His good Spirit strives with them as long as it is possible to do so, consistently with His holiness. I. I shall take the last sentence of the text first: "Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." In these words God argues with Cain, and answers the charge of favouritism which was lurking in his mind. He tells him, in effect, that NO DIFFERENCE IS MADE IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF SOCIAL LIFE BECAUSE OF THE ARRANGEMENTS OF GRACE. Notice that He says to him, "Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him"—which I understand to mean just this: "Why are you so angry against Abel? It is true that I have accepted his offering; it is true that he is a righteous man, and you are not; but, for all that, you are his elder brother, and he looks up to you, his desire is toward you, and you shall rule over him. He has not acted otherwise than as a younger brother should act towards an elder brother, but he has admitted your seniority and priority." Observe this, then—that if a man shall be angry with his wife because she is a Christian, we may well argue with him, Why are you thus provoked? Is she not a loving and obedient wife to you in all things, except in this matter touching her God? Is she not all the better for her religion? 1. Now, this is an important thing to note, because first of all it takes away from governments their excuse for persecution. Christianity does not come into a nation to break up its arrangements, or to break down its fabric. All that is good in human society it preserves and establishes. It snaps no ties of the family; it dislocates no bonds of the body politic. Let all who are in authority, whether as kings or petty magistrates, beware of wantonly molesting a people who cause them no trouble, lest they be found in this matter to be fighting against God. 2. That being so in the broad field of national life, it is just the same if you bring it down to the little sphere of home. There is no reason why Cain should be so angry with Abel because God loves him; for the love of God to Abel does not take away from Cain his right as an elder brother. It does not teach Abel to refuse to Cain the rights of his position, nor lead him to act rudely and wrongfully to him. No: Abel's desire is unto Cain, and Cain rules over him as his elder brother. Why, then, should Cain be wroth, and his countenance fall? I could hope, my angry friend, that God means to give a greater blessing still to you—that He means to entice you to heaven by showing your wife the way; or He means to lead you to Christ by that dear child of yours. I have known parents brought to repentance by the deaths of daughters or of sons who have died in the faith. I hope you will not have to lose those you love that you may be brought to Jesus by their dying words. But it may be so: it may be so. It will be better for you to yield to their gentle example while yet they are spared to you, than for you to be smitten to the heart by their sickness and death.

II. Now let us advance farther into the text. There is no room for being angry, for **THOUGH THE DIFFERENCE LIES FIRST WITH THE GRACE OF GOD, YET IT LIES ALSO WITH THE MAN'S OWN SELF.** "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." 1. First, then, if you are not accepted, and you are angry because you are not accepted, is there not a just cause for it? If you do not enjoy the comforts of religion, and you grow envious because you do not, you should cool your wrathfulness by considering this question—"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" That is to say, will you not be accepted on the same terms as Abel? You will be accepted in the same way as your brother, your sister, your child. How is it that the one you envy is full of peace? It is because he has come to Jesus and confessed his sin, and trusted his Redeemer. If thou doest this, shalt not thou also be accepted? Has not the Lord said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"? Instead of being angry with another, for believing and rejoicing, taste for thyself the joys which faith secures. May infinite grace lead thee to do so now! 2. God's second word with Cain was, however, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is to say, "If religion does not yield thee joy as it does thy brother, what is the reason? Surely sin stops the entrance, as a stone blocking the doorway. If you cannot gain an entrance to mercy, it is because sin like a huge stone, has been rolled against it, and remains there. (1) Is it unbelief? You will not believe God's word. You reject the testimony of God concerning His Son Jesus, and thus you put away from you eternal life. (2) Is it impenitence? Are you hardened about your sin? Do you refuse to quit it? Is there no sorrow in your heart to think that you have broken the Divine law, and have lived forgetful of your God? A hard heart is a great stone to lie in a man's way; for he who will not own his sin and forsake it is wedded to his own destruction. (3) Or, is it pride? Are you too big a man to

become a Christian? Are you too respectable, too wealthy, too polite? Are you too deep a thinker? Do you know too much? (4) Alas! there are some who have another sin, a hidden sin. (5) We have known persons practise dishonesty in business, and this has shut them out from acceptance. (6) Some cannot get peace because they neglect prayer. (7) Not a few harbour enmity in their hearts towards their brother or neighbour. (8) Then there are some who keep evil company. 3. I think this word of Divine exhortation bears another meaning. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is to say, not only as a stone to block your way, but as a lion to pounce upon you. It is true that sin is hindering you from peace, but it is also true that a greater sin is lurking at the door ready to spring upon you. What a warning this word ought to have been to Cain! Perhaps at that moment he had not seriously thought of killing his brother. He was angry, but he was not yet implacable and malicious. But God said, "There is a sin lying at your door that will come upon you to your destruction." May it not be the same with you? 4. But there is yet another meaning which I must bring out here, and that is one which is held by many critics, though it is questioned by others. I am content to go with a considerable following, especially of the old divines, who say that the word here used may be rendered, "If thou doest ill, a sin-offering lieth at the door." And what a sweet meaning this gives us! God graciously declares to angry Cain, "Thou canst bring a sin-offering, as Abel has done, and all will be well. Thou canst present a bleeding sacrifice, typical of the great atonement: a sin-offering lies at the door." This should be an encouraging assurance to anyone who is anxious, and at the same time greatly afraid that pardon is not possible. "Where can I find Christ?" says one. He standeth at the door: He waiteth for thee. The offering is not far to seek. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

The personal causes of human misery:—I do not understand the same thing by the words misery and calamity. Calamities may be occasions for sorrow, and they may become ingredients in misery; but they do not become misery until they have taken a certain hold upon the whole constitution of the man. Perhaps I might illustrate this distinction by comparing the character of Cain, referred to in the text, with that of the Apostle Paul. Paul was the subject of numerous afflictions, as here stated; yet we cannot call him a miserable man. But Cain exclaims in the bitterness of his soul, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." His spirit was broken down under the influence of his circumstances; and we call him miserable, whilst we only say that the Apostle Paul was afflicted. It is, then, into the causes of this breaking up of the inward peace of a man's mind in the condition which God has been pleased to assign him, that we have to inquire. But before I name the causes, and describe to you their operation severally, permit me to point out one or two conjectures, by which individuals endeavour to account for their misery, but to which it cannot properly be attributed. There are several mistakes of this kind. And, in the first place, I do not think that human misery can be ascribed to the personal organization of a man's constitution. For the frame of man is most delicately constructed by a wise and benevolent hand, devised by One who was capable of contemplating the end from the beginning of our existence; there is no part in all its original constitution, which seems to have been formed for the purpose of producing misery. In the second place, we cannot ascribe the misery that is found in this world to any order of circumstances connected with an individual's station in life. Some people are almost ever ready to attribute their sorrows and miseries to the position which they occupy. "Raise me," they say, "to another station in society, and I shall be happy enough." But all experience tells us that men are commonly as happy in the lower situations of life as in the higher. In point of fact, happiness and misery are not at all deducible from an individual's position in society. Let me add one other remark to this explanation: I do not think that you can ever trace the misery of this world to any diseases of the human frame. It is true that disease may become very painful; but yet the man in disease is not always a miserable man. He may be a dying man, but yet not a miserable man. That, then, which breaks down the spirit of a man in the midst of this world's affairs, must be bred within him. It is not misfortune, but sin, which, operating in diverse kinds, is like a brood of scorpions nursed within the breast, which spend their first life in devouring the very heart that cherished them. Yes, it is to sin cherished within the heart of man, that you must trace the misery of his present condition. In the first place, observe what is accomplished by the teaching and guidance of a father. So soon, therefore, as a man has broken away from the governance and guidance of his Father in heaven,

what is the result? What is it that he throws away? The commandment of God brings down the wisdom of infinity for the direction of human affairs; and the man throws away infinite wisdom, to prefer in its stead his own most futile and childish speculations. They are, in fact, vain wishes; and vain wishes must occupy the mind that has let go the Deity, and ceased to find its happiness in God. But there is a second cause of sorrow, more bitter, which operates in conjunction with this; I mean the indulgence of known sins—or rather the seeking our happiness in known sins. Let me take three examples: first, avarice; secondly, lust; and in the third place, pride. All these are sources of misery which are personal, because they exist and operate in the man's own mind. Consider, then, the other mode by which men pursue their happiness; and suffer man to cultivate his pride. And when pride is gratified perfectly, man becomes a devil. Our great poet has shown this in making it the sin of the master-devil. Avarice, then, makes a man a stone; lust makes him a beast; and pride makes him a devil; and thus the whole creation of God becomes blasted by the sinful pursuits of His creature, and misery must be the inevitable result. Let me add, further, the effect which these sins have in provoking the Divine anger. Much of the misery which results to men in this world flows from the effect of their personal guiltiness in the sight of heaven. In conclusion; if human misery thus flow from ourselves, you can see that human happiness must be obtained by the cultivation of our own hearts. It is not in a change of circumstances; it is not in modifying the organization of your bodies; it is not in passing from earth to heaven, for if you were to take with you into heaven the vices which you pursue on earth, they would make even heaven itself a hell. And further, if these views of the personal causes of human misery be just, you may perceive the extreme kindness of Divine chastisement, and even of Divine judgment. (C. Stovel.)

Natural and revealed religion:—I. NATURAL RELIGION. This consists in "doing well." Look at the principle on which it is founded. The principle is practical goodness. This principle is intrinsically excellent. Man was created to do well. It is to be desired that all men should act upon this principle. The world would be different if men were to. No need of police—prison. It is a principle to which none can object. Let us look at the standard by which it is to be tested. The standard is the moral law of creation. In order to do well, man must love God with all his heart, &c. There must be no omission. The act must be perfect. It must be a gem without a flaw. The motive must be good. The rule must be good. It must be done as God directs. Look at the reward, "Shalt thou not be accepted?" Such a religion will command the approval of the Almighty. It will secure immortality for its votaries. Had Adam continued to do well, he would have continued to live. This, then, is the religion of nature—is glorious. Have you performed its requirements? Think of sin—its nature, its effects, its ultimate consequences. How can we escape them? Ask natural religion. Will she suggest repentance? Will repentance replace things as they were—reformation? This cannot alter the past. An offering—man has none to present—the mercy of the Eternal? God is merciful, but how can He show it to the sinner, in harmony with justice? Nature has no reply.

II. REVEALED RELIGION. "A sin-offering lieth at thy door." 1. That revealed religion assumes that men are guilty. If there is no sin, there can be no need of a sin-offering; and if there is a sin-offering, it is presumed that there is sin. Men have not done well. They are sinners. They are liable to punishment. 2. That revealed religion has provided a sin-offering. Three kinds of sacrifices were offered by the Jews: eucharistic—peace-offerings—atonement. The last the most prominent. Type of Calvary. In the sin-offering there was a substitution of person—a substitution of sufferings—the acceptance of the sin-offering was accompanied with Divine evidence. This sacrifice is efficient. 3. That this sin-offering reposeth at the door. The atonement of Christ is accessible to the sinner—it rests with man to avail himself of it—men neglect it—God exercises great long-suffering—sinners cannot go to hell without trampling on the sacrifice of the Cross—they will be deprived of exercise if they neglect it. (Homilist.)

Three experiments and three failures:—I. THE FAMILY idea won't keep men right. Cain and Abel were brothers. II. RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL won't keep men right. Cain and Abel both offered sacrifice. III. RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION won't keep men right. Cain killed his brother, but a voice cried against him. What will keep men right? The love of God through Jesus Christ. (J. Parker, D.D.)

The principles of the Divine government:—The text declared a great and lasting truth to the mind of Cain thousands of years back, as it does to each of us this day. It grounds its appeal upon the immutable principles

of right and wrong, and projects its Divine authority through every generation from the birth of man to the very end of time. It speaks to the conscience as well as to the judgment of an intelligent being, and it leaves him to act as a free agent in accordance with its dictates. I. In the first place we notice the **EXTREME CONDESCENSION** of the Most High in thus expostulating with Cain, who, it appears from the context, was angered at the reception of his brother's offering and the rejection of his own. Then observe the gentleness of manner with which God is pleased to address Cain. It does not appear that Cain was startled or overwhelmed with terror at the voice of God. There were no thunderings, no earthquakes, no supernatural wonders, but all was gentle and kind on the part of Deity. And it is in this way He continues still to appeal to the hearts and consciences of His people. The plague and the pestilence, the famine and the sword, the blight of earthly hopes and the sadness of the death-chamber, are only the agencies through which He speaks. The voice of God itself heard within us is yet calm and inviting. II. **THE TEXT IS A DECLARATION OF THE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF THE DIVINE ADMINISTRATION** SIMILAR TO WHAT IS STATED BY ISAIAH (iii. 10, 11), and in Eccles. viii. 12, 13. III. **CONSIDER THAT THE DECISIONS OF THE FUTURE JUDGMENT WILL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS REFERRED TO.** IV. The great practical lesson we derive from the text is this: that God, through every period of man's existence, down to the very date of our first creation, HAS EVER DEALT WITH MAN AS A FREE AGENT; as a moral and responsible being, endowed with the power of will, and with faculties which place him above the mere animal world. This is a great and very important truth, and we commend it specially to your consideration. According to the unchangeable laws or principles of moral government, you perceive it is impossible for any man to commit sin with impunity. True, judgment does not always immediately follow crime. The seeds of evil are permitted to grow and develop themselves in their different forms of iniquity, but they are uprooted at last, as the destructive weed is torn up from the earth and cast into the fire. (*W. D. Horwood.*) *Sin ready to enter*:—A young friend was one day calling upon an old Christian woman, nearly eighty years of age, just waiting for the summons. Said this friend, "Oh, granny, I wish I was as sure of heaven, and as near it, as you are!" With a look of unspeakable emotion, the old woman answered, "And do you really think the devil cannot find his way up an old woman's garret-stair? Oh, if He hadn't said, 'None shall pluck them out of My hand,' I would have been away wandering long ago!" (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*)

Ver. 8. Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.—The first murder:—I. IT WAS THE MURDER OF ONE BROTHER BY ANOTHER. We should have thought that the members of this small family could have lived on amicable terms with each other. We should never have dreamed of murder in their midst. See here:—1. The power of envy. 2. The ambition of selfishness. 3. The quick development of passion. II. IT WAS OCCASIONED BY ENVY IN THE RELIGIOUS DEPARTMENT OF LIFE. Brothers ought to rejoice in the moral success of each other. Envy in the church is the great cause of strife. Men envy each other's talents. They murder each other's reputation. They kill many of tender spirit. You can slay your minister by a look—a word—as well as by a weapon. Such conduct is:—1. Cruel. 2. Reprehensible. 3. Astonishing. 4. Frequent. III. **THAT IT WAS AVENGED BY HEAVEN.** 1. By a convicting question. 2. By an alarming curse. 3. By a wandering life. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The beginning of the fatal operations of sin on human society*:—I. **THE FIRST RECORDED ACT OF WORSHIP OCCASIONS THE FIRST MURDER.** Is not that only too correct a forecast of the oceans of blood which have been shed in the name of religion, and a striking proof of the subtle power of sin to corrupt even the best, and out of it to make the worst? What a lesson against the bitter hatred which has too often sprung up on so-called religious grounds! II. **SIN HERE APPEARS AS HAVING POWER TO BAR MEN'S WAY TO GOD.** Much ingenuity has been spent on the question why Abel's offering was accepted and Cain's rejected. But the narrative itself shows in the words of Jehovah, "If thou doest well, is there not acceptance?" that the reason lay in Cain's evil deeds (See 1 John iii. 12; Heb. xi. 4). Plenty of worship nowadays is Cain's worship. Many reputable professing Christians bring just such sacrifices. The prayers of such never reach higher than the church ceiling. III. **NOTE IN ONE WORD THAT WE HAVE HERE AT THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY THE SOLEMN DISTINCTION WHICH RUNS THROUGH IT ALL.** These two, so near in blood, so separate in spirit, head the two classes into which Scripture decisively puts

men, especially men who have heard the gospel. IV. The solemn Divine voice reads the lesson of THE POWER OF SIN, WHEN ONCE DONE, OVER THE SINNER. Like a wild beast, it crouches in ambush at his door, ready to spring and devour. Or, by another metaphor, it hungers after him with a longing which is a horrible parody of the wife's love and desire (comp. Gen. iii. 16 with Gen. iv. 7). The evil deed once committed takes shape, as it were, and waits to seize the door. Remorse, inward disturbance, and, above all, the fatal inclination to repeat sin till it becomes a habit, are set forth with terrible force in these grim figures. What a menagerie of ravenous beasts some of us have at the doors of our hearts! The eternal duty of resistance is farther taught by the words. Hope of victory, encouragement to struggle, the assurance that even these savage beasts may be subdued, and the lion and adder (the hidden and the glaring evils which wound unseen, and which spring with a roar), may be overcome, and led in a silken leash, are given in the command, which is also a promise, "Rule thou over it." V. THE DEADLY FRUIT OF HATE IS TAUGHT US IN THE BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ACTUAL MURDER. Notice the impressive plainness and fewness of the words. "Cain rose up against his brother, and slew him." Observe the emphasis with which "his brother" is repeated in the verse and throughout. Observe, also, the vivid light thrown by the story on the rise and progress of the sin. It begins with envy and jealousy. Cain was not wroth because his offering was rejected. What did he care for that? But what angered him was that his brother had what he had not. So selfishness was at the bottom, and that led on to envy, and that to hatred. Then comes a pause, in which God speaks remonstrances, as God's voice—conscience—does now to us all, between the imagination and the act of evil. A real or a feigned reconciliation is effected. The brothers go in apparent harmony to the field. No new provocation appears, but the old feelings, kept down for a time, come in again with a rush, and the man is swept away. Hatred left to work means murder. VI. MARK HOW CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF SIN GOD'S QUESTION TREADS. How God spoke, we know not. Doubtless in some fashion suited to the needs of Cain. But He speaks to us as really as to him, and no sooner is the rush of passion over, and the bad deed done, than a revulsion comes. What we call conscience asks the question in stern tones, which make a man's flesh creep. Our sin is like touching the electric bells which people sometimes put on their windows to give notice of thieves. As soon as we step beyond the line of duty we set the alarm going, and it wakens the sleeping conscience. VII. CAIN'S DEFIANT ANSWER TEACHES US HOW A MAN HARDENS HIMSELF AGAINST GOD'S VOICE. It also shows us how intensely selfish all sin is, and how weakly foolish its excuses are. VIII. THE STERN SENTENCE IS NEXT PRONOUNCED. First we have the grand figure of the innocent blood having a voice which pierces the heavens. That teaches in the most forcible way the truth that God knows the crimes done by "man's inhumanity to man," even when the meek sufferers are silent. According to the fine old legend of the cranes of Ibycus, a bird of the air will carry the matter. It speaks, too, of His tender regard for His saints, whose blood is precious in His sight; and it teaches that He will surely requite. Then follows the sentence, which falls into two parts—the curse of bitter, unrequited toil, and the doom of homeless wandering. The blood which has been poured out on the battle-field fertilizes the soil; but Abel's blasted earth. It was a supernatural infliction, to teach that bloodshed polluted the earth, and so to shed a nameless horror over the deed. We see an analogous feeling in the common belief that places where some foul sin has been committed are cursed. We see a weak natural correspondence in the devastating effect of war, as expressed in the old saying that no grass would grow where the Turk had stabled his horses. The doom of wandering, which would be compulsory by reason of the earth's barrenness, is a parable. The murderer is hunted from place to place, as the Greek fable has it, by the Furies, who suffer him not to rest. Conscience drives a man "through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none." All sin makes us homeless wanderers. Every sinner is a fugitive and a vagabond. But if we love God we are still wanderers, indeed, but we are "pilgrims and sojourners with Thee." IX. CAIN'S DEMONSTRANCE COMPLETES THE TRAGIC PICTURE. We see in it despair without penitence. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *The first murderer:—*I. THIS HISTORY PRESENTS A PICTURE OF THE BASENESS OF SELFISHNESS. 1. Selfishness overlooks the means employed by others to become great. 2. Destroys the sacredness of natural ties. 3. Considers the virtues of others hostile to itself. 4. Is not scrupulous in injuring the innocent. II. THE INJURIES DONE TO THE GOOD ARE NOTICED IN HEAVEN. III. AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION WILL BE MADE TOUCHING THESE WRONGS. 1. A righteous

Judge sitting on the judgment seat. 2. An opportunity will be offered to the accused to prove his innocence. 3. Only integrity can stand the investigation. IV. THE EVIL DOER IS THE GREATEST SUFFERER IN THE END. 1. No prosperity. 2. No home. 3. No peace. (*Homilist.*) *Cain the murderer*:—I. THE HISTORY OF HIS CRIME. II. THE INSTRUCTIONS AND ADMONITIONS WHICH THE HISTORY OF HIS CRIME SUGGESTS. 1. The history affords a melancholy instance of the disappointment which sometimes follows parental hopes. 2. The history teaches that no professions of religion are acceptable to God if they be unaccompanied by faith. 3. We learn from the history, the rapid and extensive progress which sin is capable of making. 4. The history suggests to us the awful criminality which is connected with the murder of a soul!—the infusion of a deadly poison, or the infliction of a deadly blow on the character, and happiness, and hopes of an immortal spirit!—the perdition of a soul by our influence and by our instrumentality! Oh! this is a solemn thought for the minister, and for the parent, and for every one who possesses any degree of influence in society. “Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God.” 5. You also perceive from the history, that the sinner who is bold in crime becomes a coward in the presence of punishment. This was strikingly exemplified in the case of Cain. In the field he was courageous—brave enough to shed a brother’s blood! But how he fled trembling when the deed was done. How he endeavoured to persuade Jehovah that he had not been guilty of the crime. And though his punishment was mild and merciful for such a monster of iniquity, yet when it is pronounced he faints, and cries, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.” Nor is there in punishment alone, anything that is calculated to soften the heart or to reform the character. 6. Again, the history is connected with the gospel truth that “the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.” Both of these are represented in the Scriptures as endowed with speech. The blood of Abel was not sacrificial; the blood of sprinkling is the propitiation for our sins. The blood of Abel proclaims the depravity and malevolence of man; the blood of sprinkling proclaims the purity and the love of God. The blood of Abel cried for punishment on the murderer; the blood of sprinkling cries for pardon and salvation. The blood of Abel produced wretchedness and terror in the mind of Cain; the blood of sprinkling produces joy unspeakable and full of glory. 7. The history teaches that the death of a believer, under whatever circumstances it occurs, is always safe and happy. Such was the death of Abel. (*J. Alexander.*) *The first murderer*:—Our text presents us with a narrative which happened nearly six thousand years ago; a period almost bordering upon that golden age of the world’s infancy, when the bowers of Eden still blossomed as the garden of the Lord, and when man yet walked in innocence. But already had “the gold become dim”; and a little space of time had sufficed to change each scene. “Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?” It may be useful, too, to make this also our first inquiry—the cause of Cain’s sorrow. Our second will be, how God sought to remove it. I. In inquiring into THE CAUSE OF CAIN’S SORROW, we may be sure that sin was the first cause; for to that source alone we ourselves may trace our every trouble. Cain possibly, as we often do, might impute it to what he considered God’s harsh and unjust treatment of him, in having no respect to his offering; he should, however, have looked further, and considered his sin. Cain’s sin appears to have been of a three-fold character, and consisted first in this: that, though he was a sinner both by nature and by practice, yet, as if unconscious that he was such, he made no acknowledgment of guilt. Scripture everywhere speaks of two distinct classes of offerings. In the New Testament the apostle calls them “gifts”; where, in speaking of one of the particular duties of priests, he mentions both kinds of offerings: “For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices” (Heb. viii. 3; v. 1). In these gifts, or thank-offerings, to have offered blood would have been the grossest abomination; a sin, however, into which the heathen fell. So David says: “Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer.” God, therefore, instituted the ordinance of sacrifice, typical of that blood which should one day be shed upon the cross; and therefore it was only when a sacrifice had been first offered, by way of typical atonement, that then God could delight in the thanksgiving of the reconciled sinner. Now, Cain brought a thank-offering only; clearly, then, he was practically unconscious of his guilty state before God. In this respect, every unconvicted and every self-righteous sinner resembles Cain; born in Cain’s nature, and alas! still unchanged. If you have never yet felt yourself to be a lost sinner, and have never yet by faith washed your guilty soul in the blood of

Christ's sacrifice, which alone can cleanse from sin, then, in that case, your best offerings, your prayers and your praises, your charities, or even your sacramental eucharists, are but the offering that Cain brought; and God can neither respect you nor your offering: He does not accept you. But let us now go on to observe the next particular in Cain's sin. It was want of faith in God's method of acceptance. It is just in this way that thousands now, who, like Cain, are without faith, argue respecting God's ordinances, especially respecting His great ordinance, Christ. Some will satisfy themselves with an ideal or speculative faith, who nevertheless have never really come to Christ, have never pleaded earnestly the merit of His sacrifice, or sought, as Abel did, the blood of sprinkling. Others altogether exclude from their religion faith in Christ as the only means by which they can be accepted of God; and this they do, not avowedly perhaps, but by a garbled sophistry. Whilst they profess to hold the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith alone, they so mix up with it the nonsensical quackeries of some thing of their own fancied merits, and so-called inherent righteousness, that they weaken it, and fritter it down into a mere unscriptural idea. We have yet to trace another particular in Cain's sin, and one which is the certain result of being in an unconvinced and unbelieving state—it is disobedience. Unconscious of need, and exercising no faith in God's ordinance, he thought to serve God after his own fashion. And here you have the test by which to try the character of your faith. The true believer has respect to all God's commandments, and would not willingly pass by one, even the most seemingly trifling; for he is aware that, however apparently unimportant it may be in itself, yet the mere fact of its being a Divine command invests it with infinite sanction, and with a claim to most unreserved obedience. The unbeliever, on the other hand, is for serving God according to his own loose notions of morality, by endeavouring to distinguish between duties which are essential and duties which are not essential, as well as also between great sins and little sins. II. We have seen that there were three particulars in this sin: in answering our second inquiry as to how God sought to remove Cain's sorrow, we shall find THAT THERE WERE THREE CORRESPONDING PARTICULARS IN THE OFFER OF MERCY WHICH GOD MADE TO HIM. The first particular in Cain's sin was that he was unconvinced of his sinfulness and impenitence: the first step, therefore, in God's exhibition of mercy towards him was an endeavour to lead him to true repentance by convincing him that he was a sinner. God usually seizes the most convenient seasons for the operations of His mercy. He comes to knock at the sinner's heart when His visits might seem to be most welcome; and, if in the sinner's sorrow there is any even the most remote semblance of repentance, oh, then a gracious and loving Father steps forth to meet him. God comes to Cain when in trouble, and when vexed in spirit with disappointment, and then mildly expostulates with him: "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?" Surely these questions should have touched him, and reminded him of his sin. Cain sorrowed; but, alas! it was not after a godly sort: it did not prove to be that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of." This is one reason "wherefore serveth the law"; and the result is blessed, when it comes with such power to a sinner's heart as to convince him of sin. Such it proved to St. Paul (Rom. vii. 7-11). We have already observed that the second particular of Cain's sin was want of faith in God's appointed method of acceptance, namely, in the shedding of blood. The second particular, therefore, in the exhibition of God's mercy was the assurance of pardon and acceptance through faith in the blood of a sacrifice: "And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door"; that is, "If, in consequence of the utter corruption of your nature, you are unable to make amends to My law already broken, or in future to fulfil all its spiritual requirements, yet in mercy I have provided a remedy, the use of which will restore you to My favour. And now, that I have brought your sin to your knowledge, go to the door of your tent, and see lying there the goat on which, typically, I am ready to lay all your sin: take, and offer it for a sin-offering" (Lev. iv. 23, 24). In support of this interpretation, I would first remark that, in the language of Scripture, sin and its punishment, or atonement, are so intimately connected together, that the same word of the original (*chattath*) represents both ideas; and this word, which in our text has been translated "sin," is in other parts of the Old Testament rendered one hundred and twenty-four times "sin-offering." We may further add, in support of the interpretation which we have given, that the literal meaning of the verb "lieth" is in the original "coucheth," and is, more-

over, of the masculine gender; whereas the name "chattath" is feminine: thus proving that the verb refers both in its meaning and its gender to the male animal connected with the idea of the sin-offering. From what we have said, then, it will appear that God's gracious offer of mercy to Cain consisted in this, that, though he was unable himself to fulfil God's requirements, yet a substituted victim which would be accepted for him was at hand. This, however, was not the only promise of mercy which God made to Cain. The third particular of Cain's sin was disobedience; and, in consequence, he, although the first-born, forfeited the blessing of birthright. The third particular, therefore, in the exhibition of God's mercy was that, if he would be obedient, he should still enjoy his forfeited pre-eminence: "And unto thee shall be his [Abel's] desire, and thou shalt rule over him." As though God had said, "Why should you be angry, and imagine that I deal harshly or unfairly with you in choosing your brother and rejecting you? It is true, indeed, that he is My chosen, My elect, and that I have given him that pre-eminency which is yours by nature; so that, if he lives, from him shall descend My chosen seed, and of him Messiah shall be born—not of you. But do not think that this can furnish you with excuse, or that this My election of him to the rights of the first-born shall, for one moment, stand in your way. I now pledge My word to you that, if you will be obedient, and propitiate My anger by the sacrifice of the sin-offering which is near at hand, even at the door—then Abel shall indeed regard you as the eldest-born: 'his desire shall be towards thee'; and thou shalt still enjoy the pre-eminence, 'thou shalt rule over him.'" To offers so full of mercy the hardened Cain turned a deaf ear, determining to obtain the pre-eminence—which, possibly, he thought rightly belonged to him—in his own way, not God's way; and, spurning the victim of God's choice, which was crouching at his feet, and whose offered blood, crying for mercy on his behalf, might have saved him, he chose his own victim, and with a brother's hand he shed a brother's blood, blood which cried for vengeance on the murderer's head. How short the step from the richest offers of mercy to a final reprobation! Reject the preaching of the cross to-day, and to-morrow you may be sealed in final impenitency. And let the believer learn from this narrative how to present all his offerings to God. They must all have reference to the blood of Christ. (*C. P. Carey, M.A.*)

Envy:—Beware of envy; it was one of the first windows that corrupt nature looked out at; a sin that shed the first blood. Cain's envy hatched Abel's murder. (*W. Gurnall.*) *The first murder*:—I. CAIN'S CRIME. Anger and hatred are the seed of murder. We need to pray always: "Incline our hearts to keep this law." II. CAIN'S QUESTION. "Am I my brother's keeper?" 1. Defiance of God. 2. Disregard of humanity. III. CAIN'S PUNISHMENT. 1. Fruitless toil. 2. A restless life. IV. CAIN'S REMORSE. If we wish to avoid the way of Cain, let us—1. Subdue angry feelings. 2. Love our neighbour. 3. Confess our sins to God, instead of trying to conceal them. 4. Ask God for pardon, instead of trying to flee from His face. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*)

Unbelief working by wrath, malice, and envy:—I. THE LORD DID NOT ALL AT ONCE FINALLY REJECT CAIN; on the contrary, He gave him an opportunity of finding acceptance still, as Abel had found it. The very intimation of his rejection, made to him immediately upon the first offence, was a merciful dealing with Cain, and ought to have been so received by him, and improved for leading him to humiliation, penitence, and faith. Instead of being humbled, however, he is irritated and provoked. Still, the Lord visits him, and graciously condescends to plead and expostulate with him. "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?" Wilt thou mend matters by thine angry and sullen gloom? Nay, there is a more excellent way. Retrace thy steps. Do as Abel did. And if like him thou doest well, thou canst have no doubt of thine acceptance. Thy rueful and downcast looks will be elevated into the gladness of a spirit in which there is no guile. But, on the other hand, beware. If thou rejectest the only true and effectual remedy—if thou doest not well—think not that any passionate complaints or moody discontent of thine will avail for thy relief. Sin—the sin to which by complying with its solicitations thou hast given the mastery over thee—is not thus to be got rid of. Nay, thou canst not keep it at a distance, or even at arm's length. It lieth at thy door; ever crouching for thee; ever ready to fawn upon thee for further concessions, or to grasp thee in its fangs of remorse and shame and terror. Cain would not be subject to the law of God—nor would he submit himself to the righteousness of God. He thought that he did well to be angry. And as his wrath could not reach the great Being of whom chiefly he complained, he vented it on his brother, who

was within his reach. Being of the wicked one, he slew his brother. II. Returning from the field, CAIN SCRUPLES NOT, APPARENTLY, TO REVISIT THE SANCTUARY—the very “presence of the Lord”; for it is afterwards said that upon receiving his sentence he went out from thence (ver. 16). He seems to think that he may calmly meet both his parents and his God. He even assumes an air of defiance. Thus the infidel regards religion, in the persons of its professors, as insulting and injurious to himself. He is not its keeper. It is no concern of his to save its credit or its character; rather he may be justified in putting it out of his way as best he can. III. But Cain, though thus far spared, WAS MADE FULLY AND TERRIBLY AWARE OF THE DIVINE DISPLEASURE. He had hitherto been a tiller of the ground; and the ground, though cursed for man’s sake, yielded a return to his toil. This employment of a cultivator of the soil seems originally to have possessed a certain pre-eminence of rank, and it had this manifest advantage, that it was a stationary occupation—a settled line of life. It permitted those who engaged in it to remain quietly resident in their hereditary domains, and to exercise their hereditary dominion. Above all, it left them in the neighbourhood of the place where the Lord manifested His presence—the sanctuary—the seat and centre of the old primeval religion. But Cain was henceforth to be debarred from the exercise of his original calling; at least on the spot where he had previously enjoyed his birthright privileges. For not only is the ground cursed to him—he is “cursed from the earth.” (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *The progress of sin*:—The last chapter described the origin of sin; our narrative develops its progress. Eve was tempted by an external object of pleasure. Cain allowed his heart to be impregnated with the poison of jealousy; the mother was disobedient in the hope of obtaining a high intellectual boon, the son sinned merely to destroy the happiness of another without thereby increasing his own; the former brought death into the world, the latter murder. The sin of Eve marked the period when the innocence of childhood is endangered by the consciousness of good and evil, and when the first act of free-will is also the first error; the deed of Cain describes the more advanced epoch of manhood when the strife and struggle with practical life is hottest; when the heart is assailed by numberless perils and collisions; when ambition excites the imagination; and the welfare of competition taxes and stimulates all the energies of man. The first sin was against God; the second both against God and a brother. But the source of either was the covetous desire of the heart. The Bible reminds man, incessantly, that within himself is the spring of life and death. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph. D.*) *Murder of a brother*:—Sir George Sands, a gentleman living in Kent, had two sons, grown up to that age wherein he might have expected most comfort from them; but in the year 1655, the younger of them, without any apparent provocation, did in a most inhuman manner murder his brother, as he lay sleeping by him in bed; first, he beat out his brains with a hatchet, and then, observing his poor victim to be still lingering in life, he stabbed him seven or eight times in and about the heart; after which, he went to his aged father and told him of it, glorying in his inhuman and dastardly deed. (*N. Wanley.*)

Ver. 9. *Am I my brother’s keeper?* *Exaggerated individualism*:—The feeling of our sonship to God in Christ is a topic which requires to be constantly dwelt upon, because our conventional acceptance of such a relationship is apt to be compatible with a life which has no real apprehension of it. I. Of the dangers which are partly rooted in our animal nature and partly fostered and intensified by the drift of our time, the one likely to press most heavily on us is that of exaggerated individualism. Where this is not tempered by an infusion of the religious spirit, we find it working with a disintegrating power, and in various ways vitiating both our personal and social life. II. Almost every advance of civilization which distinguishes our century has tended to give this principle some new hold on the common life. There is no corner of society, commercial or social, political or artistic, which it does not invade. The volume of its force is intensified as wealth increases and easy circumstances become more common. Our time is pre-eminently a time of materialistic egoism. III. The evolutionist, telling us of the growth of all our sentiments, taking us back to germinal forms and then leading us upward through struggle and survival, makes the ruling motive in every early life essentially egoistic. The question arises, Where and how is this motive to change its character? Is this last utterance to be still but an echo of the primeval question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” IV. But we cannot rest in this conclusion. There is no possibility of rest until we have settled it with ourselves that our higher consciousness gives us touch of the reality of the Divine and everlasting, when it

declares that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. This we believe to be the last word for us on the mystery of our being and destiny. (*J. Percival.*) *Brotherhood*:—The first time the relationship of brotherhood is brought before us in Scripture does not present it in the most harmonious or endearing aspect, and yet the very rivalry and resentment which were engendered by it give an incidental sign of the closeness of the tie which it involves. I. The brother tie is one whose visible and apparent closeness of necessity diminishes under the common conditions of life. II. Although it is a link whose visible association vanishes, it ought never to be an association which fades out of the heart. There is always something wrong when a relationship like this disappears behind maturer attachments. III. Whether from the hearth of home or from the wider range of brotherhood which the commonwealth supplies, the pattern and inspiration of true brotherhood is found in Christ, the Elder Brother of us all. (*A. Mursell.*) *The gospel of selfishness*:—"Am I my brother's keeper?" This is the very gospel of selfishness, and a murderer is its first preacher. The gospel of selfishness is, that a man must take care of his own interests; and out of that universal self-seeking, provided it be wise and restrained, will come the well-being of all. I. This is an age of rights rather than of duties. It is very notable that there is almost nothing about rights in the teaching of Christ. The Lord seeks to train the spirit of His followers into doing and suffering aright. By preaching love and duty, the gospel has been the lawgiver of nations, the friend of man, the champion of his rights. Its teaching has been of God, of duty, and of love; and wherever these ideas have come, freedom and earthly happiness and cultivation have followed silently behind. II. Our age needs to be reminded that in one sense each of us has the keeping of his brethren confided to him, and that love is the law and the fulfilling of the law. The rights of men to our love and consideration, rest upon an act of Divine love. Their chartered right to our reverence is in these terms: That God loved them, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for their sins; and the Saviour set to it His seal, and signed it with His blood. (*Archbishop Thomson.*) *Cain and Abel*:—I. LET EVERY CHRISTIAN FULLY AND WILLINGLY RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT HE IS HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER. There is an old French proverb to the effect that "nobility has its obligations," the neglect to remember and act upon which resulted in the rapine and blood of the French Revolution. Position has its special responsibilities, which can not safely be disregarded, and when one is fully convinced of the fact that he is "his brother's keeper," he will be anxious to meet the liabilities of the situation. And a right-minded person will not merely accept the fact under compulsion. He will be glad that things are as they are. What wide ranges of usefulness are open before him. What an opportunity he has to impress himself for good upon multitudes around him, and even upon times remote. And that empire of gracious influence is the lordliest and most satisfying of all sovereignties. How the world loves to keep alive the names of single men who have made their personality felt in helpful directions. Scores of Union generals deserved well of their country, but Sheridan, riding "from Winchester twenty miles away," and turning disaster into victory by the simple power of his presence, receives the applause of thousands who have forgotten the names of equally loyal leaders. It is a great thing to have an efficient part in determining the destiny of others, to have control of the rudder that may steer them away from dangerous coasts and out into wide seas of prosperity. II. EVERY CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO MAKE THE DISCHARGE OF HIS DUTY AS HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER A MATTER OF CONSTANT THOUGHT AND PRAYER. It is not enough merely to accept our responsibility as an article of creed, and then lay it away on the shelf as a matter proved and concluded. How will this thing, if I do it, or leave it undone, affect others? is a question that ought to be asked and answered all the time. And especially ought we to take counsel of God, not as to how little we can consistently do, but as to how much we can possibly do in this direction. III. IN MATTERS OF DOUBT, A CHRISTIAN SHOULD LEAN TO THE SAFE SIDE. It was a rule of President Edwards never to do anything about whose influence he had a question unless he was equally in doubt as to whether the not doing it might not have as bad, or a worse, effect. That is a hard rule to follow, but it is certainly a safe one. Men will never be turned away from God and religion because we deny ourselves what seem to us legitimate pleasures for fear of the evil influence we may exert. That very sacrifice will evidence a genuineness and depth of conviction which is the strongest of all arguments to the truth and worth of religion. (*E. S. Atwood, D.D.*) *Earthly relationship the medium of spiritual influence*:—I.

THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVE THE DUTY OF SPIRITUAL CARE. Relation, taken in its widest sense, if not the ground of all moral obligation, is certainly intimately connected therewith. No man can be a parent, a son, or a master, without being specially bound to care for his own. Men have to provide for their households in earthly things, and ought to in spiritual, in proportion to the closeness of the relationship is the force of the obligation. II. THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS AFFORD PECULIAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THIS DUTY. God has constituted the varied relationships of life for purpose of promoting the moral good of man. Opportunity and power should be voluntarily used. Families have little thought of the opportunity they have of bringing each other to Jesus. III. THAT ACCORDING AS THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST OR OF SELFISHNESS IS POSSESSED, WILL THIS DUTY BE FULFILLED OR NEGLECTED. Sin, whose essence is selfishness, is a severing principle. But Christ's spirit is a spirit of love. We must come to Christ ourselves to get the incentive to this duty. IV. THAT CONCERNING THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS DUTY AN ACCOUNT WILL BE REQUIRED. And the Lord said unto Cain, &c. Vain will be excuse. God will speak. So will conscience. V. THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS, ACCORDING TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE USED, BECOME AN ETERNAL BLESSING OR BANE. (*Homilist.*) *The word of Cain:*—All men, the poor, the ignorant, the fallen, the heathen, are our brethren. Such is the Christian notion of humanity. We are, therefore, the keepers of our brethren. Man is twofold; he has a body and a soul. Thence for us a twofold mission: we are called to alleviate the miseries of the body, and to save souls. Jesus Christ has been brought into contact with both these forms of suffering. Let us examine His conduct in reference to them. I. THE SUFFERINGS OF THE BODY. Christ has come into contact with them under their two most common forms—sickness and poverty. What He has done for their victims all the gospel tells. We see Him ever surrounded by the poor and the sick. He has a partiality for their society. With what tender solicitude He treats them! And mark the results of this sublime teaching. The faithful Church has always regarded the poor as the representatives of Christ. II. That is what Christianity has done towards alleviating the miseries of the body; but that is only a part of its mission. ABOVE THE BODY THERE IS THE SOUL. The soul is man eternal. If we must sympathize with the temporal interests of our fellow-men, what shall it be when their souls are in question? But if I have understood what is my soul, if I have felt that it constitutes my dignity, my greatness, and my true life, then will I endeavour to awaken that life in others. III. THIS MISSION, HOW DO WE FULFIL IT? What, in the first place, shall we say of those who do not fulfil it at all? There are people who believe they are saved and who have never loved. If selfishness has never prompted you to utter the words of the text, have you never uttered them from discouragement? There are times when the thought of all that ought to be done pursues and paralyzes us. Let us therefore learn of Christ. But I hear your final objection: Yes, say you, we are ready to work, but on condition that our labour shall produce some results. And then follows the sad story of those vain efforts, of those humiliating failures, of those discouragements which every Christian knows and might in his turn recount. To all these objections let me again reply, "Look to Jesus!" Did He succeed on earth? (*E. Bersier, D.D.*) *My brother's keeper:*—I. THAT GOD DOES HOLD MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF HIS FELLOW-MEN. 1. For their temporal welfare. 2. For their moral condition. 3. For their religious well-being. II. THAT THE WELL-DISPOSED ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR RESPONSIBILITY, AND ACT UPON IT. 1. By attending to their bodily condition. Hospitals, almshouses, refuges, &c. 2. By caring for their souls. (*Homilist.*) *The claims of a perishing world upon Christian zeal and liberality founded in human fraternity:*—I. THAT THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE ARE ONE FAMILY, AND STAND IN RELATION OF BROTHERHOOD TO EACH OTHER. To prove this, it is necessary only to remark two things—1. God has made us all of one blood. 2. We have all proceeded from the same pair. II. THAT IT IS OUR DUTY TO CARE FOR OUR BROTHERHOOD. 1. The law of consanguinity requires it. This law dictates affection and sympathy. 2. The law of God requires it. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." 3. Our common Christianity requires it. It enjoins love to God; but we cannot love God without loving our brother also (1 John iv. 20). It enjoins an imitation of the example of Christ; but Christ so loved the world as to die for it. It enjoins obedience to Christ; but He commands His gospel to be preached in all the world. III. THAT THOSE EVILS WHICH BEFALL OUR BROTHERHOOD THROUGH OUR INATTENTION ARE CHARGEABLE UPON US. To illustrate this let me suppose a few

cases. 1. That any of your brethren were compelled to perform a long and dangerous voyage, and that they were total strangers to navigation, and without a single chart or compass; and suppose that you abounded in charts and compasses, and in skilful navigators; and that you refused to grant them either the one or the other; and suppose these should all perish, to whom would their loss be ascribed? To you. Or suppose—2. That they were compelled to journey through a land of pits and precipices, abounding in beasts of prey; and that they were ignorant of the path to be pursued, and knew not where the pits and precipices were, and had nothing by which they could defend themselves from the beasts; and suppose you had it in your power to furnish them with a guide and a sufficient defence, but did not, and that they should in consequence perish; their blood would be upon your head. Or suppose—3. That they were dying of disease, without the knowledge of any remedy; and suppose you were in possession of an infallible one, and that you withheld it; their death would be at your door. In each case the consequences would be as fatal as if you had by some positive act, as that of Cain, destroyed them. IV. THAT WE HAVE BEEN SINFULLY INATTENTIVE TO THE ETERNAL INTERESTS OF OUR BRETHREN GENERALLY, AND TO THOSE OF THE HEATHEN PART OF THEM IN PARTICULAR. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *God's question and man's answer*:—I. GOD'S QUESTION—"Where is Abel thy brother?" Has God a right to expect this knowledge at our hands? He has; and that on many accounts. 1. For instance, there is the constitution of our nature. When man was created, the whole race were involved in one parent, they all sprang from one root; so that there was provision made for forming a family, and for brotherly feeling among them. God, therefore, reasonably expects that we should all feel a kindly interest and concern in one another's welfare. 2. We might argue the same from the covenant in which we were all wrapped up, to stand or fall together; from the law, which requires us to love our neighbour; and, above all, from the gospel. Has the great God loved me, pitied me, been patient with me, and at a great, unspeakable cost saved me; and shall I not be ready to deny myself and make sacrifices, in order to save and bless my fellow-men? II. MAN'S ANSWER—"I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" Here is a twofold plea—the first, ignorance; the second, an insinuation that God has no right to expect such knowledge at his hand. 1. Cain excused himself on the ground of ignorance. This is either true or false. (1) If true, then he is guilty, because he has had abundant opportunity of knowing, and ought to know. And so with yourselves. You know about your neighbour's outward estate; should you not know about his spiritual condition? (2) But Cain's plea, "I know not," was really false. He did know where Abel was. And so you do know that many around you, perhaps closely connected with you, are tempted, ensnared, perishing. 2. Cain denies that God has a right to expect that he should take trouble about Abel. "Am I my brother's keeper? Have I anything to do with him, any charge of him? Can he not take care of himself?" Is not this the feeling in many hearts? You say, Am I that poor wretch's keeper? What have I to do with him? He has no claim upon me. I have other work to do, other interests to attend to. But look again, Is he thy brother; and has he no claim upon thee? (*J. Milne.*) *The examination of Cain*:—The world was yet young, and there were no judicatories to take cognizance of offences; therefore did God, who, though His creatures had rebelled against Him, still hold in His hands the government of the world, come forth from His solitude, and make "inquisition for blood." But why—omniscient as God was, and, by His own after-statement, thoroughly cognizant of the guilt of Cain—why did He address the murderer with the question, "Where is Abel thy brother?" in place of taxing him at once with the atrocious commission? Assuredly there could have been no need to God of additional information: it was in no sense the same as at a human tribunal, where questions are put that facts may be elicited. And in following this course, God acted as He had done on the only former occasion when He had sat, as it were, in judgment on human offenders (see Gen. iii. 9, 11, 13). But the method of question is again employed, so soon as there is again a human offender to be tried. "The Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" It can hardly be doubted that, in all these instances, the gracious design of God was to afford the criminals opportunity of confessing their crimes. You must be aware how, throughout Scripture, there is attached the greatest importance to confession of sin, so that its being forgiven is spoken of as though it depended upon nothing but its being acknowledged. "If we confess our sins," says the evangelist, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And did

the crime, then, of Cain come within the range of forgiveness? Supposing it to have been confessed, might it also have been pardoned? The crime had been fearful; and we must believe that, in any case, the moral Governor of the universe would have so treated the criminal as to mark His sense of the atrociousness of that which he had done. But there is no room for doubt that there was forgiveness even for Cain; even then there was blood which spake better things than that of Abel, the blood of Him who, on the cross, besought pardon for His murderers, and who, in thus showing that His death made expiation even for its authors, showed also that there was no human sin which its virtue would not reach. But if Cain might have been pardoned, had he been but penitent, where was the contrite sinner who need despair of the forgiveness of his sins? Ay, it is thus that the questions under review might have served as a revelation, during the infancy of the world, of the readiness of the Almighty to blot out our iniquities as a cloud, and as a thick cloud our sins. But let us now observe the manner in which Cain acted, whilst God was thus graciously endeavouring to lead him to repentance. If we had not abundant evidence, in our own day—yea, in our own cases—of the hardening power of sin, we might wonder at the effrontery which the murderer displayed. Did he, could he, think that denial would avail anything with God, so that, if he did not confess, he might keep his crime undetected? It may be that it was not in mere insolence that Cain affirmed to God that he knew nothing of Abel; he may have been so blinded by his sin as to lose all discernment of the necessary attributes of God, so that he actually imagined that not to confess would be almost to conceal. Under this point of view, his instance ought to serve as a warning to us of the deadening power of wrong-doing, informing us that there is no such ready way of benumbing the understanding, or paralysing the reason, as the indulging passion, and withstanding conscience. But Cain did more than assert ignorance of what had happened to Abel: he taxed God with the unreasonableness of proposing the question, as though it were a strange thing to suppose that he might concern himself with his brother. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” There were then no brothers in the world but Cain and Abel; and he who could insolently ask, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” when that brother was missing, might have been convicted, by those very words, of a fierceness which was equal to murder, and an audacity which would deny it even to God. But we wish to dwell for a moment on this question of Cain as virtually containing the excuse which numbers in our own day would give, were God to come visibly down, and make inquisition for blood. But we have how to consider to what God appealed in the absence of confession from the murderer himself: He had striven to induce Cain to acknowledge his guilt; but, failing in this, He must seek elsewhere for evidence on which to convict him. And where did He find this evidence? He made the inanimate creation rise up, as it were, against the assassin, and dumb things became eloquent in demanding his condemnation. “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground.” Who has not read, who has not heard, how murderers, though they have succeeded in hiding their guilt from their fellow-men, have seemed to themselves surrounded with witnesses and avengers, so that the sound of their own foot-tread has startled them as if it had been the piercing cry of an accuser, and the rustling of every tree, and the murmur of every brook, has sounded like the utterance of one clamorous for their punishment? It has been as nothing that they have screened themselves from those around them, and are yet moving in society with no suspicion attaching to them of their having done so foul a thing as murder. They have felt as though, in the absence of all accusation from beings of their own race, they had arrayed against themselves the whole visible creation, sun and moon and stars and forests and waters growing vocal that they might publish their crime. And I know not whether there may be anything more in this than the mere goading and imaging of conscience; whether the disquieted assassin, to whose troubled eye the form of his victim is given back from every mirror in the universe, and on whose ear there falls no sound which does not come like the dying man’s shriek, or the thundering call of the avenger of blood—whether he is simply to be considered as haunted and hunted by his own evil thoughts, or whether he be indeed subjected to some mysterious and terrible influences with which his crime has impregnated and endowed the whole material system. I cannot help feeling, when I consider the language of our text, as though there might be more than the mere phantasms of a diseased and distracted mind in those forms of fear, and these sounds of wrath, which agitate so tremendously the yet undiscovered murderer. It may be that, fashioned as man is out of the dust

of the earth, there are such links between him and the material creation that, when the citadel of his life is rudely invaded, the murderous blow is felt throughout the vast realm of nature; so that, though there be no truth in the wild legend that, if the assassin enter the chamber where the victim is stretched, the gaping wounds will bleed afresh, yet may earth, sea, air, have sympathy with the dead, and form themselves into furies to hunt down his destroyer. But it is not exclusively, nor even chiefly, as indicating a possible, though inexplicable, sympathy between material things and the victim of the murderer, that we reckon the statement before us deserving of being carefully pondered. Setting aside this sympathy, there is much that is very memorable in the appeal of God to a voice from Abel's blood, when there were other witnesses which might have been produced. Had not the soul of Abel entered the separate state? was not his spirit with God? and might not the immortal principle, violently detached as it had been from the body, have cried for vengeance on the murderer? We read in the Book of Revelation of "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." And of those souls we are told that "they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" It may, therefore, be that the souls of the dead cry for judgment upon those who have compassed their death: why, then, might not the soul of Abel, rather than his blood, have been adduced by God? Even had it been silent, surely its very presence in the invisible world gave a more impressive testimony than the stream which had crimsoned the ground. In answer to this, we are to consider, in the first place, that it did not please God to vouchsafe any clear revelation of the invisible state, during the earlier ages of the world. That Abel had fallen by the hand of his brother was the most terrible of all possible proofs that the original transgression had corrupted human nature to the core. But it would have done much—not indeed to counterbalance this proof, but to soften the anguish which it could not fail to produce—had there been any intimation that the death of the body was not the death of the man, and that Cain had but removed Abel from a scene of trouble to one of deep repose. This, however, was denied them: they must struggle on through darkness, sustained only by a dim conjecture of life and immortality. Indeed, indeed, I know not whether there be anything more affecting in the history of our first parents. Oh, bless God, ye who have had to sorrow over dead children, that ye live when life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. Yours has not been the deep and desolate bitterness of those on whom fell no shinings from futurity. Unto you have come sweet whisperings from the invisible world, whisperings as of the one whom you loved, telling you of a better land, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." But alas for Adam and Eve! theirs was grief, stern, dark, unmingled. But, indeed, there are better things to be said on the fact that it was Abel's blood, and not his soul, which found a voice to demand vengeance on the murderer. We know not how Abel, the first martyr, died. Oh, I cannot but think that in God's reference to the blood of Abel as the only accuser there was a designed and beautiful lesson as to the forgiveness of injuries. You know that, in the gospel, our obtaining forgiveness from God is made conditional on our forgiving those by whom we may be wronged. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And was not the same truth taught, by example, if not by word, from the earliest days, seeing that, when God would bring an accusing voice against Cain, He could only find it in the dumb earth reeking with blood, though the soul of Abel was before Him, and might have been thought ready to give witness with an exceeding great and bitter cry? Abel forgave his murderer, otherwise could he not have been forgiven of God; and we learn that he forgave his murderer from the fact that it was only his blood which cried aloud for vengeance. Thus is there something very instructive in the absence of any voice but the voice from the ground. There is also matter for deep thought in the fact that it was blood which sent up so penetrating a cry. It was like telling the young world of the power which there would be in blood to gain audience of the Most High. What was there in blood that it could give, as it were, life to inanimate things, causing them to become vocal, so that the very Godhead Himself was moved by the sound? The utterance, we think, did but predict that when one, to whom Abel had had respect in presenting in sacrifice the firstlings of his flock, should fall, as Abel fell, beneath the malice of the wicked, there would go up from the shed blood a voice that would be hearkened to in the heavenly courts,

and prevail to the obtaining whatsoever it should ask. Blessed be God that this blood does not plead for vengeance alone. It does plead for vengeance on the obdurate, who, like Cain, resist the invitation of God; but it pleads also for pardon of the murderers, so that it can expiate the crime which it proves and attests. (*H. Melvill, B.D.*) *Am I my brother's keeper?*—The cool impudence of Cain is an indication of the state of heart which led up to his murdering his brother; and it was also a part of the result of his having committed that terrible crime. He would not have proceeded to the cruel deed of bloodshed if he had not first cast off the fear of God and been ready to defy his Maker. Having committed murder, the hardening influence of sin upon Cain's mind must have been intense, and so at last he was able to speak out to God's face what he felt within his heart, and to say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" This goes a long way to explain what has puzzled some persons, namely, the wonderful calmness with which great criminals will appear in the dock. I remember to have heard it said of one who had undoubtedly committed a very foul murder, that he looked like an innocent man. He stood up before his accusers as calmly and quietly, they said, as an innocent man could do. I remember feeling at the time that an innocent man would probably not have been calm. The distress of mind occasioned to an innocent man by being under such a charge would have prevented his having the coolness which was displayed by the guilty individual. Instead of its being any evidence of innocence that a man wears a brazen front when charged with a great crime, it should by wise men be considered to be evidence against him. Save us, O God, from having our hearts hammered to the hardness of steel by sin; and daily keep us by Thy grace sensible and tender before Thee, trembling at Thy word. The very same thing, no doubt, lies at the bottom of objections to Bible truths. There are some who do not go to Scripture to take out of it what is there, but seeing what is clearly revealed, they then begin to question and judge and come to conclusions according to their notions of what ought to have been there. Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? If He says it, it is so. Believe it. Now, let us look quietly at what Cain said. He said to the Lord, "Am I my brother's keeper?" May the Holy Spirit guide us in considering this question. I. First it is to be noted that **MAN IS NOT HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER IN SOME SENSES.** There is some little weight in what Cain says. 1. For instance, first, every man must bear his own responsibility for his own acts before Almighty God. It is not possible for a man to shift from his own shoulders to those of another his obligations to the Most High. 2. And again, no one can positively secure the salvation of another, nay, he cannot even have a hope of the salvation of his friend, so long as that other remains unbelieving. 3. And here let me say, in the next place, that those do very wrongly who enter into any vows or promises for others in this matter, when they are quite powerless. 4. It is proper here to say that the most earnest minister of Christ must not so push the idea of his own personal responsibility to such an extreme as to make himself unfit for his work through a morbid view of his position. If he has faithfully preached the gospel, and his message is rejected, let him persevere in hope, and not condemn himself. II. So now, secondly, IN A HIGH DEGREE WE ARE, EACH ONE OF US, OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER. We ought to regard ourselves in that light, and it is a Cainish spirit which prompts us to think otherwise, and to wrap ourselves up in hardheartedness and say, "It is no concern of mine how others fare. Am I my brother's keeper?" Far from that spirit let us be. 1. For, first, common feelings of humanity should lead every Christian man to feel an interest in the soul of every unsaved man. 2. A second argument is drawn from the fact that we have all of us, especially those of us who are Christians, the power to do good to others. We have not all the same ability, for we have not all the same gifts, or the same position, but as the little maid that waited on Naaman's wife had opportunity to tell of the prophet who could heal her master, so there is not a young Christian here but what has some power to do good to others. Converted children can list the name of Jesus to their sires and bless them. We have all some capacity for doing good. Now, take it as an axiom that power to do good involves the duty of doing good. 3. Another argument is very plainly drawn from our Lord's version of the moral law. What is the second and great commandment according to Him? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." 4. Yet again, without looking to other men's souls, we cannot keep the first of the two great commands in which our Lord has summarized the moral law. 5. Once more. To the Christian man, perhaps, the most forcible reason will be that the whole example of Jesus Christ, whom we call Master and Lord, lies in

the direction of our being the keeper of our brother; for what was Jesus' life but entire unselfishness? What was said of Him at His death but that "He saved others: Himself He could not save"? 6. Let the thought next rise in our minds that we are certainly ordained to the office of brother-keeper, because we shall be called to account about it. Cain was called to account. "Where is Abel thy brother?" (1) Take first those who are united to us by the ties of flesh, who come under the term "brethren," because they are born of the same parents, or are near of kin. Where is John? Where is Thomas? Where is Henry thy brother? Unsaved? Without God? What have you ever done for him? How much have you prayed for him? How often have you spoken to him seriously about his state? What means have you used for his instruction, persuasion, conviction? See to this, that ye begin at once earnestly seeking the salvation of relatives. (2) But, beloved, we must never end there, because brotherhood extends to all ranks, races, and conditions; and according to each man's ability he will be held responsible about the souls of others whom he never saw. Where is Abel thy brother? Down in a back street in London. He is half-drunk already. Have you done anything, friend, towards the reclaiming of the drunkard? Where is your sister?—your sister who frequents the midnight streets? You shrink back and say, "She is no sister of mine." Ay, but God may require her blood at your hands, if you thus leave her to perish. Have you ever done anything towards reclaiming her? City merchant, where are the poor men that earned your wealth? (3) One thing more upon this calling to account. The more needy, the more destitute people are, the greater is their claim upon us; for according to the account-book—need I turn to the chapter? I think you recollect it—they are the persons for whom we shall have mainly to give an account: "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not; naked, and ye clothed Me not." 7. Now, I close this second head about our really being our brother's keeper by saying this—that there are some of us who are our brother's keeper voluntarily, but yet most solemnly, by the office that we hold. We are ministers. O brother ministers, we are our brother's keepers. III. IT WILL BE HIGH PRESUMPTION ON OUR PART IF, FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD, WE SHIRK THE DUTY OF BEING OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER. 1. I will set it very briefly in a strong light. It will be denying the right of God to make a law, and to call upon us to obey it, if we refuse to do as we are bidden. 2. Notice, next, that you will be denying all claim on your part to the Divine mercy; because if you will not render mercy to others, and if you deny altogether your responsibility to others, you put yourself into the position of saying, "I want nothing from another"—consequently, nothing from God. Such mercy as you show, such mercy shall you have. 3. Indeed, there is this about it too—that your act is something like throwing the blame of your own sin upon God if you leave men to perish. When Cain said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" he meant, probably, "You are the preserver of men. Why did You not preserve Abel? I am not his keeper." Some throw on the sovereignty of God the weight which lies on their own indolence. 4. And again, there is to my mind an utter ignoring of the whole plan of salvation in that man who says, "I am not going to have any responsibility about others," because the whole plan of salvation is based on substitution, on the care of another for us, on the sacrifice of another for us; and the whole spirit of it is self-sacrifice and love to others. If you say, "I will not love"—well, the whole system goes together, and you renounce it all. If you will not love, you cannot have love's benediction. 5. Last of all, it may turn out—it may turn out—that if we are not our brother's keeper, we may be our brother's murderer. Have any of us been so already? (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Responsibility for welfare of others*:—I. That an enlightened regard to the spiritual and eternal interests of others is recognized as a duty by nature and revelation, none of you, I trust, is disposed to question. You have only to look into the law, written by the finger of God, to know that six out of the ten requirements are based upon this very principle. Nor must this interest in the well-being of others be confined to the narrow circle of relatives and friends. How different is the world—contracted, selfish, and reckless of the misery of others, inasmuch as it does not regard the sufferings it may produce, provided its own imagined interests are secured! II. That all are furnished with means and opportunities less or more available for the discharge of this duty. This duty, as enjoined on human beings, presupposes many evils to be removed, many wants to be supplied, and much suffering to be mitigated and relieved. And where is the individual to whom God has not, in some degree,

imparted the means of promoting this great end? (*J. MacGilchrist.*) *Man his brother's keeper*.—I. One of the most terrible effects of sin on humanity is the obliteration of the sense of personal responsibility. II. The tendencies of infidel science in our day are strongly in the line of this perverse and morally stultifying effect of depravity. III. The family institution was ordained as the first and fundamental condition of society, in order to imbed the idea of responsibility in the very foundation and structure of society. IV. The strongest tendencies of the times are antagonistic to the sense of personal responsibility. V. Jesus came into the world to restore and enthroned again in the human mind and conscience the great doctrine of strict individual accountability to God on high. (*J. M. Sherwood, D.D.*) *Man, the keeper of man*.—The person who first asked this question was a man whose heart was, at the time, filled with evil passions, and his hands stained with a brother's blood. It was Cain. Yes, thou guilty Cain, thou art thy brother's keeper. He was given thee to love. He was given thee that thou mightest do him good. 1. "Am I my brother's keeper?" each one should say to himself. It is answered, "Yes, you are." But how? Take the following as some of the instances in which your brother has a claim upon your kindly offices. You are your brother's keeper, inasmuch as you are bound by ties, both of humanity and religion, to care for him, and to do him all the good you can. The humblest and the poorest can, in some way or other, help forward every agency for good, in the prosperity of which they take a hearty interest. Money may be given—if ever such a trifle, it betokens the mind of the giver. Trouble may be given—wherever pains are bestowed with a good intent, God will return some fruit. And the most destitute can always give prayer—when this comes from a fervent heart, it does great things. In your private sphere you can do much for your brother's good. You can show him little acts of kindness: you can relieve some of his smaller wants: you can help him in one or more of those numberless ways which readily suggest themselves to a benevolent disposition. You are your brother's keeper in the exercise of your influence. Every man has influence. The good man has influence, and the bad man has influence. The rich man has influence, and the poor man has influence. The aged person has influence, and the veriest child has influence. 2. But we will pass on to notice, secondly, the good results which may reasonably be expected to follow a more general and more conscientious observance of this Christian duty. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." A little moral, godly principle constantly manifested before the eyes of those with whom you mix, could not fail of diffusing itself, even though it should be your manner of life rather than your words that indicated your possession of it. Your brother would be made to feel that you are his keeper, although he might not openly acknowledge you to be so. You would be the best of preachers, the best of patriots, the best of philanthropists; and many whom your silent influence had won would be sure, at the judgment-day, to rise up with you and confess their obligation. (*F. W. Naylor, B.A.*) *Social duties*.—Such was the answer of the first Deist, the first infidel, and the first murderer, to God's inquiry, "Where is thy brother?" It was not only a lie (for the father of Cain was a liar from the beginning), but it was a daring jest upon his brother's employment. "Am I his shepherd? Am I answerable for his life? Am I to take care of him as he does of his sheep?" Such is infidelity. It is sin that makes the infidel. He does not believe, not because he cannot, but because he will not. He may talk of morality, and sport himself in his own deceiving, when, like Cain, he says he can worship God as well with the flowers of the field and the fruits of the earth as through the blood of atonement; but when we cut into the core of his heart, we shall find the worm of all rottenness still there, the love of self—we shall find that the only principle of true morality is wanting, the love of God and our brother—we shall find the very element of murder there, the dislike of God and those who love and are like Him. And is not the truth he denied and the principle he rejected this: that man is answerable for his brother's life and his brother's soul, as far as his positive acts can injure, or his neglect destroy? I will not stay to prove this. Cain's rejection of it is a proof. Parents, how nearly does this principle affect you in your important relation!—the very relation in which God Himself is pleased to place Himself with regard to His own obedient people, His redeemed ones from earth; for while the angels are called "the sons of God," "the Father hath bestowed on us" this wonderful love, "that we should be called the sons of God" also; and His Spirit—the Spirit of His Son—teaches us to cry, "Abba, Father." God has made you parents. Beings who can never die are entrusted to your care. Your children's character is greatly in your

hands. Their eternal destiny hangs on your discharge of duty. Watch for their souls as those who must give account. Masters and mistresses, the principle of which we have spoken bears powerfully on your relation. (*W. W. Champney.*)

Five questions :—1. The first question is this: Is there no one who stands related to you as a brother?—(1) By kindred. (2) By religion. (3) By civil community. (4) By the common claims of nature. "Have we not all," says Malachi, "one father," Adam? and have we not all one mother, Eve? Have we not all the same animal wants? Are we not all exposed to the same infirmities and diseases? Are we not all capable of the same improvements? Are we not all to turn to the same dust? Are we not all heirs of the same immortality? Are we not all redeemed by the same blood of the Lamb? Nothing, therefore, that is human should ever be deemed or felt alien with regard to you. 2. The second question: If you were asked, Where is thy brother? what would truth compel you now to answer? We know what truth would have constrained Cain to answer—"Oh! I hated him, I envied him; I drew him into a field, and I murdered him; and he lies there dead." What would you say, if you spoke truth, in answer to this question, Where is thy brother? Perhaps you would be constrained to say, "Living a few doors off from the subject of want and indigence and hunger, and I having all this world's goods, and more than heart could wish, I never send him any supplies." Or perhaps you would say, "I have calumniated, I have run down his religion; I have called him a hypocrite, or an enthusiast, or a mercenary." Or perhaps you would say, "Oh! I have poisoned his mind with error"; or, "I have seduced him by my wicked example." Or perhaps you would say, "He hath sinned, and instead of reproving him, I have 'suffered sin upon him'"; "He has been a stranger to the advantages of religion, while I was well acquainted with it; and I have never gone to him and said, 'Oh! taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him'"; "Oh! he is ignorant, and I have not been trying to enlighten him." Where is he? Why, living in such and such a dark village, where they are perishing for lack of knowledge; or living in the sister island, enslaved by a vile superstition. 3. The third question: Will not your conduct towards your fellow-creatures be inquired into as well as Cain's? Can you imagine that you are to live as you please even with regard to your fellow creatures? Is not God your Governor as well as your Maker? Are you not God's subjects as well as God's creatures? 4. The fourth question: If you are guilty, will not your guilt be followed by punishment? Why should God deal with Cain, and suffer you to escape? 5. The last question we have to ask is, If you are guilty and exposed to all this, what should be your concern now? Should it be to seek to deny or to palliate your transgressions? Should you not rather confess your sin, and exclaim with Joseph's brethren, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother"? (*W. Jay.*)

Cain's answer :—1. The falsehood of it—"I know not." We feel astonished that a man can dare to lie in the presence of his Maker; yet how many lies are uttered before Him by formalists and hypocrites! 2. The insolence of it—"Am I my brother's keeper?" This man had no fear of God before his eyes; and where this is wanting, regard to man will be wanting also. Even natural affection will be swallowed up in selfishness. (*A. Fuller.*)

Human brotherhood :—Man is ever a questioner. Man even questions God. But there are different kinds of questioners, as there are of questions. There are docile questioners, there are defiant questioners. "Am I my brother's keeper?" 1. Human sin says mournfully, "Yes." See how this was confirmed by Cain's vile action. If you have a right (assumed) to sin against a man, you have a right to love him. If he comes into your life and sphere, all reasonable law claims for him blessing rather than blows. 2. Human sorrow says pathetically, "Yes." We have a common heritage of sorrow. 3. Human joy says hopefully, "Yes!" We cannot tell how much of the joy of life depends upon others. 4. Human success says triumphantly, "Yes!" No such thing as independence. We only succeed so far as our fellow-man will let us succeed. 5. Human philanthropy says benevolently, "Yes." Look at the development of philanthropy! 6. Human conscience says righteously, "Yes!" Conscience is the voice of God within us. But no "quiet conscience" for him who denies that he is his "brother's keeper." (*J. E. Smallow.*)

Personal relations :—Am I my brother's keeper? The success or failure of this world turns on the question, Is the law of self or the law of love adopted? The same is true of individuals. Is it mutual help of all, or every man for himself against all? Is it Ishmael, hand against every man, or Jesus, bearing others' burdens, that gives the law of being? Man is constitutionally made to work for and with others. He is

full of sympathy, finds in union strength; hence families, railroads, civilization. A thousand minister to the comfort of every breakfast-table. Mutual help is the law of angelic nature—they are ministering spirits. Christ carries our sickness and our sins. God is love, and the whole outgoing of love is service. Heaven, the greatest product of the universe, is the outcome of the united effort of men, angels, and God. Cain tries the other way; he destroys what differs from him, that his littleness need not appear, instead of joining the great, and becoming a part of it. That act not only puts away the ideal, destroys the possibility of its help, but also dwarfs him still more. Cain slays himself more than Abel. Sin ravages him more than he can bear. An aristocrat requires a thousand serfs to support him, but slavery harms the master more than the slaves. The latter is simply arrested in his development, the former is developed awry. He cannot see that all art, architecture, agriculture, and literature perishes. So Cain sees not sin, thinks nothing of separation, asks not for pardon, but says, I am punished more than I can bear. He goes from God; all his own nobility is murdered, all his possibility of aspiration after God lies slain. Of the two, the one to be envied is Abel. It is better to have our bodies slain by others, than to slay our own souls. In every relation of life, to servants, workmen, neighbours, households, our nation, all nations, envy must be banished, lest we dwarf ourselves; murder in every degree must be spurned, lest we murder ourselves; love and mutual help must be exercised; for thereby we greatness ourselves. (*H. W. Warren, D.D.*) *Care for the fallen*:—A writer in one of the English reviews relates that during a conversation with George Eliot, not long before her death, a vase toppled over on the mantelpiece. The great writer quickly and unconsciously put out her hand to stop its fall. "I hope," said she, replacing it, "that the time will come when we shall instinctively hold up the man or woman who begins to fall as naturally and unconsciously as we arrest a falling piece of furniture or an ornament."

Ver. 10. The voice of thy brother's blood crieth.—*The first prayer on record*:—God taught Cain that all facts which take place here, are recorded too; aye, that they need no kind of attendant watcher, who supervising their proceedings shall note them in a book (though for ought we know to the contrary, this is true as well); but that they each have that peculiar quality attached by God to themselves that not a deed of any kind can happen but it becomes a witness in itself and bears record of its own occurrence. The general principles of revelation intimate this idea, and the promise of God that "He will bring every work and every secret thing into judgment, whether good or bad," confirms it. And such, I conceive, was the truth conveyed to this fratricide when he heard the appalling words, "Thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." Perhaps he had carefully concealed all beneath the sod, and with the greatest attention removed every visible trace to the superficial examiner of any record of his foul proceeding, but he now learnt that things which he thought dumb could raise their voice in the ear of Omnipotence, and that the blood of a brother which he had shed, could rise vocal in the words of prayer. Yes, depend upon it, that each act of your moral life leaves enough of a trace behind it, to give a proof that it has been performed. Nature, ever ready as the hand-maid of religion, may instruct us here—let science not precede, but follow after faith: let it be used as I feel it ought to be; not to prove Scripture doctrines, but to illustrate and confirm them, and you will then find what I have so often asserted, that the best commentary on the Word of God will be found in His works! I have said then that, in the moral world, each moral deed leaves enough of evidence behind it in its effects, to bear witness of the fact hereafter; that each act of man's history leaves a record behind it in its effects upon his soul who does it, upon other individuals and upon society, by which it may be traced out, and traced up to its originator. Now look to nature. The astronomer will demonstrate to you, not by a worn pathway in the heavens, but yet with as much certainty as though this existed, the exact line in which divers planets have moved through many thousands of years. The geologist digs into the crust of the earth, and proves beyond all question the former existence of animals long since extinct, and incapable of living in the earth in its present condition, and can show also what food, and what state of earth and atmosphere they enjoyed. Nay, he will descend with you into the quarry, and there point out, to your amazement, proofs as clear as you can desire them, which shall satisfy you of the showers of rain which in past ages watered the fair garden of the earth with refreshing distillation. And when accompanying you into the coal shaft, he shall almost

bewilder you with yet more mysterious revelations, as he shall point out the mighty forest of gigantic plants, once waving in grandeur and elegance upon the boundless prairie, and which have engraved their beauteous forms upon the solid carbonaceous block; you will then acknowledge (but perhaps only because you cannot longer deny it), that such a principle exists at least in nature that events record themselves. Or, once more, and to speak of things known to most of you. We are told that the Red Indian traces, without doubt or difficulty, the devious path by which the puny game he is pursuing has sought to escape him, and that accustomed to the rapid investigation of the tiniest foot-print, he can do so with an ease and accuracy which astounds the traveller. Or, see again the power of chemical analysis! Blend together as many gases or as many fluids as you choose, and lo, obedient to the laws of Him who first created them, they can be severed each again into their respective characteristics, and each component particle shall stand forth in its own pristine original condition. Here assuredly, brethren, we have enough to illustrate, and (I think) to confirm our position. Shall the astronomer tell me the path in which yon planet walked in past centuries, and think you then that it is a difficult task for Him who made that planet to discover the actions of His creatures there? Shall the geologist unfold, from the dark recesses of the deep, the deeds and proceedings of former ages and of former existences, and even show the mark of the falling rain drop; and shall I hope to conceal my sins, either outwardly in the earth or inwardly in my heart, when God shall call them forth? Shall the habit of rapidly tracing out the smallest footstep so strengthen the unlettered Indian that he does so free from trouble, and shall we deem it inconceivable that the moral footprints of human life are trackless through any one step of our probationary way? Shall the hunter follow with unerring precision until he overtakes the victim whom he has resolved to make his prey; and can I look to escape the avenger of God's holiness by avoiding him, when, all the while, every step I take in my moral course leaves a record (whether I will it or no), plain and unerring, of the course of life I am leading? Shall the chemical investigator untangle the compounds which ingenuity has mixed, and, setting all free again, distinctly point out the proportions which each component part had in the whole conglomerate, and shall I, by a mingling of bad actions with outwardly good ones, or by an amalgamation of my sins with those of other men, hope thus to prove myself free from all because I may be innocent of some? Ah, no! All nature too shuts me up in difficulty! Each loop-hole is barred up and there is no escape! Sinner, sinner, I must confess myself; and, oh, whither shall I flee? The heights of heaven, the depths of hell, the mysteries and mazes of darkness, the rapidity of flight, each, all, fail me together! Fool, madman that I was, shall the sceptic cry out when (too late) he discovers his error presently: for he must learn then that every action of his life has recorded itself even when it was performed; a truth, a principle which nature confirms and illustrates in every particular, and which God taught him when He said to Cain long ago, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." (*G. Venables, S.C.L.*) *Sin coming back upon the sinner*:—Two brothers started to go West to seek their fortune. One had money, the other had not. When they got to the frontier, the one without money murdered the other, and taking his money fled to California. Doctors took the head of the murdered man and preserved it in alcohol. No proof of the murder could be found. No one was present when the deed was done. The brother was accused, but declared his innocence. No one was there but he and God. He was brought before jury and judge and declared his innocence. The dead face of his brother was brought into court. He gazed on it, he fainted and fell to the floor, and confessed his sin. There is a time when all these unconfessed sins will come in before us, tramp, tramp, tramp, till they all come back. (*Dr. Talmage.*) *Sin its own detective*:—One night in Edinburgh a person awoke to find that his house had been plundered. The alarm was raised, nor was it long ere the officers of justice found a clue. The thief, wounding his hand as he escaped by the window, had left a red witness behind him. The watchman flashed his lantern upon the spot. Drop by drop the blood stained the pavement. They tracked it on and on and ever on, till their silent guide conducted them along an open passage and up a flight of steps, stopping at the door of a house. They broke in and there they found the bleeding hand, the booty, and the pale criminal. And so unless they be forgiven, washed away in the blood of Jesus, shall your sins find you out. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*) *The punishment of sin*:—We might illustrate the evil of sin by the following comparison: "Suppose I were going along a street and

were to dash my hand through a large pane of glass, what harm would I receive?" "You would be punished for breaking the glass." "Would that be all the harm I should receive?" "Your hand would be cut by the glass." Yes; and so it is with sin. If you break God's laws, you shall be punished for breaking them; and your soul is hurt by the very act of breaking them. (*J. Inglis.*) *Everlasting punishment*:—If you cut a gash in a man's head you may heal it; but you can never rub out, nor wash out, nor cut out, the scar. It may be a witness against you in his corpse: still, it may be covered by the coffin, or hidden in the grave; but then it is not till decomposition shall take place that it shall entirely disappear. But if you smite a soul, the scar remains: no coffin or grave shall hide it; no revolution, not even the upturning of the physical universe, shall obliterate it; no fire, not even the eternal furnaces of hell, shall burn it out. (*Dr. Thomson.*) *Blood will out!*—How strangely deeds of blood are disclosed! Two French merchants, relates Clarke, were travelling to a fair, and, while passing through a wood, one of them murdered the other, and robbed him of his money. After burying him to prevent discovery, he proceeded on his journey; but the murdered man's dog remained behind. His howling attracted passers-by, who were led to search the spot. The fair being ended, they watched the return of the merchants; and the murderer no sooner made his appearance than the dog sprang furiously upon him. "Be sure your sin will find you out." How terribly was this exemplified in the case of Eugene Aram, whose very conscience at last unfolded the tale:—

"He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain."

The blood of Abel and the blood of Jesus:—I. In the first place, JESUS' BLOOD SPEAKS BETTER THINGS IN GENERAL. What did the blood of Abel say? 1. Was it not the blood of testimony? When Abel fell to the ground beneath his brother's club, he bore witness to spiritual religion. Our Lord Jesus Christ, being also a testifier and witness for the faith of God, spake better things than Abel because He had more to speak, and spake from more intimate acquaintance with God. He was a fuller witness of Divine truth than Abel could be, for He brought life and immortality to light, and told His people clearly of the Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ had been in the bosom of the Father, and knew the Divine secret; this secret He revealed to the sons of men in His ministry, and then He sealed it by His blood. 2. Moreover, the blood of Abel spake good things in that it was the proof of faithfulness. His blood as it fell to the ground spake this good thing;—it said, "Great God, Abel is faithful to Thee." But the blood of Jesus Christ testifies to yet greater faithfulness still, for it was the sequel of a spotlessly perfect life, which no act of sin had ever defiled; whereas Abel's death furnished, it is true, a life of faith, but not a life of perfection. 3. Moreover, we must never forget that all that Abel's blood could say as it fell to the ground, was but the shadow of that more glorious substance of which Jesus' death assures us. 4. It is well to add that our Lord's person was infinitely more worthy and glorious than that of Abel, and consequently His death must yield to us a more golden-mouthed discourse than the death of a mere man like Abel. II. Now we will enter the very heart of our text, while we remember that THE BLOOD OF JESUS SPEAKS BETTER THINGS TO GOD than the blood of Abel did. Now, what did Abel's blood say to God? It said just this, "O God, one of Thine own creatures, the product of Thy matchless skill, has been dashed in pieces, and barbarously destroyed." Yet the blood of Abel said more than this; it said, "O God, the blood shed here was shed for Thee." It seemed to say, "If it were not for love of Thee, this blood had not been shed!" Do you hear, what a cry the blood of Abel must have had, and with what power it arose to heaven? But we are not left to conjecture as to the power of that cry, for we are told that God heard, and when He heard it He came to reckoning with Cain, and He said, "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to Me from the ground." Can you stand at Calvary now and view the flowing of the Saviour's blood from hands, and feet, and side? What are your own reflections as to what that blood says to God? Think now at the cross-foot. That blood crieth with a loud voice to God, and what doth it say? Does it not say this? "O God, this time it is not merely a creature which bleeds, but, though the body that hangs upon the cross is the creature of Thy Holy Spirit, it is Thine own Son who now pours out His soul unto death. O God, it is Thine only-begotten One, dear to Thyself, essentially

one with Thee, one in whom Thou art well pleased, whose obedience is perfect, whose love to Thee has been unwavering—it is He who dies. O God, wilt Thou despise the cries and the tears, the groans, the moans, the blood of Thine own Son? Most tender Father, in whose bosom Jesus lay from before the foundations of the earth, He dies, and wilt Thou not regard Him? Shall His blood fall to the ground in vain?" Then, moreover, the voice would plead, "It is not only Thy Son, but Thy perfectly innocent Son, in whom was no necessity for dying, because He had no original sin which would have brought corruption on Him, who had moreover no actual sin, who throughout life had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds. O God, it is Thine only-begotten, who, without a fault, is led as a lamb to the slaughter, and stands like a sheep before her shearers. Canst Thou see it, Thou God of all, canst Thou see the infinitely holy and just Son of Thy heart led here to die—canst Thou see it, and not feel the force of the blood as it cries to Thee?" Yet over and above this the blood must have pleaded thus with God:—"O God, the blood which is now being shed, thus honourable and glorious in itself, is being poured out with a motive which is Divinely gracious. He who dies on this cross dies for His enemies, groans for those who make Him groan, suffers for those who thrust the dart into His soul, and then mock at the agony which they themselves have caused. O God, it is a chain for God in heaven which binds the victim to the horns of the altar, a chain of everlasting love, of illimitable goodness." Now, dear friends, you and I could not see a man suffer out of pure benevolence without being moved by his sufferings, and shall God be unmoved? the perfectly holy and gracious God, shall He be indifferent where you and I are stirred to deep emotion? Abel's blood had mighty prevalence to curse, but Jesus' blood has prevalence to bless the sons of men. III. FURTHERMORE, JESUS' BLOOD SPEAKS BETTER THINGS TO US IN OUR OWN HEARTS than the blood of Abel. Oh, it must have been a remembrance clinging like a viper around the murderer wherever he might be! He might well build a city, as we are told he did, in order to quench these fiery remembrances. Then would the thought come upon him, "You slew him though he was your brother." The innocence of his victim, if Cain had any conscience, must have increased his uneasiness, for he would recollect how inoffensively he had kept those sheep of his, and had been like one among them, so lambl-like, that shepherd man himself, a true sheep of God's pasture. "Yet," would Cain say, "I slew him, because I hated God, the God before whose bar I am soon to stand, the God who set this mark on me." Can you picture the man who had thus to be daily schooled and upbraided by a brother's blood? It needs a poet's mind to teach him. Think how you would feel if you had killed your own brother, how the guilt would hang over you like a black cloud, and drop horror into your very soul. Now, brethren, there is more than equal force in the cry of the blood of Jesus, only it acts differently, and it speaketh better things. Let it be remembered, however, that it speaks those better things with the same force. Comforts arise from the blood of Jesus as powerful as the horrors which arose from the blood of Abel. Just in proportion as thought of murder would make Cain wretched, in the same proportion ought faith to make you happy as you think upon Jesus Christ slain; for the blood of Christ, as I said at the beginning of the sermon, cannot have a less powerful voice; it must have a more powerful voice than that of Abel, and it cries therefore more powerfully for you than the blood of Abel cried against his brother Cain. IV. Two or three words to close with. JESUS' BLOOD, EVEN IN MY TEXT, SPEAKS BETTER THINGS THAN THAT OF ABEL. It speaks the same things, but in a better sense. Did you notice the first text? God said unto Cain, "What hast thou done?" Now, that is what Christ's blood says to you: "What hast thou done?" My dear hearer, dost thou not know that thy sins slew the Saviour? If we have been playing with sin, and fancied it to be a very little thing, a trifle to play with and laugh at, let us correct the mistake. Our Saviour hangs on the cross, and was nailed there by those sins of ours; shall we think little of them? What I want mainly to indicate is this. If you notice in the second text, this blood is called "the blood of sprinkling." Whether Abel's blood sprinkled Cain or not I cannot say, but, if it did, it must have added to his horror to have had the blood actually upon him. But this adds to the joy in our case, for the blood of Jesus is of little value to us until it is sprinkled upon us. Faith dips the hyssop in the atoning blood and sprinkles it upon the soul, and the soul is clean. There is another matter in the text with which I conclude. The apostle says, "We are come to the blood of sprinkling." He mentions that among other things to which we are come. Now, from the blood of Abel every reasonable man would flee away. He that has

murdered his fellow desires to put a wide distance between himself and the accusing corpse. But we come to the blood of Jesus. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Am I clear of his blood?*—I. First, we are to MAKE A SEARCHING INQUIRY FOR THE CRIMINALS. There are many persons whose brother's blood cries to God from the ground. 1. There is the seducer; he spake with honeyed words, and talked of love, but the poison of asps was under his tongue, for lust was in his heart. 2. Then there are men who educate youth in sin, Satan's captains and marshals; strong men with corrupt hearts, who are never better pleased than when they see the buds of evil swelling and ripening into crime. Beware, ye who hunt for the precious life! 3. Ay, and I know some base men who, if they see young converts, will take a pride in putting stumbling-blocks in their way. They no sooner discover that there is some little working of conscience, than they laugh, they sneer, they point the finger. 4. Then there is the infidel, the man who is not content to keep his sin in his own breast, but must needs publish his infamy; he ascends the platform and blasphemes the Almighty to his face; defies the Eternal; takes Scripture to make it the subject of unhalloved jest; and makes religion a theme for comedy. 5. And what shall I say of the unfaithful preacher—the slumbering watchman of souls; the man who swore at God's altar that he was called of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word of God; the man upon whose lips men's ears waited with attention while he stood like a priest at God's altar to teach Israel God's law; the man who performed his duties half-asleep, in a dull and careless manner, until men slept too and thought religion but a dream? What shall I say of the minister of unholy life, whose corrupt practice out of the pulpit has made the most telling things in the pulpit to be of no avail, has blunted the edge of the sword of the Spirit, and turned the back of God's army in the day of battle? 6. To come yet closer home to this present audience. How much of the blood of man will lie at the door of careless professors. You that make a profession of being Christians and yet live in sin, you are the murderers of souls by thousands. II. But to pass on; I was, in the second place, to HOLD UP THIS CRIME TO EXECRATION, the chief point being whose blood it is; it is the blood of our brethren. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." 1. Perhaps, young man, it is your natural brother's blood that cries against you. 2. It may be, however, it is the blood of your father or mother. Some of you young people have come to London, and God has met with you in this house of prayer; you still have ungodly parents in the country, have you quite forgotten them? What if your grey-headed sire should die! 3. But what shall I say to those who are not only careless of parents, but are neglecting their own children? Mother, what if the voice of your child's blood should cry to God against you! III. We are in the third place to EXPECT THE JUDGMENT. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." It does not cry to a deaf ear, but to the ear of One who hears and feels the cry, and will certainly make bare His arm to smite the offender and to avenge the wrong. IV. I hope that these terrible things have prepared our minds to hear the better the VOICE OF EXHORTATION. If there be the voice of blood crying against us to-day, and we affirm that none of us can altogether escape from it, what shall we do to be rid of the past? Can tears of repentance do it? No. Can promises of amendment make a blank page where there are so many blots and blurs? Ah, no! Nothing that we can do can put away our sin. But may not the future atone? May not future zeal wipe out past carelessness? But a sweeter and a louder cry comes up—"Mercy, mercy, mercy"; and the Father bows His head and says, "Whose blood is that?" and the voice replies, "It is the blood of Thine only-begotten, shed on Calvary for sin." The Father lays His thunders by, sheathes His sword, stretches out His hand, and crieth to you, the sons of men, "Come unto Me, and I will have mercy upon you; turn ye, turn ye; I will pour out My Spirit upon you and ye shall live." (*Ibid.*) *Blood crying to God*:—Thus from the days of Abel has pleaded the blood of the saints:—"How long, O Lord, wilt Thou not judge and avenge our blood?" Thus the voice has been going up for ages from the ground, from the cell, from the cave, from the rock, from the glen, from the moorland, from the flood, from the flame, from the scaffold. What spot of Europe, not to take in more, is there from which this cry is not ascending? From the plains of Italy, from the valleys of Piedmont, from the dungeons of Spain, from the streets of Paris, from the stones of Smithfield, from the fields of Ireland, from the moors of Scotland; from all these has been ascending for ages the cry, "How long!" a cry unsilenced and unsatisfied; deepening and swelling as the ages roll on; a cry which will ere long be fully answered by the coming of Him who is the great avenger

of blood and rewarder of His saints. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Undone*:—The Rev. Rowland Hill, preaching on one occasion from this text at Cowes, began his sermon as follows: "In my way to your island, I visited the county jail at Winchester, and there I saw many who were accused of heavy crimes, but who seemed careless and indifferent, and to have but little sense of their awful situation. But one young man attracted my attention: he kept separate from the rest, and seemed very much troubled. I went up to him and said, 'And what have you done, young man?' 'Sir,' said he, deeply affected, 'I have done that which I cannot undo, and which has undone me.' This, my dear friends, said the minister, 'is the situation of every one of you. You have each of you done that which has undone you, and which you cannot undo.'" *The stain of blood*:—The mind of man has been compared to a white sheet of paper. Now, it is like a white sheet of paper in this, that whatever we write upon it whether with distinct purpose or no, nay, every drop of ink we let fall upon it, makes an abiding mark, a mark which we cannot rub out without much injury to the paper; unless, indeed, the mark has been very slight from the first, and we set about erasing it while it is fresh. In one of the grandest tragedies of our great English poet, there is a scene which, when one reads it, is enough to make one's blood run cold. A woman, whose husband had made himself king of Scotland by means of several murders, and who had been the prompter and partner of his crimes, is brought in while in her sleep, and continually rubbing her hands, as though she were washing them, crying ever and anon, "Yet here's a spot. . . What! will these hands ne'er be clean? . . . here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." In these words there is an awful power of truth. We can stain our souls; we can dye them, and double-dye them and triple-dye them; we can dye them all the colours of hell's rainbow, but we cannot wash them white. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten them, all the fountains of the deep will not wash one little spot out of them. The usurping Queen of Scotland had been guilty of murder; and the stain of blood, it has been very generally believed, cannot be washed out. But it is not the stain of blood alone; every stain soils the soul and none of them can be washed out. Every speck of ink eats into the paper; every sin, however small we may deem it, eats into the soul. If we try to write over it, we make a deeper blot; if we try to scratch it out, the next letters which we write on the spot are blurred. Therefore is it of such vast importance that we should be very careful of what we write. In the tragedy which I was quoting just now, the Queen says, "What's done, cannot be undone." This amounts to the same thing as what I have written, in the sense in which I am now calling upon you to consider these words. What's done cannot be undone. You know that that is true. You know you cannot push back the wheels of time, and make yesterday come again, so as to do over afresh what you did wrongly then. That which you did yesterday, yesterday will keep: you cannot change it; you cannot make it less or greater; if it was crooked you cannot make it straight. (*J. C. Hare.*) *Horror of a murderer*:—Coleridge tells of an Italian who assassinated a nobleman in Rome, and fled to Hamburg for safety. He had not passed many weeks before, one day, in the crowded street, he heard his name called by a voice familiar to him; he turned short round, and saw the face of his victim looking at him with a fixed eye. From that moment he no peace: at all hours, in all places, and amidst all companies, however engaged had he might be, he heard the voice, and could never help looking around; and whenever he so looked round he always encountered the same face, staring close upon him. The Italian said he had struggled long, but life was a burden which he could now no longer bear; and he was resolved to return to Rome, to surrender himself to justice, and expiate his crime on the scaffold.

Vers. 11, 12. *A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be.—Cain cursed by God*:—"Cursed art thou." Fearful words, coming straight from the lips of God into the very ear of man, standing in the presence of God. No lightning bursting on him from the clouds could be half so terrible. The blessing is revoked, and the curse goes forth. It is a curse because of innocent blood, as if foreshowing the curses which the shedding of innocent blood was yet to bring upon men. This curse is represented as coming up from the ground, as if the ground which had been moistened with the blood were to be the instrument of inflicting the curse. In Ezekiel we read of the "mountains devouring men" (xxxvi. 12-14), and elsewhere of the land "spewing out" (Lev. xviii. 28; xx. 22); so here the very ground is impregnated with evil to Cain, and sends up its curses on him. The soil is to cast him

off; the earth is to loathe him! inanimate nature, more tender-hearted than he (inasmuch as it drank in the blood), is to set its face against him. It had received the innocent blood into its bosom, and it was to send up unceasingly on the murderer an endless curse. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The fruits of envy.*—Such are the fruits of envy. Burden upon burden, stroke upon stroke, sorrow upon sorrow! From above, from beneath, and from around, the torment, and the terror, and the bitterness pour in. There is no peace to the wicked, no rest, no settlement. How sin uproots and unsettles, making a man to flee hither and thither, in order to get away from himself! How vain! O sin, sin! what horrid things are all wrapt up even in its smallest indulgence! An unkind thought, a harsh word, an envious feeling,—then sullenness, anger, murder—a brother's murder! How little do we know sin, or reckon on its results, or calculate the fruits that come from its womb! (*Ibid.*) *The bitter curse which sin brings on an individual life.*—I. THAT IT RENDERS A MAN SUBJECT TO THE SOLEMN AND CONVINCING ENQUIRIES OF GOD. II. THAT IT SENDS A MAN ON THROUGH LIFE WITH THE MOST TERRIBLE MEMORIES OF WRONG-DOING WITHIN HIS SOUL. III. THAT IT OFTEN RUINS THE TEMPORAL PROSPERITY OF A MAN. 1. It destroys reputation. 2. Wastes earnings. 3. Enfeebles agencies. IV. THAT IT COMMITS A MAN TO A WANDERING AND RESTLESS LIFE. V. THAT IT CRUSHES MAN WITH A HEAVY BURDEN, AND ALMOST RENDERS HIM DESPAIRING. Lessons—1. That sin is the greatest curse of human life. 2. That God is the avenger of the good. 3. That the sinner is the greatest sufferer in the end. 4. That good men go from their worship into heaven. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

Vers. 13, 14. *My punishment is greater than I can bear.*—*Cain's despair.*—1. Behold, Thou hast cast me out this day from (or from upon) the face of the ground. Thou hast driven me! He sees it to be Jehovah's own doing. He who drove Adam out of paradise, now drives Cain out of Eden. Adam's sin brought expulsion from the inner circle, Cain's from the outer. He is to be cast out from the land where he had been born, where was his home; from the ground which he had tilled. He was now doubly banished; compelled to go forth into an unknown region, without a guide, or a promise, or a hope. 2. From Thy face I shall be hid. God's face means, doubtless, the Shekinah or manifested glory of Jehovah at the gate of Eden, where Adam and Eve and their children had worshipped, where God was seen by them, where He met them, and spake to them as from His mercy-seat. From this place of Jehovah's presence Cain was to go out. And this depresses him. Not that he really cared for the favour of God, as one "in whose favour was life"; but still he could not afford to lose it, especially when others were left behind to enjoy it. And all his religious feelings, such as they were, were associated with that spot. 3. I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. Unchanged from his primeval home, he was now to drift to and fro, he knew not whither. He was to be a leaf driven to and fro, a man without a settlement and without a home. Poor, desolate sinner! And all this is thine own doing! Thy sin has found thee out. Thine own iniquities have taken thee, and thou art holden with the cords of thy sins (*Prov. v. 22*). (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The severity of self-inflicted punishment.*—The punishment which a man inflicts upon himself is infinitely severer than any punishment that can be inflicted upon him. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" You remember how you ill-treated that poor child now dead; you saw the anguish of his soul, and he besought you and you would not hear; and now a great distress is come upon you, and your bread is very bitter. Who is punishing you? Not the magistrate. Who then? You are punishing yourself. You cannot forgive yourself. The child touches you at every corner, speaks to you in every dream, moans in every cold wind, and lays its thin pale hand upon you in the hour of riot and excitement. You see that ill-used child everywhere; a shadow on the fair horizon, a background to the face of every other child, a ghastly contrast to everything lovely and fair. Time cannot quench the fire. Events cannot throw into dim distance this tragic fact. It surrounds you, mocks you, defies you, and under its pressure you know the meaning of the words, which no mere grammarian can understand—"The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment." All this will come the more vividly before us if we remember that a man who has done wrong has not only to be forgiven, he has to forgive himself. That is the insuperable difficulty. He feels that an external view of his sin, which even the acutest man can take, is altogether partial and incomplete; and, consequently, that any forgiveness which such a man can offer is also imperfect and superficial. That is

so philosophically, but, thank God, not evangelically. God's forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is not mere forgiveness, however abundant and emphatic. It is not merely a royal or even a paternal edict. It is an act incomplete in itself; it is merely introductory or preparatory, as the uprooting of weeds is preliminary to a better use of the soil. It is an essential act, for in the absence of pardon the soul is absolutely without the life that can lay hold of any of the higher blessings or gifts of God. To what, then, is forgiveness preparatory? To adoption, to communion with God, to absorption into the Divine nature, to the witness of the Holy Ghost. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Impenitent misery*.—There is a great change since he spoke last, but not for the better. All the difference is, instead of his high tone of insolence, we perceive him sinking into the last stage of depravity, sullen desperation. Behold here a finished picture of impenitent misery. What a contrast to the fifty-first Psalm! There the evil dwelt upon and pathetically lamented is sin; but here is only punishment. See how he expatiates upon it . . . Driven from the face of the earth . . . deprived of God's favour and blessing, and, in a sort, of the means of hope . . . a wanderer and an outcast from men . . . to all which his fears add, "Wherever I am by night or by day, my life will be in perpetual danger!" Truly it was a terrible doom, a kind of hell upon earth. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" (*A. Fuller.*) *Remorse*.—Tiberius felt the remorse of conscience so violent, that he protested to the senate that he suffered death daily; and Trapp tells us of Richard III. that, after the murder of his two innocent nephews, he had fearful dreams and visions, would leap out of his bed, and catching his sword, would go distractedly about the chamber, everywhere seeking to find out the cause of his own-occasioned disquiet. If, therefore, men more or less familiarized with crime and deeds of blood, had the fangs of the serpent ever probing their breasts, is it unreasonable to conclude that Cain knew seasons of sad regrets? If he had not, God's inquiry soon stirred up the pangs! The cruel Montassar, having assassinated his father, was one day admiring a beautiful painting of a man on horseback, with a diadem encircling his head, and a Persian inscription. Inquiring the significance of the words, he was told that they were: "I am Shiunjah, the son of Kosru, who murdered my father, and possessed the crown only six months." Montassar turned pale, horrors of remorse at once seized on him, frightful dreams interrupted his slumbers until he died. And no sooner did God address the first fratricide, than conscience roused herself to inflict poignant pains:—

"Oh, the wrath of the Lord is a terrible thing!
Like the tempest that withers the blossoms of spring,
Like the thunder that bursts on the summer's domain,
It fell on the head of the homicide Cain."

Condemnation.—Very little idea can be formed of the sufferings of Cain, when we read that God visited him with life-long remorse. John Randolph, in his last illness, said to his doctor: "Remorse! Remorse! Remorse! Let me see the word! show it to me in a dictionary." There being none at hand, he asked the surgeon to write it out for him; then, having looked at it carefully, he exclaimed: "Remorse! you do not know what it means." Happy are those who never know. It gives, as Dr. Thomas says, a terrible form and a horrible voice to everything beautiful and musical without. It is recorded of Bessus—a native of Polonia, in Greece—that the notes of birds were so insufferable to him, as they never ceased chirping the murder of his father—that he would tear down their nests and destroy both young and old. The music of the sweet songsters of the grove was as the shrieks of hell to a guilty conscience. And how terribly would the familiar things of life become to Cain a source of agony!

"The kiss of his children shall scorch him like flame,
When he thinks of the curse that hangs over his name,
And the wife of his bosom—the faithful and fair,
Can mix no sweet drop in his cup of despair:
For her tender caress, and her innocent breath,
But still in his soul the hot embers of death."

Wakeful conscience.—Though in many men conscience sleeps in regard to motion, yet it never sleeps in regard to observation and notice. It may be hard and seared, it can never be blind. Like letters written with the juice of lemon, that which is written upon it, though seemingly invisible and illegible, when brought before the

fire of God's judgment shall come forth clear and expressive. (*J. M'Cosh.*) *Sin and punishment*:—Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Saul, king of Israel, had a minstrel to soothe him when the evil spirit rose within him. King Richard III. of England, after he killed his two nephews, had horrible dreams. He thought all the devils in hell, in terrible shapes, were coming to pull him about; and, in his fright, he leaped out of bed, and seized the naked sword which he kept beside him, to find and punish the cause of his trouble. Charles IX., of France, had similar anguish after he had ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew. *A ruined life*:—Sailing down the Thames one occasionally sees a green flag, in tatters, inscribed with the word "wreck," floating in the breeze over a piece of the mast or the funnel of a steamer which is just visible above the water. How many lives might thus be marked, and how needful that they should be so labelled, lest they prove ruinous to others!

Ver. 15. The Lord set a mark upon Cain. *The mark upon Cain*:—What this mark was we cannot tell. It might be his name affixed by the pen of the lightning in red characters upon his brow, or it might simply be the stain of his brother's blood left by his own fingers, which he had raised up while yet wet and reeking to cover his forehead, rendered miraculously indelible; or it might be some general aspect of grief and guilt, which told too plainly that he had become the first murderer; or, perhaps, it was written on his brow, "Kill not this man, murderer as he is, lest thou thyself be punished." (*G. Gilfillan.*) *A sign given to Cain*.—Render—"Gave a sign to Cain." It is difficult to conceive of any visible mark which should warn men not to touch Cain, and a mark which should merely identify him would of course be rather a danger than a benefit. An interesting parallel occurs in the "Laws of Menu," which enjoin branding as a punishment of certain crimes:—

"Let them wander over the earth;
Branded with indelible marks,
They shall be abandoned by father and mother,
Treated by none with affection:
Received by none with respect."

(*M. Dods, D.D.*)

Cain's preservation by God:—But why is God so anxious to preserve Cain from death, and to give him the assurance of this security? Some reasons are obvious, besides those which run us up directly to the sovereignty of God. 1. God's desire is to manifest the riches of His grace, and the extent of His forbearance, and that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but wishes by His long-suffering to lead him to repentance. 2. Death would not have answered God's end at all. It was needful that Cain should be preserved alive as an awful monument of sin, a warning against the shedding of man's blood. 3. Cain was spared, too, because of this partial repentance. God accepted Ahab's repentance (1 Kings xxi. 29), poor and hollow as it was; so does He Cain's; for He is gracious and merciful, looking for the first and faintest sign of a sinner's turning to Himself, willing to meet him at once without upbraiding, and putting the best possible construction on all he says and does. To what length is not the grace of our God able to go! Sin abounds, but grace superabounds. How desirous is Jehovah not to curse, but to bless; not to smite, but to heal; not to destroy, but to save. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *God's mode of dealing with Cain*:—This passage unfolds to us a mode of dealing with the first murderer which is at first sight somewhat difficult to be understood. But we are to bear in mind that the sentence of death has been already pronounced upon man, and therefore stood over Adam and all his posterity, Cain among the rest. To pronounce the same sentence therefore upon him for a new crime would have been weak and unmeaning. Besides, the great crime of crimes was disobedience to the Divine will, and any particular form of crime added to that was comparatively unimportant. Wrong done to a creature even of the deepest dye was not to be compared in point of guilt with wrong done to the Creator. The grave element in the criminality of every social wrong is its practical disregard of the authority of the Most High. Moreover, every other sin to the end of time is but the development of that first act of disobedience to the mandate of heaven by which man fell, and accordingly every penalty is summed up in that death which is the judicial consequence of the first act of rebellion against heaven. We are also to bear in mind that God still held the sword of justice in His own immediate hands, and had not delegated His authority to any human tribunal. No man was, there-

fore, clothed with any right from heaven to call Cain to account for the crime he had committed. To fall upon him with the high hand in a wilful act of private revenge, would be taking the law into one's own hands, and therefore a misdemeanour against the majesty of heaven, which the Judge of all could not allow to pass unpunished. It is plain that no man has an inherent right to inflict the sanction of a broken law on the transgressor. This right originally belongs only to the Creator, and derivatively only to those whom He has entrusted with the dispensation of civil government according to established laws. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) *God's dealings with Cain*.—We may ask, with some degree of surprise, why God granted this uncommon indulgence to a murderer, who had insidiously killed his own brother? Did not God Himself give the distinct precept: "He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed?" Why was it necessary to take such anxious precautions to save a life forfeited according to human and Divine rights? We hesitate to speak with decision where the text is entirely silent. But we may venture the supposition that, if Cain's blood was to be "shed by man," it would also have been by the hand of a brother, for no other man existed; the first-born of Adam's strength, and the pride of his mother, would have perished by a cold law of retaliation; the avenging of the crime would, in the result, have been as horrible as the crime itself; and the human family, just called into being, would have perpetrated self-destruction in its first generations. It was thus necessary that God should Himself exercise the duty of punishment, and dispense a chastisement commensurate with the unnatural and fatal offence. A long, laborious life in exile, with the fear of sanguinary retribution perpetually impending, was deemed equivalent to death; and the lamentations of Cain, when he heard the verdict of his flight, prove the bitterness of his pangs. And this is the other side of a profound Biblical idea which we have above pointed out. As the early death of Abel was no curse, so was the long life of Cain no blessing. He was permitted to protract an existence, veiled by the gloom of the past, and uncheered by any hope of the future. No earthly boon, not even long life, the greatest of all, is, in itself, either a pledge of happiness, or a mark of the Divine favour. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) *Marks on conscience*.—Whatever was the mark which Cain carried upon his person after that murderous deed, there is no doubt that the mark on his conscience was more deep, more tormenting, more irremovable. Men who sin in these days often carry a mark upon them by which others know them to be sinners; but could you read the inner man you would see stronger marks there, by which they themselves know and feel that they are sinners more sensibly than you see it. (*John Bate.*) *Marks of crime*.—We may find, in this part of our narrative, the important practical and philosophical truth, that the traces of crime are indelibly visible in the person of the criminal; the "human form divine" is degraded and corrupted by vice; it loses that sublime dignity with which a pure and noble soul never fails to impress it; the shy look, the uncertain step, the sinister reserve, the lurking passion, these and many other symptoms of the highest interest for the physiognomist, mark the outcast of society, and make the man conspicuous upon whose conscience weighs the burden of an enormous misdeed. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Vers. 16, 17. **Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.**—*The future of a God-forsaken life*.—I. THAT A GOD-FORSAKEN MAN IS NOT CUT OFF FROM THE MITIGATING INFLUENCES OF DOMESTIC LIFE. 1. Here the future of the cursed life has some relief. Cain had his wife to share his sorrow, and, for all we know, to help him in it. The domestic relationship is a great relief and comfort to a sad life. When all goes wrong without, it can find a refuge at home. 2. The children of a cursed life are placed at a moral disadvantage. They are the offspring of a God-forsaken parent. It is awful to commence life under these conditions. II. THAT A GOD-FORSAKEN MAN IS LIKELY VERY SOON TO SEEK SATISFACTION IN EARTHLY EMPLOYMENTS AND THINGS. Cain built a city. This would find occupation for his energies. It would tend to divest his mind of his wicked past. It would enrich his poverty. It might become the home of his posterity. III. THAT OFTEN A GOD-FORSAKEN MAN IS DISPOSED TO TRY TO BUILD A RIVAL TO THE CHURCH FROM WHENCE HE HAS BEEN DRIVEN. If he has been driven from God, he will engage his energies to build a city for Satan. In this work some wicked men are active. And to-day the city of evil is of vast dimensions, is thickly populated, but is weak in its foundation, and will ultimately be swept away by the prayerful effort of the Church, and the wrath of God. IV. THAT MEN WHOSE NAMES ARE NOT WRITTEN IN HEAVEN ARE VERY ANXIOUS TO

MAKE THEM FAMOUS ON EARTH. They build cities rather than characters. LESSONS: 1. Earth cannot give the soul a true substitute for God. 2. Family relationship is unsanctified without Him. 3. Cities are useless without Him. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

Cain going out from God's presence:—It is an awful thought, that of the lost, to the sound of the dead march, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," flinging away from the judgment seat. But scarcely inferior in horror is the sight of Cain going out from the presence of the Lord. He goes out alone, save for his poor weeping wife, for children as yet he had none. He goes out in silence, without venturing to utter one word of remonstrance or regret. He goes out withered and accursed, although not utterly crushed. He goes out bearing, and showing that he is conscious of bearing, his character burnt and branded on his brow. He goes out, preserved indeed, but preserved as the criminal on the scaffold is preserved from the guns of the soldiery and the missiles of the crowd, that he may abide the executioner's axe, or feel the hangman's gripe. He goes out alone, but you see in him the representative of the giant race of transgressors, who are yet in his loins as he goes forth. He goes out into a thinly-peopled earth, but into an earth where he knows that every man is aware of his crime, and would kill him but for a mark which identifies and renders infamous while it secures him. He goes forth into the young world, a region as silent as it is vast; but hark! as he leaves the presence of the Lord a peal of harsh thunder behind proclaims the departure of the murderer, and worse than this still, the trembling hollows of his ear (like the sea-shell by the sound of the deep) are filled with the cry, which he feels is for ever his music, "Cain, Cain, where is thy brother?" (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Cain's banishment:—Like Judas from the presence of Jesus, so does Cain go out from the face of God, from the place where the visible glory of God, the Shekinah, had its abode. Partly troubled at his banishment, and partly relieved at getting away from the near presence of the Holy One, he goes forth, a banished criminal, whose foot must no longer be permitted to profane the sacred circle of Eden; an excommunicated man, who must no longer worship with the Church of God, round the primeval altar. He goes out, not like Abraham to the land of promise, the land flowing with milk and honey, but to the land of the threatening, the land where no divine presence was seen and on which no glory shone, and where no bright cherubim foreshadowed redemption, and proclaimed restoration to paradise, and the tree of life. He goes out to an unknown and untrodden land; a land which, from his own character as "the wanderer," received in after days the name of Nod. He goes out, the flaming sword behind him, driving him out of his native seat, and forbidding his return. A banished man, an excommunicated worshipper (the sentence of excommunication pronounced by God Himself)—one "delivered over to Satan" (1 Tim. i. 20), he takes up his abode in the land of Nod. There he "sits down," not as if at rest, for what had *he* to do with rest? Can the cloud rest? Can the sea rest? Can the guilty conscience rest? He sits down in Nod, but not to rest, only to drown his restlessness in schemes of labour. He went towards the rising sun. He and his posterity spread eastward, just as Seth and his posterity spread westward. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

The land of Nod.—*The land of Nod*:—Cain settled "in the land of Nod, in the east of Eden." It is evident that the name Nod expresses the nature and character of the locality; it signifies flight or exile; and the same root means, sometimes, grief and mourning. Nod is, therefore, the land of misery and exile. But, although this appellative signification of Nod is clear, it is not less certain that the historian intended to describe thereby a distinct country. He designates its position in the east of Eden, and he mentions a town which Cain built in that land of flight. Nod is, therefore, as little as Eden itself, a mere abstraction, or a fictitious name, invented for the embodiment of a myth. But, as it is only described by its relative position to Eden, its situation is, naturally, as disputed as that of paradise itself. It has been placed in Susiana, Lydia, and Arabia; in Nyssa and China; in the mountains of the Caucasus and the vast steppes in the east of Cashmere; in Tartary, in Parthia, or any part of India. However, it appears that the whole extent of Asia eastward of Eden, was comprised under the name of Nod. Cain was expelled to the east of paradise, where the cherubim with their flaming swords for ever prevented the access; we are, thus, expressly reminded that the murderer who with one audacious step ascended the whole climax of crime, was removed far from the seat of blessedness and innocence. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

VERE. 17-24. *Built a city*.—*The first city*:—It was a very decided step towards

civilization, when the idea of building a city was first conceived and realized. The roaming life of the homeless savage was abandoned; social ties were formed; families joined families, and exchanged in friendly intercourse their experience and observations; communities arose, and submitted to the rule of self-imposed laws; the individuals resigned the unchecked liberty of the beasts of the forest, and felt the delight of being subservient links in the universal chain. Social and personal excellence depend on and strengthen each other. Therefore, when the first communities were organized, the way to a steady and continuous progress was paved, and the first beams of dawning humanity trembled over the night of barbarism and ferocity. It is a deep trait in the Biblical account to ascribe the origin of cities to none but the agriculturist. Unlike the nomad, who changes his temporary tents whenever the state of the pasture requires it, the husbandman is bound to the glebe which he cultivates; the soil to which he devotes his strength and his anxieties becomes dear to him; that part of the earth to which he owes his sustenance assumes a character of holiness in his eyes; and if, besides, pledges of conjugal love have grown up in that spot, he is more strongly still tied to it; he fixes there his permanent abode, and considers its loss a curse of God. Thus, even in the "land of flight," the agriculturist Cain was compelled to build houses and to form a city. Many inventions of mechanical skill are inseparable from the building of towns; ingenuity was aroused and exercised; and whilst engaged in satisfying the moral desire of sociability, man brought many of his intellectual powers into efficient operation. Necessity suggested, and perseverance executed, inventions which safety or comfort required; and when man left the caverns which nature had beneficently provided for his dwelling-place, to inhabit the houses which his own hands had built, he entered them with that legitimate pride which the consciousness of superior skill begets, and with the consoling conviction that, although God had doomed him, on account of his own and his ancestors' sins, to a life full of fatigue and struggles, He had graciously furnished him with a spark of that heavenly fire which strengthens him to endure and to conquer. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

The generations of Cain:—1. Nothing good is said of any one of them; but, heathen-like, they appear to have lost all fear of God and regard to man. 2. Two or three of them became famous for arts; one was a shepherd, another a musician, and another a smith; all very well in themselves, but things in which the worst of men may excel. 3. One of them was infamous for his wickedness, namely Lamech. He was the first who violated the law of marriage; a man giving loose to his appetites, and who lived a kind of lawless life. Here ends the account of cursed Cain. We hear no more of his posterity, unless it be as tempters to the sons of God, till they were all swept away by the deluge! (*A. Fuller.*)

Lessons:—In Cain's building a city, and calling it after his son's name, we see the care of the wicked, ever more to desire to magnify themselves than to glorify God, more to seek after a name in earth than a life in heaven, more to establish their seed with towns and towers than with God's favour. But such course is crooked and like Cain's here. If we desire a name, the love of God and His word, the love of Christ and His truth is the way. You remember a silly woman that, in a true affection to her Lord and Master, poured upon Him a box of ointment, and what got she: "Verily," saith Christ, "whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the world, this shall be told of the woman for a remembrance of her." Here was a name well gotten, and firmly continued to the very world's end. The memory of the righteous shall remain for ever, and the name of the wicked, do what they can, in God's good time shall rot and take an ending. For which cause Moses, if you mark it, maketh no mention of the time that either Cain or any of his sons lived, as he doth of the godly. Filthy polygamy, you see, in this place began with wicked Lamech, that is, to have more wives than one at a time: so old is this evil, that from the beginning was not so. That mention that is made of the children here of the wicked, telleth us how they flourish for a time with all worldly things whom yet God hateth. The last words show you what eclipses true religion suffereth often in this world, and let us mark it. (*Bp. Babington.*)

The race of Cain:—I. IT IS SINGULAR HOW MENTAL EFFORT AND INVENTION SEEM CHIEFLY CONFINED TO THE RACE OF CAIN. Feeling themselves estranged from God, they are stung to derive whatever solace they can from natural research, artistic skill, and poetic illusion. It is melancholy to think that so many of the arts appeared in conjunction with some shape or other of evil. The music of Jubal in all probability first sounded in the praise of some idol-god, or perhaps mingled with some infernal sacrifice. The art of metallurgy and its

cognate branches became instantly the instruments of human ferocity and the desire of shedding blood. Even poetry first appeared on the stage linked with the immoral and degrading practices of polygamy. Gifts without graces are but lamps enabling individuals and nations to see their way down more clearly to the chambers of death. II. THERE ARE CERTAIN STRIKING ANALOGIES BETWEEN OUR OWN AGE AND THE AGE BEFORE THE FLOOD. Both are ages of—1. Ingenuity. 2. Violence. 3. Great corruption and sensuality. 4. Distinguished by the striving of the Spirit of God. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *Cain's descendants*:—The natural man is fertile in all things pertaining to this present evil world; and Satan, the god of this world, sharpens and quickens his ingenuity and skill. 1. Pastoral pursuits make progress. Jabel was the father of such as dwell in tents, and have cattle (ver. 20). Jabel takes the lead as the great shepherd of his day—gentler, perhaps, and more peaceful in his nature—more like Abel in his disposition. The Spirit of God does not here cast censure on such employments, as if there were sin in them. He simply points out these children of Cain as sitting down contented with earth, and engrossed with its pursuits. These children of Cain seem to have shrunk from tillage. The soil was too full of terror, as well as of toil, for them to attempt its tillage. How a man's sin finds him out! How it traces him out wherever he sets his foot! 2. The fine arts. Jabel had a brother by name Jubal, who betakes himself to the harp and the organ. Yes—music—the world must soothe its sorrows or drown its cares with music! The world must cheat its hours away with music! The world must set its lusts to music (Job xxi. 12). Yet, sweet sounds are not unholy. There is no sin in the richest strains of music. And God, by bringing into His own temple all the varied instruments of melody, and employing them in His praises, showed this. But these Cainites make music of the siren kind. God is not in all their melodies. It is to shut Him out that they devise the harp and the organ. Yet these inventions He makes use of for Himself afterwards; employing these men as the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for His temple. 3. The mechanical arts. Zillah bare Tubal-Cain to Lamech; and this Tubal-Cain was an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. The arts flourish under Cain's posterity. They can prosper without God, and among those in whose hearts His fear is not. God suffers them to go on forgetting Himself, and occupying themselves with these engrossing employments. He does not interfere; and this not only because He is long-suffering, but because one of His great purposes is, that man shall have full scope to develop himself mentally, morally, and physically. Man has torn himself off from God; and God will let it be seen how the branch can unfold its leaves and fruit, or rather what kind of leaves and fruit it can put forth when thus severed from Himself. God will let the world roll on its own way, that it may be seen what a world it is. What is earth without the God that made it, or the Christ by whom it is yet to be made new? What are the arts and sciences; music, painting, statuary? What are the wisdom, skill, energy, power, genius of the race, developed to the full? What are the mind's resources, the heart's fulness, the body's pliant power, man's strength or woman's beauty, youth's fervour or age's grey-haired wisdom? What are all these in a world from which its Creator has been banished; a world whose wisdom is not the knowledge of Christ, and whose sunshine is not the love of God? (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *The first city and the last*:—In the Book of Genesis we have the first city built by Cain, in the Book of the Revelation the last city built by Christ. Now, what I specially wish to show is how the spirit of Christ will purify and exalt city life, how it will arrest the evil of the multitude within the city walls, how it will develop the good, and bring the corporate life to a glorious perfection. It was said of Augustus that he found Rome brick and left it marble; but Christ shall work a far grander transformation, for, finding the cities of the earth cities of Cain, He shall change them into new Jerusalems, holy cities, cities of God. We must not look for the city that John saw in some future world strange and distant; we must look for it in the purification of the present order, that city is already coming down from God out of heaven, it is even now purging and beautifying the cities of the earth, and it will never cease coming down until the corrupt cities of the nations are built up in the crystal and gold of truth and justice and peace. The city of Cain is the city of the past; it is also, alas! to a large extent the city of the present. It is impossible to think of London, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, New York, without being deeply impressed by the spectacles they present of human genius and power and splendid aspiration. And yet in these very cities how much there is to give us pain! How much there is of ignorance, poverty, crime, suffering—of low life, sad life, shameful

life. Now, what makes a great city a sad sight, what is the cause of its terrible and perplexing contrasts, and how will Christ cure these evils and bring the clean thing out of the unclean? Let us see. 1. The spirit of Cain was the spirit of ungodliness. It was the spirit of worldliness, it was the fastening to the earthly side of things and the leaving out of the spiritual and divine; it made material life a substitute for God, and in all things aimed to make man independent of God. It was government without God. "Cain builded a city"—he laid the foundation of the worldly rule, and laid it in the spirit of pride and independence. It was culture without God. It was wealth and power without God. It was fashion and pleasure without God. The names of their women signify their appreciation of personal beauty and adornment. The spirit of Cain was, throughout, the spirit of ungodliness, the acceptance and development of all the gifts of God yet ignoring the Giver, and in this spirit Cain built his city. The consciousness of God is the salt of our personal life, and the consciousness of God is the salt of our social and national life. National atheism, whether practical or theoretical, works national ruin. There is no adequate check then to our pride, our selfishness, our license. Without God, the more power we have the sooner we destroy ourselves; without God, the richer we are the sooner we rot. In opposition to this Christ brings into city life the element of spirituality. "Coming down out of heaven from God." It is in the recognition of the living God that Christ creates the fairer civilization. He puts into our heart assurance of God's existence, government, watchfulness, equity, faithfulness. It is comparatively easy to see God in nature, in the landscape, the sky, the sea, the sun, but Christ has brought God into the city, identified Him with human life and interests and duties and joys and sorrows, and just as we accept and enforce the divine element in city life so shall our cities flourish in strength and happiness. We cannot do without God in the city—here where temptation is most bitter, pleasure most enticing, sorrow most tragical, where material is most abundant, opportunity most common, secrecy most practicable, passion most excited, where character suffers most fiery trial, here can be no good thing except as we are kept in awe of God's majesty, comforted by His sympathy, strengthened by His government, inspired by His love. We cannot build cities without God, and if we do they fall to pieces again. 2. The spirit of Cain was the spirit of unbrotherliness. "Cain slew his brother." It was Cain who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" He specially denied the brotherly relation, he specially affirmed the selfish policy. And in Lamech you see how the hateful spirit has prevailed. The first city was built in the spirit of a cruel egotism, built by a fratricide, and Cain's red finger-marks are on the city still. The blood stains of the old builder are everywhere. The rich things of commerce are stained by extortion and selfishness—the bloody finger-marks are not always immediately visible; but they are generally there. There are red finger-prints on the palaces of the great, red stains on the gold of the opulent. Look at the gorgeous raiment of fashion, and the dismal blot is there. Go into the flowery paths of pleasure, and you will see selfishness spilling blood for its indulgence. And what is the outcome of this selfishness? It creates everywhere weakness and wretchedness and peril. It throws a strange black shadow on all the magnificence of civilization. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of brotherliness. "Cain slew his brother." "Christ died for us." Christ brings a new spirit and a new law into society; we must love one another. There are red marks once more on the new city, but this time they are the Builder's own blood teaching us that as He laid down His life for us so we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Oh! what a mighty difference will the working of this spirit make in all our civilization. Can you measure it? How it will inspire men, soften their antagonisms, lighten their burdens, wipe away their tears, make rough places smooth, dark places bright, crooked places plain. 3. The spirit of Cain was the spirit of unrighteousness. "Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Cain acted in untruthfulness, injustice, violence. And in that spirit he built his city. "He was of that wicked one." The devil was the architect of the first city and Cain its builder, and the spirit of faction, lying, robbery, and fratricide has prevailed in the city ever since. Our great populations are full of wretchedness because there is everywhere such lack of truth and equity and mercy. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of righteousness. Christ comes not only with the sweetness of love, but with the majesty of truth and justice. He creates, wherever He is received, purity of heart, conscientiousness, faithfulness, uprightness of spirit and action. And in this

spirit of righteousness shall we build the ideal city. Some time ago, in one of the Reviews, a writer gave a picture of the London of the future when all sanitary and political improvements shall have been perfected. No dust in the streets, no smoke in the air, no noise, no fog, spaces everywhere for flowers and sunlight, the sky above always pure, the Thames running below a tide of silver; but think of the city of the future in whose life, laws, institutions, trade, politics, pleasure, the righteousness of Christ shall find full and final manifestation. Let us have great faith in the future. We say sometimes, "God made the country and man the town," but God will make the town before He finishes, and the town that He makes shall outshine all the glory of nature as much as living immortal beings are beyond all material things. Let us be co-workers with Christ. Put your chrysolite in somewhere. In our personal life, in our domestic life, in our public life, in our evangelistic life let us put in some real work. We are poor creatures if we have no part in this. We must have a brick in this time. Let us be true to the grand Master Builder, and when the earth in her beauty is taken to the breast of God we shall sit down at the bridal feast and share the immortal joy. (W. L. Watkinson.)

The city of Cain.—Cain is a type of the worldling, cut off from God, whose all is in this life, and who has no hope of heaven. I. His thought is of living here always. A city is a settled place of residence meant to endure long. II. His ambition and pride. Great pomp and state in cities. III. His covetousness. Money made and hoarded in cities. IV. His luxuriousness. Cities are scenes of luxury and vice. There is Satan's seat. (T. G. Horton.)

Cain's life.—It is not difficult to detect the spirit he carried with him, and the tone he gave to his line of the race. The facts recorded are few but significant. He begat a son, he built a city; and he gave to both the name Enoch, that is, "initiation," or "beginning," as if he were saying in his heart, "What so great harm after all in cutting short one line in Abel? I can begin another and find a new starting-point for the race. I am driven forth cursed as a vagabond, but a vagabond I will not be; I will make for myself a settled abode, and I will fence it round with knife-blade thorns so that no man will be able to assault me." In this settling of Cain, however, we see not any symptom of his ceasing to be a vagabond, but the surest evidence that now he was content to be a fugitive from God, and had cut himself off from hope. His heart had found rest, and had found it apart from God. It is in the family of Lamech the characteristics of Cain's line are most distinctly seen, and the significance of their tendencies becomes apparent. As Cain had set himself to cultivate the curse out of the world, so have his children derived from him the self-reliant hardness and hardihood which are resolute to make of this world as bright and happy a home as may be. They make it their task to subdue the world and compel it to yield them a life in which they can delight. They are so far successful that in a few generations they have formed a home in which all the essentials of civilized life are found—the arts are cultivated and female society is appreciated. Of his three sons, Jabal—or "Increase"—was "the father of such as dwell in tents and of such as have cattle." He had originality enough to step beyond all traditional habits and to invent a new mode of life. Hitherto men had been tied to one spot by their fixed habitations, or found shelter, when overtaken by storm, in caves or trees. To Jabal the idea first occurs, I can carry my house about with me and regulate its movements, and not it mine. I need not return every night this long, weary way from the pastures, but may go wherever grass is green and streams run cool. He and his comrades would thus become aware of the vast resources of other lands, and would unconsciously lay the foundations both of commerce and of wars of conquest. For both in ancient and more modern times the most formidable armies have been those vast moving shepherd races bred outside the borders of civilization and flooding as with an irresistible tide the territories of more settled and less hardy tribes. Jubal again was, as his name denotes, the reputed father of all such as handle the harp and the organ, stringed and wind instruments. The stops of the reed or flute and the divisions of the string being once discovered, all else necessarily followed. The twanging of a bow-string in a musical ear was enough to give the suggestion to an observant mind; the varying notes of the birds; the winds expressing at one time unbridled fury and at another a breathing benediction, could not fail to move and stir the susceptible spirit. The spontaneous though untuned singing of children, that follows no mere melody made by another to express his joy, but is the instinctive expression of their own joy, could not but give, however meagrely, the first rudiments of music. But here was the man who first made a piece of wood help him;

who out of the commonest material of the physical world found for himself a means of expressing the most impalpable moods of his spirit. Once the idea was caught that matter inanimate as well as animate was man's servant, and could do his finest work for him, Jabal and his brother Jubal would make rapid work between them. If the rude matter of the world could sing for them, what might it not do for them? They would see that there was a precision in machine-work which man's hand could not rival—a regularity which no nervous throb could throw out and no feeling interrupt, and yet at the same time when they found how these rude instruments responded to every finest shade of feeling, and how all external nature seemed able to express what was in man, must it not have been the birth of poetry as well as of music? Jubal, in short, originates what we now compendiously describe as the fine arts. The third brother, again, may be taken as the originator of the useful arts—though not exclusively—for being the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron, having something of his brother's genius for invention and more than his brother's handiness and practical faculty for embodying his ideas in material forms, he must have promoted all arts which require tools for their culture. Thus among these three brothers we find distributed the various kinds of genius and faculty which ever since have enriched the world. Here in germ was really all that the world can do. The great lines in which individual and social activity have since run were then laid down. This notable family circle was completed by Naamah, the sister of Tubal-Cain. The strength of female influence began to be felt contemporaneously with the cultivation of the arts. Very early in the world's history it was perceived that, although debarred from the rougher activities of life, women have an empire of their own. Men have the making of civilization, but women have the making of men. It is they who form the character of the individual and give its tone to the society in which they live. (*M. Dods, D.D.*)

The cultivation of the fine arts :—The inexorable necessities of daily life absorbed no more the whole attention or the entire strength; the soul and the heart, also, demanded and obtained their food and nurture; Lamech was the first poet (vers. 23, 24), and his son the first musician; the "sweat of the brow" was temporarily dried by the heavenly sunshine of art; the curse of Adam was, in a great measure, conquered by the perseverance and the gentleness of his descendants. Everybody will readily admit that this was a most important step in the advancement of society; for, materialism with its degrading tendencies of cold expediency was, in some measure, dethroned; it became a co-ordinate part of a higher striving, which found its reward, not in selfish utility, but in a free and elevating recreation. It is true that most of the ancient nations ascribed the invention of musical instruments to their deities: the Egyptians believed that Thot, the god of wisdom and knowledge, the friend of Osiris, invented the three-stringed lyre; the Greeks represented Pan or Mercury as the first artists on the flute; and music was generally considered a Divine gift, and an immediate communication from the gods. But our context describes the invention of these instruments in a far deeper manner; it embodies it organically in the history of the human families, and assigns to it that significant place which its internal character demands. It is not an accidental fact that the lyre and the flute were introduced by the brother of a nomadic herdsman (Jabal). It is in the happy leisure of this occupation that music is generally first exercised and appreciated, and the idyllic tunes of the shepherd find their way, either with his simple instruments, or after the invention of others of a more developed description, into the house of the citizen and the palace of the monarch. But we must not be surprised to find here Jabal described as "the father of those who dwell in tents, and of those who have cattle" (ver. 20), although Abel had already followed the same pursuits (ver. 2). Every single remark proves the depth of thought, and the comprehensiveness of the views of the Hebrew writer. Abel had been murdered, most probably without leaving children; yet his occupation could not die out with him; breeding of cattle is a calling too necessary, and at the same time too inviting, not to be resumed by some later-born individual. But in the family of Cain rested the curse of blood-shed; the crime was to be expiated by severe labour; in the fourth generation it was atoned for (Exod. xx. 5); and now were the Cainites permitted to indulge extensively in the easy life of herdsmen; the blood of Abel was avenged, and with the restored guiltlessness returned affluence, and—mirth, which is aptly symbolized by the invention of music. Jabal and Jubal were Lamech's sons with Adah; but he had another wife, Zillah, who bore him also a son, Tubal-Cain. He was a "sharpener of all instruments of brass and iron"; and this seems to imply that he continued

the ancestral pursuit of agriculture, but that he also improved the necessary implements; he invented the practical art of whetting ploughs, and of making, by the aid of fire, other instruments materially mitigating the toil and hardship which the cultivation of the soil imposes upon the laborious countryman. And are we not justified in finding in this alleviation of the manual labour also, a relaxation of the severe curse pronounced against his ancestor Cain? (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.—*The song of the sword*.—It may be translated thus:—

“Adah and Zillah! hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech! give ear to my speech:
I will slay men for smiting me,
And for wounding me young men shall die.
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Lamech seventy and seven.”

This is the most antique song or poem in the world, the only poem which dates from before the Flood, the sole literary relic of the antediluvian race. Of course, it has been read in many different senses, and its meaning has at times been darkened by those who assumed to explain it. According to some, Lamech is a murderer stung by remorse into a public confession of his guilt. According to others, he, the polygamist, acknowledges that his sin will bear a more fruitful progeny of ills than that of Cain, that polygamy will prove more fatal to human peace than murder. But the interpretation which the ablest critics are rapidly adopting, and which I hold to be incomparably the best, is that which names it “the Song of the Sword.” Whatever else may be doubtful, this seems certain, that Lamech is in a vaunting humour as he sings; that he is boasting of an immunity from vengeance superior to that of Cain; and that, because of some special advantage which he possesses, he is encouraging himself to deeds of violence and resentment. Now, just before the song of Lamech we have the verse which narrates that Tubal-Cain had learned to hammer out edge-tools in brass and iron. Suppose this great smith to have invented a sword or a spear, to have shown his father how effective and mortal a weapon it was, would not that have been likely to put Lamech into the vainglorious mood which inspires his poem? May we not rationally conclude that his song is “the Song of the Sword”; that, as he wields this new product of Tubal-Cain’s anvil, Lamech feels that he has a new strength and defence put into his hand, a weapon which will make him even more secure than the mark of God made Cain? (*S. Cox, D.D.*) *The case of Lamech*.—I. THE CASE OF LAMECH SHOWS THE EFFECT OF AN ABANDONMENT OF THE CHURCH’S FELLOWSHIP. 1. The end and use of ordinances. 2. These are enjoined only in the Church. 3. Cain and his posterity forsook the fellowship of the Church, and lost its privileges. 4. Mark the effect of this in Lamech. (1) In his government of himself, unrestrained by Divine precepts, a polygamist. (2) In household government, a tyrant. (3) In his character as a member of society, a murderer. One sin leads to another. II. THE CASE OF LAMECH SHOWS THAT OUTWARD PROSPERITY IS NO SURE MARK OF GOD’S FAVOUR. 1. We have seen Lamech’s character. 2. He was remarkable for family prosperity (vers. 20–22). 3. God’s dealings with His people have all a reference to their spiritual and eternal good. 4. Hence they have not uninterrupted prosperity. 5. To the ungodly, temporal good is cursed, and becomes a curse—increased responsibility, increased guilt. 6. Splendid masked misery—embroidered shroud—sculptured tomb. 7. The graces of poetry given here—speech of Lamech. III. THE CASE OF LAMECH SHOWS THAT THE DEALINGS OF GOD ARE MISUNDERSTOOD AND MISINTERPRETED BY THE UNGODLY. 1. God protected Cain by a special providence, that His sentence might take effect. 2. Lamech argues from this, that he is under a similar special providence. 3. Common—they who despise Divine things still know as much of them as is convenient for their reasonings. Doctrines—depravity, election, justification by faith. Incidents—Noah, David, Peter, malefactor on the cross—“All things work,” &c. “Because sentence against,” &c. (*Eccles. viii. 11*). 4. Satan thus uses something like the sword of the Spirit—infuses poison into the Word of Life. 5. The Scriptures are thus by men made to injure them fatally. They rest them to their own destruction—food in a weak stomach—a weed in a rich soil. (1) See the effects of a departure from God. (2) Avoid the first step. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *Lamech*.—Without professing to regard him as either “an antediluvian Thug—a patriarchal ‘old man of the mountain’—the true type of the

assassin in every age, whose sacrificial knife is a dagger, whose worship is homicide, and his inspiration that apostate spirit who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning" (Rev. J. B. Owen, M.A., "Pre-Calvary Martyrs," p. 97); or, on the other hand, "the afflicted one, a type and prophecy, in the first ages of the world, of afflicted Israel in the hour of Jacob's trouble, when they shall look on the pierced Saviour with godly sorrow" (Rev. T. R. Birks, M.A., in *Family Treasury*, February, 1863, p. 85); we see in him—I. A VIOLATOR OF THE DIVINE LAW OF MARRIAGE. Lamech was a polygamist. Monogamy was the Divine law of marriage, and in all likelihood this rule had been observed till Lamech's time. Dr. Cox says, "He is the first of the human race who had more wives than one. The father of a family of inventors, this was his invention, his legacy to the human race—a legacy which perhaps the larger half of men still inherit to their cost and ours" (*Sunday Magazine*, 1873, p. 158). Kitto quaintly remarks, "Lamech had his troubles, as a man with two wives was likely to have, and always has had; but whether or not his troubles grew directly out of his polygamy is not clearly disclosed." II. A PROOF THAT WORLDLY PROSPERITY IS NO NECESSARY SIGN OF THE DIVINE FAVOUR. Lamech was a prosperous man, as things went in those primitive times. His family was numerous and rarely gifted (vers. 20-22). But gifts and graces do not necessarily go together. III. A CASE OF GOD'S DEALINGS BEING MISCONSTRUED AND PERVERTED. "If Cain be avenged sevenfold." The mark set on Cain was not only a protection but a punishment. Whilst it saved him from death, it confined him to a vagabondage almost worse than death. Lamech, however, sees in it not punishment, but only protection. He interprets Cain's case as a premium put by God upon violence; as a Divine connivance at murder. "If God," he argues, "took the part of a homicide, I need not scruple to destroy with my glittering blade any man, old or young, who dares to molest me. God is merciful to murderers." A true case of turning the grace of God into licentiousness, of sinning that grace may abound. IV. AN INSTANCE OF CULTURED AND CIVILIZED GODLESSNESS. Lamech argues that, if God avenged Cain sevenfold (Gen. iv. 15), he, with his new weapon, the sword, will not need nor ask a Divine avenger. He will act for himself on the principle, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and that not merely sevenfold but seventy-and-seven times. The song thus "breathes a spirit of boastful defiance, of trust in his own strength, of violence, and of murder. Of God there is no further acknowledgment than that in a reference to the avenging of Cain, from which Lamech argues his own safety" (Edersheim). Looked at in the light of this savage "sword-song," we cannot but see that the culture and civilization introduced by Lamech and his family were essentially godless; "of the earth, earthy." (T. D. Dickson, M.A.) Lamech:—1. As the first violator of God's primeval law of marriage. That law most strictly enjoined one wife; and doubtless had been observed till Lamech's time. It was the foundation of family peace, of true religion, of social order, of right government in the state. Take away this foundation, or place two instead of one, and the whole fabric shakes, the nation crumbles to pieces. 2. As a murderer. Lust had led to adultery, and adultery had led to violence and murder. 3. As a boaster of his evil deeds. He does the deed of blood, and he is not ashamed of it; nay, he glories in it—nay, glories in it to his own wives. There is no confession of sin here, no repentance, not even Cain's partial humbling. Thus iniquity lifts up its head and waxes bold in countenance, defying God and vaunting before men, as if the deed had been one of honour and not of shame (2 Tim. iii. 2; Ps. lii. 7; x. 3). 4. As one taking refuge in the crimes of others. He makes Cain not a warning, but an example. 5. As one perverting God's forbearance. He trifles with sin, because God showed mercy to another. He tramples on righteousness, because it is tempered with grace. He sets vengeance at nought, because God is long-suffering. 6. As a scoffer. He believes in no judgment, and makes light of sin's recompense. Is not this the mocking that we hear on every side? No day of judgment, no righteous vengeance against sin, no condemnation of the transgressor! God has borne long with the world, He will bear longer with it still! He may do something to dry up the running sore of its miseries; but as for its guilt, He will make no account of that, for "God is love"! But what then becomes of law, or of righteousness, or of the difference between good and evil? And what becomes of God's past proclamations of law, His manifestations of righteousness, His declarations of abhorrence of all sin? (H. Bonar, D.D.)

Ver. 25. Another seed, instead of Abel.—*Seth*:—To Eve is born a third son; and

he comes to them as the gift of love and the pledge of hope. Eve names him Seth, which means "set" or "placed" or "appointed," as being expressly given to her in room of Abel, whom Cain slew. In this her faith shows itself again; for in the case of her three sons it is she herself who gives the names, and in them displays her faith. In Cain, it was simple and triumphant faith, that had not yet entered into conflict, nor known what trials and crosses are. In Abel's, it was the utterance of hope deferred making the heart sick, and realizing strangership on earth and "vanity" in creation. And now, in Seth, it is faith reassured and comforted, brought to rest in God, as able to fulfil to the uttermost all that He had promised.

1. She recognizes God in this. It is not the mere "law of nature"; it is the Lord. It is in the fulfilment of His sovereign purpose that He is doing this.
2. She gives a name expressive of her faith. She calls her infant the appointed one, the substituted one. She saw God making up her loss, filling up the void, providing a seed, through which the promised Deliverer was to come.
3. She fondly calls to mind her martyred son. The way in which she does this, shows the yearning of her heart over him who was taken away, as if his place was one which needed to be supplied, as if there were a blank in her bosom which God only knew how to supply. (H. Bonar, D.D.)

Ver. 26. **Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.**—*Prayer*:—Prayer is speaking to God—on any subject, with any object, in any place, and in any way.

I. PRAYER SO REGARDED IS AN INSTINCT. It seems to be natural to man to look upwards and address himself to his God. Even in the depth of lost knowledge and depraved feeling, the instinct of prayer will assert itself. A nation going to war with another nation will call upon its God for success and victory; and an individual man, from the bedside of a dying wife or child, will invoke the aid of One supposed to be mighty, to stay the course of a disease which the earthly physician has pronounced incurable and mortal. Just as the instinct of nature brings the child in distress or hunger to a father's knee or to a mother's bosom, even so does created man turn in great misery to a faithful Creator, and throw himself upon His compassion and invoke His aid.

II. BUT PRAYER IS A MYSTERY TOO. The mysteriousness of prayer is an argument for its reasonableness. It is not a thing which common men would have thought of or gone after for themselves. The idea of holding a communication with a distant, an unseen, a spiritual being, is an idea too sublime, too ethereal for any but poets or philosophers to have dreamed of, had it not been made instinctive by the original Designer of our spiritual frame.

III. PRAYER IS ALSO A REVELATION. Many things waited for the coming of Christ to reveal them, but prayer waited not. Piety without knowledge there might be; piety without prayer could not be. And so Christ had no need to teach as a novelty the duty or the privilege of prayer. He was able to assume that all pious men, however ignorant, prayed; and to say therefore only this—"When ye pray, say after this manner." (Dean Vaughan.)

The first public revival of religion:—I. Consider THE STATE OF THE TIMES HERE REFERRED TO. "Then"—"then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." What was the state of the times, when this revival of religion took place? It was very bad. There were evidently two parties—the children of men and the sons of God—the men of this world and the men not of this world—the faithful in Christ Jesus and the unbelieving and ungodly. And these, it seems—the worldly-minded and corrupt—were growing greatly in boldness and recklessness of crime. They congregated in cities, and so kept each other in countenance; they had their unions for pleasure, for business, for sin; they poured contempt on God and godliness. Meanwhile the godly seed were few and separated. They worshipped God in privacy in their families. They wanted more of union with each other. It was now necessary to make a stand for true religion. What they believed with their heart, it was high time to confess through their lips.

II. Consider THE PUBLIC REVIVAL OF RELIGION WHICH THEN TOOK PLACE. The pious found it necessary and desirable to unite more closely together; and they found their bond of union in "the name of the Lord." "They began," the margin of our Bible says it may be rendered—"they began to call themselves by the name of the Lord." Probably the expression includes both ideas; they "began to call themselves by the name of the Lord," and they also "began to call upon His name." 1. They "called themselves by His name." They owned themselves openly His people. They were not ashamed of Him—of His name, of His truth, of His cause, nor of His people. They knew God in His grace, in the promise of the Messiah, by the help of the Spirit. What they knew, they believed;

what they believed, they confessed; they "called themselves by the name of the lord." 2. And then they also "called upon the name of the Lord." We cannot think that so many years had passed away, and men had not yet begun to pray by themselves in secret, or with their households in family worship. But "then men began to call upon the name of the Lord" in social, united, and public worship. This probably is the meaning. The enemies of God were publicly united, and the people of God began publicly to unite. Those, for ungodly purposes; these, to promote vital godliness. The former, for profaneness; the latter, for prayer. This was a decided step; when they came out of their family circles and closets, to join together in public worship. Doubtless it attracted much observation, and excited much ridicule. Can you not fancy the ungodly of that day mocking the men of God as they went to their place of worship? disturbing (it may be) the little band when assembled, or following them with their taunts? But in vain. The Spirit of God brought His children to unite as brethren. III. Consider our own INSTRUCTION in this subject. What is the state of our times? Is it good or bad? It is very mixed—much as it was then. Numbers have altogether erroneous views of the way of salvation. Numbers advocate another gospel than that of Jesus Christ. Infidelity also prevails to a fearful extent. But, still, there is a bright side also. There are more than a few now who know and who believe from the heart the promise of the Seed of the woman, and all its glorious fulfilment in the person, in the work, in the doctrine, in the grace of Jesus Christ. These also do "call upon the name of the Lord" in private. Oh! we are not of their number, if we neglect private prayer. Then, also, most persons of true piety do now call upon God in their families. But would we see religion revived? We must "call ourselves after the name of the Lord"; confess Christ faithfully before men; be not ashamed of Christian principles. And there must also be revived delight in public worship. This has ever been the case in revivals of true religion. Religion never flourishes without diligent and faithful use of the appointed means of grace. (*J. Hambleton, M.A.*) *A change in mode of worship*:—Some change is here intimated in the mode of approaching God in worship. The gist of the sentence, however, does not lie in the name of Jehovah. For this term was not then new in itself, as it was used by Eve at the birth of Cain; nor was it new in this connection, as the phrase now appears for the first time, and Jehovah is the ordinary term employed in it ever afterwards to denote the true God. As a proper name, Jehovah is the fit and customary word to enter into a solemn invocation. It is, as we have seen, highly significant. It speaks of the Self-existent, the Author of all existing things, and in particular of man; the Self-manifest, who has shown Himself merciful and gracious to the returning penitent, and with him keeps promise and covenant. Hence it is the custom itself of calling on the name of Jehovah, of addressing God by His proper name, which is here said to have been commenced. Growing man now comprehends all that is implied in the proper name of God, Jehovah, the Author of being, of promise, and of performance. He finds a tongue, and ventures to express the desires and feelings that have been long pent up in his breast, and are now bursting for utterance. These petitions and confessions are now made in an audible voice, and with a holy urgency and courage rising above the depressing sense of self-abasement to the confidence of peace and gratitude. These adorations are also presented in a social capacity, and thereby acquire a public notoriety. The father, the elder of the house, is the master of words, and he becomes the spokesman of the brotherhood in this new relationship into which they have spontaneously entered with their Father in heaven. The spirit of adoption has prompted the confiding and endearing terms, Abba, Father, and now the winged words ascend to heaven, conveying the adorations and aspirations of the assembled saints. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 1-32. This is the book of the generations of Adam.—*Distinguished men*:—I. SOME MEN ARE RENDERED DISTINGUISHED BY THE PECULIARITY OF THE TIMES IN WHICH THEY LIVE. Adam: the first human being to (1) inhabit the earth, (2)

hold communion with God, (3) be led astray. II. SOME MEN ARE RENDERED DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR MARVELLOUS LONGEVITY. Methuselah. III. SOME MEN ARE RENDERED DISTINGUISHED BY THE VILLAINY OF THEIR MORAL CONDUCT. IV. SOME MEN ARE RENDERED DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR ANCESTRAL LINE OF DESCENT. Feeble lights in a grand constellation. V. SOME MEN ARE RENDERED DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR TRUE AND EXALTED PIETY. Enoch. This is a distinction of the very truest kind; it arises from the moral purity of the soul. Lessons: 1. That a good old age is often the heritage of man. 2. That noble lineage is the heritage of others. 3. That true piety may be the heritage of all. 4. That true piety has a substantial reward as well as a permanent record. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

Thoughts:—I. THE LONGEVITY OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN RACE. 1. Their longevity might be explained on natural principles. 2. Their longevity was for special ends. 3. Their longevity contributed to their depravity. II. THE POVERTY OF HUMAN HISTORY. The record of a thousand is in these few verses. III. THE MATERIALIZING TENDENCIES OF SIN. All that is recorded here of these great men, except Enoch, is that they begat sons and daughters. They thought only of material things. IV. THE INEVITABLENESS OF MAN'S MORTALITY. It is said of each, "He died." No money can bribe Death, no power avert his blow. V. THE BLESSEDNESS OF PRACTICAL GODLINESS. "Enoch walked with God." (*Homilist.*)

The genealogy:—1. It is a very honourable one. The Son of God Himself descended from it. 2. Neither Cain nor Abel have any place in it. Abel was slain before he had any children, and could not; and Cain, by his sin, had covered his name with infamy, and should not. Adam's posterity, therefore, after a lapse of one hundred and thirty years, must begin anew. 3. The honour done to Seth and his posterity was of grace; for he is said to have been born in Adam's likeness, and after his image. Man was made after the image of God; but this being lost, they are born corrupt, the children of a corrupt father. What is true of all mankind is here noted of Seth, because he was reckoned as Adam's firstborn. He, therefore, like all others, was by nature a child of wrath; and what he or any of his posterity were different from this, they were by grace. 4. Though many of the names in this genealogy are passed over without anything being said of their piety, yet we are not from hence to infer that they were impious. Many might be included among them who called upon the name of the Lord, and who are denominated the sons of God, though nothing is personally related of them. (*A. Fuller.*)

The original vitality of men:—Whether we are to think that the original vitality of the human frame faded only by slow degrees, or whether there was something salubrious in the air of the ages after Eden, has often been asked, but can never be answered. Some have fancied that the immense lives ascribed to the antediluvians imply that each name represents a tribe, the lives of whose leading members are added together; others have understood the years to mean only months; while others have sought to prove that from Adam to Abraham the year had no more than three months, from Abraham to Joseph eight, and from Joseph's time twelve months, as at present. But such explanations have no sufficient warrant, and it is perhaps best, on the whole, to keep in mind what Bishop Harold Browne has pointed out, that "numbers and dates are liable in the course of ages to become obscured and exaggerated." It is quite possible that some of the early Rabbis, desirous of emulating the fabled age ascribed by heathen nations to their heroes and demigods, may have added to the Bible figures, so as to secure the patriarchs an equal honour. Our present bodies certainly could not live more than two hundred years, at the very most, from the decay of one part after another, and hence we must either take Bishop Browne's solution of antediluvian longevity, or suppose that exceptional circumstances in the first ages produced exceptional results. (*C. Geikie, D.D.*)

The apostate and the godly seeds:—I. IT IS ESPECIALLY IN THE LINE OF CAIN THAT WE FIND THE ARTS OF SOCIAL AND CIVILIZED LIFE CULTIVATED. They increased in power, in wealth, and in luxury. In almost all earthly advantages they attained to a superiority over the more simple and rural family of Seth. And they afford an instance of the high cultivation which a people may often possess who are altogether irreligious and ungodly, as well as of the progress which they may make in the arts and embellishments of life. II. THE GODLY SEED WAS PERPETUATED IN THE FAMILY OF SETH, whose name signifies "appointed, placed, or firmly founded." For on him now was to rest the hope of the promised Messiah. So God ordained, and so Eve devoutly believed. The posterity of Seth maintained the cause of religion in the midst of increasing degeneracy. It is true they did not always maintain it very successfully; perhaps they did not always

maintain it very consistently. In the first place, in the days of Enos, the grandson of Adam, a signal revival took place among those who adhered to the true faith (iv. 26). Again, secondly, several generations later, contemporary with Lamech in the house of Cain, lived Enoch in the family of Seth, the seventh from Adam. He was raised up as a remarkable prophet, and the burden of his prophetic strains is preserved to us by the Apostle Jude (vers. 14, 15). Once more, in the third place, still later in this melancholy period, the Lord raised up Noah, or Noe, as his name is often written. That name signifies "comfort" or "consolation." Thus, in three successive eras, the Lord remarkably interposed to arrest the progress of the sad apostasy. 1. It is interesting in this view to consider the longevity of the patriarchs. The length of their days well fitted them for being the depositories of the revealed will of God, preserving and transmitting it from age to age; and so many of them surviving together to so late a period must have formed a holy and reverend company of teachers and witnesses in the world. So, at least, it should have been; since, at all events, this longevity of the fathers was a boon and privilege to the Church. It served the purpose of the written Word. It transmitted, not a treacherous and variable tradition passing quickly through many hands, such as some would fondly prefer even to the Bible, but a sure record of the truth of God. Hence it was fitted to rally with no uncertain sound, and not by the artifice of any dead and nominal uniformity, but on a trustworthy principle of living unity, the Church of the living God. If the effect was otherwise—if the testimony of the long-lived fathers then, like the teaching of the abiding Word now, failed to keep the sons of God at one among themselves, and separate from the world, their sin was on that account all the greater. Nor was the agency wanting which alone can give a spiritual discernment of the truth. The Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, was, throughout these ages, continually striving with men, and by the Spirit Christ was ever preaching to the successive generations of that antediluvian world. 2. But it is not the length of their lives only that is to be taken into account when we would estimate the effect which the testimony of the godly patriarchs was fitted to have in stemming the torrent of ungodliness. Their deaths also must have been instructive and significant. That they all lived so long, witnessing for God, believing and showing forth His righteousness, was a standing reproof to the wicked. That, long as they might live, they all died at last, gave a warning more affecting still. The death of each, coming surely in the end, though long delayed, must have rung emphatically the knell of judgment. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. Providence hath made a sufficient register of the Church's rise and growth and state, for faith, not for curiosity. 2. God's will is made out, that His Church was to be propagated by generation, not creation. 3. The generations of the Church were ordered to be from Adam fallen, that grace might appear. 4. God's blessing makes man only fruitful to propagate His Church. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Nobodyism*:—You must have already noticed that this chapter is as true as any chapter in human history, especially as it shows so clearly, what we ourselves have found out, that the most of people are extremely uninteresting. They are names, and nothing more. They are producers and consumers, tenants and taxpayers, and that is all; they are without wit, music, piquancy, enterprise, or keenness of sympathy. Such people were Seth and Enos, Mahalaleel and Jared; respectable, quiet, plodding; said "good-night" to one another regularly, and remarked briefly upon the weather, and died. Just what many nowadays seem to do. Now, I want to show you that such people are often unjustly estimated, and to remind you that if all stars were of the same size the sky would look very odd—much like a vast chess-board with circles instead of squares. I want to remind you also that really the best part of human history is never written at all. Family life, patient service, quiet endurance, the training of children, the resistance of temptation—these things are never mentioned by the historian. Because we admire brilliance we need not despise usefulness. When your little child is ill, he needs kindness more than genius, and it will be of small service to him if his mother is good at epigrams but bad at wringing out a wet cloth for his burning brow. I am, then, quite willing to admit that Seth and Enos, Mahalaleel and Jared, are not one-thousandth part so well known by name as the man in the moon, but I believe they did more real good than that famous character ever attempted. You should remember, too, that a long flat road may be leading up to a great mountain. There are some very plain and uninteresting miles out of Geneva, but every one of them brings you nearer Mont Blanc. Oh, so dull that long road from Seth to Jared, but round the corner

you find Enoch, the Mont Blanc of his day! Many a child who never heard the name of Jared knows well the name of Enoch. So you do not know to what high hill your life may be quietly leading up. Even if you yourself are nobody, your son may be a man of renown, or his son may be a valiant and mighty man. Enoch reaches the point of renown in godliness; he walked with God three hundred years at least; his walk was on the high hills—so high that he simply stepped into the next world without troubling Death to go through his long, dark process. "He was not, for God took——." As if he had walked so near that God opened the window and took him in; and we, too, might pass in as easily if we walked on the same sunny heights. But we are in valleys and pits, and God must needs send Death to dig us out and send us to heaven by a longer road. After Enoch, we come to Methuselah. He, too, is well known, although for nothing but length of days apparently; yet as a matter of fact he ought to be known for something much more highly distinguished. He was the grandfather of Noah; that is his glory, not his mere age! You cannot tell what your boy may be, or his boy; so keep yourself up to the mark in all mental health and moral integrity, lest you transmit a plague to posterity. It may be that Nature is only resting in you; presently she will produce a man! Precisely the same thing we have in this chapter we find in the catalogue of the names of the early disciples of our Lord. We know Peter and James and John. But how little as compared with them do we know of Thomas and Bartholomew and Philip, of Lebbaeus, and Simon the Canaanite? Yet they were all members of one company, and servants of the same Lord. We speak of men of renown, forgetting that their renown is principally derived from men who have no renown themselves! Unknown people make other people known. The hills rest upon the plain ground. Besides, there is a bad repute as well as a fair fame: Judas Iscariot is known as widely as the Apostle John! Be not envious of those who have high place and name; could we know them better, perhaps we should find that they long for the quietness of home, and sigh for release from the noise and strain of popular applause. Happily, too, we should remember that a deed may be immortal, when the mere name of the doer may be lost in uncertainty. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

The Divine image in man hidden.—A researcher of art in Italy, who, reading in some book that there was a portrait of Dante painted by Giotto, was led to suspect where it had been placed. There was an apartment used as an outhouse for the storing of wood, hay, and the like. He besought and obtained permission to examine it. Clearing out the rubbish and experimenting upon the whitewashed wall, he soon detected the signs of the long-hidden portrait. Little by little, with loving skill, he opened up the sad, thoughtful, stern face of the old Tuscan poet. Sin has done for man what the whitewash did for the painting. It has covered over the likeness of God upon the soul; and it is only by the Spirit of God Himself that the long-hidden likeness can be manifested again.

Long life and death of the patriarchs.—From the 4th verse to the 22nd two things chiefly are noted, the long life of these fathers and their assured death. Many years they continued, yea, many hundreds; but at last they died. Death was long ere it came, but at last it came. 1. And touching their long life, some questions are moved: First, why it was so long; secondly, whence or how it came to be so. Of the first, two causes are alleged, one for the propagation of mankind so much the faster and more speedily, the other for continuance of remembrance of matters, and deducing of them to posterity the better. The indifferent mixture, equal temperature, and good disposition of the chief and first qualities, heat, cold, moisture, dryness, is in nature the ground of life, and by all probability in that beginning this was so more than now; their diet better, and temperance more from surfeiting and fleshly pleasures than is now; their minds quieter from eating and gnawing cares, the shortness of man's life, since, iniquity then being not so strong, many woes and vexations were unfound; and lastly, the fruits of the earth, in their purity, strength, and virtue, not corrupted, as after the flood, and ever since still more and more, might be to them a true cause, and a most forcible cause, of good health, greater strength, and longer life than ever since by nature could be. 2. Their certain death is noted, to show the truth of God's Word, ever infallible and unmovable. The Lord said, if they did eat they should die: they did eat, then death must follow; for He will be true, do what we can, and we shall find it so. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, but he died; Sheth nine hundred and twelve, and he died; Methuselah nine hundred threescore and nine, and yet he died. Died, died, is the end of all, that God might be true, how long soever they lived. The same word of the Lord

is no falser now than then, but the same for ever. Would God this repetition of death, death, to all these fathers might make us as duly to remember it as we are sure truly to find it—to find it, I say; and God knoweth, not we, how soon. “To-day I, to-morrow thou,” saith the wise man. His conceit was not unprofitable that imagined man’s life to be as a tree, at the root whereof two mice lay gnawing and nibbling without ceasing, a white mouse and a black. The white mouse he conceived to be the day, and the black mouse the night, by which day and night man’s life, as a tree, by continual gnawing, at last is ended. Who can now tell how far these two mice have eaten upon him? Haply the tree that seemeth yet strong ere night may shake, and ere day again fall flat down. Oh, let us think of this uncertainty! But you see the snow, how blind it makes a man by his great whiteness; so doth this world, by his manifold pleasures, baits, and allurements, dazzle our eyes, and blind us so, that we forget to die; we dream of life when there is no hope, and we cannot hear of it to go away. O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things, yea, unto him that is yet able to receive meat. (*Bishop Babington.*) *Lessons from the longevity of the antediluvians*:—1. Now, here is a lesson in human experience which one would think would silence for ever the advocates of the theory of human perfectibility. The race of antediluvians were blessed with all possible capacities and facilities for indefinite improvement in knowledge and happiness. They were not called to die when they had just began to live, nor to quit their investigations for ever when they had just learned how to study. Men’s minds might have been formed and disciplined in the revolution of nine hundred years under an accumulation of influences and circumstances in the highest degree powerful and favourable. A ladder was let down to them from heaven; but instead of rising thither, they employed every endowment of being, and every capability of life, for growth in unkindness, and corrupted themselves to such a height before God, that their sufferance on earth was no longer possible. So much for human perfectibility. 2. Only one event is recorded alike of them all, no matter what may have been their situation in life—whether princes of the earth or beggars in rags. Their life is reduced down to the bald, unvaried epitaph—“He died”! The only thing of absolute value is that which connects us with God. Crowns are playthings; dukedoms and dominions of no more importance than the grains of sand that go to make up an ant-hill. 3. The consideration of the great age of the antediluvians, and its effect upon their state on earth, might lead to some faint conception of what an apostle calls the “power of an endless life.” (1) The power of such a life for the increase of holiness. (2) In the progressive accumulation of depravity. 4. We are all naturally as wicked as the race of mankind destroyed by the deluge. And doubtless it will be less tolerable for us than the antediluvians in the Day of Judgment. 5. The mere duration of years does not constitute a long life, but the fulfilment of life’s purposes. 6. There was a time in the life of every ungodly antediluvian in which his wickedness had reached such a point, his long habits of sin had gained such strength, that all hope of his salvation departed. At such a moment, though long before the close of his mortal career, it might have been said with awful emphasis—“He died”! (*Christian Age.*) *God’s way of writing history*:—Bible history is written on the principle of abridgment and selection. God Himself is the abridger and selector. He has written the story of His own world in His own way, and according to His own plan, keeping such things as these in view—1. What would most glorify Himself. 2. What would most benefit the Church upon the whole. 3. What would mark distinctly the stages leading on to the incarnation of His Son. 4. What would prove the true humanity of Messiah as the seed of the woman, and so the embodiment of the grace and truth wrapt up in the first promise to man. The first verse carries us back to the earlier chapters, and repeats the statement already given as to man’s creation in the Divine image. It is plain from it that God desires us to look at and ponder such things as these—1. Man’s creation by God. 2. His creation in the likeness of God. 3. His creation, male and female. 4. His being “blessed” by God, and that he enters this world as a blessed being, not under the curse at all. 5. His receiving the name of Adam, or man, from God Himself, as if God specially claimed the right of nomenclature to Himself. How much importance must God attach to these things when He thus repeats them at so brief an interval! He does not repeat in vain. Every word of God is “pure,” and it is full of meaning, even though we may not now see it all. It is not a mere grain or atom; it is a seed, a root. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Ten*

biographies in one chapter:—A single chapter contains ten biographies. Such is God's estimate of man, and man's importance! How unlike man's estimate of himself! How unlike are the biographies contained in this chapter to those volumes of biography over which are spread the story of a single life! Is not this man-worship, hero-worship? And was it not to prevent this that God has hid from us the details of primitive history—everything that would magnify man and man's doings? Just as He has taken pains to prevent the grosser idolatries of sun-worship and star-worship by exhibiting these orbs in the first chapter as His own handiwork, so in this fifth chapter He has sought to anticipate and prevent the more refined idolatry, not only of past ages, when man openly and grossly deified man, but of these last days, when man is worshipping man in the most subtle of all ways, and multiplying the stories of man's wisdom, or prowess, or goodness, so as to hide God from our eyes, and give to man an independent position and importance, from which God has been so careful to exclude him. We might say, too, that this chapter is God's protest against that special development of hero-worship which is to be exhibited in the last Antichrist, when God shall be set aside and man be set up as all. The importance attached to these recorded names is just this, that they belong to the line of the woman's seed. It was this that made them worthy of memory. The chain to which some precious jewel is attached is chiefly noticeable because of the gem that it suspends. The steps which led up to the temple were mainly important because of the temple to which they led. So it was the connection of these ten worthies of the world's first age with the great Coming One that gave them their importance. Standing where we now do, far down the ages, and looking back on the men of early days, we are like one tracing some great river back to its distant source amid the lonely hills. The varied beauties of its banks, however great, yet derive their chief attraction and interest from the mighty city reared upon its margin, at some turn of its far downward course, and from the mighty ones which that city has given birth to. It is Bethlehem that gives all its interest to the river whose beginnings this chapter traces; or rather, it is He who was there born of a woman—Jesus the son of Abraham, the son of Adam. Save in their bearing upon Him, how unmeaning do these names appear! (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 3. And Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.—Human depravity:—I. THAT HUMAN DEPRAVITY IS TOTAL AS TO ITS INFLUENCE OVER THE HUMAN MIND. By the phrase, human depravity, we mean that corruption of our nature, whereby we are inclined to sin rather than to holiness. The seat of this depravity is within; external forms of wickedness, in words and actions, are only the results and expressions of it, &c. By the heart, we mean the mind and all its faculties and powers; and by the depravity of the heart, we mean that principle within it, call it disposition, energy, or cause, whence those powers receive their inclination and bias, and from the quality of which, they, and the actions resulting from them, derive their character. II. I now proceed to prove, that THIS DEPRAVITY IS UNIVERSAL IN ITS PREVALENCE AMONGST MANKIND. 1. It exists in all ages. Our proof of this is in universal history. 2. It exists in all countries. 3. In all communities. 4. In all families. 5. In all individuals. III. IT IS INHERENT IN OUR NATURE, IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE FALL OF ADAM. (*T. Raffles, D.D.*)

Ver. 5. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.—The life and death of Adam:—I. THE SUBJECT OF THIS BRIEF NARRATION. Adam, the first of men. Here it may be profitable to notice him most attentively. 1. As a compound being, formed of different component parts. (1) Composed of matter, or earth, as to his body. (2) Composed of pure spirit, called "The Breath of Life," as to his soul. 2. As to the common head of mankind; both our natural and moral head. (1) He is our natural head, or common parent; for Adam must have been the father, as Eve was the mother, of all living (Gen. iii. 20). This renders the blood of all mankind the same (Acts xvii. 26); and our interests the same; for all mankind are brethren. Being thus united, we should live in unity (Psa. cxxxiii. 1). (2) He was our moral head, or representative. He acted for us, and his conduct affected the state of all his posterity. 3. As the chief of sinners. 4. As a subject of God's redeeming mercy. 5. As a figure or type of Christ. II. HIS LIFE. He lived nine hundred and thirty years. His life may be considered—1. In its origin. Divine (Luke iii. 38). 2. In its progress, as singularly diversified. 3. In its duration, as graciously protracted. From the protracted

life of Adam learn the great end for which our lives are continued; that we may glorify God by getting and doing good. III. HIS DEATH; HE DIED. His death may be considered—1. As a dissolution of first principles. He died; he was not annihilated, but merely dissolved. His body returned to dust, his soul to God (Eccles. xii. 7). 2. As the fruit of sin. 3. As a release from the vanity and evils of this world. 4. As a certain indication of our own. (*Sketches of Sermons.*)

Preparation for death:—A man, who lived in forgetfulness of God and of his soul, went one day into a church while the chapter which has furnished us with our text was being read there. When he heard that long and monotonous catalogue of the names and ages of the patriarchs, his first inclination was to smile; he said to himself that there might have been chosen for the reading a less dry and a more edifying subject. He remained, however, and continued to listen, compelled to attention in spite of himself. Soon a thought struck him. He could not long listen with indifference to that solemn refrain, which came back always the same after these lives, so lengthened, of the patriarchs, "And he died." That is, he said to himself, what all these men had to pass through who lived so long on earth; they have all finished by dying. What happened to the patriarchs, happens also to all men without exception. All finish with death. What happens to all men must, therefore, happen to myself. I also shall finish with death. How am I prepared to receive that death which every day advances towards me, and from which no power in the world can shield me? What will be its consequences in my case? Will they be happy or unhappy? Will it be a heaven? Will it be a hell? Solemn question, which I have lost sight of till the present, but which I can no longer let remain unsolved. And from that moment he became as serious as he had hitherto been careless, with regard to his eternal interests. I. The first way of acting with regard to death, is NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT AT ALL; that is the way of men of the world. They can so occupy themselves with the things of this life, that they forget, in some sort, that this life is to have an end. 1. Such a young man thus forgets death in the stupefaction of pleasures. 2. Another young man is thus brought to forget death in the preoccupation of work. 3. The old man himself often comes to conceal from himself the death which is already so near him. He can no longer work; he can no longer deliver himself up to the noisy pleasures of youth, but he can still procure distractions for himself, which beguile his *ennui*, and remove from him the thought of death; he can still throw the dice, or hold the cards, and the game will make him forget the flight of time. Or in the moments of idleness, say, when he is thrown back upon his own reflections, he will transport himself in idea into the past; he will turn over in his memory, and with inward satisfaction, too, the scenes of his youth and of his riper age, and that preoccupation with the past will hinder him from thinking about the future. And, in a word, there are many means of diverting one's thoughts, and deceiving one's self with regard to death; but is such conduct wise and reasonable? is it really for our interest? II. A second manner of acting with regard to death consists in PERSUADING ONE'S SELF THAT EVERYTHING ENDS AT DEATH; this is the way of infidels. The men whom I have in view do not at all divert their thoughts from the necessity which is laid upon them to die; they do not fear (at least, to judge from their pretensions), to look in the face the thought of death; they speak voluntarily and coolly of it; they believe that they possess the secret of not fearing it. They mock the people simple enough to trouble themselves with what is to follow death. As regards themselves—more enlightened and freed from those vulgar prejudices—they are convinced that what is called our soul is but a result of physical organization, and that, in consequence, it cannot survive the dissolution of the body; that judgment to come, heaven, hell, and life eternal, are so many idle fancies of weak minds. By means of such a conviction they pretend to live tranquilly, and not to fear death. Annihilation is a sad prospect; there is in the thought of annihilation something which horrifies our nature, and which we cannot look at without shuddering. What strange consolation to oppose to the trials of life is the future expected by the infidel! There is another existence after this, and the infidels themselves are forced, sooner or later, to do homage to that truth. At the approach of death they see the fragile stage of their infidelity fall in pieces like a house of cards at the breath of a child; and the anguish of their conscience becomes then an argument, tardy but terrible, in favour of a life to come. It is not, then, in the ranks of infidels that we shall find the best way of preparing for death. III. A third way of conducting one's self with regard to death consists in MAKING AN EFFORT TO MERIT BY ONE'S WORKS, FUTURE HAPPINESS; it is the way with self-righteous

men. If, then, a man observed the law of God perfectly, he could wait fearlessly for death, assured beforehand that the consequences will be happy in his case; he could present himself with confidence at the judgment of God, and ask from Him eternal life as a recompense which he has merited. But, as there is not a single man that has perfectly observed the law of God, there is not one who can procure for himself by that means a solid peace in view of death. IV. But that peace which we seek in vain in ourselves, might it not be found in CONFIDENCE IN THE GOODNESS OF GOD? It is there at least that many persons seek it. Here again, we are forced to overthrow that pretended peace as dangerous and illusive. No! it is in vain that you pretend to found your peace in presence of death on the goodness of God, while leaving in the shade His justice. The goodness of God, separated from His justice, is but a frail reed, which will pierce the hand of the imprudent one who rests on it. V. We shall need, you see, in order to our being able to die tranquilly, A MEANS OF PREPARING FOR DEATH THAT WOULD SATISFY THE JUSTICE OF GOD, AT THE SAME TIME THAT IT WOULD DO HOMAGE TO HIS GOODNESS. It would be necessary that at the very time when His goodness displayed itself in the pardon of the sinner, His justice should preserve its rights in the punishment of the sin. If there existed a system founded on truth, and satisfying that double condition, it would assuredly be the best means, or rather the only means, of preparing us to die tranquilly. Now, that system exists, that means is found, and you have already named it in your thought; it is faith in Jesus Christ. After all human systems have been tried in succession, and been found false and powerless, how joyfully the means which God Himself has proposed, and which is the only one that can give peace to our hearts, is returned to; that system, simple as well as Divine, which is summed up in the words, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" Faith in Christ presents the secret of satisfying at once the justice of God and His goodness. The Cross of Christ unites what an eternal abyss seemed to separate. (*A. Monod, D.D.*)

Adam dies:—Then he died! He by whom death came in at last fell under it. He returned to dust. His sin found him out, after a long pursuit of nine hundred and thirty years, and laid him low. The first Adam dies! The tallest, goodliest palm-tree of the primeval paradise is laid low. The first Adam dies; neither in life nor in death transmitting to us aught of blessing. He dies as our forerunner; he who led the way to the tomb. The first Adam dies, and we die in him; but the second Adam dies, and we live in Him! The first Adam's grave proclaims only death; the second Adam's grave announces life—"I am the resurrection and the life." We look into the grave of the one, and we see only darkness, corruption, and death; we look into the grave of the other, and we find there only light, incorruption, and life. We look into the grave of the one, and we find that he is still there, his dust still mingling with its fellow-dust about it; we look into the grave of the other, and find that He is not there, He is risen—risen as our forerunner into the heavenly paradise, the home of the risen and redeemed. We look into the grave of the first Adam, and see in him the first-fruits of them that have died, the millions that have gone down to that prison-house whose gates he opened; we look into the tomb of the second Adam, and we see in Him the first-fruits of them that are to rise, the first-fruits of that bright multitude, that glorified band, who are to come forth from that cell, triumphing over death, and rising to the immortal life; not through the tree which grew in the earthly paradise, but through Him whom that tree prefigured—through Him who was dead and is alive, and who liveth for evermore, and who has the keys of hell and death. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*)

And he died:—It is said that the striking thing in this chapter is the painful repetition of the words, "and he died." In a popular magazine some years ago there appeared an article, "An Hour Among the Tombstones," in which the writer gives the following:—"In memory of Richard B—, who died August 1, 18—. He was for many years an inhabitant of this parish." Was he? Well most people are "inhabitants" of some "parish"; and if they live long enough, and are not over-fidgety, of the same parish for "many years." That is little enough to say of Richard B—. But what sort of an "inhabitant" was he? Cross and surly, miserly and close-fisted, selfish and ungodly; or, a good man, fearing his God, and blessing his neighbour? Good stone-mason, come hither. You have written too much or too little. Either cut out what is on yonder stone, or else cut in something more creditable to him "who was for many years an inhabitant of this parish." The dissolution of past ages a memento for posterity:—One Guericus, hearing these words read in the Church, out of the Book of Genesis: "And all the days that

Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died; all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died; and all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years, and he died; and all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years, and he died," &c.,—hearing, I say, these words read, the very conceit of death wrought so strongly upon him, and made so deep an impression in his mind, that he retired from the world and gave himself wholly to devotion, that so he might die the death of the godly, and arrive more safely at the haven of felicity, which is nowhere to be found in this world. And thus should we do when we look back to the many ages that are past before us, but thus we do not: like those that go the Indies, we look not on the many that have been swallowed up by the waves, but on some few that have got by the voyage: we regard not the millions that are dead before us, but have our eyes set on the lesser number that survive with us; and hence it comes to pass that our passage out of this world is so little minded. (*J. Spencer.*)

VER. 24.—Enoch walked with God.—*The life and translation of Enoch:*—I. Consider the LIFE of ENOCH. He "walked with God." These words seem to imply that Enoch possessed a remarkable resemblance to God in moral excellence; that he realized God's presence, and enjoyed His communion in an extraordinary measure, and that he publicly avowed himself to be on God's side, and stood almost alone in doing so. We notice especially the quietness and unconsciousness of his walk with God. The life of David or of Job resembled a stormy spring day, made up of sweeping tempest, angry glooms, and sudden bursts of windy sunshine; that of Enoch is a soft grey autumn noon, with one mild haze of brightness covering earth and heaven. II. Notice ENOCH'S PUBLIC WORK OF PROTEST AND PROPHECY. The Epistle of Jude supplies us with new information about Enoch's public work. He not only characterized and by implication condemned his age, but predicted the coming of the last great judgment of God. He announced it—(1) as a glorious and overpowering event; (2) as one of conclusive judgment and convincing demonstration. III. Look now at ENOCH'S TRANSLATION. How striking in its simplicity is the phrase, "He was not, for God took him!" The circumstances of his translation are advisedly concealed: "translated that he should not see death." Many a hero has gathered fame because he stood "face to face with death," and has outfaced the old enemy; but death never so much as dared to "look into Enoch's eye as it kindled into immortality." The reasons why this honour was conferred on him were probably—(1) to show his transcendent excellence; (2) to abash an infidel world; (3) to prove that there was another state of being, and to give a pledge of this to all future ages. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *Enoch's life:*—Few words are needed to describe the salient features of the majority of human lives. It is not needful to write a volume to tell whether a man has spent a noble or a wasted life. One stroke of the pen, one solitary word, may be enough. I. HERE IS A LIFE SUDDENLY AND PREMATURELY CUT SHORT; for, although Enoch lived 365 years, it was not half the usual age of the men of his day. II. A LIFE SPENT AMID SURROUNDING WICKEDNESS. III. A LIFE SPENT IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. In the expression "walked with God," there is the idea of—(1) strong persistence and determination; (2) progress. IV. A LIFE OF NOBLE TESTIMONY. V. A LIFE CROWNED BY TRANSLATION. His translation was—(1) A reminder to the men of his day that there was another state above and beyond the present; (2) an intimation of the final reward of the saints. (*J. W. Atkinson.*) *Enoch, one of the world's great teachers:*—Three strange things in connection with Enoch's history: (1) That so little is said about him; (2) the comparative shortness of his stay on earth; (3) the manifest singularity of the life he lived. I. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS LIFE. 1. "He walked with God." 2. "He had the testimony that he pleased God." II. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS TRANSLATION. 1. That death is not a necessity of human nature. 2. That there is a sphere of human existence beyond this. 3. That there is a God in the universe who approves of goodness. 4. That the mastering of sin is the way to a grand destiny. III. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS PREACHING (Jude 14, 15). (1) The advent of the Judge. (2) The gathering of the saints. (3) The conversion of sinners. (*Homilist.*) *The heavenly walk:*—I. THAT IT MAY BE PURSUED NOTWITHSTANDING THE PREVALENCY OF SIN AROUND. II. THAT IT MAY BE PURSUED IN THE VERY PRIME OF BUSY MANHOOD. III. THAT IT MAY BE PURSUED IN THE VERY MIDST OF DOMESTIC ANXIETY AND CARE. Many people have lost their religion through the increase of domestic cares. But a godly soul can walk with God in family life, and take all its offspring in the

same holy path. Enoch would instruct his children in the right way. He would pray for them. He would commend them to his Divine friend. Happy the home where such a godly parent is at its head. IV. THAT IT MAY BE PURSUED INTO THE VERY PORTALS OF HEAVEN AND ETERNAL BLISS. Enoch walked with God, and one day walked right into heaven with Him. Heaven is but the continuation of the holy walk of earth. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Enoch: accounting for men's disappearance from the earth:—"God took him."* I. WE SHOULD TAKE AN INTEREST IN THE DESTINY OF MEN. II. WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE HAND OF GOD IN THE REMOVAL OF MEN. III. WE SHOULD BELIEVE IN THE PARTICULARITY OF GOD'S OVERSIGHT OF MEN. When God takes a good man—(1) He takes that man to a higher blessing, (2) He will fill that man's place as a Christian worker upon earth. (3) He trains survivors towards self-reliance and emulous work. Or thus: 1. God took him—the assertion of a sovereign right. 2. God took him—an illustration of Divine regard. 3. God took him—an assurance of eternal blessedness. 4. God took him—a pledge that all like him will be associated. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Enoch:—*I. ENOCH AS TO HIS AGE. 1. It was an age of longevity. 2. It was an ungodly age. II. ENOCH AS TO HIS RELIGION. 1. He was independent. 2. Practical. III. ENOCH AS TO HIS DEPARTURE. 1. His departure implies a future state. (1) Analogy says so. (2) The state of the world shows that there is a hereafter to square the accounts. (3) Revelation proves it. 2. His departure shows that there is a reward to the faithful. (1) Present satisfaction. (2) Future felicity. Heb. iv. 9. (*W. Griffiths.*) *Enoch:—*I. WHAT IS MEANT BY ENOCH'S WALKING WITH GOD? 1. That he was well-pleasing to God (Heb. xi. 5). Amity, friendship, intimacy, love. 2. That he realized the Divine presence (Heb. xi. 6). God was to him a living Friend, in whom he confided, and by whom he was loved. 3. That he had very familiar intercourse with the Most High. 4. That his intercourse with God was continuous. He did not take a turn or two with God and then leave His company, but walked with God for hundreds of years. He did not commune with God by fits and starts, but abode in the conscious love of God. 5. That his life was progressive. At the end of two hundred years he was not where he began; he was not in the same company, but he had gone forward in the right way. II. WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WERE CONNECTED WITH ENOCH'S WALKING WITH GOD? 1. The details of his life are very few. Quite enough for us to know that he walked with God. 2. It is a mistake to suppose that he was placed in very advantageous circumstances for piety. (1) A public man. (2) A family man. (3) Living in a very evil age. Still he bore his witness for God. III. WHAT WAS THE CLOSE OF ENOCH'S WALK? 1. He finished his work early. 2. He was missed. "Not found" (Heb. xi. 5). 3. His departure was a testimony. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Enoch's walk with God:—*In "Kitto's Daily Bible Readings" there is an exceedingly pleasing piece, illustrating what it must be to walk with God by the figure of a father's taking his little son by the hand and walking forth with him upon the breezy hills. He says, "As that child walks with thee, so do thou walk with God. That child loves thee now. The world—the cold cruel world—has not yet come between his heart and thine. His love now is the purest and most beautiful he will ever feel, or thou wilt ever receive. Cherish it well, and as that child walks lovingly with thee, so do thou walk lovingly with God." It is a delight to such children to be with their father. The roughness of the way or of the weather is nothing to them: it is joy enough to go for a walk with father. There is a warm, tender, affectionate grip of the hand and a beaming smile of the eye as they look up to father while he conducts them over hill and dale. Such a walk is humble too, for the child looks upon its father as the greatest and wisest man that ever lived. He considers him to be the incarnation of everything that is strong and wise, and all that his father says or does he admires. As he walks along he feels for his father the utmost affection, but his reverence is equally strong: he is very near his father, but yet he is only a child, and looks up to his father as his king. Moreover, such a walk is one of perfect confidence. The boy is not afraid of missing his way, he trusts implicitly his father's guidance. His father's arm will screen him from all danger, and therefore he does not so much as give it a thought—why should he? If care is needed as to the road, it is his father's business to see to it, and the child, therefore, never dreams of anxiety—why should he? If any difficult place is to be passed, the father will have to lift the boy *over* it, or help him through it; the child meanwhile is merry as a bird—why should he not be? Thus should the believer walk with God, resting on eternal tenderness and rejoicing in undoubted love. What an instructive walk a child has with a wise, communicative parent!

How many of his little puzzles are explained to him, how everything about him is illuminated by the father's wisdom. The boy, every step he takes, becomes the wiser for such companionship. Oh, happy children of God, who have been taught of their Father while they have walked with Him! Enoch must have been a man of profound knowledge and great wisdom as to Divine things. He must have dived into the deep things of God beyond most men. His life must also have been a holy life, because he walked with God, and God never walks out of the way of holiness. If we walk with God, we must walk according to truth, justice, and love. The Lord has no company with the unjust and rebellious, and therefore we know that he who walked with God must have been an upright and holy man. Enoch's life must, moreover, have been a happy one. Who could be unhappy with such a companion! With God himself to be with us the way can never be dreary. Did Enoch walk with God? Then his pilgrimage must have been safe. Nothing can harm the man who is walking with the Lord God at his right hand. And oh, what an honourable thing it is to walk with the Eternal! Many a man would give thousands to walk with a king. (*Ibid.*) *High ground*.—I. WHAT IS IT TO WALK WITH GOD? 1. Reconciliation with God. 2. Spiritual life (Gal. v. 25). 3. None walk with God closely but those who love Him supremely. 4. Those with whom we walk, and whom we love, we are desirous to please and oblige. And those who walk with God delight to do His will. 5. Communion with God. 6. Similarity of disposition and feeling. II. THE ADVANTAGES ARISING FROM SUCH A WALK. 1. It gives a real enjoyment, for which we are not at all dependent on external things, and of which nothing in this world can deprive us. 2. It sweetens all earthly pleasures and pains. 3. The man who walks with God learns much of the will of God. 4. Such a walk is a preparation for the enjoyment of God in heaven. (*Benson Bailey.*) *Enoch*.—I. ENOCH'S PIETY. 1. Walking with God includes—(1) A true knowledge of God—of His character and laws; of His will concerning us, &c. (2) Reconciliation to God (Amos iii. 3). In Jesus alone can this be effected. (3) Cheerful obedience to the commands of God (1 John ii. 3). (4) Devotional intercourse with God. Meditation. Prayer. Praise. (5) Assimilation to the holy image of God (2 Cor. iii. 18). (6) Advancement in all the things of God. 2. Walking with God is associated with—(1) True dignity. (2) Real pleasure. (3) Permanent security. And (4) eternal advantages. II. HIS DISTINGUISHED REMOVAL. 1. "He was not." No more among men. (1) He was not allowed to remain in a troublesome and ungodly world. (2) He was not subjected to the, otherwise, universal stroke of mortality. Exempted from disease, death, and corruption. 2. "God took him." (1) In a peculiar way. Body and soul unseparated. (2) God took him to Himself—to His own immediate presence, "where is fulness of joy," &c. (3) God took him; and thus signalized and honoured distinguished piety. Application: Learn—1. The nature of true piety. To walk with God. 2. The reward of true piety. Interested in God's gracious care; and ultimately raised to His own Divine presence. 3. Removal of Enoch teaches immortality of soul. (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *Enoch's walk with God*.—I. EXPLAIN THE VIEW GIVEN OF ENOCH'S LIFE AND CHARACTER. II. THE SINGULAR CLOSE OF HIS PIOTUS COURSE. 1. It was a sudden change. 2. It was a miraculous change. 3. It was a happy change. (*The Evangelical Preacher.*) *Walking with God*.—I. HIS GENERAL CHARACTER. He walked with God. 1. What walking with God supposes. 2. Some advantages which result from walking with God. (1) Guidance in difficulties (Prov. iii. 6). "He shall direct," &c. (Psa. xxxiii. 8). (2) Preservation from falling (Psa. xvi. 8). (3) Assistance in weakness (Isa. xli. 10). (4) Comfort in afflictions (Psa. xli. 1, and xciv. 19). (5) Improvement in piety (Prov. iv. 18). II. SOME PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH IT. Particularly—1. The period of its commencement, and the time of its continuance. It commenced in what may be considered his early youth; when he had not lived the twelfth part of the then usual age of man. This shows us that early piety is acceptable to God (Prov. viii. 17). Seek it (Eccl. xii. 1); for early habits are most easily formed, and most lasting (Lam. iii. 27). It continued at least three hundred years. This teaches us that the pleasures of religion never cloy (Psa. lxxiii. 3, 4); and that God's grace is sufficient for the longest pilgrimage (2 Cor. xii. 9). 2. The relations under which it was sustained. (1) The relation of a family governor. Hence, we see the falsehood of three common suppositions. First, "That solitude is necessary to piety." This is an error of superstition; as Christians we are called to sociability (Matt. v. 14-16). Secondly, "That religion is injurious to social duties and comforts." This is an error of prejudice, which is confuted by many

living characters (Prov. xii. 26). Thirdly, "That we serve God only when we engage in acts of devotion." This is an error of ignorance; for we also serve God acceptably when we serve mankind in obedience to Him (Acts xiii. 36; Gal. v. 14, and vi. 2. 10). (2) This character was also sustained by Enoch, under the relation of a public teacher. From this example we learn that teachers of others should be careful to walk with God themselves; in domestic life, that they may engage their families in God's service (Josh. xxiv. 15); in public life, that their labours may be blessed by God (Psa. li. 12, 13; Mal. ii. 6). 3. The scenes amidst which it was preserved. These were examples of prevailing ungodliness, when piety was generally reproached. Thus, when iniquity is general, it is our duty to be singular (Exod. xxiii. 2); for we are called by God to be a peculiar people (Tit. ii. 14; Rom. xii. 2). A resolute confession of God in the face of an opposing world, is highly pleasing to Him (Heb. xi. 5). "He pleased God" (Num. xiv. 24). Those who honour God are honoured by Him (1 Sam. ii. 30). 4. The glorious event which succeeded this holy walk: "God took him." He was translated body and soul to heaven, without seeing death. (1) This removal was gainful to him; it perfected his felicity. So the death of all true believers is followed by the eternal consummation of all their happiness (Phil. i. 21, 23; Luke xxiii. 43). (2) It was honourable to God. To His wisdom in discriminating characters; to His goodness, in rewarding the faithful; and to His truth, in fulfilling His promises. So is the death of all His saints (Psa. cxvi. 15, and lviii. 11). (3) It was beneficial to mankind. It teaches mankind in all ages—(a) That there is another and better world reserved for the righteous, as the ascension of Elijah and our Lord did afterwards (Heb. xi. 16; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 5); (b) that piety is extensively profitable, being evidently conducive to our eternal, as well as to our present welfare (1 Tim. iv. 8); (c) that the redemption of our bodies as well as our souls is certain. For we see God able and faithful to fulfil His engagements (Hos. xiii. 14; Phil. iii. 21); (d) that an early removal is no loss to the righteous. For what is taken from time is added to a blissful eternity (Rev. vii. 14-17); (e) that a sudden removal, when God appoints it, is no cause of terror to those who die in Him, for to all such characters sudden death becomes sudden glory. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Walking with God*.—I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE TERM. II. I SHALL PRESCRIBE SOME MEANS, IN THE LAWFUL USE OF WHICH BELIEVERS ARE ENABLED TO KEEP UP THEIR WALK WITH GOD. 1. By studying the Scriptures. 2. By constant and earnest prayer. 3. By watching the dealings of God without. 4. The motions of God within. 5. Walking in ordinances. 6. Walking in providences. 7. In the communion of saints. 8. And by meditation. III. I SHALL OFFER SOME MOTIVES TO STIR US UP TO THIS HOLY PRACTICE. It is most honourable: most pleasing: and abundantly beneficial to the souls of men. 1. This walking is by faith in Christ (2 Cor. v. 7). 2. Looking to the promises of God (1 Tim. iv. 8). 3. Trusting to the wisdom of God (Rom. viii. 28). (*T. B. Baker.*) *Enoch*.—I. ENOCH'S CHARACTER. "He walked with God." II. ENOCH'S END. "He was not" any longer subject to pain, sickness, infirmity, sorrow; all of which are still the portion even of those who walk with God in this vale of tears. "He was not" any longer tempted by Satan, by the world, by his own fallen nature, to sin against his kind Friend and Saviour; and thus his heaviest burden is removed. "He was not" any more "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked," with the dishonour cast on his God, with the "triumphing of the wicked." "He was not" spared to see their ungodliness proceeding to that gigantic pitch, which at length brought upon them the flood of waters to destroy all the earth. (*J. Jowett, M.A.*) *Enoch; or, the earthly walk and heavenly home*.—I. HE "WALKED WITH GOD"—A BRIEF AND SIMPLE STATEMENT OF A MOMENTOUS FACT. Of course the meaning is, that he was a good man, that he lived religiously. True religion is, walking "with God." We are meant to walk with some one. We are social as well as active. Solitary journeying is sorrowful journeying. Company gives safety as well as cheer, beguiles the long hours and goads the flagging spirits. Most men have fellowships in their journey through life—companions of their moral ways, "walking with the wise," or "going with the evil." But the highest of all fellowships is with God: and "if we all walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." We "walk with God." What does it include? Unquestionably realization. God is with us wherever we are, but we are with Him only as we recognize and feel Him to be present. God is "invisible," and only faith can realize; and "by faith Enoch was translated." In the dark night, a stranger perhaps might place himself by our side, or just behind us, for a

time, but we should not walk with him. In the dark night of sin, "God is not far from every one of us," but only one here and there are with Him. To see God, to be aware of His solemn nearness, to act as if this thought were ever in our mind, "Thou, God, seest me," doing His will as that of a present Master, rejoicing in His favour as that of a present Friend, and trusting in His succour as that of a present Protector—to go on thus divinely right, and brave, and happy, is to "walk with God." It includes intercourse. "But truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." II. Enoch walked with God, AFTER THE BIRTH OF METHUSELAH. It was then, so far as appears, that he began to do so. It is not said that he did so before. Until then it is said that "he lived," as it is said of the rest. Does it not imply that he had not walked with God for sixty-five years? Or, supposing the expression, in his case, refers to eminence in religion, does it not imply that at that time his religion received a new start? III. Be this as it may, the fact is clear that Enoch did walk with God after the birth of Methuselah and the births of other children. One of the two men who have had the honours of translation in this world for "pleasing God" was a man who LIVED IN THE MIDST OF SOCIETY, and was surrounded with children; he was not a recluse or a celibate. He lived in that condition in which there are natural and necessary distractions and temptations. It would be saying very little for religion if such a case were impossible. It would be queer theology which taught that man must denude himself of a portion of himself, ignore some of his capabilities and propensities, in order to know and possess much, or most, of God. When it is said that Enoch walked with God, it is meant that he attained to special religious excellence. His religion did not merely come into contact with his secular life; his spiritual humanity did not merely touch his social humanity, but, like the prophet upon the dead child, "stretched itself upon" it, mouth on mouth, eyes on eyes, hands on hands, and made it live. His religion was life, an active life. He "walked with God." IV. We see Enoch's eminent godliness attaining a STRANGE AND SIGNAL HONOUR. "He was not, for God took him." Paul says of Enoch, he did not "see death." Christ says of every disciple that "he does not taste death." I know not how it strikes you, but I always feel when reading this passage as if there was a beautiful fitness in this exit, a fitness of course and end. God took him who had walked with Him, bore him away to another sphere. The very silence of the historian aids the impression: there is no breach between the earthly and the heavenly life, no defined horizon—clouds, and sky, fields, hills, and wood, meet together, and this world's beauty and the glory of the world above melt into each other, and one unbroken scene fills and satisfies the eye. He was with God here, he is with God there. He became more and more Divine in the lower and harder conditions of life, and now he has reached a state where nothing exists to check or disappoint his Godward aspirations. There is no translation now for the righteous, but there is better, transformation, the being "changed from glory to glory now," and "the bearing of the image of the heavenly" hereafter. (*A. J. Morris.*) *Enoch's character and translation*:—Observe, Be the times never so bad, it is men's own fault they are bad too. Eminent holiness, and intimate communion with God, may be attained in the worst of times. The reasons are—1. Because, however men grow worse and worse, heaven is still as good and bountiful as ever (*Isa. lix. 1, 2*). 2. Because those that mind for heaven must row against the stream always; and if they do not, they will be called down the stream in the best of times; for, says our Lord (*Matt. xi. 12*). 3. The badness of the times affords matter to excite God's people the more to their duty and close walking with God. The profaneness and formality of those they live among, and the dishonour done to God thereby, should be like oil to the flame of their holy love and zeal, as it was to David (*Psa. cxix. 126, 127*). 4. Because, as the Lord shows Himself most concerned for the welfare of those who are most concerned for His honour, so the worse the times are, they that cleave to Him closely may expect to fare the better. (1) Let us consider Enoch's holy life in this world; "Enoch walked with God." The Spirit of God puts a special remark on this. It is Enoch's honour, that he did not walk as others did, after their lusts. Observe, 1. God takes special notice of those who are best when others are worst (*Gen. vi. 9*). (1) To be thus argues an ingenuous spirit, a love to the Lord for Himself, and a love to His way for its likeness to Himself; that the soul is carried thus to it against the stream of the corruption of the age. (2) It argues not only grace, but the strength of grace. It must be strong faith, love, &c., that so much bear out against the strong temptation to apostasy, arising from the combination of a generation against God and His way. To be holy when the

helps to a holy life are least in the world, argues the vigour of grace in the heart. Labour ye then to be best while others are worst, to confront the impiety of the generation wherein ye live. Do they indulge themselves in licentiousness? be ye the more strict and holy in your walk. Do they take up with mere externals in religion? strive ye the rather to get into the inner court, to taste and see, and here to have communion with God. Observe, 2. It is the honour of a professor of religion to outgo others in the matter of close walking with God. In the first part of the words we have—(1) The person characterized; and that is Enoch. There was another of this name descended from Cain, who had a city called after his name (Gen. iv. 17). Immortality is desired of all; and because men cannot stave off death, they follow after a shadow of immortality, that at least their name may live when they are gone. Therefore that has been an ancient custom, for men to call their lands after their own names (Psa. xlix. 11). How much better was it with this Enoch, that took that course to get on him the name of the city of God, which Christ promises to write on all his people (Rev. iii. 12.)? The city called by the name of the other Enoch was destroyed by the deluge, and is now unknown; but the city of God lasts still, and will last for ever. Observe, True piety is the best way to honour, even to true honour. For “the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance,” when “the memory of the wicked shall rot.” Observe, They that live near God are most likely to be put upon His secrets, and to know most of His mind (Psa. xxv. 14). 2. His character; he “walked with God.” He lived like a man of another world; a life of close communion with God. It imports—(1) That he was really religious; not only religious before men, but before God. Religion lies inwardly. We are that really which we are before the Lord; “He is a Jew which is one inwardly.” See, here, what he was: a spiritual traveller through the world; he “walked.” “He walked with God.” He looked on himself as a pilgrim and stranger in this present world (Heb. xi. 13). (*T. Boston, D.D.*) *Of walking with God*:—I. First, I am to consider walking with God in the foundation thereof, with respect to our state. II. Secondly, I shall consider walking with God in the matter of it, in respect of our frame and conversation. And, indeed, this duty goes as broad as the whole law. If we would have the life of religion in our walk, we must not walk at random. 1. We must walk with God in the way of habitual eyeing of Him in all things. 2. We must walk with God in the way of the heart’s going along with Him in all things, as the shadow goes with the body. Walking with God is no bodily motion, but a spiritual motion, a moving of the heart and affections; and so it must import necessarily the heart’s going along with Him. 3. We must walk with God in ordinances (Luke i. 6). The ordinances are the banqueting-house of Christ wherein He feasts His people (Cant. ii. 4), the galleries wherein the king is held by those that walk with him there (Cant. vii. 5). 4. We must walk with God in the stations and relations wherein He hath placed us. These are the sphere that God hath given us to move in, in the world. There are two pieces of work which a Christian has to do. (1) One for himself, and that is his salvation-work (Phil. ii. 12). This lies in his personal walk. (2) One for God, and that is his generation work (Acts xiii. 36). This lies in his relative walk. 5. We must walk with God in all our actions, whether natural, civil, or religious. “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. x. 31). III. Thirdly, I shall consider walking with God in the properties thereof. Walking with God is religion; and it is—1. Practical religion, religion in deed, not in word only; and there is no other sort of religion that will bring us to heaven; hence says our Lord (John xiii. 17). 2. It is inward and heart religion (1 Pet. iii. 4). They that have no religion but what is visible to the world, have no true religion; for God is the invisible God, and walking with Him must be so too (Rom. ii. 28, 29). 3. It is heavenly religion (Phil. iii. 20). According to men’s state and their nature, so will their actions be; for as is the tree, so will the fruit be. The heart of man, according as grace or corruption reigns in it, will tincture everything that comes through it. 4. It is lively and active religion, being a walking with the living God, wherein there is not only grace, but grace in exercise (Cant. i. 12). 5. It is regular religion, and uniform; for he that walks with God must needs walk by a constant rule, eyeing Him not in some things only, but in all (Gal. vi. 16; Psa. xvi. 8). He gives one rule of walking, extending to man’s whole conversation; and so he that walks with Him, walks regularly, aiming at a holy niceness, preciseness, and exactness, in conformity to that rule in all things (Eph. v. 15). 6. It is laborious and painful religion; for it is no easy life they have whose trade it is to walk on their feet

(Heb. vi. 10). And it is no easy religion to walk with God. Religion is not a business of saying, but doing; not of doing carelessly, but carefully, painfully, and diligently. 7. It is a self-denied religion (Matt. xvi. 24). 8. It is a humble religion (Micah vi. 8). 9. It is constant religion. Walking is not a rising up and sitting down again, but a continued action, like that of a traveller going on till he come to his journey's end. Enoch walked on through the world, till he was not. 10. It is progressive religion; religion that is going forward (Prov. iv. 18). (*Ibid.*) *Walking with God*.—I. First and chiefest, because it will secure the rest, walk **CONFIDENTLY** with God. Rest upon His faithfulness. Entertain no suspicions of His love. II. Walk **OBEDIENTLY** with God; i.e., be diligent in keeping His commandments. And let your obedience be an unreserved, warm-hearted, zealous, faithful obedience, an obedience of love which is ready at all times, as love is ready. Walk, then, unreservedly, in the love of the Lord with all its glorious consequences. And walk obediently with God in the second commandment as well as the first. Oh! then, let your walk with God be obedient; unreserved, without fear of excess; universal, without exception or partiality; and persevering, without yielding to monotony. III. Walk **HUMBLY** with your God. He is a Father, and we are children. What does that relationship call for? Reverence—filial reverence, it is true, but still reverence, or honour—the honour of the father and the mother. "If I be a Father," He says, "where is My honour? and if I be a Master, where is My fear?" Further, He is the Creator, and we are the creatures of His hands; and this relationship calls for real subjection and prostration. IV. Walk **PATIENTLY** with God. For however confiding your walk may be; however obedient with all the great characteristics of obedience; however humble, still you will suffer, and must be prepared for endurance. "The Lord chastens every son whom He receiveth"; and you must not expect to walk through this world exempt from trouble. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you." It is not a strange thing, it is the common case of the Lord's children. (*H. McNeile, D.D.*) *Enoch's walk and translation*.—I. THE CHARACTER OF ENOCH, WITH HIS DECIDED RELIGIOUS WORTH. II. ENOCH'S GLORIOUS TRANSLATION FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN. 1. A sign of God's love. 2. It is remarkable that three eminent translations distinguished three dispensations of God's mercy to men—the last the most glorious. (1) Enoch's translation in the patriarchal age. (2) Elijah's translation in the prophetic age. (3) Our Lord Jesus Christ ascended, was translated to heaven, in the Christian dispensation, when, after His triumphant resurrection and sojourn on earth for forty days, He ascended on a cloud of glory before His own disciples. Now, these three most memorable instances of translation to heaven clearly prove a separate state—a glorified humanity and an immortal life. III. A FEW PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS MAY PROFITABLY CONCLUDE THIS SERMON: especially when a solemn event fills the minds of so many with deep thoughts. 1. We may all copy the living sermon of a holy life dedicated to Christ. 2. How sweet and blessed is the death of the Christian! His soul is taken away to the Saviour whom he loved; and his body rests in hopes of resurrection glory. His soul is gone; he is not on earth; God has taken him to heaven! No more shall sin or sorrow cloud the soul; no more shall trial, suffering, or death affect the body; no more shall the gloom of life intercept or darken the eye of faith, or the streaming light of heaven. (*J. G. Angley, M.A.*) *The piety and translation of Enoch*.—I. ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD. II. THE TRANSLATION OF ENOCH. 1. As a work of omnipotence. (1) A suspension of the order of nature in this particular case, arresting the arm of death. (2) There was also a miraculous removal of the body of Enoch. 2. As a work of mercy. The wings of heavenly mercy overshadowed him, to protect him from the penalties of a violated law. 3. The translation of Enoch eminently displays the glory and honour of God. His love of the righteous was strikingly shown. His moral government was manifested, and His entire command over the present and the future so fully exemplified, that we cannot contemplate it without profound adoration of the Most High. 4. It was calculated to be beneficial to mankind, and to serve in that early stage of society the interests of truth and piety. (*Essex Remembrancer.*) *The character and translation of Enoch*.—I. HISTORY OF ENOCH. II. CHARACTER OF ENOCH. III. CONDUCT OF ENOCH. The conduct of this antediluvian saint was the piety of intelligence; he understood God's claim and his own obligations, and it was not a mere custom. It was the piety of deliberate design and choice; he was not, so to speak, thrown accidentally into God's company, but chose to go to Him, and with fixed, deter-

minate purpose, sought His friendship. It was the piety also of a minister of religion; and what is any minister of religion, without personal godliness, but an actor in the most dreadful tragedy ever performed on the stage of this world, since it ends not in the feigned, but the real, death and destruction of the performer? It was the piety of one who had few of those helps and advantages of divine revelation and ordinances which we enjoy, and therefore shows how God can, and will, help those in the Divine life, who are, by Providence, deprived of the assistance which others possess. It was piety, maintained during a long period of severe trial, a profession consistently upheld amidst all conceivable opposition for nearly four centuries, thus exhibiting a sublime instance of endurance, perseverance, and victorious faith. IV. TRANSLATION OF ENOCH. Enoch's translation was a testimony to that generation of which he was a member, and to the whole world from that time to this, of God's approval of his conduct. (*J. A. James.*) *Walking with God*.—I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN WALKING WITH GOD. II. THAT GOD WILL MANIFEST SOME PECULIAR TOKENS OF HIS FAVOUR TO THOSE WHO WALK WITH HIM. 1. God will guard them against the favours of the world. 2. God graciously guards his friends while they walk with Him, from their invisible as well as visible enemies. 3. God will give those who walk with Him peculiar evidence of their interest in His special grace. He loves those who walk with Him, and will manifest His love to them. He expressly called Abraham His friend when he offered up his son upon the altar. He sent a messenger from heaven to declare that Daniel was greatly beloved. And He manifested His special love to David by lifting the light of His countenance upon him. 4. God will manifest His peculiar favour to those who walk with Him, by giving them not only inward light, and joy, and peace, and the full assurance of hope, but by granting them outward prosperity. 5. Those who walk with God have ground to hope for another great and peculiar favour; that is, His gracious and comforting presence when they leave the world. IMPROVEMENT. 1. We may learn from the nature and effects of walking with God how all true believers may attain to the full assurance of hope. If saints would prevent or remove darkness, doubts, and distress from their minds, let them walk closely with God, who will give them peculiar tokens of their displeasing Him, and standing high in His favour. 2. If God manifests peculiar tokens of His favour to those who walk with Him, then they have more to gain than to lose by walking with Him. 3. If God be highly pleased with His friends while they walk with Him, then He must be highly displeased when they depart from Him. 4. It appears from the nature of walking with God, that those who walk with Him in a day of degeneracy do peculiar service and honour to religion. 5. This subject calls upon all who have professed to walk with God to inquire whether they have walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. 6. This subject exhorts all who have not hitherto walked with God to walk with Him. (*N. Emmons, D.D.*) *Walking with God*.—Other notable men existed in that ancient time, to whom we are apparently more indebted than we are to Enoch; men who were the fathers of arts and sciences, and the founders of political institutions—pioneers in the onward march of civilization. But what are Jabal, and Jubal, and Tubal-Cain to us but so many cyphers associated in our minds with certain objects? We know something of these men's work; of themselves we know absolutely nothing. Here, on the contrary, nothing is told us of any outward work that the man did; we only have the brief and summarized story of an inner life. But more than this. Enoch was the first saint, in the full sense of the word, of whom we hear anything in human history, as Abel was the first "righteous [or justified] man." He stands, perhaps, historically speaking, at the head of the great muster-roll of heaven's nobility; and it is the brotherhood of saints that makes the ages one. We are more indebted to the first pioneer upon the highway of holiness than to the earliest discoverers in science and in art. Holiness is, above everything else, the reproduction of the Divine. As I said a moment ago, very little has been told us about Enoch, where our curiosity would fain have heard a great deal; but the little that has been told us is suggestive, and every point seems to carry its own lesson. To begin with his name. Enoch has the double meaning of consecration and initiation, suggesting first the thought that he who bore that name was to be one of God's consecrated ones, "a priest unto God," and next that, as a priest, he was to be introduced into the spiritual temple, to be allowed to see and know what the outer world knows nothing of, and to be initiated into the deeper mysteries of the spiritual life. And in this name we have the clue not only to his career, but to that of every other saint who, like him, walks with God. The life of fellowship

must needs be the product of a state of consecration. God consecrates us His spiritual priests that our whole manhood may be set apart and our whole lives dedicated to His service. We may be occupied, as Enoch was, in the ordinary duties of life; our hands and our heads may be busy, yet may we find God's temple everywhere, and His service in everything. For there is nothing secular, all is a sanctity, where all is given to God. Further, our attention is specially called by a New Testament writer to the fact that Enoch was the seventh from Adam. His was the Sabbath life in that genealogical record. As the Sabbath days to the other days of the week, so must his life have seemed as compared with the lives of others in those troublous and tumultuous days. And there is a rest even here for the people of God. We need not defer the Sabbath-keeping of the soul to that glorious future which awaits God's faithful ones yonder. It may seem, perhaps, fanciful to call attention to another fact mentioned in this brief notice, but I cannot bring myself to pass it over. We read that "all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years." That is to say, he lived a perfect year of years; as many days as there are in the year, so many years there were in his life; he fulfilled his year. Perhaps when we reach the other side we shall make some strange discoveries with respect to the term of our existence here in the house of our discipline. Perhaps we may find that some lives have been lengthened out to extreme old age, just because life's lessons were being learned indeed, but learned wondrous slowly by very dull scholars; and that some lives were cut short just because Divine Omniscience saw no probability of these lessons ever being learned at all by scholars who positively refused to learn. But to every man is appointed his own proper year; and blessed are they who so live that the year completes the life in every sense of the word! Blessed are they who so walk with God that when their appointed life-period draws to a close their life-lesson may be learnt, and they themselves be ready for the call to higher knowledge and more perfect service, while it is said of them, "He was not; for God took him." Enoch's life was not a long one as lives went in those days; he was only in what would be then regarded as early middle life when his call came, but had fulfilled his year. His life was complete in God's sight, his day's work done, and there was no necessity that he should tarry in the house of discipline through the long ages which measured the life of a Methuselah. But it is time that we looked more closely at this pregnant phrase, which tells us all that we historically know of the religious life of this ancient servant of God, "Enoch walked with God." What is it, let us ask, to walk with God? More than a single idea would seem to be suggested by this familiar expression. As the words stand in the original they suggest primarily the idea of walking with reference to God. It is the idea that the Psalmist expresses when he says, "I foresaw God always before mine eyes." In the practical issues of life, and in all its complete details, everything turns upon our choice of our centre of reference. He whose central idea in life is, *How shall I please myself?* can never walk with God, because God is not his centre of reference. Or again, this life of reference to God stands contrasted with the life of reference to the world, that conventional life which so many people condescend to lead. With such the question is, *What is expected of me?* or, *What is the correct thing?* or, *What do others do?* or, *Will people like it?* *What will people say if I adopt this course, or do not adopt the other?* Do not aim at singularity, but, on the other hand, do not shrink from it. You needs must be singular if you serve God in a world that serves Him not; you needs must be singular if you put the good before the fashionable in a world that puts the fashionable before the good; you needs must be singular if you put duty before worldly expediency, and the love of God and man before both in a selfish, shallow world, where all men seek their own. But there is nothing to be ashamed of in such singularity, and he who plays the poltroon, and is afraid to face reproach, would indeed be very singular in heaven if he were ever to get there. Better surely to be singular in this perishing world than hopelessly out of harmony with the spirit and genius of heaven. But this leads us to consider another thought suggested by the words of our text, closely connected with what we have just been considering, and yet distinct from it. To walk with God is not only to walk with reference to God, but to move, so to speak, on the same moral plane as belongs to God—seeing things from His point of view, entering into His designs, and drinking ever more and more deeply of His Spirit. There is a unity of heart and mind, of thought and feeling, that is usually a feature of close association amongst ourselves; and something of this kind would seem to be implied by the words, "Enoch walked with God." Listen to the

words quoted by St. Jude, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." The man that uttered those words was clearly looking at things from the Divine standpoint. With him sinners are regarded specially as ungodly, and sins are ungodly deeds; the habit of life that induces them is an ungodly habit of life, and the very words that such sinners are wont to speak are ungodly words. And the reason of this way of viewing things is that the man is walking with God. He takes measure of evil and of good, according as it affects that Divine Being with whom his life is hid. His standpoint is no longer merely ethical; he is conversant rather with the very heart of God than with moral principles. He is jealous for God's glory with a godly jealousy, and is fired with a holy indignation at all that militates against this. And oh, with what a heart full of yearning love does he who thus walks with God gaze upon a God-dishonouring world! God loved the world, and loves it, and he who is in fellowship with the mind of God must needs love it too. The more He hates sin, the more does He long for the salvation of the sinner. But let us take the words of our text in the meaning which they most naturally bear, and which suggests perhaps the most important lesson of all. "Enoch walked with God"; that is to say, he lived in the society of God. In all his life an invisible but ever-present Friend was his Companion. He lived in His society, he consulted Him about everything, he was in communion with Him everywhere. So he lived out his allotted life, his year of years, until he passed from the triumphs of the walk of faith to the glories of the Land of Vision; for there is no death for such. The presence of God makes earth heaven, and brings heaven down to earth. The presence of God turns the shadow of death into the morning, and invests him who enjoys it with immortality. "I am the resurrection, and the life," saith the Lord: "he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." By-and-by, when the last of the three hundred and sixty-five days of his year had arrived and was reaching its close, the call came, "Friend, come up higher": and "he was not; for God took him." For as to walk with God is the secret of perfection here on earth, so to walk with God will be the crowning glory of that higher world. (*W. Hay Aitken, M.A.*) *Enoch, the model walker*:—I. A SAFE WALK. During a sudden freshet, a labouring man and his child, living in a cottage that stood by itself, were obliged to walk at midnight for more than a mile through water reaching to the little boy's waist before they could reach a place of safety. After they had changed their clothes, and were feeling comfortable, the friend in whose cottage they had found shelter said to the little boy, "And wasn't you afraid, Jack, while walking through the water?" "No, not at all," said the little fellow, who was but seven years old: "I was walking along with father, you know. And I knew he wouldn't let the water drown me." This was very sweet. And if, like Enoch, we are walking with God, let us remember that we are walking with our heavenly Father. And He promises us expressly, "When thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee" (*Isa. xliii. 2*). One morning a teacher found many empty seats in her schoolroom. Two little scholars lay dead at their homes, and others were sick. The few children present gathered around her, and said, "Oh! what shall we do? Do you think we shall be sick, and die too?" The teacher gently touched the bell, and said, "Children, you are all afraid of this disease. You grieve for the death of your little friends, and you fear that you also may be taken. I only know of one thing for us to do, and that is to hide. Listen while I read to you about a hiding-place. Then she read the 91st Psalm, which begins thus: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." They were all hushed by the sweet words, and then the morning lesson went on as usual. At recess, a dear little girl came up to the desk, and said, "Teacher, aren't you afraid of the diphtheria?" "No, my child," she answered. "Well, wouldn't you be if you thought you would be sick, and die?" "No, dear, I trust not." The child gazed wonderingly at her for a moment; and then her face lightened up as she said, "Oh! I know! You are hidden under God's wings. What a nice safe place that is to hide in!" II. WALKING WITH GOD IS A USEFUL WALK. Suppose that you and I were taking a walk through the wards of a hospital. It is full of people who are suffering from accidents, and diseases of different kinds. There are some people there with broken limbs. Some are blind, others are deaf; and some are sick with various fevers, and consumption. And suppose that, like

our blessed Lord, we had the power, as we went from one bed to another, to heal the sick and suffering people in that hospital. Here is a lame man. We make his limbs straight and strong, so that he can walk. Here is a blind man. We touch his eyes with our fingers; they open, and he can see. We speak to those who are suffering from diseases of different kinds, and make them well. Then we might well say that our walk through that hospital was a useful walk. But we have no such power as this to cure the diseases from which the bodies of men are suffering. Yet this may afford us a good illustration of what we can do for the souls that are suffering around us, when we become Christians, and walk with God. Some years ago a gentleman from England brought a letter of introduction to a merchant in this country. The stranger was an intelligent man with very pleasant manners, but he was an infidel. The gentleman to whom he brought the letter of introduction, and his wife, were earnest Christian people. They invited the stranger to make their house his home during his stay, and treated him with the greatest possible kindness. On the evening of his arrival, before the hour of retiring, the gentleman of the house, knowing what the views of his guest were on the subject of religion, told him they were in the habit of having family worship every evening; that they would be happy to have him join with them; or, if he preferred, he could retire to his room. He said it would give him pleasure to remain. Then a chapter of the Bible was read, and the family knelt in prayer, the stranger with them. After spending a few days in that pleasant Christian home, the stranger embarked on board a ship, and sailed to a foreign land. In the course of three or four years he returned, and stayed with the same family. But what a change there was in him! His infidelity was all gone. He was now an humble, earnest Christian. In speaking to his friend of this change, he said: "Sir, I owe it all to you. When I knelt down with you at family prayers on my former visit, it was the first time for years that I had ever bowed my knees before God. It brought back to me the memory of my pious mother, now in heaven, and all the teaching she had given me when a boy. I was so occupied with these thoughts that I did not hear a word of your prayer. But this led me to give up my infidelity, and seek the blessing of my mother's God. And now I am as happy as the day is long in His service." Here again we see how true it is that walking with God is a useful walk.

III. A PLEASANT WALK. When we are taking a walk there are several things that will help to make up the pleasure to be found in that walk. If we have a guide to show us the road; if we have a pleasant companion to talk with as we go on our way; if we have plenty of refreshments—nice things to eat and drink; if there are bright and cheerful prospects around and before us; and especially, if we are sure of a nice comfortable home to rest in when our walk is ended, these will help to make it pleasant. But when we walk with God, as Enoch did, we have all these things, and more too. And these are sure to make it a pleasant walk. Solomon is speaking of this walk when he says: "Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace." "I visited a poor old woman belonging to my congregation," said a minister. "She was entirely dependent on the church for her support. Her home was a very small cottage. The moment I entered it I saw how neat and clean everything was. She had just been gathering some sticks from the lane with which to cook her evening meal. Her face was one of the sweetest I ever saw. It was surrounded by the strings of her snow-white cap. On the table lay a well-worn copy of the Word of God. I looked around for a daughter or friend to be her companion and caretaker, but saw none. I said: 'Mother Ansel, you don't live here alone, do you?' 'Live alone! Live alone!' she exclaimed in surprise, and then, as a sweet smile lighted up her face, she added, 'No, sir, the blessed Lord lives with me, and that makes it pleasant living!'" Certainly she found walking with God a pleasant walk.

A Christian lady was visiting among the poor one day. She called, among others, on a little sick girl. Her home was a dreary-looking one. The room she occupied was on the north side of the house. There was nothing bright or pleasant about it. Everything looked dark and cheerless. "I am sorry you have no sun on this side of the house," said the lady. "Not a ray of sunshine gets in here. This is a misfortune, for sunshine is everything." "Oh, ma'am! you are mistaken!" said the sick girl, as a sweet smile lighted up her pale face. "My sun pours in at every window, and through all the cracks." "But how can the sun get round on this side of the house?" asked the visitor. "It is Jesus, 'the Sun of Righteousness,' that shines in here," was the reply, "and He makes the best sunshine." That sick girl found walking with God a pleasant walk.

IV. A PROFITABLE WALK. We see a good deal of walking done without much profit. But sometimes we hear of people who are able to make their walking pay. There was a walking match in New York not long ago. A number of persons were engaged in it, and the man who won the prize secured twenty-five thousand dollars. That was profitable walking, so far as money was concerned; but walking with God is more profitable than this. Suppose there was a savings bank half a mile from your house, and you were told that if you walked to that bank every week, and put a penny in the treasury, for every penny you put in you would get a dollar at the end of the year. A penny a week would make fifty-two pennies by the end of the year, and if for these fifty-two pennies you were to receive fifty-two dollars, that would make your walk to the bank profitable walking. It would be getting what we call a hundredfold for the money invested there. There is no such savings bank as this. But, when we learn to walk with God, we find that serving Him is just like putting money in such a bank. Jesus says that if we give a cup of cold water to one of His disciples, or if we suffer for Him, or do any work for Him, we "shall receive a manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." And if such rewards are given to those who walk with Him, then we may well say that *that* is profitable walking. An infidel was one day laughing at a plain farmer because he believed the Bible. The farmer surprised him by saying, "Well, you see, we plain country people like to have two strings to our bow." "And pray what do you mean by that?" asked the infidel. "Only this," was the farmer's answer, "that believing the Bible, and acting up to it, is like having two strings to one's bow; for, if the Bible is not true, still I shall be a better and happier man for living according to its teachings, and so it will be profitable for me in this life; this is one string to my bow, and a good one, too. And, if the Bible should prove true, as I know it will, it will be profitable for me in the next world, and that is another string, and a pretty strong one, too. But, sir, if you do not believe the Bible, and do not live as it requires, you have no string to your bow in this world. And, oh, sir! if the tremendous threatenings of the Bible prove true—as they surely will—you will have no string to your bow for the next world, and what will become of you then?" This shows us that walking with God is profitable walking. (R. Newton, D.D.)

Known by his walk:—"That man's been in the army," said a gentleman to his friend the other day, as a stranger passed them in the street; "I know a soldier by his walk." Men ought to know Christ's soldiers by their walk. *The biography of Enoch*; or, *a glorious life and a glorious end*:—Enoch is one of the few excellent men mentioned in the Bible, of whom nothing bad is recorded. Abraham is described as the father of the faithful; and yet there are instances on record in which his mighty faith gave way. Who ever thinks of the flaws on the face of beauty? Who ever thinks of the spots which deface the sun? They exist, you may find them by minute observation; but they do not make a deep impression upon your mind. Thus the character of Enoch, in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, seemed to be one mass of light, in which there was no darkness at all. Enoch is one of those men who owe their immortality to the brightness of their characters. Let us then consider the text as—I. A SIMPLE RECORD OF A GLORIOUS LIFE. What does a glorious life consist in? The poet thinks it a glorious thing to produce burning thoughts, to master the powers of language, to command brilliant imagery; to revel in imagination through the ethereal regions of the lovely, the grand, the eternal; and then descend from those lofty heights to the lowly regions of real life, to enlighten its gloom, to soothe its sorrows, to strengthen its hopes. The orator thinks it a glorious thing to rivet the attention of assembled multitudes. The warrior thinks it a glorious thing to be entrusted with the command of a powerful army. Here is a simple record of a glorious life; let us now endeavour to analyse it. The words point to—1. A life of absolute devotedness. It is not a selfish existence, but an existence linked to another existence, subordinate to another existence, devoted to another existence. "With God." 2. A life of steady progress. This is clearly suggested by the term walking. Man is never more dignified than when he walks with a regular, firm, steady step; it is then that he looks every inch the lord of creation; you wonder not that other creatures should submit to his sway. But let him loiter about as if he had nothing to do, or let him run as if he were pursued, and he falls at once in your estimation. There is a touch of manliness about the very act of walking, which indicates a definite purpose, a reasonable aim, a complete mastery over one's self. You have only to conceive of a man walking and a man running, and compare these two

conceptions together, in order to be impressed with the superiority of the one over the other. But the expression employed here has a wider meaning than this. "Enoch walked with God." This indicates progress. It is progress in knowledge, progress in holiness, progress in good works. It is an upward struggle, a heavenward course, a climbing up to the mount of God. 3. A life of blessed companionship. "With God." Now, the blessed companionship of Enoch with God, which was a type of all true companionship, implied faith in God. Enoch's companionship implied also a certain degree of familiarity with God. Just think of it. God's friend must become a God-like character. The moon which is bathed in the transforming light of the sun, becomes itself a luminous body, and lightens up the sombre blackness of the night with its pale, beautiful, silvery rays. And so the man who walks in the light of God's countenance must necessarily catch some of the glory and reflect it upon the world around him. Besides this, God's friend needs fear no enemy. II. A SIMPLE RECORD OF A GLORIOUS END. "And he was not, for God took him." A good man is never lost; long after his body has mouldered in the dust, the influence of his holy example will remain, will remain as a mighty power; a power which will not diminish, but grow with the flight of ages. (D. Rowlands, B.A.) *Enoch's walking with God*:—I. As the first acceptable worshipper of God was Abel, so the first acceptable walker with God was Enoch, in Scripture record. Here are two remarks upon Enoch recorded in Scripture. The first is, his appearance in the world. The second is, his disappearance from the world. 1. His appearance is attended with sundry considerable circumstances. As (1) his name. (2) His time. (3) His Age. (4) His office or employ. Concerning his name Enoch, which has a double signification. Enoch signifies "dedicated"; his father Jared (which signifies "meek") being a lowly and a holy man, did dedicate this son to God, as soon as he had received him from God. II. Enoch signifies "catechized" or "instructed"; well knowing, also, that the care of the means was committed to the father, though he had committed the care of the end to the Lord. The paternal instruction must promote the dedication. As Jared had marred him by propagation (begetting a son in his own, the fallen image), so he must mend him by instruction. God is so exact in Scripture record, stating him the seventh patriarch, not only to declare the genealogy of Christ in a more distinct chronology of succession than can be found in any of the best human histories, but also to show both His great care of His Church and His great delight in His Church. 1. His great care of it in upholding it by seven descents of holy patriarchs. 2. His great delight in His Church above all other His concerns in the world, being only, all of them, in order to His Church. 3. The age of life that Enoch lived. The years that he lived in this lower world were exactly answerable to the days of a year, to wit, 365. What he wanted in the silver of a life natural, he had well paid him in the gold of a life eternal; so that not only the shortness of the father's life was made up in the long life of his son, but also, God took him from a worse place to plant him into a better. His translation was but transplantation, as it were, out of God's kitchen-garden into His heavenly paradise. Thus we see here on earth, those northern plants which are transplanted out of their cold climate into a warmer southern soil, find no detriment, but advantage thereby, and thrive the better. How much more was it no loss, but gain, to Enoch to be translated out of the vale of tears into God's garden of celestial pleasures! There are many talkers and but few walkers; many talkers of God, few walkers with God. Their lives give the lie to their lips or tongues, as not running relatively in parallel lines together with the heart. A man's conversation is the most conspicuous comment upon all that the heart believeth and the mouth expresseth (Rom. x. 9, 10). I. WHAT IS THIS WALKING WITH GOD? 1. Negatively. It is not as if a man should desert the society of mankind, and run into a desert or cloister; or as if a man should depart out of the world, and fly up into heaven. Neither does this phrase import only Enoch's public capacity, as if it were proper solely to such as serve God in some high office. There are three Scripture phrases—(1) Walking with God, as here. (2) Walking before God (Gen. xvii. 1). (3) Walking after God (Deut. xiii. 4). 2. Showing what it is to walk with God positively; that is, he did serve God in his generation according to his will, as is said of David (Acts xiii. 3, 6). II. HOW THIS WALKING WITH GOD IS MAN'S DUTY. Upon a threefold respect. 1. It is the principal end why God created man, that man should walk with God his Creator. 2. It is the creature's homage and fealty to his creator, God, to walk with Him, not with Satan, or with sin and sinners. 3. This walking with God is the very badge and character whereby saints are distinguished from sinners, believers

from unbelievers, and the children of God from the children of the World. III. HOW THIS WALKING WITH GOD IS MAN'S DIGNITY AS WELL AS DUTY. It is not only man's homage, but it is also his honour to walk with God. It is accounted honourable to be but a follower of a mortal king. Inferences hence are—1. It is our duty to walk with God, though the whole world walk contrary to God. The worse that times are, the better should we be, that the times may not be worse, but better by us. We should all strive to be the most holy persons, even in the most unholy times. 2. Therefore we should all strive to walk with God, upon these three following motives; besides the reasons of the duty, as also of the dignity. (1) Safety. (2) Solace. (3) Satiety. Having done with Enoch's first grand concern, to wit, concerning his appearance in the world—all which he managed in a constant walking with God—I come now to discourse upon his second grand concern, concerning his DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE WORLD; to wit, his translation from earth to heaven. (C. Ness.) *The memorial of Enoch*:—Could we but hope that, even in a limited sense, these words might be inscribed as the motto on our tomb, then we need not envy either the mausoleums of the Pharaohs, the tomb of Alexander or Napoleon, or the sepulchres of the Cæsars! Our "record would be on high," and our memorial would live when the scroll of fame should be scattered by the winds of heaven, and perish for ever in the conflagration of the world; for they who walk with God on earth shall reign with Christ in heaven. I. CONTEMPLATE THE CHARACTER HERE GIVEN OF ENOCH—"HE WALKED WITH GOD." Let none suppose that, whatever this may imply, it was the exclusive privilege of Enoch, and, therefore, is not to be sought after by others; for of Noah it is written—he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord; for he was a just man, and perfect in his generation." And "Noah walked with God." To Abraham, also, it was commanded—"Walk before Me"; and this the father of the faithful actually described himself as doing, when he said, "The Lord, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and prosper thy way." 1. It must imply the true knowledge of each other; for familiar intercourse is founded on knowledge. On the part of God, the knowledge is perfect and infinite. Well, then, might the Psalmist exclaim—"O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassedst my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo! O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." But man is naturally ignorant of God. He knows Him not, nor desires to know Him; for "God is not in all his thoughts." How, then, shall he understand His being and perfections, His works and His ways? "Such knowledge is too wonderful" for him; "it is high," he "cannot attain unto it." "For who by searching can find out God? who can find out the Almighty to perfection?" But He has graciously revealed Himself to us by His Spirit, in His Holy Word. 2. The most sincere friendship. 3. The strongest proofs of devoted attachment. Without these, friendship itself is only a name; but with them, the very balm of life. 4. But, in one word, to walk with God includes a community of interests. Their aim is one. Now, as God necessarily exists for His own glory, and delights in its manifestation in the happiness of His creatures; so man, regenerated and sanctified, supremely seeks the glory of God in all things. II. CONTEMPLATE HIS SPECIAL PRIVILEGE. He was removed to heaven, without tasting the bitterness of death. It might be sooner than he expected; for he had not attained to half the years of the life of his father—but he rejoiced to depart, and to be with "God, his exceeding joy," for ever and ever! And was not this the richest boon he could possibly receive? Classic story has told us of two lovely youths that were found dead in their bed, soon after the prayer had been offered for them, that they might possess the best blessing heaven could bestow. And the Christian well knows, that "to depart, and to be with Christ, is far better" than anything here. Such was the privilege of Enoch—but as to the mode of his translation we know nothing. Yet, it must have been eminently gracious. Whatever was the manner of his translation, it was evidently supernatural—the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in the eyes of all. No rude storm of chaos, no fortuitous blast of atoms hurled him on high. But the Lord did it, in His own most gracious way. He had frequently conferred on him many distinguished favours—but then, to crown all, he took him as a special friend to Himself, to be for ever with Him in heaven, in joys unutterable and full of glory. But do not expect the same kind of dismissal as Enoch. Only Elijah and he ever entered the eternal kingdom, without passing through the gate of death. (J. Clunie, LL.D.) *Enoch's holiness and its reward*:—His mind was pure; his spirit rose above the turmoil of worldliness; he

delighted in calm communion with God ; once more the familiar intercourse between God and man, which had existed in the time of paradise, was restored ; the path commenced by Seth was continued by Enoch ; the former addressed God by the medium of the word ; the latter approached Him by the still more spiritual medium of thought : the highest form of religious life was gained. But, unfortunately, Enoch alone "walked with God" ; his contemporaries were sunk in iniquity and depravation ; but the measure of their wickedness was not yet complete ; three generations more were required to mature their destruction ; and God, in order to rescue Enoch, took him to Himself, delivering him from the contamination of his time at a comparatively early period of his life. Was this early death a punishment ? But the piety of Enoch is repeatedly stated. Was it a misfortune ? It was this as little as the full length of Noah's life ; both cases were analogous ; in the one, the pious man left the wicked generation ; in the other, he was by a catastrophe freed from it ; and in both instances, the deliverance was miraculous and supernatural, by the immediate agency of God. If this is the clear internal meaning of Enoch's history, who can doubt that he was called away from the earth, not to cease his life abruptly, but to continue it in a better sphere, and in still more perfect virtue ? We are convinced that the "taking away" of Enoch is one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state prevailing among the Hebrews ; without this belief, the history of Enoch is a perfect mystery, a hieroglyph without a clue, a commencement without an end. If, then, pious men could hope to continue a brighter existence after their transitory sojourn upon earth, the books of the Old Testament are not enveloped in the gloomy clouds of despair ; they radiate in the beams of hope ; and, if a long life on earth was also gratefully accepted as a high, though not the highest, boon, this may have sprung from the just feeling, that man is born to enjoy and to work, to receive much and to give more ; and that he does not deserve the blessing of eternal rest before he has toiled to extend the empire of truth and piety (comp. Sap. iv. 7-10.) God "took" Enoch as He "took" Elijah (2 Kings ii. 9), or "he was translated by faith, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him" (Heb. xi. 5). The notion seems to be, that Enoch passed from earth to heaven without the intermediate state of decrepitude and dissolution ; he suffered no bodily infirmity ; "his eye grew not dim, nor did his natural strength abate," as it is stated with regard to Moses, who also disappeared, so that no mortal knew his grave. For the pious Enoch, death lost its pang and its sting ; though the descendant of a sinful race, he was delivered from the real punishment which sin inflicted upon the human family ; his existence was uninterrupted ; he was undying, as man was originally intended to be ; for he passed from this life into a future state both without fear and without struggle. God took him as a loving father to His eternal home. The history of Enoch has ever been regarded as embodying profound truths ; and, we think, there are few so strongly affecting the very root of religious life as those which we have just briefly indicated. And, as the virtuous are thus translated into heaven, the wicked are devoured alive in the gulf of the earth (Num. xvi.). It is known that the classical writers also mention such translations into heaven ; they assign this distinction among others to Hercules, to Ganymede, and to Romulus. But it was awarded to them either for their valour, or for mere physical beauty, which advantages, though valued among the Hebrews, were not considered by them as sublime or godlike ; a pious and religious life alone deserved and obtained the crown of immortal glory. In no single feature can the Scriptures conceal their high spiritual character. However, the idea of a translation to heaven is not limited to the old world ; it was familiar to the tribes of Central America ; the chronicles of Guatemala record four progenitors of mankind who were suddenly raised to heaven ; and the documents add that those first men came to Guatemala from the other side of the sea, from the east. This is, then, apparently, a rather remarkable connection of the primitive traditions of the most different nations. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) *My ministry :*—On the 22nd of February, 1880, Dr. Raleigh preached for the last time. His text was, "And Enoch walked with God : and he was not ; for God took him." Had he known that he would never preach again, he could not have chosen a more appropriate text, or have spoken with more impressiveness and pathos. One of the members of the congregation said, on returning home, "I have heard to-day what I never expect to hear again in this world." Dr. Raleigh was compelled to rest ; weeks passed away, but there was no amendment in his health, and at length he had to be told that there was no hope of his recovery. When he received

the intelligence he said, "Then my ministry is ended." There was a pause, and then he added, "My ministry!—It is dearer than my life." On the Tuesday before his death, he was visited by the Rev. Joshua Harrison, to whom he freely expressed his confidence in the glorious work of the Saviour, and said, "In any case I may well be content and thankful. I am not an old man, yet I have lived long and worked hard. I have had, on the whole, a most happy, and I think I may say successful, ministry. God has blessed my work, and has always given me true friends. If I have finished my work, I am ready to go. Indeed, I should have no regrets but for these dear ones" (his wife and children). When reminded of the prayers which were being offered on his behalf, he replied, "Yes, my people's prayers make me sometimes think I may have a little more work to do, but if not, I shall calmly march up to the gates." Still trusting in Christ, he went "through the gate," April, 1880. In the presence of a sorrowing multitude, his coffin was lowered into a grave in Abney Park Cemetery. (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*) *Gathering flowers to compose him in the hour of death:*—We know it to be a Scripture fact that men have "walked with God" in closest intimacy, and that God hath held converse with them, "even as a man converseth with his friend." Such was the case with Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and all that luminous cloud of witnesses so brightly and clearly revealed in the Bible. The Church of God, even down to our own time, furnishes innumerable witnesses to this truth, which we will establish by the mouth of two of them. John Holland was an old Puritan minister, who died two hundred and fifty years ago. Little is known of him, except what relates to his deathbed. Perceiving that he was near his end, he said, "Come, oh, come; death approaches. Let us gather some flowers to comfort this hour." He requested that the eighth chapter of Romans might be read to him. But at every verse he stopped the reading, while he expounded it to the comfort of his soul, and to the joy and wonder of his friends. Having thus continued his meditations above two hours, he suddenly cried out, "Oh, stay your reading. What brightness is this I see? Have you lighted any candles?" They told him "No; it is the sunshine." "Sunshine?" said he; "nay, my Saviour's shine! Now farewell, world—welcome, heaven. The day-star from on high hath visited my heart. Oh! speak when I am gone, and preach it at my funeral, 'God dealeth familiarly with man.'" In such transports his soul soared towards heaven. His last words, after repeating the declaration that "God doth and will deal familiarly with man," were these: "And now, thou fiery chariot, that camest down to fetch up Elijah, carry me to my happy home. And, all ye blessed angels, who attended the soul of Lazarus to bring it to heaven, bear me, oh! bear me to the bosom of my best beloved. Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" One other present witness is Gilbert Tennent, who was a main instrument, with Whitefield and Edwards, of the great revival in New England one hundred years ago. In one of his letters to his brother, the holy William Tennent, he says, "Brother, shall I tell you an astonishing instance of the glorious grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is this, that one of the meanest of His servants has had His presence every day, in some degree, for above eleven weeks. Nor is the great, good Master yet gone. Oh, brother, it is heaven upon earth to live near to God! Verily, our comfort does not depend so much upon our outward situation as is generally supposed. No, a Saviour's love is all in all. Oh, this will make any situation sweet, and turn the thickest darkness into day!" (*Ibid.*) *Preparation for death necessary:*—I have read of a gentleman who died very suddenly, and his jester ran to the other servants, and having told them that their master was dead, he, with much gravity, said, "And where is he gone?" The servants replied, "Why, to heaven, to be sure!" "No," said the jester, "he is not gone to heaven, I am certain." The servants with much warmth asked him how he knew that his master was not gone to heaven? The jester then replied, "Because heaven is a great way off, and I never knew my master take a long journey in his life but he always talked of it some time beforehand, and also made preparations for it; but I never heard him talk about heaven, nor ever saw him making preparations for death, and therefore I am sure he is not gone to heaven." (*H. G. Salter.*) *Enoch's translation:*—This moment Enoch is surrounded by antediluvian sinners, transformed by evil passions into demons; the next, he is in the society of angels, of the general assembly of the firstborn, of God Himself: this moment he is in a humble tent; the next, he is in the city and palace of the King: this moment he is in imminent danger; the next, his is quietness and assurance for ever: this moment he is in earth—an earth reeling with wickedness, and ripening fast for ruin; the next, he "summers high

in bliss upon the hills of God": this moment he is almost a solitary protester against evil; the next, he has outsoared the shadow of sin, and is one of a holy company that no man can number, standing before the throne: this moment his body is frail and corrupt, a body of death, even as others; the next, his body has become a glorious body, winged, radiant, immortal: this moment he is like all men, subject to, and in danger of, death; the next, he has evaded the grim king of terrors, escaped not only the feeling, but the sight, of death. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *A singular saint is a precious saint*:—As the morning star in the midst of the clouds, and as the moon when it is at full; as the flower of the roses in the spring of the year, and as the lilies by the springs of waters; as the branches of the frankincense in the time of summer, and as a vessel of massy gold, set with all manner of precious stones, and as the fat that is taken from the peace-offering;—so is one Enoch, that walketh with God when others walk from Him; one Rahab, in Jericho; one Elias, that boweth not his knee to Baal; one David, in Mesech; one Esther, in Shushan; one Judith, in Bethulia; one Joseph, in the Sanhedrim of the Jews; one Gamaliel, in the council of the Pharisees; one innocent and righteous man, in the midst of a crooked and froward generation. (*J. Spencer.*)

Ver. 27. *And all the days of Methuselah.*—*The longest life and its lessons*:—In dwelling upon this text I shall—I. Take a simple survey of the age and manners of the antediluvian world. The youth of the world was the season of man's greatest age; perhaps, also, of man's greatest wickedness. II. Draw some important lessons from this survey—1. The agglomerative tendencies of human depravity. 2. The vanity of earthly things. 3. The power of an endless life. 4. The great natural wickedness of the heart. 5. That mere duration of years does not constitute a long life, but the fulfilment of life's ends. 6. The danger of religious procrastination. (*Dr. Cheever.*) *The close of life*:—I. THE CLOSE OF LIFE IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN. II. LIFE HAS COME TO A CLOSE WITH MEN THROUGH ALL GENERATIONS FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES. III. LIFE COMES TO A CLOSE IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD. Some places are more salubrious than others. IV. LIFE COMES TO A CLOSE AT ALL SEASONS OF THE YEAR. V. LIFE CLOSES AT ALL PERIODS. Death is not peculiar to any age. VI. LIFE CLOSES IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. How many perish in the battle-field, amid all the dreadful realities of war! Many are lost by shipwreck at sea. Many lose their lives by accident on land. Far from the land of his birth and friends, pursuing his philanthropic career, John Howard finished his labours and his life. Sublimely grand must have been the exit of Thomas Chalmers; but, like that of John Foster, no human eye was permitted to see it. It was a Sabbath evening when he retired to rest, "in his most happy mood." In the morning he was found on his bedside in an attitude of repose. A peaceful smile, like a beam from the Sun of Righteousness, lingered about his face. His immortal part had soared upwards, escorted by a convoy of angels, to the better land. Thus widely diversified are the circumstances and modes of our departure. VII. THE CLOSE OF LIFE NEVER HAPPENS BY CHANCE. It is an event of Divine appointment. VIII. THE CLOSE OF LIFE MAKES ALL THE ARTIFICIAL DISTINCTIONS OF LIFE VOID. "Death," says Dr. Donne, "comes equally to us all, and makes us all equal when it comes. The ashes of an oak in a chimney are no epitaph of that to tell me how high, or how large it was; it tells me not what flocks it sheltered whilst it stood, nor what men it hurt when it fell. The dust of great men's graves is speechless too; it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing. As soon the dust of a wretch whom thou wouldst not, as of a prince whom thou couldst not look upon, will trouble thine eyes if the wind blow it thither; and when a whirlwind hath blown the dust of the churchyard into the church, and the man sweeps out the dust of the church into the churchyard, who will undertake to sift those dusts again, and to pronounce: 'This is the patrician—this is the noble flour; and this the yeoman—this the plebeian bran!'" IX. THE CLOSE OF LIFE IS OF INCONCEIVABLE IMPORTANCE. Our chances of preparation last while life lasts. It is said that when Alexander encamped before a city, he used to set up a light, to give notice to those within that if they came forth to him while that light lasted, they should have quarter; but if they came not out within the given time they were to expect no mercy. Our light is burning now. It goes out when life departs. Death fixes all for ever. It is this solemn fact—that death in shutting the gates of life upon us here, ushers us into the unchangeable hereafter—that accounts for the opposite experiences of men when they come to die. Voltaire said to his doctor—"I am abandoned by God and man. I will give you

half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months' life." "Sir," replied the doctor, "you cannot live six weeks." "Then," said the dying man, "I shall go to hell"; and soon after expired. "I shall be glad to find a hole," said Hobbes, "to creep out of the world at." How different the anticipations of good men! "O Father of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ!" exclaimed the martyr Polycarp; "I bless Thee that Thou hast counted me worthy to receive my portion in the number of martyrs." "I have pain," said Richard Baxter, "(there is no arguing against sense); but I have peace." "Is this dying?" said Dr. Goodwin. "How have I dreaded as an enemy this smiling friend." "The best of all is, God is with us," was John Wesley's shout of victory in the last hour. "The victory's won for ever," exclaimed Dr. Payson; "I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity and benevolence and happiness to all eternity." X. I HAVE NOW TO OBSERVE, THAT THE CLOSE OF LIFE MAY BE NEAR AT HAND. We know not the day nor the hour of the messenger's arrival. XI. MY LAST REMARK IS, THAT THE CLOSE OF LIFE DEMANDS INSTANT PREPARATION. Mark what that preparation is. What you require to fit you for death is all the same as that which you require to fit you for life. (*W. Walters.*)

Ver. 29. This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toll of our hands.—*Hope through the gloom*.—I. THE HARDNESS AND DIFFICULTY OF LIFE. These words are the words of parents. Lamech, "the powerful," is not ashamed to confess that he needs comfort; and when this child comes to him he accepts him as a Divine gift, as a commissioned, competent, and thrice-welcome messenger of comfort from God. II. THE COMFORT THAT COMES INTO THE WORLD WITH CHILDREN. These words of Lamech are the permanent inscription in the horoscope which parents everywhere and always see over the cradle of the latest born. There is a bright prophecy of God concerning the future in this invincible hopefulness of the parental heart. III. THE SECURITY WE HAVE FOR THIS IN THE GREAT FACT OF OUR REDEMPTION. Our Noah has been born; the Rest-giver, strong Burden-bearer, all-pitying and all-suffering Saviour. Noah was a preacher of righteousness, but Jesus Christ brings and gives righteousness, instilling it into every believing heart. (*A. Raleigh, D.D.*) *Comfort in toil*.—These words, used by Lamech, apply far more truly to the descendant of Noah after the flesh, even Jesus Christ. I. When our Lord appeared among men the world was in almost as sad and hopeless a condition as when Lamech looked around him. Among the Gentiles there was ignorance, darkness, and false imaginations; among the chosen people there was hardness and impenitence. Christ comforted His disciples after His resurrection by raising up the temple of their wrecked faith, as He raised again the temple of His own body. He comforted them with the assurance that their faith was not in vain, that He had the keys of death and hell, and was able to succour to the uttermost those who trusted in Him. II. The risen Christ comforted also the fathers of the ancient covenant. Moses and Elias appeared unto Him on Tabor, speaking with Him of the things concerning His passion. The ancient patriarchs could not enter into heaven till the gates were opened by the cross of Christ, and the handwriting that was against all sinners was taken away. III. The resurrection of Christ is a joy and comfort to us also.—1. Because in Him a way of safety was opened to the world. 2. Because He will repay a hundredfold all that is done for him. (*S. Baring-Gould, M.A.*) *The third Sunday in Advent*.—I. THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE GENEALOGICAL LISTS OF SCRIPTURE. They serve to tell us not only—1. Of the physical inter-dependence of the race, awakening thus our attention to the great problem of heredity; but 2. Of the moral variety of the race, bringing us face to face with human free will; and 3. Of the great glory of the race. There are names, like mountain-peaks, of spiritual grandeur; they find their apex in the Name which is above every name. II. THE MERCIFUL DEALING OF GOD WITH A SINFUL WORLD. Samples of God's education of man by—1. Promise; 2. Disappointment; 3. Manifold discipline. III. THE TRANSCENDENT SUPERIORITY OF OUR PRIVILEGES. In the advent of Jesus Christ—1. We find no disappointment; 2. We have profound satisfaction. (*Homilist.*)

CHAPTER VI.

VERS. 1, 2. The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.—*Sons of God different from the*

daughters of men :—1. In disposition. 2. In profession. 3. In moral character. 4. In eternal destiny. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Sons of Elohim and daughters of men* :—Opinions have differed greatly as to the meaning of the name "Sons of God," or rather of "Elohim." The rabbis, as was natural, from their love of the marvellous, took for granted that the fallen angels are meant; since "nephilim" is derived from the verb "to fall." Hence Apocryphal Jewish literature assumes this constantly, while not a few writers of the most opposite schools still support this explanation, which, nevertheless, seems fanciful and ungrounded. The giants are not said to have been "the sons of Elohim," and their name may as fitly be explained as referring to their "falling upon" their fellow-men as by any mysterious connection with the rebel angels. Nor does the name "sons" of "Elohim" necessarily refer to angels at all; for the word "Elohim" is used elsewhere in Scripture of men. Thus, in Psalm lxxxii. 1, we read that God "judges in the midst of the Elohim," who are shown in the next verse to be those who "judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked." The name is evidently given them from their office, in which they represented, in Israel, the supreme judge of the nation—Jehovah. Jewish interpreters generally adopt this meaning of the passage, believing that the "great" or "mighty" sons of Cain are contrasted with the lowlier daughters of Seth. It is, moreover, very doubtful if the word be ever applied in the Old Testament to angels. On the other hand, it is continually used of heathen idols, and hence it may well point in this particular case to inter-marriages between the adherents of idolatry and the daughters of the race of Seth, and a consequent spread of heathenism, far and near, with its attendant violence and moral debasement. If, however, by "the sons of Elohim" we understand the worshippers of Jehovah, the "daughters of men" would mean those of the race of Cain. This interpretation, indeed, is now very generally adopted, and seems the most natural. We should, then, read "the sons of the godly race" took wives of "the daughters of men." The children of such marriages sadly increased the prevailing corruption. They became "gibborim," or fierce and cruel chiefs, filling the world with blood and tumult. It was to prevent the final triumph of evil, Scripture tells us, that the deluge was sent from God. (*C. Geikie, D.D.*) *Marriage to be sought of God by prayer* :—It came to pass, when men began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God (men well qualified) saw the daughters of men (very lewd ones) that they were fair (that is all they aimed at), and, therefore, they took them wives (hand over head) of all which they chose; but, being not of God's providing, they had better been without them. Thus, when men send out lusts to seek them wives, and unclean spirits to woo for them; when men send out ambition to make their houses great, and covetousness to join house to house and land to land; when men send out flattery, lying and deceitful speeches, and do not send out prayers and loud cries unto Almighty God to direct them in their choice, they may thank themselves if they meet with wives, but not such helpmeets as God otherwise intended for them. (*J. Spencer.*) *Unequal marriages abhorrent to God* :—We see how grievous a thing unequal marriages be, when the godly with the ungodly, the believing with the infidels, the religious with the superstitious, are unequally yoked—surely even so grievous to God, that for this cause especially the whole world was destroyed by the flood. The Lord is no changeling; He disliked it ever, and disliketh it still. It is a secret poison that destroyeth virtue more speedily than anything. Solomon was overthrown by the daughters of men, for all his wisdom. Jehoshaphat matched his son to Ahab's daughter, and it was his destruction. He forsook the way of the Lord, and wrought all wickedness in a full measure. Why? Because, saith the text, "The daughter of Ahab was his wife." Ahab was wicked, but a wicked wife made him far worse, for she provoked him, saith the text. "Be not unequally yoked with infidels," saith the apostle, "for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath the believer with the infidel?" It is a law of marriage that should not be broken, that it be in the Lord—that is, with His liking and in His fear—with such as be godly and hold the truth. Our children we allow not to marry against our wills, but our right we challenge to give a consent. And shall the children of God seek no consent of their Father in heaven to their marriages? But His consent He will never give to marry His enemy, and therefore do it not. It is not lawful; it is not expedient if it were lawful. The flood came to punish such disobedience, and forget it never. (*Bishop Babington.*) *Beauty a snare* :—Beauty is a dangerous

bait, and lust is sharp-sighted. It is not safe gazing on a fair woman. How many have died of the wound in the eye! No one means hath so enriched hell as beautiful faces. Take heed our eyes be not windows of wickedness and loopholes of lust. (*J. Trapp.*) *Wrong unions*:—The mingling of that which is of God with that which is of man is a special form of evil, and a very effectual engine in Satan's hand for marring the testimony of Christ on earth. This mingling may frequently wear the appearance of something very desirable; it may often look like a wider promulgation of that which is of God. Such is not the Divine method of promulgating with or of advancing the interests of those who ought to occupy the place of witnesses for Him on the earth. Separation from all evil is God's principle; and this principle can never be infringed without serious damage to the truth. (*C. H. M.*) *The Cainites and the Sethites*:—You will remember that at this time there were two distinct races upon the earth—the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth; or, as we will call them, the Cainites and the Sethites. The latter were godly people; they worshipped and served the Lord; they kept up the observance of family prayer; they recognized, in fact, an unseen and spiritual kingdom; and they fashioned their lives, or endeavoured to fashion them, in accordance with their belief. The Cainites, on the contrary, cared for none of these things; they flung off the restraints of religion; they were the secularists and materialists of the antediluvian world. Whether there was an unseen kingdom, and a King to rule over it; whether there was such a thing as truth, or such a thing as righteousness, or even such a Being as God Himself, they did not care at all to inquire. These things might be, or might not be; but, at all events, there was the present visible, tangible, enjoyable condition of existence in which they found themselves placed; and of that they determined to make the best, without troubling themselves about difficult and abstruse questions which could probably never be solved. There is another observable thing, too, about these Cainites. Female names occur in their genealogies; and these female names are of such a character as indicates that especial attention had been given to attractiveness of personal appearance, and especial value set upon it by the women of this branch of the human family. Adah is one name: it means "ornament—beauty." Zillah is another: it means "shade," and seems to refer to the woman's thick and clustering tresses. Naamah is a third: it means "pleasing," and alludes, in all probability, to the fascination and winning attractiveness of manner possessed by the person who bore it. All this seems significant. We gather from it that the women of the Cainite race came into greater prominence, exercised a greater influence of a certain kind than the women of the Sethite race; were more obtrusive and less modest; wore more costly dresses, spent more time in adorning their persons, and gave themselves up to the cultivation and practice of feminine allurements. The recollection of this fact will enable us to understand better the statement of the text. Now, for some considerable time the two races kept completely apart; the Cainites went their way, the Sethites went theirs, and there was no intercourse to speak of between them. But after awhile the separation was removed. We are not informed how the change took place; it may have been through what we may call accidental circumstances, bringing the two races into contact; but it was more probably owing to a relaxation of religious principle on the part of the Sethites, a lowering of the spiritual tone, a departure from the ancient severity of their religious character, which threw them open to the assaults of temptation on the part of their worldly neighbours. And it was through the women of the Cainite race that the danger came in: "the sons of God" (that is, the worshippers of God—the Sethites) "saw the daughters of men that they were fair." Their beauty attracted and ensnared them; their dress was exquisite; their manners were fascinating, if a trifle bold—unlike, they would say, the shy and retiring ways of the women of their own race; and they first fluttered round, and then fell into the net that was spread for them. "And they took them wives of all which they chose." There is indicated in this language a simple following of their own will; there is no reference to God or to duty in the matter. The result was an intermingling of the two races, and a very rapid increase of the corruption of mankind. Possibly some of the Sethites, the sons of God, may have deceived themselves with fancying that they, by the infusion of their goodness, were going to raise from its spiritual degradation the Cainite family, and instruct them in the knowledge and the love of God. Ah, the snow as it falls upon the street may cherish the hope that it is going to cover the pathway with a robe of unsullied whiteness! The pure bright stream may fancy when it mingles its waters with those of some turbulent and

turbid companion, that it is going to absorb the other's foulness into its own immaculate purity! But what a miserable mistake this is! Good is indeed more potent than evil when it stands on the defensive and occupies its own ground; but it is feeble, it is powerless, it is soon overcome, when it allows itself to be drawn into the enemy's territory, and to meet him as a friend. This seems to be the true explanation of the narrative to which our text belongs. And now the question arises, Has it any practical bearing upon ourselves, and upon the circumstances in which we are placed? We believe it has. In what did the criminality of these Sethites consist? In that perversion of the moral sense which led them to prefer external advantages, external attractions, to goodness. Yet how often we are tempted to prefer other things to this sterling quality, or at least to think that the absence of it is more than atoned for by the presence of exterior fascinations! Take, for instance, some favourite writer. He is profane, perhaps; he scoffs at religion, or at least sneers in a covert way. "True," we say, apologetically; "but how full of intellect he is! What a masterly hand he lays upon his subject! How magnificent are his descriptions, and how his thoughts roll forth in a grand overwhelming tide from the depths of his mind, sweeping all before them!" Or that companion of ours, whom we have lately been warned against. "Perhaps he is irreligious; perhaps he is a little loose, both in his habits and his notions. But how clever he is! No one ever feels dull in his company!" Instances and proofs might easily be multiplied. Now, all this exactly corresponds to the fault, the sin of the "sons of God," spoken of in our text. It is a criminal preference of external fascinations to the goodness which consists in recognition of God and in consecration to His service. "It is natural," perhaps you will say. Granted; but the Christian ought to carry that about him which enables him to discriminate between the seeming and the real, and to know things, to a certain extent at least, as they really are. Our subject applies to companionship generally, and suggests the extreme importance of a right choice of associates. Many of us, of course, are thrown into unavoidable juxtaposition with those with whom we have no manner of sympathy, and whom we would gladly avoid if we could. The exigencies of business bring into the same office, or into the same pursuit, the pure and the impure, the godly and the ungodly; and nothing is more common than to hear right-minded young people complaining of the words which they are compelled to hear, or of the things which they are compelled to witness, in the place in which their lot is cast. But, after all, a man is safe if he is in the path of duty. It is the voluntary and not the enforced association which exercises a deleterious influence upon mind and character. But the subject suggests more particularly the effect of companionship between the sexes, and, more particularly still, it puts men on their guard against the fascinations of attractive and accomplished, but irreligious and unspiritual, women. (*G. Calthrop, M.A.*)

Ver. 3. My Spirit shall not always strive with man.—*The striving of the Spirit*:—I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE ASSERTION, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man"? It is implied:—(1) that the Spirit does sometimes strive with men; (2) that men resist the Spirit. II. WHAT IS NOT INTENDED BY THE SPIRIT STRIVING? It is no form of physical struggling or effort whatever. It is not any force applied to our bodies. III. WHAT, THEN, IS THE STRIVING OF THE SPIRIT? It is an energy of God applied to the mind of man, setting truth before his mind, reasoning, convincing, and persuading. IV. HOW MAY IT BE KNOWN WHEN THE SPIRIT OF GOD STRIVES WITH AN INDIVIDUAL? (1) When a man finds his attention arrested to the great concerns of his soul; (2) when a man finds himself convinced of sin; (3) when the mind is convicted of the great guilt and ill-desert of sin; (4) when men see the folly of seeking salvation in any other way than through Christ alone. V. WHAT IS INTENDED BY THE SPIRIT NOT STRIVING ALWAYS? Not that He will at some period withdraw from among mankind, but that He will withdraw from the individual in question. There is a limit to the Spirit's efforts in the case of each sinner; at some uncertain, awful point, he will reach and pass it. VI. WHY WILL GOD'S SPIRIT NOT STRIVE ALWAYS? (1) Because longer striving will do the sinner no good; (2) because sinners sin wilfully when they resist the Holy Ghost; (3) because there is a point beyond which forbearance is no virtue. VII. CONSEQUENCES OF THE SPIRIT'S CEASING TO STRIVE WITH MEN. (1) A confirmed hardness of heart; (2) a seared conscience; (3) certain damnation. (*C. G. Finney.*) *God striving with man*:—God strives with man in many ways by the working of His blessed Spirit within him; by the working of our own conscience, by various warnings from

without constantly strewn in our paths ; but if we grieve and resist the Holy Spirit of God, then He will not always strive with us, but will give us over to a reprobate mind. I. Consider the great mercy of God, in consenting to strive with man at all. II. The striving of the Spirit is a means of resisting the flesh. III. The Spirit of God strives in many ways. His strivings have a meaning, a message, and a warning to us all. (*Bishop Atlay.*) *The Spirit's influence* :—I. THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD DOES EXERT AN INFLUENCE ON MAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING HIS BEST INTEREST. Notice—1. That this spiritual influence is universal. No doubt respecting its possibility. He who made man can influence him. 2. That this spiritual influence is essential to the production of good. Human nature is depraved, and therefore incapable of itself of producing anything good. As every drop of rain which falls from the clouds, and every spring that issues from the rocky mountains, comes from the mighty oceans ; as the light which makes every planet and satellite gleam in the dark void of space comes from the sun, so does all good in man proceed from the Spirit of God. 3. That this spiritual influence is, in every case, limited by the conditions of man's free agency. Nothing compulsory in its nature. If religion be virtue, man in becoming religious must act from choice and not from necessity. 4. That this spiritual influence is effective in proportion to the adaptation of the means by which it acts upon men's minds. Nature. Providence. Chiefly the gospel. II. THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD MAY CEASE TO INFLUENCE MEN FOR GOOD. This proved by facts. Saul (1 Sam. xxviii. 15) ; Belshazzar (Dan. v.) ; Jews in time of Jeremiah (Jer. xv. 1). III. THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD CEASES TO INFLUENCE MAN FOR GOOD BECAUSE OF MAN'S CONTINUED REBELLION. "For that he also is flesh." The word "flesh" is often used in Scripture to denote the sinfulness of man. This ceasing to strive may not be the result of a positive act of withdrawal of heavenly influences, so much as that of the law of nature which determines that the momentum of any moving body is diminished by constant resistance. In the moral universe, as well as in the physical, this law operates. IV. THAT THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD IS MANIFESTED IN THE MANNER IN WHICH SPIRITUAL INFLUENCES ARE WITHDRAWN FROM MAN. "Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." 1. The withdrawal never happens till after a long period of existence. 2. It never happens suddenly, but gradually. 3. It never happens without sufficient warning. (*Evan Lewis.*) *The Spirit striving* :—I. A WONDERFUL FACT IMPLIED. The Holy Spirit strives with man. 1. Remarkable power. Man can refuse to obey the Creator. 2. Amazing Divine condescension. 3. Astonishing human obduracy. 4. A merciful reason. Why not abandon man ? Love of God. 5. The benevolent purpose. That man may forsake sin. 6. The mysterious method. II. AN ALARMING FACT STATED. 1. A calamity of awful magnitude. 2. Most melancholy. (*Homilist.*) *The time of God's grace is limited* :—There is a time when God will strive ; but when that time is gone, God will strive no more. To make this plain I will lay down these six things :—1. I will let you see that it hath been so by testimonies of Scripture. (1 Sam. xv. 23 ; Heb. xii. 16-18 ; Luke xix. 41, 42.) 2. I will show in or after what manner God deals with a soul in giving it over. (1) The Lord changes His mind, and repents of the good He has done to such rebellious and stubborn creatures. (2) The Lord gives over that man to the power of that sin, which He never did before when He strove with him ; we must either lose our sins or our souls ; and if no means will serve to bring a man home, then the Lord gives him over to commit his old sin (Psa. lxxxi. 11, 12). (3) As God gives a man over to the power of his lusts, so He doth blast a man in regard of all abilities and gifts that formerly he hath had. Look into the world, and you shall see this plain. Great scholars, learned doctors and preachers, their learning hath been blasted ; they were bright candles, yet in the end they became snuffs, men of corrupt minds, &c. Look upon other common Christians, who have given hope of coming unto God when they were in sickness or necessity, &c. Yet at last it turns to nothing ; He sent leanness into their souls (Psa. cvi. 15). He gave them their request. One aims at honour ; well, God gives it unto Him. Another will have profit ; well, saith God, and thou shalt have it, but My Spirit and the excellency thereof thou shalt never have. (4) The Lord hardens that man. He repents of the good that is done unto him ; He gives him up to the power of his lusts, and blasts all his parts, so that he hardens his heart. And look by what means God sought to bring him unto Him, those means harden him ; afflictions harden him, which should have been the means to have recalled him. God brays a fool ten times in a mortar, and yet he is the harder, harder, and harder. (5) The Lord lets that man build upon false bottoms, live by false principles ; that

man which hath been enlightened must have somewhat to hold upon; else he would be in a little hell, and ergo a man hath his shifts. Saul saith, I have performed the will of the Lord, I have done that which He commanded me. Have you so, says Samuel? What then means the lowing of the oxen? Oh, saith he, it is to do sacrifice unto the Lord. (6) The Lord gives a commission to all means formerly used, that they shall never come to Him more; the Lord bids those judgments and mercies wherewith He sought to humble him before, never more to meddle with him. Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone (Hos. iv. 17). 3. I will let you see what persons they are. (1) Those that have lived a good while under the means of grace, but are still unprofitable and no good is wrought upon them; it is likely such men are given over (Matt. xxiii. 34-37). And a man that hardens his neck when he is rebuked, shall suddenly be destroyed and cannot be cured (Prov. xxix. 1). (2) Those that have much calling and means and also many secret-workings of the Spirit on them, that when they have gone out of the house of God have determined never to be drunk more, never to swear, lie, nor steal more, &c., and yet these come to nought. He that hath had many proclamations, as Ezek. xxiv. 13. (3) Those that have much grieved the good Spirit of God in bringing in some sin contrary to the light of conscience and the suggestions of the good Spirit of God, as did the children of Israel, who resisted the good Spirit of God, and He swore, &c. (4) Such as have a common, base, vile, and contemptible esteem of the gospel and ministers thereof. They mocked the ministers till the wrath of God broke out against them and there was no remedy (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16). 4. Now I come to the fourth thing which is the grounds of it, viz.: Why the Lord in this life doth give men over and strive with them no more. The grounds of this point arise from these two attributes of God, His justice and His wisdom. (1) God is a just God; and is it not just that those who have rejected Him, that He should reject them? I have called, but you answered not (Jer. vii. 13). (2) God is a wise God. A man that knocks at the door if he be wise, will not always lie knocking if none answer: he gives over and goes away; so the Lord knocks at our hearts by mercies to allure us, by judgments to terrify us: yet He can find no entrance. Is it not wisdom then to be gone? Why should I smite you any more, saith God? (Isa. i. 5). (*W. Fenner.*) *Divine forbearance and justice:*—I. THE LONGSUFFERANCE OF JEHOVAH TOWARDS HIS WAYWARD CREATURES IS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES IN VARIOUS WAYS. It is stated in a multitude of passages, that longsuffering is one of His distinguishing attributes; and the truth of this is evidenced by the exceeding great forbearance manifested towards many whose character and conduct are recorded in Holy Writ (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7; Num. xiv. 8; Psa. lxxxvi. 15; 2 Pet. iii. 9). Consider, then, the fact of God's exceeding great forbearance, and let it be the means of gently leading you to repentance. But, in addition to this, there is another consideration which ought to operate on your minds—namely: II. THE WARNINGS AFFORDED TO SINNERS BEFORE THE POURING OUT OF HIS JUDGMENTS. There is nothing more clearly manifested in the account given us in the Word of God of His dealings with mankind, than the fact of the unwillingness with which the Almighty inflicts punishment on sinners. It is termed in the twenty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and the twenty-first verse, "His strange work, His strange act." Mercy is the work in which the Lord delights; and judgment when executed is performed as a matter of constraint, the effect of necessity. How many are the warnings which the Lord holds forth before He strikes the blow! This was remarkable in the case of the antediluvians. (*T. R. Redwar, M.A.*) *The danger of resisting the Spirit:*—I. THAT GOD'S TAKING AWAY HIS SPIRIT FROM ANY SOUL IS THE CERTAIN FORERUNNER OF THE RUIN AND DESTRUCTION OF THAT SOUL. This is clearly evinced from the words; for, although the flood did immediately terminate in the destruction of the body only, yet because it snatched these men away in a state of impenitence, it was consequentially the destruction of the soul. II. THAT THERE IS IN THE HEART OF MAN A NATURAL ENMITY AND OPPOSITION TO THE MOTIONS OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT; outward contention is the proper issue and product of inward hatred: striving in action is an undoubted sign of enmity in the heart (Gal. v. 17). Here we see there is a sharp combat between these two: and the apostle subjoins the reason of it: "for these two are contrary." Things contrary will vent their contrariety in mutual strife. III. THAT THE SPIRIT IN ITS DEALINGS WITH THE HEART IS VERY EARNEST AND VEHEMENT. To strive, imports a vigorous putting forth of the power: it is such a posture as denotes an active desire. There is none that strives with another but conquest is the thing both in his desire and in his endeavour. IV. THAT THERE IS A SET AND PUNCTUAL

TIME, AFTER WHICH THE CONVINCING OPERATIONS OF GOD'S SPIRIT UPON THE HEART OF MAN IN ORDER TO HIS CONVERSION BEING RESISTED, WILL CEASE AND FOR EVER LEAVE HIM. 1. Scripture proof (Psa. xcv. 10; Luke xix. 42). 2. How the Spirit may be resisted in His workings upon the heart. Where we must first lay down, what it is in general to resist the Spirit. And this I conceive is, in brief, to disobey the Spirit commanding and persuading the soul to the performance of duty, and the avoidance of sin. Now, the Spirit commands and persuades two ways. 1. Externally, by the letter of the word either written or preached. 2. By its immediate internal workings upon the soul, which I shall reduce to two: (1) The illumination of the understanding. (2) The conviction of the will. Now, suitable to all these ways of the Spirit's dealings with us, there are so many different acts of resistance by which these dealings are opposed. Of all which in their order. 1. Concerning the resistance of the Spirit in disobeying the letter of the Word. The reason that disobedience to the Word is to be accounted an opposing of the Spirit, is because the Word was dictated and inspired by the Spirit itself. 2. I shall next show how it is resisted in its immediate internal workings upon the soul. Here we must reflect upon ourselves, and know that upon the unhappy fall of man, sin and the wretched effects of sin immediately entered upon, and took full possession of all his faculties: his understanding, that before shined clear like the lamp of God, was by sin over-spread with darkness; his will, that bore a perfect conformity to the Divine will, was rendered totally averse from and contrary to the things of God. (1) Concerning our resistance of it in illumination or its enlightening work. And these enlightenings both may be, and often are, resisted by the soul. Illumination in general may be described, the Spirit's infusing a certain light into the mind, whereby it is in some measure enabled to discern and judge of the things of God. Now, this light is threefold. (a) That universal light which we usually term the light of nature, yet so as it may also be rightly termed the light of the Spirit; but in a different respect. It is called the light of nature, because of its general inherence in all men; because it is commensurate and of equal extent with nature, so that wheresoever the nature of man is to be found there this light is to be found. "It enlightens every man that comes into the world." But on the other hand, it is called the light of the Spirit, in respect of the Spirit's efficiency, in that it is the producing cause of it as it is of every good and perfect gift. (b) The second kind of light may be called a notional Scripture light; that is, a bare knowledge of or assent to Scripture truths. This light is begot in the mind of all professors by the mere hearing or reading the word; it is the bare perception of evangelical truths placed in the intellect, resting in the brain, treasured up there by a naked apprehension and speculation. So that the resisting this is almost the same with our resistance of the Spirit speaking in the word, only with this difference, that in the former we resist the word as considered in the letter, in this we resist it as it lies transcribed in the conceptions of the understanding. (c) The third kind of light may be called a special convincing light, which is a higher degree of the enlightening work of the Spirit. This is the highest attainment of the soul on this side saving grace; it is like the clear shining of the moon and stars, which is the greatest light that is consistent with a state of darkness. Yea, it is such a light as does not only make a discovery of the things of God, but also engenders in the soul a certain relish and taste of them. (2) We come now to the second, which is the conviction of the will, which conviction may be described in general. A work of the Spirit of God upon the will and affections, producing in them some imperfect liking of the ways of God, and dislike to the ways of sin. Now, the convincing works of the Spirit upon the will may be reduced to these three. (a) A begetting in it some good desires, wishes, and inclinations. (b) An enabling it to perform some imperfect obedience. (c) An enabling it to leave some sins. In all these works the Spirit may be resisted and opposed. 3. Why, upon such resistance, the Spirit finally withdraws. (1) The first reason is drawn from God's decree. (2) The second reason is because it is most agreeable to the great intent and design of the gospel. (3) The third ground or reason why God withdraws His Spirit upon our resistance, is because it highly tends to the vindication of His honour. Now, God may vindicate His honour two ways in the Spirit's departure. (a) As it is a punishment to the sinner, that has dishonoured Him. God's glory cannot be repaired but by the misery of the party that made a breach upon it. (b) God may vindicate His honour by clearing His injured attributes from those aspersions that human mistakes might charge upon them. (4) God withdraws His Spirit upon resistance, because this naturally raises in the hearts of men an esteem and valuation of the Spirit's workings: and the reason of

this is, because in so doing, men apparently see that God Himself puts an esteem and value upon them, otherwise why should He so severely bereave men of them upon their abuse? Were it not a treasure God would not be so choice of it. APPLICATION: And now, what can be more seasonable than to wrap up all in the apostle's own exhortation, "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19). Now, as arguments to dissuade or deter you from this, and withal to persuade and excite you to the former, take these motives. 1. Our resisting of the Spirit in His precepts and instructions will certainly bereave us of His comforts. 2. The second motive why we should comply with the Spirit is, because the resisting of it brings a man under hardness of heart and a reprobate sense. 3. The third motive is, because resisting of the Spirit puts a man in the very next disposition to the great and unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. (R. South, D.D.) *Why God's Spirit will not always strive*:—There is a certain point beyond which He will not go for sufficient reasons known fully to Himself, partly to us. Two of these we are to notice for our instruction. 1. He will not touch the free agency of His rational creatures. He can put no force on the volitions of men. An involuntary or compulsory faith, hope, love, obedience, is a contradiction in terms, and anything that could bear the name can have no moral validity whatsoever. 2. After giving ample warning, instruction and invitation, He will, as a just judgment on the unbelieving and the impenitent, withdraw His Spirit and let them alone. (Prof. J. G. Murphy.) *Neglecting the opportunity of grace*:—When I think of opportunities, I think I may liken us here to-night to a number of men in the Arctic regions. They have been frozen up for a long time, and the ship is high and dry on great masses of ice. The thaw comes on; but the thaw, however, will last but for a very short time. They set their saws to work; they see a split in the ice; there is a long and very narrow lane of water. If they can get the ship along there before the water freezes it up again, they may yet reach the shores of dear old England, and be safe; but if not, they are frozen in for another winter, and very likely will be frozen in for ever. Well, now, to-night it seems just so with us. It seems as if the Spirit of God had purposely brought some of you here; and I do trust He is opening, as it were, the lane of mercy for you—causing your sins for a little time to loose their frosty hold, and opening your heart a little to the genial influences of the gospel. But, oh! if it should be frozen up again. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *The world's treatment of the Holy Spirit*:—It is sad, when the physician, having exhausted all the resources of his skill, gives up his patient and retires. It is sad when the parent, having tried severity and kindness, correction and encouragement, in vain, at last, heartbroken and hopeless, desists from his endeavours to reform his wayward child. But it is sadder still when Almighty God foiled, as it were, by human obduracy, in all the manifestations of His grace and mercy, at last gives up His efforts for the salvation of men, and retires exclaiming: "How often would I have gathered you under My wing, and ye would not." Such is the spectacle here. The Spirit of God has, all through, been connected with our world. It was He who moved on the face of the waters, reducing the discordant elements to order, and building up that fair and goodly structure, which has still so many traces of its original beauty lingering amid its ruin and decay. It was He who was breathed into man, making him a living soul, spiritual, and like to God in wisdom, goodness, happiness, and truth. After the Fall, He did not forsake the work of His hands, but clave to the souls of men, seeking to help their recovery, and if that might not be, seeking to act as a drag on their downward progress. Oh, how long-continued, constant, and persevering have been His efforts for the good of man! What has been the treatment which He has received from them in return? God tells us what it was from the men before the flood. They were going on in evils ways, and the Spirit strove with them, tried to stop them, and turn them back. He pleaded with them, warned them, but it was in vain; they went on, and grew worse and worse. Like a mighty torrent they swept along, and drew even the godly along with them. At length it became time for God to decide and act, and so He did. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Slowly and reluctantly, God comes to this determination. Oh, the evil of man's sin! It makes, as it were, a conflict in the Divine bosom. Mercy calls for delay, but justice says, "It must be limited." Love to men, and unwillingness that they should perish, cry, "Let alone a little longer," but God is jealous for the honour of His Spirit. And so a time comes when the blessed God must decide and act; and so He does. "Man has become flesh," mere flesh; all, with one exception, flesh. The case is hopeless. "Open the windows of heaven, and break up the fountains of the

great deep." So it was with Israel. With growing light, unparalleled privileges, they grew worse and worse—more hardened, formal, hypocritical. The case was hopeless; Israel was mere flesh—a dead, corrupting carcase. Ho, ho, ye Roman eagles, come and devour! (*J. Milne.*) *The long-suffering of God:*—The stroke of judgment is like the lightning flash, irresistible, fatal; it kills—kills in the twinkling of an eye. But the clouds from which it leaps are slow to gather; they thicken by degrees; and he must be intensely engaged with the pleasures, or engrossed in the business of the world, whom the flash and peal surprise. The mustering clouds, the deepening gloom, the still and sultry air, the awful silence, the big pattering raindrops, these reveal his danger to the traveller, and warn him away from river, road, or hill, to the nearest shelter. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*) *Sin beyond mercy:*—In an age of despotism, an Italian prince became celebrated for his forbearance, also for his severe punishment when aroused to do vengeance. He had an offending servant who was repeatedly admonished. With every pardon he became more reckless and impudent, and thought he could do anything with impunity. One day, he entered the presence of the prince with his hat on, and, when rebuked, said he had a cold. His much-enduring master said, "I will take care that you never catch cold again." He immediately ordered the man to prison, and that the executioner should nail his hat to his head. One of the prince's friends expressed surprise at this severe sentence, because the servant had been pardoned for more serious crimes. The prince took a goblet, and having half filled it with water, requested his friend to put an apple into it. This made the water rise to the brim. The prince then told his friend to drop in a coin. This made the water to run over. "How is it?" the prince asked, "that the small coin caused the water to run over, whereas the large apple raised it only to the brim?" The overflowing of the cup of God's mercy is wrath and destruction to the impenitent.

Ver. 4. Giants in the earth.—*Giants:*—Story of Jack the Giant Killer: written to teach children that they have got to fight giants. I. The first giant you have to overcome is **ILL-TEMPER**. Look out for him when told to do something you don't want to do. The time to beat him is right at the beginning. II. The next giant you have to meet is **SELFISHNESS**. We have only one mouth because we don't have to eat for anybody else; but two ears, eyes, hands, because we have to help other people. This giant has only one ear, eye, hand—just enough to do for himself and nothing more. III. The third giant is **UNTRUTHFULNESS**. He is a big liar. The most dangerous of all the giants. Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all. IV. **DISOBEDIENCE**. V. **SELF-SUFFICIENCY**. Whenever this giant moves you to sneer at the honest beliefs of others, or to set your opinion and wisdom against that of the world, there is but one thing that will suffice to conquer him, and that is faith. (*J. M. Pullman.*) *Giants of strength:*—In the early days of which we read in the Bible men seemed to have been stronger and taller, and to have lived to a greater age than now. But it is not of these giants of strength of whom I would speak to you, but of giants in character, in faith, in holiness, and endurance, who may serve us feeble folk as examples how to live and die. Let us take Noah as an example of a giant in faith. He believed God's promise that He would destroy the world, though there were no signs of the coming flood. And when the flood came, Noah was saved and the laughers destroyed. Again, take Abraham as an example of a giant of faith. Take Job as an example of patience: he lost health and home, and money and children, at one stroke, and he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." We, like them, may be giants of strength if we trust in Him whose grace is sufficient for us. Let me now tell you of some who have been giants of strength in their death, and let their dying words be a sermon to us. Let us hear Simeon, the old man who had grown grey waiting for the consolation of Israel; his dim eyes looked on the Son of God, his feeble arms held Him, and he went to his rest, saying, "Lord, now lettest," &c. May we all likewise die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like his! St. Stephen sank beneath the cruel stones, crying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"; &c. St. Paul, when his work was nearly over, said, "I have fought a good fight," &c. Listen to Ignatius on his way to Rome to die for Jesus, "My Lord was crucified for me." St. Polycarp, the white-haired bishop of Smyrna, is in the hands of his enemies, they bid him abjure the faith of Christ, or be cast to the lions, and the brave old man makes answer, "We Christians change no better for worse, but change from bad to

better," and so goes to the lions. John Huss is being bound to the stake and he cries, "Welcome this chain for Christ's sake." The dying Luther murmurs, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth." When Melancthon was near his end, they asked him if he wanted aught, and he answered, "Nothing but heaven." The poet Goethe said with his last breath, "Let the light enter," and so passed away to where all things are made clear. When the learned Grotius was dying they brought young people to his bedside to hear his parting advice; he gave it in two words, "Be serious." Beethoven, the great composer, was too deaf to hear his own sweet music, but on his death-bed he said, smiling, "I shall hear in heaven." Yes, the best music, the unending praises of the Lamb of God! From these giants let us learn how to die. Many of them were weak, and old, and sickly, some were women and tender children; only let us be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and the feeblest feet among us shall climb to heaven, the tiniest hands shall beat down the tempter, the sickliest bodies shall be glorified. (*H. J. Wilmot Buxton, M.A.*)

Vers. 5-7. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth.—*A degenerate world*:—1. The organic unity of society is favourable to the spread of moral evil. 2. The native willingness of the human soul to do evil is favourable to the contagion of moral wrong. I. It is a world in which marriage is abused. 1. We find that marriage was commenced on a wrong principle. It is altogether wrong for the sons of God to marry the daughters of men. 2. We find that physical beauty was made the basis of the matrimonial selection. We find that the marriage bond was violated by impurity. II. It is a world in which violence prevails. 1. Men of physical strength became the rulers of the people. 2. Men of physical strength were the popular favourites of the day. 3. Men of physical strength were the terror of the day. III. It is a world in which spiritual influences are rejected. 1. This degenerate world had not been entirely left to its own inclination. 2. The degenerate world rejected the holy influences of heaven. 3. The degenerate world was in danger of losing the holy and correcting influences of heaven. IV. It is a world under the immediate inspection of God. V. It is a world threatened with destruction by God. 1. This threat was retributive. 2. This threat was comprehensive. 3. This threat was mingled with mercy. LESSONS: 1. To sanctify a long life by true piety, lest it become a means of impurity. 2. To avoid unhallowed alliances. 3. To coincide with the convictions of the Spirit or God. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The extent of man's wickedness*:—1. The testimony of God respecting man. In general, the wickedness of man was great in the earth. Every species of wickedness was committed in the most shameless manner. But more particularly, "the hearts" of men were evil; "the thoughts" of their hearts were evil; "the imaginations" of the thoughts were evil, and this too without exception, without mixture, without intermission; for every imagination was evil, and "only" evil, and that continually. What an awful statement. But how could this be ascertained? Only by God (Prov. xvi. 2). This is His testimony, after a thorough inspection of every human being. The same must be spoken of man at this day. Proved by observation. What has been the state of your hearts? Pride, anger, impure thoughts have sprung up in them. If occasionally a transient thought of good has arisen, how coldly has it been entertained, how feebly has it operated, how soon has it been lost. Compared with what the law requires, and what God and His Christ deserve at your hands, do we not fall short of our duty? II. WHAT EFFECT IT SHOULD PRODUCE UPON YOU. 1. Humiliation. On review of our words and actions we have all reason to be ashamed. Who amongst us could bear to have all his thoughts disclosed? Yet God beholds all; and has a perfect recollection of all that has passed through our minds from infancy. We ought to be humble. 2. Gratitude. God sent His Son that through Him all our iniquities might be forgiven. Is not gratitude due to Him in return? 3. Fear. Though your hearts are renewed by Divine grace, it is only in part; you have still the flesh within you, as well as the spirit. (*C. Simeon, M.A.*) *A degenerate world*:—1. In the first place, we may remark the occasion of this general corruption, which was the increase of population. When men began to multiply they became more and more depraved; yet an increase of population is considered as a blessing to a country, and such it is in itself; but through man's depravity it often proves a curse. When men are collected in great numbers they whet one another up to evil, which is the reason why sin commonly grows rankest in populous places. We were made to be helpers; but by sin we are become tempters of one another,

drawing and being drawn into innumerable evils. 2. Secondly: Observe the first step towards degeneracy, which was the uniting of the world and the church by mixed marriages. The great end of marriage in a good man should not be to gratify his fancy, or indulge his natural inclinations, but to obtain a helper; and the same in a woman. We need to be helped on in our way to heaven, instead of being hindered and corrupted. 3. Observe the great offence that God took at this conduct, and the consequences which grew out of it: The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, &c. It is for that he also (or these also) were flesh; that is, those who had been considered as the sons of God were become corrupt. 4. Observe the long-suffering of God amidst His displeasure—His day shall be a hundred and twenty years (1 Peter iii. 20). All this time God did strive, or contend with them; but, it seems, without effect. (*A. Fuller.*) *Moral declension*:—As there is a law of continuity, whereby in ascending we can only mount step by step; so they who descend must sink with an ever-increasing velocity. No propagation is more rapid than that of evil; no growth more certain. He who is in for a penny, if he does not resolutely fly, will find that he is in for a pound. The longer the avalanche rolls down the glacier slopes, the swifter becomes its speed. A little group of Alpine travellers saw a flower blooming on the slope of the cliff on which they stood surveying the prospect below. Each started to secure the prize; but as they hastened down, the force of their momentum increased with each step of the descent—they were borne on the smooth icy surface swiftly past the object of pursuit—and were precipitated into a yawning crevasse. Such is the declension of the soul. *A fair scene spoiled*:—I know a beautiful valley in Wales, guarded by well-wooded hills. Spring came there first, and summer lingered longest, and the clear river loitered through the rich pastures and the laughing orchards, as if loth to leave the enchanting scene. But the manufacturer came there; he built his chimneys and he lighted his furnaces, out of which belched forth poisonous fumes night and day. Every tree is dead, no flower blooms there now, the very grass has been eaten off the face of the earth, the beautiful river, in which the pebbles once lay as the pure thoughts in a maiden's mind, is now foul, and the valley scarred and bare, looks like the entrance into Tophet itself. And this human nature of ours, in which faith and virtue, and godliness, and all sweet humanities might flourish, in miles of this London of ours, is what bad air, and the gin palace, and the careless indifference of a Christianity bent only upon saving itself, have made it. (*Morlais Jones.*) *Man's corruption*:—I. THAT THE WICKEDNESS OF MAN IS, AND EVER HAS BEEN, GREAT. 1. Among the Jews. 2. In heathen nations. But, to bring the matter home to ourselves, for with ourselves the great concern lies, are not men still full of envy, murder, debate, deceit? Is not the state of society lamentably corrupted and depraved? II. THAT THIS WICKEDNESS PROCEEDS FROM HIS CORRUPT NATURE. Prove this from—1. Experience. 2. Scripture. (*Gen. viii. 20, 21; Job xv. 14-16; Psa. li. 5-10; Matt. xv. 19, xii. 33; Rom. vii. 14, 15, 18.*) II. THE ONLY REMEDY FOR THIS CORRUPTION. (*John iii. 16.*) (*H. J. Hastings, M.A.*) *The sinfulness of man's natural state*:—Two things are here laid to their charge: 1. Corruption of life, wickedness, great wickedness. I understand this of the wickedness of their lives; for it is plainly distinguished from the wickedness of their hearts. 2. Corruption of nature. Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. All their wicked practices are here traced to the fountain and spring-head: a corrupt heart was the source of all. The soul, which was made upright in all its faculties, is now wholly disordered. There is a sad alteration, a wonderful overturning in the nature of man: where, at first, there was nothing evil, now there is nothing good. I. I SHALL CONFIRM THE DOCTRINE OF THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE. Here we shall consult the word of God, and men's experience and observation. For Scripture-proof, let us consider, 1. How the Scripture takes particular notice of fallen Adam's communicating his image to his posterity (*Gen. v. 3*). 2. It appears, from *Job xiv. 4*, our first parents were unclean; how then can we be clean? 3. Consider the confession of David (*Psa. li. 5*). Here he ascends from his actual sin to the fountain of it, namely, corrupt nature. 4. Hear our Lord's determination of the point, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (*John iii. 6*). Behold the universal corruption of mankind—all are flesh! 5. Man certainly is sunk very low now, in comparison of what he once was. God made him but a "little lower than the angels"; but now we find him likened to the beasts that perish. He hearkened to a brute, and is now become like one of them. 6. "We are by nature the children of wrath" (*Eph.*

ii. 3). We are worthy of, and liable to, the wrath of God; and this by nature: therefore, doubtless, we are by nature sinful creatures. I shall propose a few things that may serve to convince us in this point—(1) Who sees not a flood of miseries overflowing the world? (2) Observe how early this corruption of nature begins to appear in young ones. (3) Take a view of the manifold gross outbreakings of sin in the world: the wickedness of man is yet great in the earth. (4) Cast your eye upon those terrible convulsions which the world is thrown into by the lusts of men! Lions make not a prey of lions, nor wolves of wolves: but men are turned lions and wolves to one another, biting and devouring one another. (5) Consider the necessity of human laws, guarded by terrors and severities; to which we may apply what the apostle says (1 Tim. i. 9). (6) Consider the remains of that natural corruption in the saints. Though grace has entered yet corruption is not expelled: though they have got the new creature, yet much of the old corrupt nature remains. (7) I shall add but one observation more, and that is, that in every man naturally the image of fallen Adam appears. Some children by the features and lineaments of their face do, as it were, father themselves: and thus we resemble our first parents. Every one of us bears the image and impression of the Fall upon him: and to evince the truth of this, I appeal to the consciences of all in these following particulars—(a) Is not sinful curiosity natural to us? and is not this a print of Adam's image (Gen. iii. 6)? (b) If the Lord by His holy law and wise providence puts a restraint upon us to keep us back from anything, does not that restraint whet the edge of our natural inclinations, and makes us so much the keener in our desires? And in this do we not betray it plainly that we are Adam's children (Gen. iii. 2-6)? (c) Which of all the children of Adam is not naturally disposed to hear the instruction that causeth to err? And was not this the rock our first parents split upon (Gen. iii. 4-6)? (d) Do not the eyes in your head often blind the eyes of the mind? (e) Is it not natural to us to care for the body, even at the expense of the soul? (f) Is not every one by nature discontented with his present lot in the world, or with some one thing or other in it? (g) Are we not far more easily impressed and influenced by evil counsels and examples than by those that are good? (h) Who of all Adam's sons needs be taught the art of sewing fig leaves together to cover their nakedness (Gen. iii. 7)? (i) Do not Adam's children naturally follow his footsteps in hiding themselves from the presence of the Lord (Gen. iii. 8)? (k) How loth are men to confess sin, to take guilt and shame to themselves? Was it not thus in the case before us (Gen. iii. 10)? (l) Is it not natural for us to extenuate our sin, and transfer the guilt upon others? II. I PROCEED TO INQUIRE INTO THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE IN THE SEVERAL PARTS THEREOF. Man in his natural state is altogether corrupt: both soul and body are polluted, as the apostle proves at large (Rom. iii. 10-18). 1. Of the corruption of the understanding. (1) There is a natural weakness in the minds of men with respect to spiritual things. The apostle determines concerning every one that is not endued with the graces of the Spirit, "That he is blind, and cannot see afar off" (2 Pet. i. 9). (2) Man's understanding is naturally overwhelmed with gross darkness in spiritual things. He has some notions of spiritual truths, but sees not the things themselves that are wrapt up in the words of truth, "Understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (1 Tim. i. 7). In a word, natural men fear, seek, confess, they know not what. (3) There is in the mind of man a natural bias to evil, whereby it comes to pass that whatever difficulties it finds while occupied about things truly good, it acts with a great deal of ease in evil, as being in that case in its own element (Jer. iv. 22). (4) There is in the carnal mind an opposition to spiritual truths, and an aversion to receive them. It is as little a friend to Divine truths as it is to holiness. (5) There is in the mind of man a natural proneness to lies and falsehood, which favours his lusts. (6) Man is naturally high-minded; for when the gospel comes in power to him it is employed in "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. x. 5). 2. Of the corruption of the will. The will, that commanding faculty, which at first was faithful and ruled with God, is now turned traitor and rules with and for the devil. God planted it in man "wholly a right seed," but now it is "turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine." (1) There is in the unrenewed will an utter inability for what is truly good and acceptable in the sight of God. (2) There is in the unrenewed will an aversion to good. Sin is the natural man's element; he is as unwilling to part with it as fish are to come out of the water on to dry land. (3) There is in the will of man a natural "proneness to evil," a woeful bent towards sin. (4) There is a natural

contrariety, direct opposition, and enmity in the will of man to God Himself and His holy will (Rom. viii. 7). 3. The corruption of the affections. The unrenewed man's affections are wholly disordered and distempered: they are as the unruly horse, that either will not receive, or violently runs away with, the rider. 4. Corruption of the conscience (Tit. i. 15). 5. Corruption of the memory. Even the memory bears evident marks of this corruption. What is good and worthy to be remembered, as it makes but slender impression, so that impression easily wears off: the memory, as a leaking vessel, lets it slip (Heb. ii. 1). 6. Corruption of the body. The body itself also is partaker of this corruption and defilement so far as it is capable thereof. Wherefore the Scripture calls it sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3). We may take this up in two things. (1) The natural temper, or rather distemper, of the bodies of Adam's children, as it is an effect of original sin, so it has a natural tendency to sin, incites to sin, leads the soul into snares, yea, is itself a snare to the soul. (2) It serves the soul in many sins. Its members are instruments or weapons of unrighteousness whereby men fight against God (Rom. vi. 13). III. I SHALL SHOW HOW MAN'S NATURE COMES TO BE THUS CORRUPTED. Adam's sin corrupted man's nature and leavened the whole lump of mankind. The root was poisoned, and so the branches were envenomed: the vine turned into the vine of Sodom, and so the grapes became grapes of gall. Adam by his sin became not only guilty but corrupt, and so transmits guilt and corruption to his posterity (Gen. v. 3; Job xiv. 4). By his sin he stripped himself of his original righteousness and corrupted himself; we were in him representatively, being represented by him as our moral head in the covenant of works: we were in him seminally, as our natural head; hence we fell in him, and by his disobedience were made sinners, as Levi in the loins of Abraham paid tithes (Heb. vii. 9, 10). IV. I SHALL NOW APPLY THIS DOCTRINE OF THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE. Use 1—For information. Is man's nature wholly corrupted? Then—(1) No wonder that the grave opens its devouring mouth for us as soon as the womb has cast us forth, and that the cradle is turned into a coffin to receive the corrupt lump: for we are all, in a spiritual sense, dead-born; yea, and filthy (Psa. xiv. 3), noisome, rank, and stinking as a corrupt thing, as the word imports. (2) Behold here as in a glass the spring of all the wickedness, profanity, and formality which is in the world; the source of all the disorders in thy own heart and life. (3) See here why sin is so pleasant and religion such a burden to carnal spirits: sin is natural, holiness not so. (4) Learn from this the nature and necessity of regeneration. First, this discovers the nature of regeneration in these two things—(a) It is not a partial, but a total change, though imperfect in this life. Thy whole nature is corrupted; therefore the cure must go through every part. (b) It is not a change made by human industry, but by the mighty power of the Spirit of God. A man must be born of the Spirit (John iii. 5). Secondly, this also shows the necessity of regeneration. It is absolutely necessary in order to salvation (John iii. 4). Use 2—For lamentation. Well may we lament thy case. O natural man! for it is the saddest case one can be in out of hell. Use 3—I exhort you to believe this sad truth. Alas! it is evident that it is very little believed in the world. Few are concerned to get their corrupt conversation changed; but fewer, by far, to get their nature changed. Most men know not what they are, nor what spirits they are of; they are as the eye, which, seeing many things, never sees itself. But until you know every one the plague of his own heart, there is no hope of your recovery. (*T. Boston, D.D.*) *A dark view of sin*:—If a doctor knows that he can cure a disease, he can afford to give full weight to its gravest symptoms. If he knows he cannot, he is sorely tempted to say it is of slight importance, and, though it cannot be cured, can be endured without much discomfort. And so the Scripture teachings about man's real moral condition are characterized by two peculiarities which, at first sight, seem somewhat opposed, but are really harmonious and closely connected. There is no book and no system in the whole world that takes such a dark view of what you and I are; there is none animated with so bright and confident a hope of what you and I may become. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *The sinfulness and cure of thoughts*:—1. Of the subject, "every man." 2. Of the act, "every thought." 3. Of the qualification of the act, "only evil." 4. Of the time, "continually." The words thus opened afford us this proposition: That the thoughts, and inward operations of the souls of men, are naturally universally evil, and highly provoking. In this discourse, let us first see what kind of thoughts are sine. 1. Negatively. A simple apprehension of sin is not sinful. Thoughts

receive not a sinfulness barely from the object. That may be unlawful to be acted which is not unlawful to be thought of. 2. Positively. Our thoughts may be branched into first motions, or such that are more voluntary. (1) First motions: those unfledged thoughts and single threads, before a multitude of them come to be twisted and woven into a discourse; such as skip up from our natural corruptions, and sink down again, as fish in a river. These are sins, though we consent not to them, because, though they are without our will, they are not against our nature, but spring from an inordinate frame, of a different hue from what God implanted in us. How can the first sprouts be good, if the root be evil? Not only the thought formed, but the very formation, or first imagination, is evil. (2) Voluntary thoughts, which are the blossoms of these motions: such that have no lawful object, no right end, not governed by reason, eccentric, disorderly in their motions, and like the jarring strings of an untuned instrument. These may be reduced to three heads. I. In regard of God. II. Of ourselves. III. Of others. I. In regard of God. 1. Cold thoughts of God. When no affection is raised in us by them. 2. Debasement conceptions, unworthy of God. Such are called in the heathen "vain imaginations" (Rom. i. 21). Such an imagination Adam seemed to have, conceiving God to be so mean a being, that he, a creature not of a day's standing, could mount to an equality of knowledge with Him. 3. Accusing thoughts of God, either of His mercy, as in despair; or of His justice, as too severe, as in Cain (Gen. iv. 13). 4. Curious thoughts about things too high for us. It is the frequent business of men's minds to flutter about things without the bounds of God's revelation (Gen. iii. 5). "God knows that your eyes shall be opened." Yet how do all Adam's posterity long after this forbidden fruit! II. In regard of ourselves. Our thoughts are proud, self-confident, self-applauding, foolish, covetous, anxious, unclean, and what not? 1. Ambitious. The aspiring thoughts of the first man run in the veins of his posterity. 2. Self-confident. Edom's thoughts swelled him into a vain confidence of a perpetual prosperity; and David sometimes said, in the like state, that he should never be moved. 3. Self-applauding. Either in the vain remembrances of our former prosperity, or ascribing our present happiness to the dexterity of our own wit. 4. Ungrounded imaginations of the events of things, either present or future. Such wild conceits, like meteors bred of a few vapours, do often frisk in our minds. (1) Of things present. It is likely Eve foolishly imagined she had brought forth the Messiah when she brought forth a murderer (Gen. iv. 1). (2) Of things to come, either in bespeaking false hopes, or antedating improbable griefs. Such are the jolly thoughts we have of a happy estate in reversion, which yet we may fall short of. 5. Immoderate thoughts about lawful things. When we exercise our minds too thick, and with a fierceness of affection above their merit; not in subservency to God, or mixing our cares with dependencies on Him. Worldly concerns may quarter in our thoughts, but they must not possess all the room, and thrust Christ into a manger; neither must they be of that value with us as the law was with David, sweeter than the honey or the honeycomb. III. In regard of others. All thoughts of our neighbour against the rule of charity: "Such that imagine evil in their hearts, God hates" (Zech. viii. 17). These principally are—1. Envious, when we torment ourselves with other's fortunes. 2. Censorious, stigmatizing every freckle in our brother's conversation (1 Tim. vi. 4). 3. Jealous and evil surmisings, contrary to charity, which "thinks no evil" (1 Cor. xiii. 5). 4. Revengeful; such made Haman take little content in his preferments, as long as Mordecai refused to court him (Esther v. 13); and Esau thought of the days of mourning for his father, that he might be revenged for his brother's deceits: "Esau said in his heart," &c. (Gen. xxvii. 41). In all these thoughts there is a further guilt in three respects, viz.—1. Delight. 2. Contrivance. 3. Reacting. 1. Delight in them. The very tickling of our fancy by a sinful motion, though without a formal consent, is a sin, because it is a degree of complacency in an unlawful object. 2. Contrivance. When the delight in the thought grows up to the contrivance of the act (which is still the work of the thinking faculty). When men's wits play the devils in their souls, in inventing sophistical reasons for the commission and justification of their crimes, with a mighty jollity at their own craft, such plots are the trade of a wicked man's heart. A covetous man will be working in his inward shop from morning till night to study new methods for gain; and voluptuous and ambitious persons will draw schemes and models in their fancy of what they would outwardly accomplish. 3. Reacting sin after it is outwardly committed. Though the individual action be transient, and cannot be committed again, yet the idea and image of it remaining

in the memory may, by the help of an apish fancy, be repeated a thousand times over with a rarefied pleasure, as both the features of our friends, and the agreeable conversations we have had with them, may with a fresh relish be represented in our fancies, though the persons were rotten many years ago. Having thus declared the nature of our thoughts, and the degrees of their guilt, the next thing is to prove that they are sins. There are three reasons for the proof of this, that they are sins. 1. They are contrary to the law, which doth forbid the first foamings and belchings of the heart, because they arise from an habitual corruption, and testify a defect of something which the law requires to be in us, to correct the excursions of our minds (Rom. vii. 7). 2. They are contrary to the order of nature, and the design of our creation. Whatsoever is a swerving from our primitive nature is sin, or at least a consequent of it. But all inclinations to sin are contrary to that righteousness wherewith man was first endued. 3. We are accountable to God, and punishable for thoughts. Nothing is the meritorious cause of God's wrath but sin. Having proved that there is a sinfulness in our thoughts, let us now see what provocation there is in them, which in some respects is greater than that of our actions. Now, thoughts are greater in respect—1. Of fruitfulness. The wickedness that God saw great in the earth was the fruit of imaginations. They are the immediate causes of all sin. No cockatrice but was first an egg. 2. In respect of quantity. Imaginations are said to be continually evil. There is an infinite variety of conceptions, as the Psalmist speaks of the sea, "wherein are all things creeping innumerable, both small and great," and a constant generation of whole shoals of them; that you may as well number the fish in the sea, or the atoms in the sunbeams, as recount them. 3. In respect of strength. Imaginations of the heart are only, *i.e.*, purely evil. The nearer anything is in union with the root, the more radical strength it hath. 4. In respect of alliance. In these we have the nearest communion with the devil. The understanding of man is so tainted, that his wisdom, the chiefest flower in it, is not only earthly and sensual (it were well if it were no worse), but devilish too (James iii. 15). If the flower be so rank, what are the weeds? 5. In respect of contrariety and odiousness to God. Imaginations were only evil, and so most directly contrary to God, who is only good. Our natural enmity against God (Rom. viii. 7), is seated in the mind. 6. In respect of connaturalness and voluntariness. They are the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, and they are continually evil. They are as natural as the estuaries of the sea, the bubblings of a fountain, or the twinkling of the stars. The uses shall be two, though many inferences might be drawn from the point. 1. Reproof. What a mass of vanity should we find in our minds, if we could bring our thoughts, in the space of one day, yea, but one hour, to an account! How many foolish thoughts with our wisdom, ignorant with our knowledge, worldly with our heavenliness, hypocritical with our religion, and proud with our humiliations! 2. Exhortation. We must take care for the suppression of them. All vice doth arise from imagination. Upon what stock doth ambition and revenge grow but upon a false conceit of the nature of honour? What engenders covetousness but a mistaken fancy of the excellency of wealth? Thoughts must be forsaken as well as our way (Isa. lv. 7). That we may do this, let us consider these following directions, which may be branched into these heads: 1. For the raising good thoughts. 2. Preventing bad. 3. Ordering bad when they do intrude. 4. Ordering good when they appear in us. 1. For raising good thoughts. (1) Get renewed hearts. The fountain must be cleansed which breeds the vermin. Pure vapours can never ascend from a filthy quagmire. What issue can there be of a vain heart but vain imaginations? (2) Study Scripture. Original corruption stuffs us with bad thoughts, and Scripture-knowledge would stock us with good ones; for it proposeth things in such terms as exceedingly suit out imaginative faculty, as well as strengthen our understanding. Judicious knowledge would make us "approve things that are excellent" (Phil. i. 9, 10); and where such things are approved, toys cannot be welcome. Fulness is the cause of steadfastness. (3) Reflect often upon the frame of your mind at your first conversion. None have more settled and more pleasant thoughts of Divine things than new converts when they first clasp about Christ, partly because of the novelty of their state, and partly because God puts a full stock into them; and diligent tradesmen, at their first setting up, have their minds intent upon improving their stock. Endeavour to put your mind in the same posture it was then. (4) Ballast your heart with a love to God. David thought all the day of God's law, as other men do of their lusts, because he inexpressibly loved it: "Oh, how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psa. cxix. 97). "I hate

vain thoughts, but Thy law do I love" (ver. 113). This was the successful means he used to stifle vain thoughts, and excite his hatred of them. (5) Exercise faith. As the habit of faith is attended with habitual sanctification, so the acts of faith are accompanied with a progress in the degrees of it. That faith which brings Christ to dwell in our souls will make us often think of our Inmate. (6) Accustom yourself to a serious meditation every morning. Fresh-airing our souls in heaven will engender in us a purer spirit and nobler thoughts. A morning seasoning would secure us for all the day. In this meditation, look both to the matter and manner. First, Look to the matter of your meditation. Let it be some truth which will assist you in reviving some languishing grace, or fortify you against some triumphing corruption; for it is our darling sin which doth most envenom our thoughts: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. xxiii. 7). Secondly, Look to the manner of it. First, Let it be intent. Transitory thoughts are like the glances of the eye, soon on and soon off; they make no clear discovery, and consequently raise no sprightly affections. Secondly, Let it be affectionate and practical. Meditation should excite a spiritual delight in God, as it did in the Psalmist: "My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord" (Psa. civ. 34); and a Divine delight would keep up good thoughts, and keep out impertinencies. (7) Draw spiritual inferences from occasional objects. David did but wisely consider the heavens, and he breaks out into self-abasement and humble admirations of God (Psa. viii. 3, 4). Glean matter of instruction to yourselves, and praise to your Maker, from everything you see; it will be a degree of restoration to a state of innocency, since this was Adam's task in paradise. 2. The second sort of directions are for the preventing bad thoughts. And to this purpose—(1) Exercise frequent humiliations. Pride exposeth us to impatient and disquieting thoughts, whereas humility clears up a calm and serenity in the soul. (2) Avoid entangling yourselves with the world. This clay will clog our minds, and a dirty happiness will engender but dirty thoughts. (3) Avoid idleness. Serious callings do naturally compose men's spirits, but too much recreation makes them blaze out in vanity. Idle souls as well as idle spirits will be ranging. (4) Awe your hearts with the thoughts of God's omniscience, especially the discovery of it at the last judgment. (5) Keep a constant watch over your hearts. David desires God to "set a watch before the door of his lips" (Psa. cxli. 3): much more should we desire that God would keep the door of our hearts. 3. The third sort of directions are for the ordering of evil thoughts, when they do intrude; and—(1) Examine them. Look often into your heart to see what it is doing; and what thoughts you find dabbling in it call to an account; inquire what business they have, what their errand and design is, whence they come, and whither they tend. (2) Check them at the first appearance. If they bear upon them a palpable mark of sin, bestow not upon them the honour of an examination. (3) Improve them. Poisons may be made medicinal. Let the thoughts of old sins stir up a commotion of anger and hatred. (4) Continue your resistance if they still importune thee, and lay not down thy weapons till they wholly shrink from thee. (5) Join supplication with your opposition. "Watch and pray" are sometimes linked together (Matt. xxvi. 41). The diligence and multitude of our enemies should urge us to watch, that we be not surprised; and our own weakness and proneness to presumption should make us pray that we may be powerfully assisted. 4. A fourth sort of directions is concerning good motions; whether they spring naturally from a gracious principle, or are peculiarly breathed in by the Spirit. There are ordinary bubbleings of grace in a renewed mind, as there are of sins in an unregenerate heart; for grace is as active a principle as any, because it is a participation of the Divine nature. But there are other thoughts darted in beyond the ordinary strain of thinking, which, like the beams of the sun, evidence both themselves and their original. And as concerning these motions joined together, take these directions in short—(1) Welcome and entertain them. As it is our happiness, as well as our duty, to stifle evil motions, so it is our misery, as well as our sin, to extinguish heavenly. (2) Improve them for those ends to which they naturally tend. It is not enough to give them a bare reception, and forbear the smothering of them; but we must consider what affections are proper to be raised by them, either in the search of some truth, or performance of some duty. (3) Refer them, if possible, to assist your morning meditation; that, like little brooks arising from several springs, they may meet in one channel, and compose a more useful stream. (4) Record the choicer of them. We may have occasion to look back upon them another time, either as grounds of comfort in some hour of temptation, or directions in some sudden emergency; but constantly

as persuasive engagements to our necessary duty. Thus they may lie by us for further use, as money in our purse. (5) Back them with ejaculations. Let our hearts be ready to attend every injection from heaven with a motion to it, since it is ingratitude to receive a present without returning an acknowledgment to the benefactor. As God turns His thoughts of us into promises, so let us turn our thoughts of Him into prayers. (*S. Charnock.*) *Man has made himself what he is:*—I would a thousand times sooner believe that man made himself what he is than that God made him so, for in the one case I should think ill of man only, in the other I am tempted to blame his Maker. Just think, I pray you, to what conclusion our reason would conduct us in any analogous case. You see, for example, a beautiful capital still bearing some of the flowers and foliage which the chisel of a master had carved upon the marble. It lies prostrate on the ground, half-buried among weeds and nettles; while beside it there rises from its pedestal the headless shaft of a noble pillar. Would you not conclude at once that its present position, so base, mean, and prostrate, was not its original position? You would say the lightning must have struck it down, or an earthquake have shaken it, or some ignorant barbarian had climbed the shaft and with rude hand had hurled it to the ground. Well, we look at man, and come to a similar conclusion. There is something, there is much that is wrong, both in his state and condition. His mind is carnal, and at enmity with God; the "imaginings of his heart are only evil continually," so says the Bible. His body is the seat of disease: his eyes are often swimming in tears; care, anticipating age, has drawn deep furrows on his brow; he possesses noble faculties, but, like people of high descent, who have sunk into a low estate and become menials, they drudge in the service of the meanest passions. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*) *The flood of evil:*—God's all-piercing eye cannot read wrongly. The Spirit's hand cannot pen error. Undoubted verity speaks here with open mouth. Thus with sorrowing reverence we draw nearer to the fearful picture. In the foreground stands Wickedness. This is a frightful monster. It is antagonism to our God. Whose is this wickedness? The "wickedness of man." Man, and man alone of all who breathe the vital air, claims wickedness as his own. His crime sinks earth into a slough of woe. The degradation is world-wide. The cause is wholly his. Wickedness is his sole property. Therefore, O man, see your exclusive specialty. Boast not of any excellency. Glory not of reason, faculties, power, mind, intellect, talent. Parade not your stores of acquired wisdom, your investigating knowledge, your elaborating skill. But rather blush that your superiorities claim wickedness as their territory. The picture next exhibits man's heart. This is the home of the affections—the spring-head of desires—the cradle of each impulse. Here the character receives its form. This is the rudder of the life. This is the guide of walk. As is the heart, such is the individual. Here schemes, and plans, and purposes are conceived. This is the mother of contrivance and device. What is naturally transacted in this laboratory? The reply here meets us. "Every imagination"—every germ of idea—every incipient embryo of notion—every feeling, when it begins to move—every passion, when it stirs—every inclination, as it arises, is "only evil." Terrific word! Evil. Here wickedness comes forth in another but not less frightful form. Evil. It is the offspring of the evil one. "Only evil!" No ray of light mitigates the darkness. No spark alleviates the impure night. No righteous spot relieves the sinful monotony. No flower of goodness blooms in the rank desert. No rill finds other vent. All flow in the one channel of evil—"only evil." Turn not too quickly from this picture. It is not yet complete. The full hideousness is "only evil continually." What! is there no respite? Is evil never weary? Does not intermission break the tremendous sameness? Ah! no. There is no moment of a brighter dawn. Countless are these imaginations; but they all show one feature—evil continually. There is no better aspect. When the Father of lights gives saving grace, then instantly the foulness of the inner man is seen. Then the illumined conscience testifies, "Behold, I am vile." When the revealing Spirit uplifts the heaven-lit torch, then new-born vision discerns the sin-sick ruin. But out of these materials God peoples heaven with a redeemed multitude, pure and glorious as Himself. Yes, through grace, there is relief large as the need. There is a remedy, mighty to heal the deepest depths of the disease. The sinner is not for ever buried in hopeless guilt. God, from all eternity foreseeing the Fall and its tremendous woe, devised a reparation wide as the breach. This gracious work is entrusted to His beloved Son. Sin destroyed creature-righteousness. Jesus brings

in a righteousness Divine. But the gospel-mercy is richer yet. Nature's heart is, as has been shown, a quarry of vile materials. It cannot be mended. These stones can frame no holy fabric. But grace works wonders. The Holy Spirit comes, and a new creation springs to life. He takes away the stony heart. He creates it gloriously clean. Thus old things pass away. Thus all things become new. The moral desert smiles fruitful and fragrant as Eden's garden. (*Dean Law.*)

Universal corruption.—I. THE CAUSES OF THE CORRUPTION. 1. Original sin. This the prime cause; from this fertile source of evil arose many fruits, each of which in its turn and place strengthened and intensified the wickedness. 2. Pride. This would be fostered by growing numbers and wealth of men. If they were expelled from the garden, had they not now many and fenced cities? To this may be added pride of individual strength, which the flattery of others might inflame. The Nephilim and their redoubtable progeny would be regarded as leaders and champions. 3. Sensuality. Sons of God and daughters of men. Even to the better trained mere beauty, devoid of piety, became a snare. The result was godless and ill-trained children, who in their turn became the progenitors of a yet more sinful race. 4. Idolatry, which diverted the attention from the holy God, and fixed it on human qualities, &c. II. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE CORRUPTION. 1. In regard to each individual. From the heart outwardly through all the life. The heart includes "conscience and consciousness, will and desire, intellect and emotion, understanding and affection." 2. In regard to the race. All flesh. There were few exceptions. God never left Himself without witness (Enos, Enoch, Noah, &c.). 3. They were thus corrupt, notwithstanding the preaching of Noah and the example of Enoch. 4. The wickedness of man various. Idolatry. Violence. Violence the effect of idolatry. 5. Till now all men spoke one language. III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS CORRUPTION. God, beholding, resolved to destroy man. Sceptics say the experiment failed—that men are as bad now as they were before. Before it can be said to have failed its object must be defined. It was punitive rather than remedial. As a punishment it did not fail. The story of the deluge stands out in history as a Divine protest against sin; and as a substantial proof that God is able, when and how He pleases, to destroy the earth in the last great day. To furnish a proof of the possibility of the future judgment seems to have been another object (2 Pet. ii. 4-6; iii. 3-14). Another purpose served by the deluge is to illustrate and certify the reward of godliness. This seen in the character and preservation of Noah. The Divine estimate of sin and holiness one of the most important things for the world to know. (*J. C. Gray.*)

The universal corruption.—1. The progress of corruption was not arrested. It increased as the tide of population rolled on. For a time the true people of God, the adherents of the house of Seth, kept themselves unspotted from the world. But even this barrier was at last overthrown (vers. 1, 2). There were very plausible reasons for their cultivating a good understanding, at least with the less abandoned of the ungodly faction. Thus, in the first instance, the useful arts and the embellishments of social life began to flourish, as has been seen in the house of Cain (Gen. iv. 19-24). Agriculture, commerce, music, and poetry were cultivated among his descendants and brought by them to a high pitch of perfection. Were the children of Seth to forego the benefit of participating in the improvements and advantages thus introduced into the social system? Then again, secondly, the lawless violence, of which Lamech's impious boast of impunity (Gen. iv. 23, 24) was a token and example, and which soon became general so as to fill the earth, might seem to warrant, and indeed require, on grounds of policy some kind of dealing between the persecuted and harassed people of God and the more reasonable and moderate of their opponents. The result was that to a large extent there ceased to be a separate and peculiar people testifying for God and reproving sin; and a new race of giants, powerful and lawless men, overspread the whole earth (Gen. vi. 4). The salt of the earth lost its savour, wherewith was it to be seasoned (Mark x. 50)? 2. At last the patience of the Lord is represented as worn out. The period of His long-suffering has arrived. The day of His wrath is at hand. What must that wrath be which the Lord so pathetically expresses His reluctance to inflict; and in reference to which He solemnly declares that it would have been good for the men of that old world that they had never been made, and for the traitor apostle that he had not been born? Such is now the state of the world lately so blessed. It is abandoned by the Creator as unfit for the purposes for which it was created. He changes, therefore, His work into a work of desolation. One man alone believes, to the saving of his house, and becomes heir of the righteousness that is by faith

(Heb. xi. 7). Noah finds grace in the eyes of the Lord. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Evil thoughts* :—Some thoughts be the darts of Satan; and these *non nocent, si non placeant*. We cannot keep thieves from looking in at our windows, but we need not give them entertainment with open doors. "Wash thy heart from iniquity, that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" They may be passengers, but they must not be sojourners. (*T. Adams.*) **It repented the Lord that He had made man.**—*The sincerity of the Divine compassion* :—Marvellous words indeed, words such as no man could have ventured to use respecting God, words too strong and bold for any one to have employed but God Himself. I. What the words do NOT MEAN. 1. They do not mean that God's purpose had been frustrated. That cannot fail. 2. They do not mean that an unexpected crisis had arisen. God foresees all. 3. They do not mean that God is subject to like passions and changes as we are. He does not vary as we vary, nor repent as we repent. Instability is the property of the creature, not of the Creator. 4. They do not mean that He has ceased to care for His creatures. Wrath, indeed, has gone out against the transgressor; yet neither man himself, nor his habitation, the earth, has been overlooked by God—far less, hated and spurned. The words intimate neither the coldness nor the dislike of the Creator toward the creature. It is something very widely different which they convey; a sadder, tenderer feeling; a feeling in which, not indifference, but profound compassion, is the prevailing element. II. What the words do MEAN. 1. That God is represented to us here as looking at events or facts simply as they are, without reference to the past or future at all. 2. That God's purposes do not alter God's estimate of events, or His feelings respecting individuals and their conduct. 3. That God is looking at the scene just as a man would look at it, and expressing Himself just as a man would have done in such circumstances. He sees all the present misery and ruin which the scene presents, and they affect Him according to their nature; and as they affect Him, so does He speak, in the words of man. But now let us look at the words of our text—"repenting,"—"grieving at the heart." (1) "Repent." The word frequently occurs in the same connection as in our text (Exod. xxxii. 14; 1 Sam. xv. 11, 35; Jer. xxvi. 13, 19). In these and other like passages it denotes that change of mind which is produced towards an object by an alteration of circumstances. (2) "Grieve." The word used in reference to man is found in such places as 2 Sam. xix. 2; and, in reference to God, in such as Psa. lxxviii. 40; Isa. lxiii. 10. In these passages the word denotes simply and truly what we call "grief"; and then, in the passage before us, as if to deepen the intensity of the expression, and to show how thoroughly real was the feeling indicated, it is added, "at His heart." The grief spoken of is as true as it is profound. It is not the grief of words. It is not the grief of fancy or sentiment. It is true sorrow of heart. We come now to ask, Why did the Lord thus grieve at His heart? 1. He grieved to see the change which sin had made in the work of His hands. Once it was "very good," and in this He had rejoiced. Now, how altered! Creation was a wreck. Man's glory had departed. The fair image of his Maker was gone! 2. He grieved at the dishonour thus brought upon Himself. It was, indeed, but a temporary dishonour; it was one which He would soon repair; but still, it was an obscuration of His own fair character; it was a clouding of His glory; it was an eclipse, however transient. 3. He grieved at man's misery. Man had not been made for misery. Happiness, like a rich jewel, had been entrusted to him. He had flung it away, as worthless and undesirable. He had offered it for sale to every passer-by; nay, he had cast it from him as vile. This wretchedness filled His soul, and overshadowed this once blessed earth. How, then, could God but grieve? 4. He grieved that now He must be the infliker of man's misery. There had, for long years, been an alternative. He could be gracious; He could be long-suffering. But now this alternative is denied. Such was the accumulation of sin; such was its hatefulness; such were its aggravations, that grace can no longer hold out against righteousness; long-suffering has exhausted itself, and judgment must take its course. (*H. Bonar, D.D.*) *Evil of sin in the sight of God* :—I. We may inquire, first, WHAT WERE THE CAUSES OF SO GREAT CORRUPTION AS THEN PREVAILED. 1. One of these was the intermarriage of the sons of God, or believers, with the daughters of men, or unbelievers. When the clear waters of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Illinois mingle with the turbid Missouri, they never regain their purity, but flow darkly on to the ocean; so when the children of Seth made affinities with the race of Cain, there was no regaining of moral purity until the generations of men had been buried in the waters of the deluge. 2. Another cause of the wickedness of the men before

the flood was probably in their neglect of the Sabbath, and of God's public worship. Of this neglect we have the following evidence. In the days of Seth and Enos it is said, "then men began to call upon the name of the Lord." This is supposed to refer to some regular assemblies for public worship, and as it is spoken in connection with Seth and his posterity, we may infer that it was confined to them. Indeed, it is said of Cain that "he went out from the presence of the Lord," and he complained that he should be hid from God's presence; not His omnipresence certainly, but from some visible display of His glory, in that place where the sons of God worshipped. In that separation from God and His worship the descendants of Cain rapidly increased in wickedness; for, if the Sabbath and its worship were banished from among us, enlightened and religious as we are, one half century might witness the most abominable idolatries, and call for another cleansing deluge.

3. The long life of the antediluvians was yet another cause of their wickedness. After the flood, God shortened man's days from a little less than a thousand to a little less than a hundred years, because brevity of life is favourable to piety. It is in seeing our fellow-creatures die almost as soon as they begin to live, that sin is checked, and the things unseen and eternal gather power. And what a curse to society might such a long life prove! Think of a drunkard polluting the earth with his breath nine hundred years; of an infidel scattering the poison of his works century after century; of the adulterer, the robber, the murderer, protracting their existence through thirty of our generations! The world would groan to have the grave close over them.

4. It is mentioned again, as a cause of their wickedness, that they were an ambitious race. There were mighty men and men of renown in those days, we are told, though we ask with a smile, who were they, and what did they do? for the antediluvian Napoleons and Cæsars have left no record of their exploits. There were giants too in those days, and we generally associate with them the idea of great wickedness, for great strength puffs up its possessor, and makes him forget God. It was an age of great worldliness too, for our Lord says, "They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they married and were given in marriage, until the day when the flood came"; meaning that they were absorbed in these things, for in mere eating and drinking there could be no sin. It was, moreover, an age of great civilization and refinement; for there were those who handled the harp and the organ, and artificers in all the mechanic arts. These may be made subservient to piety, but too often great skill in them, as, indeed, great worldly attainments of any kind, are apt to draw the heart off from God, so that the most refined people may be the most ungodly.

II. How GREAT THAT WICKEDNESS WAS, we may gather from the strong language of our text, and from other portions of Scripture. "And God saw," we are told, "that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was full of violence." And what rendered this sinfulness the more guilty was, that the world was then in its youth, retaining probably more of its infant beauty than it now has in its wrinkled old age.

III. But we may especially see in our text and subject THE EVIL OF SIN IN THE SIGHT OF GOD. It destroyed a world which God created; nay, more, as far as might be, it destroyed the world's Creator, when the Son of God died for it on the cross.

IV. Let us TAKE CARE OF RELAPSING INTO THAT STATE IN WHICH SIN SHALL NOT GRIEVE US AT THE HEART AS IT DOES OUR GOD. We are like Him, we are His, if we share His holy hatred of sin. But we are in continual danger of growing callous and indifferent to it, so that though once in the while, at long intervals, when some gross offence has been committed, or when something has specially aroused us, we are softened and contrite; yet our general frame is one of indifference to our offences. (*W. H. Lewis, D.D.*) *It repented the Lord that He had made man*:—Dismissing at once, as they deserve to be dismissed, these coarser and more repulsive aspects of the language before us, we will claim rather for it this most beautiful characteristic; that it speaks of the sympathy of God Himself with that very view of human life which is taken by the best and purest of His children and servants below. There are times when the contemplation of the misery and sin of the world is almost overwhelming to those who would keep (if it be possible) both their faith and their reason. The words here written of God Himself are exactly descriptive of them—"it repents them that God has made man on the earth; it grieves them at the heart." They can take little comfort in the thought of the one or the two "perfect in their generations," while they see the bulk of mankind suffering without hope, and living without God in the world. They can take little

comfort in the thought of a heaven opened to the believing and the holy, if it implies that the very opposite and antithesis of a heaven is crowded with masses and multitudes of rejecters and despisers and neglecters of the gospel. Oh, why did God—they ask themselves, and there is none to answer—why did God make all things worse than for nought? Why did He create upon the earth a race predestined to a choice foreseen to be of evil? Why did He not either bias that inevitable choice for good, or else blot out instantly from existence the creature that had used liberty for self-destruction? With such questions all thoughtful men at times have vexed themselves. It is something, I say this morning, to read here of the sympathy of God Himself with the perplexity; to find the Bible speaking of God repenting Himself that He has created—vexing Himself at the very heart for these terrible consequences of the origination of human life and human free-will. And I read in this record much more than a fruitless or hopeless lamentation. I read here, first of all, that which should reconcile heart and conscience to the necessity of a judgment. The verse which says, “It repented Him,” is followed by the verse which says, “I will destroy”—“I must bring a flood of waters.” Yes, we could not wish that this evil should be immortal. We could not wish that vices and crimes, cruelties and defilements, should go on for ever repeating themselves on a suffering earth. If we saw any clear proof that the world, taken as a whole—not in a few of its privileged spots, but all over and everywhere—was improving, was on the way, surely however slowly, towards a millennium of health and welfare, we might leave contentedly the question of the when and the how, and be willing that there should be patience, in heaven as on earth, over a seed growing secretly and a promise gradually developing. But is it thus with us? Is the growth of good, in the world as a whole, and of good as a whole—the higher good as well as the lower, the spiritual good as well as the physical—is this growth discernible? Side by side with the growth of good, is there not an equal, or a more than equal, growth of evil? On what night of this earth’s history does not the enemy go forth, while men sleep, to sow his counterfeit grain? Who shall flatter us with the hope that either free trade or cheap literature, either compulsory education or shilling Bibles, have in them the secret of regenerating thoroughly this bad old world, or of rendering superfluous that aboriginal faith of the Church, The day of the Lord will come: “the judgment shall sit, and the books be opened”? For my part, I think that I can leave in God’s hands the exercise of that judgment and the settlement of its issues. There is, to me, almost an impertinence in trying to settle for Him, in this twilight of our knowledge, either the exact meaning of His terms, or the precise measurements of His eternity. I only know that saints and righteous men have been reconciled to the expectation of a judgment, not by the thought of the just recompense of the wicked, but by the thought of the putting down of evil, and the introduction of a new heaven and earth—this very heaven and earth it may be—wherein dwelleth righteousness. It would be no kindness to the sinner to let him sin on for ever and not die. God sympathizes with us in our sense of this world’s evil; and if He had not in His view a glorious future, from which the spectre of misery shall be absent, and in which the demon of sin shall be forgotten and out of mind, He would say literally that it repented Him to have created—He would say indeed, and also do it, that He must annihilate the work of His own hands. But there is an alternative, and He has provided it. (*Dean Vaughan.*) *Sinful defection*:—I. That such is the pestilent nature of sin as to provoke God, who did make the world, to mar it, and unmake it again. II. A general defection is a most certain fore-runner of a universal destruction. (*C. Ness.*)

Vers. 8-10. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.—*Noah*:—I. NOAH, we read, “was a just man and perfect in his generations”; and why? 1. Because he was a faithful man—faithful to God, as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” Noah and Abraham believed God, and so became heirs of the righteousness which is by faith; not their own righteousness, not growing out of their own character, but given them by God, who puts His righteous Spirit into those who trust in Him. 2. Noah was perfect in all the relations and duties of life—a good son, a good husband, a good father: these were the fruits of his faith. He believed that the unseen God had given him these ties, had given him his parents and his children, and that to love them was to love God, to do his duty to them was to do his duty to God. II. The Bible gives us a picture of the old world before the flood—a world of men mighty in body and mind, fierce and busy, conquering the world round them, in continual war and

turmoil; with all the wild passions of youth, and yet all the cunning and experience of enormous old age; every one guided only by self-will, having cast off God and conscience, and doing every man that which was right in the sight of his own eyes. And amidst all this Noah was steadfast; he at least knew his way; he "walked with God, a just man and perfect in his generations." III. There was something wonderful and Divine in Noah's patience. He knew that a flood was to come; he set to work in faith to build his ark, and that ark was in building for one hundred and twenty years. During all that time Noah never lost faith, and he never lost love either, for we read that he preached righteousness to the very men who mocked him, and preached in vain. One hundred and twenty years he warned those sinners of God's wrath, of righteousness and judgment to come, and no man listened to him. That must have been the hardest of his trials. (*C. Kingsley, M.A.*) *A good man living in degenerate times*:—I. THAT GOOD MEN LIVING IN DEGENERATE TIMES ARE NOT OVERLOOKED BY GOD. II. THAT GOOD MEN LIVING IN DEGENERATE TIMES ARE OFTEN CHARACTERIZED BY SIGNAL PIETY. Piety at such times is—1. A contrast. 2. A rebuke. 3. A testimony. 4. A duty. III. THAT GOOD MEN LIVING IN DEGENERATE TIMES ARE ANXIOUS THAT THEIR FAMILY CONNECTIONS MAY BE PRESERVED FROM MORAL DEFILEMENT. IV. THAT GOOD MEN LIVING IN DEGENERATE TIMES RECEIVE THE COMMUNICATIONS OF HEAVEN IN REFERENCE TO THE DESTINY OF MEN. 1. This is a dignity. 2. This is a discipline. LESSONS: (1) The good man is worth the mention and commendation of God. (2) That true piety can survive the darkest ages and live through the most arduous toils. (3) That good men know most of the mind of God in reference to the world's future. (4) That good men will not be included in the destructions which overtake the wicked. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The piety of Noah*:—1. It was characterized by justice. 2. It was characterized by moral perfection. 3. It was characterized by holy communion with God. (*Ibid.*) *The Christian's walk*:—1. Christ the rule of it. 2. Christ the company of it. 3. Christ the end of it. (*Ibid.*) *The saint among sinners*:—I. Notice here, first, THE SOLITARY SAINT. Noah stands alone "in his generations" like some solitary tree green and erect in a forest of blasted and fallen pines. "Among the faithless, faithful only he." His character is described, so to speak, from the outside inwards. He is "righteous," or discharging all the obligations of law and of his various relationships. He is "perfect." His whole nature is developed, and all in due symmetry and proportion; no beauty wanting, no grace cultivated at the expense of others. He is a full man; not a one-sided and therefore a distorted one. We do not take these words to imply sinlessness, of course. They express a relative, not an absolute, completeness. Hence we may learn both a lesson of stimulus and of hope. We are not to rest satisfied with partial goodness, but to seek to attain an all-round perfectness, even in regard to the graces least like our dispositions. And we can rejoice to believe that God is generous in His acceptance and praise. He does not grudge commendation, but takes account of the deepest desires and main tendencies of a life, and sees the germ as a full-blown flower, and the bud as a fruit. Learn, too, that solitary goodness is possible. Noah stood uninfected by the universal contagion; and, as is always the case, the evil around, which he did not share, drove him to a more rigid abstinence from it. Flowers grow on a dunghill, and a very reeking rotteness may make the bloom finer. Learn, too, that the true place for the saint is "in his generations." If the mass is corrupt, so much the more need to rub the salt well in. Notice, again, the companion of the solitary saint. What beauty there is in that description of the isolated man, passing lonely amid his contemporaries, like a stream of pure water flowing through some foul liquid, and untouched by it, and yet not alone in all his loneliness, because "he walked with God"! One man, with God to back him, is always in the majority. Though surrounded by friends, have we found that, after all, we live and suffer and must die alone? Here is the all-sufficient Friend, if we have fellowship with whom our hearts will be lonely no more. Observe that this communion is the foundation of all righteousness in conduct. Because Noah walked with God, he was "just" and "perfect." If we live habitually in the holy of holies, our faces will shine when we come forth. II. Notice THE UNIVERSAL APOSTASY. Two points are brought out in the sombre description. The first is moral corruption; the second, violence. Bad men are cruel men. When the bonds which knit society to God are relaxed, selfishness soon becomes furious, and forcibly seizes what it lusts after, regardless of others' rights. To walk with God is the true way to make men gentle and pitying. Learn from this dark outline that God gazes in silence on the evil. That is a grand

solemn expression, "corrupt before God." All this mad riot of pollution and violence is holding its carnival of lust and blood under the very eye of God, and He says never a word. So is it ever. Then comes a further expression of the same thought. "God looked upon the earth." As a sudden beam of sunshine out of a thunder-cloud. His eye flashes down, not as if He then began to know, but that His knowledge then began, as it were, to act. III. WHAT DOES THE STERN SENTENCE TEACH US? A very profound truth, not only of the certain Divine retribution, but of the indissoluble connection of sin with destruction. Sin is death in the making; death is sin finished. The promise of deliverance, which comes side by side with the stern sentence, illustrates the blessed truth that God's darkest threatenings are accompanied with the revelation of the way of escape. IV. We pass by the details of the construction of the ark to draw the final lesson from the exact obedience of Noah. We have the statement twice over, HE DID "ACCORDING TO ALL THAT GOD COMMANDED HIM." It was no easy thing for him to build the ark, amidst the scoffing of his generations. Smart witticisms fell around him like hail. All the "practical men" thought him a dreamy fool, wasting his time, while they prospered and made something of life. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us the secret of his obedience: "By faith, Noah," &c. He realized the distant unseen, because he believed Him who warned him of it. The far-off flood was more real to him than the shows of life around him. Therefore he could stand all the gibes, and gave himself to a course of life which was sheer folly unless that future was real. Perhaps a hundred and twenty years passed between the warning and the flood; and for all that time he held on his way, nor faltered in his faith. Does our faith realize that which lies before us with anything like similar clearness? Do we see that future shining through all the trivial, fleeting present? Does it possess weight and solidity enough to shape our lives? Noah's creed was much shorter than ours; but I fear his faith was as much stronger. V. We may think, finally, of THE VINDICATION OF HIS FAITH. For a hundred and twenty years the wits laughed, and the "common-sense" people wondered, and the patient saint went on hammering and pitching at his ark. But one morning it began to rain; and by degrees, somehow, Noah did not seem quite such a fool. The jests would look rather different when the water got up to the knees of the jesters; and their sarcasms would stick in their throats as they drowned. So is it always. So it will be at the last great day. (4. *Maclaren, D.D.*) *Noah*.—I. HIS PRIVATE CHARACTER. 1. He found grace in the sight of the Lord. 2. He was a just man. II. HIS PUBLIC LABOURS. A preacher of righteousness (1 Pet. ii. 5). 1. As such he would have to place their unrighteousness before them. 2. He had to enforce attention to righteousness. 3. As a preacher he was faithful. 4. He preached practically. By his own example, and especially by building the ark. 5. Yet he was an unsuccessful preacher. III. HIS GRACIOUS DELIVERANCE. 1. The gracious reward of his faith and obedience. 2. For the encouragement of believing sinners to the end of the world. APPLICATION. 1. Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years; displayed great frailty, &c. Let us watch and pray, &c. 2. Ministers may learn their duty. 3. Sinners, their only way of sure and certain safety. 4. And the incorrigible, their inevitable doom. (J. *Burns, D.D.*) *Noah*.—I. THE INNER PRINCIPLE OF NOAH'S LIFE. "Walked with God." 1. Companionship. 2. Confidence. 3. Communion. II. THE OUTER ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF THE PATRIARCH. His religion was no fruitless tree, no scentless flower, no painted fire; it was a tree growing fruit, a flower giving fragrance, a fire casting heat everywhere. I know there were many mournful and some disgraceful defects in his character, but then they were the defects, not of death, but of imperfect life. Society is always influential; companionship moulds character, association produces resemblance; the less always catches naturally something of the spirit and character of the greater; and so he, who walked with God, became "a just man," says my text, "and perfect in his generations." He who wears a mask before his God will always try to wear a veil before his fellow-creatures. Integrity is the invariable accompaniment of spiritual religion; open, manly, brave, unselfish integrity. And so Noah was a just man, always upright, always straightforward, always clear as crystal. The righteousness at which he aimed was a righteousness of the heart; and here, of course, as everywhere, the waters took their sweetness and their purity from the fountain out of which they rose. He who has felt that inner life, which is a walking with God, will be no sham amongst his fellow-creatures, no trickster towards them. Truth will be upon his lips, justice in his hands, honour in his acts, probity in his dealings, purity in his affections. Noah, too, my text says, was "perfect in his generations." There

was nothing pretentious, nothing vain; all was sincere; his devotion to his God was a visible reality. The man was just what he seemed to be—honest, earnest, truthful. The word “generations” is a very emphatic word in this connection. The age was all against such a character as this; it would be least looked for, and it would be sure to pass unhonoured and unloved at such a time. The world was never more corrupt than it was then, goodness never so scarce, so limited to a single person; yet the man kept his course, contracted no contagion, never fell down quite to the low level which was on all sides of him. (*C. J. P. Eyre, M.A.*) *Noah walking with God*:—I. ILLUSTRATE THE SENSE OF THE PHRASE, “WALKING WITH GOD.” 1. To exercise the thoughts upon God continually. 2. A conscientious regard to His Word and ordinances. 3. To live habitually in the exercise of spiritual graces, depending on Divine influence. 4. It also imports that the attainments, intimacies, and joys, of godliness are of a progressive kind. II. WHAT WE MAY ASSOCIATE WITH SUCH A WAY OF LIVING. 1. There is the highest honour which man can realize. 2. There is safety and peace to be found. 3. There will be a happy futurity. (*Essex Remembrancer.*) *Companionship with God*:—If we endeavour to keep the familiar figure of walking with a person fully in mind, we shall see that the phrase implies—I. COMPANIONSHIP—constant and habitual; for as God is everywhere present and at all times, so the saint is never parted from Him. United once we are united for ever by a companionship as constant as the omnipresence of God, and as long continued as the immortal life of man’s soul. Let the expression be closely observed, together with the familiar ideas it suggests—walking with God. Not amid God’s works, nor in God’s presence; not with the saints of God, not in the ways of God, but actually with God, as if the Divine Being Himself had quitted His throne—as, indeed, He has done in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God—and, linking Himself with the creature He had redeemed, went forth in sweet and wonderful companionship with man, inseparable throughout all the trials and perplexing paths of human experience. II. The expression IMPLIES CONCURRENCE OF WILL. To walk together implies movement toward the same object, along the same road. Where two persons take different roads, companionship must cease. Yet we know that Noah was a fallen creature like ourselves. He lived after the curse of sin had fallen upon man; and we know it to be the essence of sin that man’s will and God’s will do not agree. In unfallen man, pure and holy as he came from his Creator’s hand, there was perfect agreement with God. The two wills, the Divine and the human, were like two strains of music in sweet harmony with each other. But sin turned the harmony into discord. It is the very essence of the carnal nature that, in St. Paul’s language, “it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” The will of man has become contrary to the will of God. One of the two must be subject to the other. That is most certain. Which is it to be? Is the will of the great, omnipotent, and holy Creator to be brought into conformity with all the wayward fancies, all the petty selfishnesses, and all the foolish imaginations of fallen man? God forbid! God’s will can not be changed to suit man’s. Then it remains that man’s will must be changed to suit God’s, and thus all the varying wishes of mankind be harmonized in one adoring submission to the Divine mind. This can be; this may be; if you will not drive the Holy Spirit away from you, this will be. III. The expression IMPLIES AFFECTIONATE AND DELIGHTFUL INTERCOURSE. Do you not choose as a companion one whom you love? and if your choice be well placed, and there be thorough sympathy between you and your friend, is not companionship delightful? Indeed, do you not walk with him, for the sake of being alone with the loved one and enjoying his society? (*E. Garbett, M.A.*) *The duty and advantage of cleaving to the Lord and His way, in a declining time*:—Two doctrines are deducible from the words. Doctrine 1—In the most declining generation, wherein sin and wickedness come to the greatest height, GOD HAS STILL SOME, THOUGH FEW, THAT RETAIN THEIR INTEGRITY, and cleave to Him and His ways. It has been found so in all ages of the Church. In the old world there was a Noah; in Sodom a Lot; among the children of Israel in Egypt a Moses, who all retained their integrity, and cleaved to the Lord and His ways. When Christ came into the world, there were some “waiting for the consolation of Israel”; and when the Jewish nation was ruined at the destruction of Jerusalem, there was “a remnant according to the election of grace.” In the grand apostasy under the New Testament, there were still “two witnesses” left (Rev. ix.). II. How is it that the declining of a generation comes to be so very general, THAT SO VERY FEW ARE LEFT RETAINING THEIR INTEGRITY, that they may be for signs and wonders in the day wherein they live? 1. The corruption

of human nature is the spring-head of it (Gen. vi. 5). 2. No due care taken for the religious education of those who are springing up, doth notably advance it. 3. Corruption of manners thus prevailing, every one serves to corrupt another, till the heaven has well nigh gone through the whole lump (Gen. vi. 12). 4. When a generation is thus posting on in the road of apostasy from God unto ruin, the Lord usually takes home many of His own out from among them (Isa. lvii. 1, 2). 5. The declining humour by these means at length so prevails, that it makes its way over all opposition, and gets the mastery, so as it carries all before it, like a flood. 6. What puts the copestone on the course of a generation's defection from God, and readily fills the cup to the brim, is persecution of the way of God, and of any that will dare to retain their integrity.

III. WHY ARE SOME, THOUGH FEW, STILL LEFT RETAINING THEIR INTEGRITY IN SUCH A GENERATION? 1. Because of God's faithfulness in His promise (Matt. xvi. 18). 2. Because God will not leave Himself without a witness in an apostatizing generation. 3. Because therein the power of His grace appears most illustriously. 4. The Lord preserves them for a seed to better days.

Use 1. Whatever encouragement such have, that turn their back on the way of religion and seriousness, and take a sinful latitude to themselves from the multitude going their way, there is a witness against them still left, that will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them. 2. However bad the days are, let none pretend it cannot be better with them, because their lot is cast in such an evil day. 3. Be exhorted not to conform yourselves to the ways of the declining generation wherein our lot is cast; but be among the few who cleave to Him and keep His way. It is hard, yet it is possible. Doctrine 2—God takes special notice of them for good, who in a declining generation retain their integrity, and keep right, cleaving to Him and His way in the face of a generation departing fast from Him.

I. The first thing is to show what this rare attainment is, this perfection in such a generation; or, How men keep right, like Noah, in such a generation. It is then to be, 1. Sincere, and not a hypocrite. 2. Downright for God, without going aside to the ways of carnal wisdom. 3. Tender in one's private walk and conversation, as under the eye of the all-seeing God. 4. Watchful against snares and temptations, that one be not led away with them. 5. Proof against ill example, which is the great engine of Satan for carrying on apostasy in such a day and generation. 6. A mourner for the sins of others. 7. An opposer of the sinful courses of the day and generation wherein he lives, as he hath access. Hence is that exhortation (Eph. v. 11). 8. In a word, it is to be rowing against the stream of iniquity, and endeavouring to draw the nearer God that others are going from Him.

II. The second thing is, to show what are the advantages of this course, in which the Lord takes special notice for good, of those who follow it in a declining day. 1. Sweet peace of conscience in keeping the Lord's way, while others are disregarding it. Hence said the apostle (2 Cor. i. 12). 2. Communion with God, and access to Him in duties. Hence saith our Lord (John xiv. 21). 3. A sweet allowance of furniture, strength, and support, for the duty called for (Prov. x. 29). 4. Seasonable providential appearances for them. God has a watchful eye for good over them who keep His way; and He will protect them in it, while He has use for them in that way (Psa. cxxi. 2, 3). 5. Special favour in a suffering time, when the Lord ariseth to plead His controversy with the sinful generation. Hence saith the prophet Habakkuk (chap. iii. 16). Use. I exhort you to be perfect in this generation, to be persons of integrity, downright for God, rowing against the stream of this sinful generation. And in order to that, 1. Purge your conversation from the gross pollutions of the outward man. 2. Be Christians indeed, in the inner man. Such an one is described (Rom. ii. 28, 29). 3. Be of a public spirit (Psa. cxxxvii. 5, 6). 4. Be of a Gospel spirit, having high thoughts of the free grace of God, and deep impressions of the nothingness of man and all that he can do (Gal. vi. 14). 5. Be accurate observers of your duty to God, whom the generation we live in has much cast behind their back. 6. Be nice observers of justice and truth in your dealings with men; for both these are rare to a marvel in this generation, as they were of old (See Isa. lix. 13-15; Mic. vii. 1, &c.). 7. Oppose and set yourselves against sin and wickedness in others, as ye have access; and so endeavour to stem the tide of the apostasy of the generation (Eph. v. 11). 8. Do your endeavour to get a right set in the young generation, who are in great hazard at this day. I shall give you the following motives to press you to be perfect in this generation, as you have been exhorted. Consider: 1. It will be a great discovery of your sincerity, and unfeigned love to the Lord and the way of holiness. 2. It is a noble, heaven-like disposition, to be perfect in such a generation; to

cleave to Christ, when the generation is so generally turning their back on Him (John vi. 66-68). 8. It will glorify God very much; and that is the great business we have to do in the world, agreeable to what is said (1 Cor. x. 31). 4. It is the best service ye can do for the generation, like David, who "served his own generation by the will of God" (Acts xiii. 36). 5. Suppose it should not be effectual to stop the career of any in their sin, yet it would leave a conviction of sin in their consciences. 6. It is a debt we owe to posterity. Hence says the Psalmist (Psa. xlv. 17). 7. It is an honourable thing. It is to be a witness for God; and this is one of the characters of His people (Isa. xliii. 10). 8. It is the best course ye can take to be safe in the evil day, when the Lord calls the generation to an account. 9. It will be most comfortable in a dying hour; as it was to the good king Hezekiah, when he said, "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight" (Isa. xxxviii. 3). (*T. Boston, D.D.*)

Noah:—I. NOAH'S EARLY LIFE. II. NOAH'S TIMES. III. NOAH'S WORK. IV. NOAH'S SECRET. What was it that made Noah different from other people? What was it that made Noah a strong and valiant man—a hero, in fact? Why, his faith. He did not see the deluge approaching, but he believed in it; he was sure it would come, because God had told him so. And his belief in God's Word made him despise all the opposition he had to encounter; made him begin the work, and carry on the work, and end the work; made him bold to tell people the truth, although there was at the time no proof or evidence to back his words. (*G. Calthrop, M.A.*) *That the power and providence of the most wise and most gracious God doth preserve and provide the best of men for the worst of times:—I.* How it is so. 'Tis most manifest in sacred history, that God ordered the best of prophets to be born and to officiate in the worst of times; oh what a degenerate age was that wherein Moses appeared! Israel was in the bondage of Egypt, and in the worst part of that bondage, their tale of brick and mortar-work was doubled upon them, and that without straw (Exod. i. 11, 14; v. 18, 19, &c.). Then God sent Moses their deliverer. And what a degenerate age was that wherein Samuel was born, where there was no open vision (1 Sam. iii. 1, &c.). No better, but far worse, were the times of Elijah, who, in his own computation, was left alone of all the Lord's prophets, when the prophets of Baal were many (1 Kings xviii. 22). This is also remarkable in the civil or secular history (complying with that of the sacred aforesaid) that the best of human laws have been gained in the reigns of the worst of kings, as a happy counter-balance to their exorbitant and extravagant actings. II. This leads me to the **WHY IT IS SO.** Herein appeareth the wisdom and graciousness, as well as the power and providence, of God to reserve a little remnant for royal use in the worst of times, that he might not ruin the whole work of His hands at once: saints are called the salt of the earth (Matt. v. 13). Oh how dark would the world be in the night of degeneracy if God had not some orient stars sparkling and bespangling the world, though not in every part, yet in every zone and quarter of it. Such an one was our Noah here. Some good men in bad times, a holy remnant kept for a reserve. Good husbands cast not all their corn into the oven, but reserve some for seed. God kept His Mithe-Mispar, a small few, here to replant the world. III. **AFTER WHAT MANNER IT IS.** 'Tis as the chaff is kept from burning while the corn is amongst it. As in all times God hath a few pearls to preserve the many pebbles, and a few jewels to preserve the lumber from being destroyed, so the Holy Seed. (*C. Ness.*)

The preacher of righteousness:—I. NOAH'S CIRCUMSTANCES. The earth was filled with "violence," i.e., oppression, tyranny, persecution of good men, injustice, cruelty. How difficult for Noah to be faithful! How he would be taunted, scoffed at, ridiculed! II. **NOAH'S CHARACTER.** "Just," i.e., righteous, trying to do that which was right in God's sight, and right towards his fellow-men; and "perfect in his generations," i.e., living a blameless life among those of his own day and his kinsfolk. He also, like Enoch, "walked with God," i.e., loved, trusted, and served God. He also "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," i.e., was pleasing to the Lord, and was accepted by Him. III. **NOAH'S WORK.** To warn the people of his generation. 1. By preaching God's truth. 2. By preparing an ark. **LESSONS:** 1. Our day and opportunity is now and here. We must prepare now for the unseen future. 2. Being warned ourselves, we must both by what we say, and by what we do, proclaim God's truth to those around us. 3. Let us pray God to give us Noah's faith and Noah's fear. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*)

Lonely moral goodness:—I. THE CHRISTIAN MAN IS SOMETIMES SOLITARY IN HIS COMPANIONSHIP. It was so with Noah. No companionship

for him in the violent men of his age. 1. His was not fancied loneliness, like Elijah's. 2. His loneliness was not the result of an exclusive spirit. II. THE CHRISTIAN MAN IS SOMETIMES SOLITARY IN HIS CHARACTER. Noah was alone in moral goodness. The real king of the age: his sceptre a holy life. III. THE CHRISTIAN MAN IS SOMETIMES SOLITARY IN HIS WORK. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Solitary excellence*:—1. It is painful to find but one family, nay, it would seem but one person, out of all the professed sons of God, who stood firmly in this evil day. Some were dead, and others, by mingling with the wicked, had apostatized. 2. It is pleasant to find one upright man in a generation of the ungodly: a lily among thorns, whose lovely conduct would shine the brighter when contrasted with that of the world about him. It is a great matter to be faithful among the faithless. With all our helps from the society of good men, we find it enough to keep on our way: but for an individual to set his face against the whole current of public opinion and custom, requires and implies great grace. Yet that is the only true religion which walks as in the sight of God, irrespective of what is thought or done by others. Such was the resolution of Joshua when the whole nation seemed to be turning aside from God: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." 3. It is encouraging to find that one upright man was singled out from the rest when the world was to be destroyed. If he had been destroyed with the world, God could have taken him to Himself, and all would have been well with him; but then there had been no public expression of what he loved, as well as of what he hated. (*A Fuller.*) *Noah's piety*:—Standing on the seashore on a calm summer morning or evening, the vessels in the far distance appear to be sailing in the sky and not on the sea. So doubtless did Noah appear to these worldling spectators of his age, to be walking in the sky, and not on the earth. He was a marked man, secretly to be admired, but openly to be avoided. They took notice of him that he was unlike themselves, living a life of faith, traversing his spiritual way to the glory of God. (*W. Adamson.*) *Noah's perfection*:—The perfection here ascribed to Noah, and elsewhere to other servants of God, is to be understood as being a perfection, not of degree, but of extent—not of height, but of breadth. He is perfect—not as having reached on earth the full maturity of holiness which he is to attain in heaven, nor as being immaculate and exempt from liability to sin—but as having the entire new man formed in him, and no affection of the old man willingly allowed. For it is this completeness and consistency of character that is to be understood by perfection. It is opposed to a partial and insincere devotion of the heart and life to God—to everything like compromise, or evasion, or reservation in the obedience that is rendered to Him—to the idea of doing many things to please Him, but yet something to please self or the world. It implies the dedication of the whole man, soul, and body, and spirit, absolutely and unequivocally to God—and the keeping of the whole law, without offending in any one point or breaking one of the least of its commandments. In short, it is the wisdom which cometh down from above—whose distinguishing characteristic is, that it is perfect—complete and compact in all its parts—being "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." To this wisdom is opposed that which "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish" (James iii. 15-17). The bitter fruits and characteristics of that wisdom are envying and strife, confusion, tumult, unequibleness, and every evil work—in one word, "violence"—such as then filled the earth. Now, the perfection which has been described naturally attends upon a heart right with God—a mind calmly fixed in a righteous peace with heaven. To have got settled, upon just terms, the dread controversy which sin has caused, the angry strife of conscience, the impatient struggle against judgment—to have this warfare ended, in that blessed tranquillity which a sense of saving mercy and justifying righteousness inspires, through "the love of God being shed abroad in the heart, by the Holy Ghost, which is given" to the believer (Rom. v. 5)—to have the heart thus established with grace (Hab. xiii. 9)—this, this alone, and this effectually, disposes to universal holiness and love. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Grace not defiled by contact with sin*:—As all the water in the salt sea cannot make the fish salt, but still the fish retains its freshness, so all the wickedness and filthiness that is in the world cannot destroy, cannot defile true grace; that will bear up its head, and hold up itself for ever. (*J. Caryl.*) *Grace will show itself*:—Grace in the heart will appear in the life. If there be a new spirit, a tender heart, there will be walking in the statutes. A new spirit cannot be imprisoned within; but it will break out into action. When the seed is sown in

good ground, it will not lie long under ground, but spring forth. Grace is light, and will manifest itself. (*W. Greenhill.*) *All grace is from God*:—Not only are the first beginnings of grace from God, but also the daily increase and progress of grace in every degree and step from the lowest to the highest. (*J. Ferguson.*) *Three wholesome fears with respect to grace*:—Happy art thou if thy heart be replenished with three fears—a fear for received grace, a greater fear for lost grace, a greatest fear to recover grace. (*Quarles.*) *Grace progressive*:—Trace back any river to its source, and you will find its beginnings small. A little moisture oozing through the sand or dripping out of some unknown rock, a gentle gush from some far away mountain's foot, are the beginning of many a broad river, in whose waters tall merchantmen may anchor and gallant fleets may ride. For it widens and gets deeper, till it mingles with the ocean. So is the beginning of a Christian's, or a nation's, grace. It is first a tiny stream, then it swells into a river, then a sea. There is life and progression towards an ultimate perfection when God finds the beginning of grace in any man. (*J. J. Wray.*) *The perfect life pleasant*:—Matthew Henry, shortly before his death, desired his friends to take down, and remember, as his dying saying, that, "A life spent in the service of God, and communion with Him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any man can live in this world." **Noah begat three sons.**—*Lessons*:—1. Fruitfulness in body is an effect of grace, to continue God's Church. 2. The holiest parent cannot bring forth a holy seed; that is, born of grace. Noah could not. 3. Little or small may be the visible Church; father and sons and wives but eight. 4. In the visible Church may be such as are not saints, indeed; but far from it. 5. Grace puts the last before the first, and the younger before the elder. 6. Mixtures in the Church not destructive to its being, were permitted not to divide, but to put them upon purging it. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Vers. 11–13. The earth also was corrupt.—*Corruption and violence, twin evils*:—If succeeding generations inquire, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the work of His hands? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Be it known that it was not for a small matter: The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. Here are two words used to express the wickedness of the world, corruption and violence, both which are repeated, and dwelt upon in verses 12, 13. The former refers, I conceive, to their having debased and depraved the true religion. This was the natural consequence of the junction between the sons of God and the daughters of men. Whenever the Church is become one with the world, the corruption of true religion has invariably followed: for if wicked men have a religion, it must needs be such as to accord with their inclinations. Hence arose all the heresies of the early ages of Christianity; hence the grand Romish apostasy; and in short every corruption of the true religion in past or present times. The latter of these terms is expressive of their conduct towards one another. The fear of God, and the regard of man are closely connected; and where the one is given up, the other will soon follow. Indeed, it appears to be the decree of the eternal God, that when men have cast off His fear, they shall not continue long in amity one with another. And He has only to let the laws of nature take their course in order to effect it; for when men depart from God, the principle of union is lost, and self-love governs everything: and being LOVERS OF THEIR OWN SELVES, they will be covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Such a flood of wickedness is at any time sufficient to deluge a world with misery. If these things did not then break forth in national wars as they do with us, it was merely because the world was not as yet divided into nations; the springs of domestic and social life were poisoned, the tender ties of blood and affinity violated, and quarrels, intrigues, oppressions, robberies, and murders pervaded the abodes of man. (*A. Fuller.*) *Lessons*:—1. Apostasy from God and pollution of worship, is the corruption of men. 2. Such corruption in God's face is high provocation. 3. Violent injury to man accompanieth apostasy from God. 4. Fulness of such iniquity makes a world ripe for judgment (ver. 11). 5. God must see and mark iniquity done in His face. 6. God layeth open all corruption of men, which He seeth. 7. Man is a self-corrupter; he pollutes his own way. 8. The habitation of sinners aggravates their corruption (ver. 12). 9. God revealeth His wrath before He strikes. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) **Corruption of man**:—Salter used to say: "In regard to our corruptions we may

learn something from the difference of glasses. You behold yourselves in your common looking-glasses, and see yourselves so fine that you admire your persons and dress. But when you view yourself in a microscope, how much may you behold in that fine skin to be ashamed of; what disfigurement to the eye! and instead of smoothness, irregularity, uncomeliness, and even impurity. So, if you will look upon yourself through the glass of faith, that glass would show you much of the corruption of your sinful nature still cleaving to you, your tempers crooked, your graces misshapen and deformed, and so much corruption cleaving to every action of your lives that would make you sin-sick that you have known God so long, and are like Him so little." *The earth must be destroyed*.—The earth was corrupted, and full of violence, and all flesh had depraved its way upon the earth; therefore the end of all flesh was resolved, together with the earth. The earth is, in the Bible, not considered as a mere passive object; it is the habitation of man; it beholds his deeds of virtue and of baseness; it is, therefore, like the eternal heavens, invoked as a witness in solemn exhortations; it cries up to heaven if it is soiled with blood; it "vomits out" the wicked inhabitants. But the earth has also furnished the matter from which man was framed; there is, therefore, a certain mutual relation between both; if man is corrupted, the earth shares his degradation; if the one is exterminated, the other participates in the ruin; Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed together with their impious inhabitants; the Israelites were threatened, that when they should be led away as captives for their iniquity, their once blooming land would be converted into a dreary desert of thorns and thistles; whilst, at the return of the pious and penitent into their land, even the inhospitable wilderness would be changed into beautiful gardens and proud cedar-forests; and just as the first parents were, after their fall, doomed to exhaust their strength on a curse-laden soil; thus the generation of Noah was annihilated, together with the earth which had seen and suffered their iniquity. The Persian faith teaches that, in whatever country the sacredness of matrimony is violated, that country perishes, together with its inhabitants. The nearer man is to the state of nature, the more mysterious and inseparable appears to him his connection with the earth and its silently-working powers; the earth is the "great mother" of all men, who produces, nourishes, and may destroy them; and the heathen nations have based upon these conceptions many of their most beautiful myths, too universally known to require a detailed allusion. But the animals must perish, because they had also beheld the iniquity of man; every witness of the degradation was to be removed; the history of man should commence a new epoch. If crimes were committed through the instrumentality of animals, the latter were also killed: an ox which had caused the death of a man, was destroyed; if a Hebrew town adopted idolatrous worship, its inhabitants were destroyed with their cattle; whilst piety and faith were attended by prosperity among the beasts; the avarice of Achan was punished by death, and the destruction of his family and his property; when the Amalekites were to be extirpated, the animals were included in the fatal decree; and when the Ninevites did penance by fasting and humiliation, the beasts shared the same acts of external grief. The horror against bloodshed was so intense, that every reminiscence of it was to be eradicated; some Indian tribes pursue with their united force the wild beast which has killed a man, and the family of the murdered is an abomination and a disgrace till they have killed that or another beast of the same species; and other ancient nations went a step still farther, and doomed even inanimate objects (as an axe) with which a crime had been perpetrated to ignominious treatment, if the author of the misdeed could not be discovered (see notes on Exod. xxi. 28-32); and if, among the Hindoos, a man is killed by an accidental fall from a tree, all his relations assemble, cut it down, and reduce it to chips, which they scatter to the winds. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Ver. 14. Make thee an ark of gopher wood.—*Noah and the ark*.—Sometimes God seems to create a colossal figure in the moral world for after ages to gaze at and pattern by, as the sculptor chisels a statue of heroic size for some high niche in temple or civic hall, that those below may be inspired by its beauty and its grand proportions. Or, as God Himself has sculptured the Old Man of the Mountain on the naked cliff, high up in the air, for the traveller far down in the notch to gaze at, so he sometimes creates a man, sublime in his moral proportions, for all the ages to study—a character not for a generation, but for all the centuries. Yet, if we carefully study such a character, we shall find that, though the dimensions are heroic, they are not out of proportion. Each feature is true to common life, just as

the "Guardian of the Notch" is no grotesque caricature of a man, but a faithful image. Such a colossal figure of the ages is Noah. And yet, as we carefully study this Scripture likeness, we shall find that his leading traits of character are common traits and imitable traits. 1. In the first place, we find that he was moved to the great work of his life—the building of the ark, at the command of God—by the same motive that leads many men to turn to God to-day. He was "moved by fear," says the apostle. There was nothing derogatory in this either to the power of God's love or the human heart. If the storm is coming, it is the part of wisdom, not of cowardly fear, to prepare for it. 2. In the second place, if Noah was moved, aroused by fear, he was actuated by a sublime faith. When he began to build the ark, the flood was one hundred and twenty years in the future. How dim and distant is any event removed from us by the space of six-score years! 3. Again, we are impressed with the fact that Noah's difficulties and obstacles must have been very much the same in essence as those of the modern Christian. He was in the minority, as the Christian is to-day, only it was a far more hopeless and overwhelming minority. He was engaged in a most unpopular cause. The earnest Christian does not find that his best work obtains the plaudits of the world. Noah was not, so far as we know, openly persecuted and hindered in his work any more than is the Christian of the nineteenth century; but doubtless all the artillery of sarcasm and ridicule was trained upon him, just as the modern Christian, when he conscientiously does anything out of the ordinary course, anything that attracts attention, the utility of which the world does not understand, finds that the same weapons are in use to-day. And yet we do not know that the work was interrupted, or that its completion was delayed a week by the fun and railery which were doubtless heaped upon the project. 4. Another imitable trait in the character of this grand antediluvian was his obedience, strict and implicit. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." Witness his ready obedience and minute performance of every command of God in the slow construction of the ark. Obedience was the same thing five thousand years ago that it is to-day. (*F. E. Clark.*) *The divinely-achieved safety of the good, and its connection with the life-giving agencies of the material universe:*—I. THAT GOD IS NEVER AT A LOSS FOR A METHOD WHEREBY TO ACHIEVE THE SAFETY OF THE GOOD (ver. 14). 1. We find that the good are often in imminent peril. 2. We find that the good are often in peril through the prevalence of sin in the world around them. 3. We find that when it is the purpose of God to save the good from peril, He is never at a loss for means whereby to do so. II. That in the working out of these methods for the safety of the good, the good are desired to render their most effective co-operation (ver. 15). 1. This co-operation involves an utter self-abandonment to the Divine teaching. 2. It involves self-sacrifice. 3. It involves much ridicule. III. That in the working out of these methods for the safety of the good, the Divine Providence connects them with the temporal needs of the future. (vers. 19-22). LESSONS:—1. Let a remembrance of God's care for the good inspire comfort within the hearts of those in perilous circumstances. 2. That good men should be thoughtful and devout in their co-operation with the Spirit and providence of God. 3. That by such co-operation men enhance the temporal interests of the world. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The ark a type of the scheme of human salvation:*—I. That like the ark, the scheme of human salvation was wrought out AFTER A DIVINELY-GIVEN PLAN AND METHOD. 1. Like the ark, the scheme of salvation was not conceived by any human mind. 2. Like the ark, the scheme of salvation was originated by God, and was the outworking of a Divine plan. II. Like the ark, the scheme of human salvation was ANTECEDENTLY VERY UNLIKELY AND IMPROBABLE FOR THE PURPOSE. III. That as the ark had a window, so the scheme of human salvation is ILLUMINED BY THE LIGHT OF GOD. 1. The scheme of human salvation is illumined by the Holy Spirit. 2. This illumination of the scheme of salvation is the abiding comfort and joy of man. IV. That as the ark had a door, so into the scheme of human salvation THERE IS BUT ONE METHOD OF ENTRANCE. 1. That like the ark, the scheme of salvation has an entrance. Christ is the way to eternal safety. 2. That like the ark, the scheme of salvation has but one entrance. V. That like the ark, the scheme of human salvation is EFFICIENT TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNED PURPOSE. VI. That like the ark, the scheme of human salvation is NEGLECTED BY THE VAST MULTITUDE. LESSONS:—1. That a Divine method of salvation is provided for the human race from the future retributions of the universe. 2. That this salvation is equal to all the need of the case. 3. That men who neglect or despise it are sure to perish. 4. The holy wisdom of entering the ark at once. (*Ibid.*) *God's provision for salvation of His saints:*—1. In pour-

ing out indignation on the wicked world, God provideth for His saints. 2. God alone knoweth how to deliver the just from destruction to come. 3. Man must use God's means in order to salvation according to His prescript. 4. In God's command of using means, there is implied a promise. 5. Means of salvation to sight are but mean and despicable, a little timber and pitch. 6. Several nests and mansions are in the ark of the Church (ver. 14). 7. All Church work for salvation must have its line and measure from God. 8. Sufficient dimensions doth God give to the means of salvation for His people. Breadth and length, &c. (ver. 15). 9. Light must be in the means or instrument of man's salvation. 10. A door or entrance must be for souls to come into the ark of the Church and live. 11. A due proportion of place is designed by God for all creatures admitted into the Church ark for salvation (ver. 16). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The preaching of the ark:—*I. A MEMORIAL OF DIVINE GOODNESS. 1. It reminds us of His saints. Amongst the thousands of the world, Noah stood alone, firm in faith, dauntless in courage; God does not forget him; the innocent shall not suffer with the guilty. "God waited . . . while the ark was a-preparing" (1 Pet. iii. 20). 2. It reminds us of His regard for the families of His saints. 3. It reminds us of God's goodness to the world. All are invited to enter the ark. II. A TESTIMONY TO NOAH'S FAITH (Heb. xi. 7). III. A SYMBOL OF THE SAVIOUR. 1. The ark was a refuge. "Thou art my hiding place" (Psa. xxvii. 7). 2. The ark was a home. "Lord, Thou hast been our home in all generations" (Psa. xc. 1). 3. The ark was a temple. There Noah and his family worshipped. We must be in Christ if we would be acceptable worshippers (Rev. xxi. 22). 4. The ark was a conveyance. So to speak, it bore Noah from the old to the new world; from the valley of his labours and sorrows to the mountain of rest and plenty. "I am the way," said Jesus. IV. A DEACON FOR THE SINNER. The ark warns sinners of their danger. It points out the awful nature of unbelief, of voluptuousness, of pride. It warns us that, "though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." That numbers cannot shield us from Divine wrath. 1. The ark proclaims the wilfulness of sinners. Who built it? Were not many of its builders destroyed? We may be the means of insuring safety for others, and be ourselves lost (1 Cor. ix. 27). 2. The ark warns us of the power of sin. How long was it building? Month after month it was surveyed by hundreds, still they continued in sin. Beware of the deceitfulness of sin. Listen to the strange and varied story this silent ark so eloquently tells. Hear its attestation of the goodness and faithfulness of God; hear, too, its awful revelation of His power to punish and destroy. (*Stems and Twigs.*) *The ark a type of the Lord Jesus Christ:—*I. The ark was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, by being a MEANS OF ESCAPE OF GOD'S OWN PROVIDING. II. The ark was THE MOST UNLIKELY MEANS OF ESCAPE. III. The ark was MOCKED BY THE WORLD. IV. THERE WAS MORE THAN ROOM IN THE ARK for all its inhabitants. V. The ark was a PRESERVER OF LIFE. VI. The ark had but ONE DOOR AND ONE WINDOW. VII. The ark was DELUGED BY GOD. (*R. Jessop, M.A.*) *The ark a type of the Church:—*I. IT WAS BUILT BY HUMAN INSTRUMENTALITY; BUT THE FASHION OF IT, AS WELL AS THE MATERIALS OF WHICH IT WAS TO BE MADE, WERE OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT. II. THE ARK WAS BUILT BY DEGREES. III. The ark was a RECEPTACLE FOR ALL. IV. THE ANIMALS THAT ENTERED THE ARK WENT IN OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL, AND YET WERE DIVINELY GUIDED TO IT. V. THE FIERCE PASSIONS OF THE ANIMALS WERE RESTRAINED WHILE IN THE ARK. VI. TILL THE ARK WAS BUILT, THE WORLD COULD NOT BE DESTROYED. (*Ibid.*) *Noah's warning, preparation, and deliverance:—*I. THE WARNING THAT NOAH RECEIVED. 1. Only one received it. Noah found grace, favour. 2. To him a most unprecedented and unlikely thing. Beyond that vision, what was there to strengthen his faith? While the evidence to him was so slight, the proofs to us are numerous. 3. Imagine Noah after receiving this warning, with what different feelings he would regard the world, &c. II. THE PREPARATION THAT NOAH MADE. By faith. He believed God more than nature, which preached stability; or than men, who must soon have begun to argue thus—1. Who is Noah that he should have this warning? 2. But where is the promise or sign of this flood? Nature does not change. 3. The old man will never live to complete his task. 4. If he does, how are the animals, &c., to be collected? 5. Even if they are, is it likely that so cumbrous a vessel will float? 6. But where will all the water come from? To such men, Noah's ark would be Noah's folly. (Christ, our Ark, is a folly to many, 1 Cor. i. 23). 7. If the worst comes to the worst, we will fly to the hills. Faith overcomes all arguments. 480 years of age when he began, he toiled on for 120 years. While others were growing rich or spending their time in pleasure and sin, he spent his substance about the ark. III. THE DELIVERANCE

THAT NOAH EXPERIENCED. 1. The ark finished. The world comes to look, and wonder, and laugh. Science and selfishness have furnished their arguments, and begin to launch them. On a huge platform of timber stands the ark. 2. Noah examines his work, and compares it with the plan. He has done his part and enters. 3. God now collects the animals, &c. The astonishment of the world at that strange sight. Misgivings. Noah, a wise man after all, 4. Seven days' pause. Time yet for repentance. Mercy in the midst of wrath. 5. Noah shut in, and the world shut out. 6. The flood. 7. The waters rising. The ark swings round from its resting-place, and floats out on the bosom of the great waste of waters. LEARN—1. To take heed to the warning and invitation that we have had. 2. To work out our salvation with fear and trembling. 3. Noah made the ark to save his life; what are we doing to save our souls? 4. Let us fly for refuge to the hope set before us. (*J. C. Gray.*) *Noah was a type, and Christ the antitype, in sundry particulars:—*1. As Noah's name signifies comforter and restorer, which shows Lamech's faith to put that name upon him (Gen. v. 29; viii. 21). Herein he typified Christ, our grand Comforter and Restorer of the new world, as Noah was of the old. 2. Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. ii. 5). So also is Christ both preaching and purchasing, yea, procuring everlasting righteousness (Dan. ix. 24). 3. As Noah found grace in the sight of God, both for himself and for all his family (Gen. vi. 8, vii. 1; Heb. xi. 7), so did Christ for Himself (Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5), and for all his household of faith, for so many as God hath given him (John xvii. 2), they are all accepted in the beloved One (Eph. i. 6). Yea, He is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe (1 Tim. iv. 10; Luke ii. 52). 4. As Noah was the builder of the ark, so is Christ of the Church, which is called His workmanship (Eph. ii. 10, &c.). Is not Christ the carpenter (Mark vi. 3), to hew, plane, cement, and clinch us close together? &c. 5. As Noah was long in building the ark, even a hundred and twenty years, so is Christ long in building His Church, even some thousands of years. 6. As Noah used many carpenters that were instrumental to save others, but not themselves, so likewise doth Christ (Matt. vii. 22, 23). Some ministers Christ employs that may save—(1) Others, not themselves. (2) Themselves, not others. (3) Neither themselves, nor others. (4) Both themselves, and others (1 Tim. iv. 16). 7. As when Noah had finished the ark, the destruction of the old world by water followed immediately; so when Christ hath gathered in all His elect, and completed His Church, then will the destruction of this present world by fire presently pass upon it. Add unto all these—8. As Noah's presence in the ark did secure his household all the time of its tossing, and landed them safely (after the destruction of the old world) in another; so Christ's presence with His Church, while she is tossed with tempests and not comforted (Isa. liv. 11), doth secure her from all evil, for He keeps the ensuring office. As there is congruity 'twixt this type and antitype, to wit, Christ and Noah, so there is some disparity. 1. As Noah preached to the old world and converted none, but Christ converted many in this new world. 2. Noah saved his household, but only temporarily, but Christ saves the household of faith, spiritually and eternally. 3. Noah had no better to send out than a raven and a dove, but Christ sent out better things, such as the law and the gospel, the former to work fear and the latter love. 4. Noah was insufficient to complete salvation for his family, as he was unable of himself to shut the great door of the ark after him; but Christ saveth to the utmost, by His own power (Heb. vii. 25), rebuking storms and procuring calms, all in His own name. 2. As Noah's self was a type of Christ, so was his ark, wherein alone salvation was found from that deluge of waters, accordingly in Christ alone can be found salvation (of all sorts, temporal, spiritual, and eternal) from the deluge of Divine wrath, and justice of God for the sin of man. Beside Him, there is no Saviour (Isa. xliii. 11). As there was but one ark, so there must be but one mediator; no cock-boats were to attend this ark (Acts xxvii. 30). (*C. Ness.*) *Dimensions of the ark:—*Much needless ingenuity has been wasted on the calculation of the exact space in the ark, of its internal arrangements, and of the accommodation it contained for the different species of animals then existing. Such computations are essentially unreliable, as we can neither calculate the exact room in the ark, nor yet the exact number of species which required to be accommodated within its shelter. Scripture, which sets before us the history of God's kingdom, never gratifies such idle and foolish inquiries. But of this we may be quite sure, that the ark which God provided was literally and in every sense quite sufficient for the purposes for which it was intended, and that these purposes were fully secured. It may perhaps help us to realize this marvellous structure if we compare it to the

biggest ship known—the *Great Eastern*, whose dimensions are six hundred and eighty feet in length, eighty-three in breadth, and fifty-eight in depth; or else if we describe it as nearly half the size of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. It should be borne in mind that the ark was designed not for navigation, but chiefly for storage. It had neither masts, rudder, nor sails, and was probably flat at the bottom, resembling a huge floating chest. To show how suitable its proportions were for storage, we may mention that a Dutchman, Peter Jansen, built in 1604 a ship on precisely the same proportions (not, of course, the same figures), which was found to hold one-third more lading than any other vessel of the same tonnage. To sum up Noah's life of faith, Noah's preaching of faith, and Noah's work of faith in the words of Scripture: "By faith Noah, being warned of God," &c. (Heb. xi. 7). (*Dr. Edersheim.*)

Vers. 17–22. **I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh.**—*The flood.*—I. The first fact that strikes us in the story of the flood is this: that God, on account of the wickedness to which the world had grown, had made up His mind to sweep it away, once and for all. II. Out of the seed of Noah God had determined to people the earth once more with a race that would not be so wicked as the one He destroyed. III. Noah was told to go into the ark because his life was to be saved from the flood. God has provided another ark for us; He tells us to go into it and be saved. IV. Noah's family was taken with him into the ark, showing the value God sets on family life. V. God gave it as a reward to Noah for his righteousness that his children went with him into the ark. A holy and loving example preaches a sermon to those who watch it, and remains in the memory of the godless son and the godless daughter long after the parents have been laid in the grave. (*Bp. Thorold.*) *Lessons from the flood.*—A long period elapsed between the commencement of the building of the ark and the actual flood. During that period we notice—1. The strength of Noah's faith. God has told him of a deluge of which there is no appearance; He has commanded him to build a strange vessel for no apparent purpose; He has told him that one hundred and twenty years of toil must elapse before the vessel can be of any use to him. And yet, in the face of all these difficulties, Noah forms and keeps his resolution to obey God. 2. Notice the reception which Noah's work and message probably met with. The first feeling excited would be one of derision and mirth, then would come wonder, then pity, then disappointment and disgust, and lastly, perhaps, a silent contempt. I. **THE FLOOD SHOWS US.**—1. How absolute is God's control over the natural world. 2. The evil of sin, and the light in which it appears to the eye of God. 3. It reminds us of another deluge, of which all unreconciled sinners stand in jeopardy. II. **CONSIDER THE VARIOUS PURPOSES THAT WERE SERVED BY THE DELUGE.** 1. It swept away an effete and evil generation, which had become of no use, except to commit sin and thus deprave and weaken the general stock of humanity. 2. The flood was calculated to overawe mankind, and to suggest the idea that other such interpositions might be expected when they were required. 3. The flood furnished an opportunity to God of coming more nearly and closely to men. 4. The flood brought the human family nearer to the promised land of Canaan. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *The history of the deluge.*—The history of the deluge is alleged in the New Testament as a type of the deep waters of sin, in which a lost world is perishing, and from which there is no escape but in that ark which God has prepared for us. The eight souls saved from the deluge are types of that little flock which rides safely and triumphantly, though the floods lift up their waves and the billows break over them. And their safety is assured to them, because they are in Christ. I. **AT THE ROOT OF ALL CHRISTIANITY LIES THAT DEEP MYSTERIOUS TRUTH, THE SPIRITUAL UNION OF THE REDEEMER WITH THOSE WHOM HE REDEEMED.** To this truth most emphatically witnesses all the New Testament teaching about the ark as a symbol and a prophecy. For—1. The ark is a figure of Christ. The ark floated over the waste of waters, as Christ dwelt and toiled and suffered in the wilderness of this world, and amid the waters of affliction. 2. The ark is a figure of the redeemed of Christ. The Church, which is Christ's body, is also the ark of refuge from the wrath of God. This life is still to the Church a conflict, a trial, a pilgrimage, a voyage. The crown shall be at the resurrection of the just. II. **THE PRACTICAL THOUGHTS TO WHICH THIS SUBJECT LEADS US DIFFER BUT LITTLE FROM THE DOCTRINAL.** Is not the substance and the end of all—safety in Christ, rest in Christ, and at last glory in Christ? Those only who have rested in the ark will rest upon Mount Ararat. The life of the Christian is begun on earth; it is perfected in heaven. When the voyage is over,

the Saviour, who has been to us the ark upon the waters, shall be to us, in the eternal mountains of the Lord, rest and peace and light and glory. (*Ep. Harold Browne.*) *The record of the flood*:—I. Consider the record of THE FLOOD AS A HISTORY: a history having a twofold aspect—an aspect of judgment, and an aspect of mercy. 1. "God," St. Peter says, "spared not the old world," He "brought in a flood upon the world of the ungodly." He who made can destroy. Long trifled with, God is not mocked: and he who will not have Him for his Father must at last know Him as his Judge. 2. The record of judgment passes on into a record of mercy. Mercy was shown: (1) in preservation; (2) in reconstruction. II. Consider THE FLOOD IN ITS USES: AS A TYPE, AS A PROPHECY, AND AS A WARNING. 1. The water through which Noah and his family passed into their ark was like the water of holy baptism, through which a Christian, penitent and believing, finds his way into the Church of the living God. 2. St. Peter exhibits the flood to us also as a prophecy. The flood of waters becomes in its turn the prediction of a last flood of fire. He who foretold the one—and notwithstanding long delay the word was fulfilled—may be believed when He threatens the other; and no pause or respite can defeat the certainty of the performance. 3. There is one special warning appended by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to the Scriptural record of the great deluge: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (*Dean Vaughan.*) *Flood of waters*:—Mythology tells how Jupiter burned with anger at the wickedness of the iron age. Having summoned a council of the gods, he addressed them—setting forth the awful condition of the things upon the earth, and announcing his determination to destroy all its inhabitants. He took a thunderbolt, and was about to launch it upon the world, to destroy it by fire, when he bethought himself that it might enkindle the heavens also. He then resolved to drown it by making the clouds pour out torrents of rain:—

"With his clenched fist

He squeezed the clouds:

Then, with his mace, the monarch struck the ground;

With inward trembling earth received the wound,

And rising streams a ready passage found."

(*W. Adamson.*)

The impotence of floods:—The Almighty is about to do here what some of us in our imperfect wisdom have often wished to see done: we have supposed that if all notoriously bad people could be removed at a stroke from the world the kingdom of heaven would be at once established on the earth. The idea may be put roughly thus: Bring together all prisoners, all idlers, drunkards, thieves, liars, and every known form of criminal; take them out into the middle of the Atlantic and sink them there, and at once society will be regenerated, and paradise will be regained. Now this is substantially the very course which the Almighty took in the days of Noah, with what results we know only too well. All our fine theories have been tested, and they come to nothing. The tree of manhood has been cut down to the very root, and it has been shown in every possible way that the root itself must be cured if the branches are to become strong and fruitful. If you were to-day to destroy all the world, with the single exception of one household, and that household the most pious and honourable that ever lived, in less than half a century we should see all the bad characteristics returning. Water cannot drown sin. Fire cannot burn out sin. Prisons cannot cure theft and cruelty. We must go deeper. In the meantime it was well to try some rough experiments, merely for the sake of showing that they were not worth trying. If the flood had not been tried there are some reformers amongst us who would have thought of that as a lucky idea, and wondered that it had never occurred to the Divine mind! After all, it is a very elementary idea. It is the very first idea that would occur to a healthy mind: the world is a failure, man is a criminal and a fool, sin is rampant in the land; very well; that being the case, drown the world. There are persons who seriously ask, Do you think the flood ever did occur? and there are others who find shells on hill-tops, and show them in proof of a universal deluge. O fools and slow of heart! This flood is occurring every day; this judgment upon sin never ceases; this protection of a righteous seed is an eternal fact! How long shall we live in the mere letter, and have only a history instead of a revelation—a memorandum book instead of a living Father? That there was a flood exactly as is described in the Bible I have not so much as a shadow of a doubt; but even if I took

it as an allegory, or a typical judgment given in parable, I should seize the account as one that is far more profoundly true than any mere fact could ever be. Look at it! God morally angry, righteousness asserted, sin judged, goodness preserved, evil destroyed; it is true, it must be true, every honest heart demands that it be taken as true. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Ver. 18. With thee will I establish My covenant.—*God's covenant with Noah*:—

1. The leading ideas suggested by a covenant are those of peace and goodwill between the parties, and if differences have subsisted, forgiveness of the past, and security for the future. Such were the friendly alliances between Abram and Abimelech, Isaac and another of the same name, and between Jacob and Laban. God was highly displeased with the world, and would, therefore, destroy that generation by a flood, but when He should have done this, He would return in loving-kindness and tender mercies, and would look upon the earth with a propitious eye. Nor should they be kept in fearful expectation of being so destroyed again; for He would pledge His word no more to be wroth with them in such a way, nor to rebuke them for ever. 2. In covenants wherein one or both the parties had been offended, it was usual to offer sacrifices, in which a kind of atonement was made for past offences, and a perfect reconciliation followed. Such were the covenants before referred to; and such, as we shall see at the close of the eighth chapter, was the covenant in question. "Noah offered sacrifices, and the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and promised to curse the ground no more for man's sake." 3. In covenants which include a blessing on many, and they unworthy, it is God's ordinary method to bestow it in reward, or for the sake of one who was dear to Him. God loves men, but He also loves righteousness; hence He delights to bestow His blessings in such a way as manifest His true character. If there had been any dependence on Noah's posterity, that they would all have walked in his steps, the covenant might have been established with them as well as him; but they would soon degenerate into idolatry, and all manner of wickedness. If, therefore, He will bestow favour on them in such a way as to express His love of righteousness, it must be for their father Noah's sake, and in reward of his righteousness. To say, "With thee will I establish My covenant," was saying in effect, "I will not treat with thy ungodly posterity: whatever favour I show them, it shall be for thy sake," (*A. Fuller.*)

Ver. 22. Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded, so did he.—

Noah's obedience:—I. THE OBEDIENCE RENDERED BY NOAH. 1. The circumstances in which he was placed. 2. The means he was directed to use for the preservation of God's chosen remnant. 3. His perseverance in the use of these means till he had completed the work assigned him. II. THE OBEDIENCE REQUIRED OF US. 1. The danger to which we are exposed is similar. 2. The means provided for our escape are similar. 3. The distinction that will be made between the believing and unbelieving world will be similar. Learn: 1. The office of faith. Not to argue, but to believe God. 2. The necessity of fear. 3. The benefit of obedience. (*C. Simeon, M.A.*) *The Divine commands*:—I. THE DIVINE COMMANDS ARE SEVERE IN THEIR REQUIREMENTS. II. THE DIVINE COMMANDS ARE EXTENSIVE IN THEIR REQUIREMENTS. III. THE DIVINE COMMANDMENTS ARE INFLUENTIAL TO THE WELFARE OF MAN. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*)

Noah's obedience:—I. THE RULE OF NOAH'S OBEDIENCE. "All that God commanded." Mankind need a rule for their conduct. 1. It should come forth from God, and have the Divine sanction. 2. It should be practicable in its requirements. 3. It should be plain and circumstantial in its phraseology. 4. It should be beneficial in its results. II. THE NATURE OF NOAH'S OBEDIENCE. "So did he." 1. Noah's obedience was pious in its principle. 2. Prompt and decided in its acts. 3. Laborious in its exercise. 4. Universal in its extent. 5. Persevering in its course. 6. Successful in its object. Learn from the subject—1. What terrible desolations sin makes in the world, and how the severity of God was displayed in making the very elements conspire to the destruction of those who had slighted the Divine counsels. 2. How tenderly God cares for His servants, and how easily He can provide means for their safety. 3. How much human security depends upon human exertion. The way of duty is the way of safety. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Noah, the model worker*:—I. Noah was—a READY—worker. And in this respect he is a good model to set before us. It was a very hard thing that Noah was commanded to do. He was told to build an ark, or a ship, that was very remarkable for its size. But Noah was not a ship-builder himself, neither were his sons. He did not live in a seaport town, where the people

were familiar with the business of building ships. He lived in an inland country, far away from the sea. We do not know that he, or any one else then living in the world, had ever seen a large ship. And this must have made the work that Noah was told to do very hard indeed. How easy it would have been for him to make excuses when God commanded him to build that huge ark! He might have said, very truthfully, "I do not know anything about the work of building ships. I have no ship carpenters to help me, and know not where to get any." And if, for reasons like these, he had begged to be excused from undertaking a work of so much difficulty, it would not have been at all surprising. Instead of this he went out to work at once. No doubt he asked God to help him. And when we get such help as He can give, nothing can be too hard for us. The apostle believed this fully, when he said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." II. But Noah was a model worker, because he was—A PERSEVERING—worker. If we have anything hard to do, or anything that will take a long time in which to do it, we never can succeed in doing it without perseverance. And no one ever had so much need of perseverance as Noah had in the work he was told to do. From the day when God first spoke to him about building the ark, until it was finished, one hundred and twenty years passed away. All that time he was engaged in the work. How strangely Noah must have felt when he laid the first piece of timber in the keel of the ark, and knew how many years were to pass away before that great vessel would be completed! We read of men who have become famous by the discoveries or inventions they have made, such as the art of printing, the use of steam-engines, and other things. Some of these men were working away for seven, or ten, or fifteen, or twenty years, before they finished their work. And when we read about the difficulties they had to overcome before they succeeded in what they were trying to do, and how they persevered in overcoming these difficulties, we cannot but wonder at them. And yet, how short the time was in which they did their work, compared with the hundred and twenty years through which Noah had to go on labouring! His perseverance was the most wonderful ever heard of in the history of our world. How much trouble he must have had in getting the right kind of wood with which to build the ark! And when the wood was found, how much trouble he must have had in getting the right sort of workmen to carry on the building! And how many other difficulties he must have had, of which no account is given! But, notwithstanding all these difficulties, he went patiently on, for a hundred and twenty years, till his work was done. How well we may speak of Noah as a model of perseverance! Let us study this model, till we learn to persevere, in all the work we try to do, for God, or for our fellow-men. After a great snow-storm, a little fellow about seven or eight years old was trying to make a path through a large snow-band, which had drifted before his grandmother's door. A gentleman who was passing by was struck with the earnestness with which he was doing his work. He stopped to look at him for a moment, and then said: "My little man, how do you ever expect to get through that great snow-bank?" In a cheerful tone, and without stopping at all in his work, the little fellow's reply was: "By keeping at it, sir. That's how." "By keeping at it" Noah was able to get through with the great work he had to do. And it is only "By keeping at it" that we can expect to succeed in any good work in which we may be engaged. III. Noah was a model worker because he was—A THOROUGH—worker. We see this in our text when it tells us, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." Some people are willing to obey God just so long as He tells them to do what they like to do. But if He commands them to do anything that is disagreeable, they are not willing to obey Him. But this was not the way in which Noah obeyed God. And it is very important for us to follow the example of Noah in this respect, because this is the only kind of service that God will accept. It was what David taught us when he said, "Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all Thy commandments." And this was what Jesus taught us when He said: "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." And it is always pleasant to meet with persons who are trying to serve God as thoroughly as Noah did. A religious meeting was once held among some working-men. One after another of them rose up to speak of their experience on the subject of religion. This was the way in which one of them spoke about himself: "I used to be an odd-job Christian; but now, thank God, I'm working on full time." This was very expressive. There are a great many "odd-job Christians." They work for Jesus just when it suits them. For the rest of their time they are pleasing themselves. But Noah was not one of this

kind. He was on full time. IV. Noah was a model worker, because he was—A COURAGEOUS—worker. If we had a history of all that took place while Noah was building the ark, how interesting it would be! It was such a strange work that he was engaged in! Nothing like it had ever been heard of in that country. People would come from all quarters. They would look on in wonder. They would call him an old fool, and make all sorts of fun of him. And this is something which it is always very hard to bear. Many men who have courage enough to go boldly into battle, and face the glittering swords or roaring cannon of their enemies, have not courage enough to go on doing a thing when men laugh at them, and ridicule them for doing it. But Noah did not mind this at all. He let them laugh as much as they pleased, while he went quietly on with the work that God had given him to do. V. Noah was a model worker, because he was—A SUCCESSFUL—worker. He laboured on through all those long years until the ark was finished. And then, when the flood came, he was saved himself, and his family was saved, while all the rest of the world was swept away in its wickedness. And who can tell how much good Noah did by his successful work on the ark? That good has extended to all who have lived since then. And this is a thought that may well encourage us in working for God. We never can tell how successful our work may be, and what great good may follow from it. And we shall find prayer a great help to success in all the work we have to do. (R. Newton, D.D.) *Obedience*:—I would rather obey than work miracles. (Luther.) Wicked men obey for fear, but the good for love. (Aristotle.) "All God's biddings are enablings," says an early Christian writer. An obedient soul is like a crystal glass with a light in the midst, which shines forth through every part thereof. (T. Brooks.) A soul sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey, and what to reject, as hypocrites do. (Ibid.) He praiseth God best that serveth and obeyeth Him most: the life of thankfulness consists in the thankfulness of the life. (W. Burkitt.) The knowing of God, that we may serve Him, and the serving Him, that we may enjoy Him, take up the whole duty of man's obedience. (Herle.) Jesus Christ intended, when He opened your eyes, that your eyes should direct your feet. Light is a special help to obedience, and obedience is a singular help to increase your light. (J. Flavel.) A man sincerely obedient lays such a charge upon his whole man as Mary, the mother of Christ, did upon all the servants at the feast; "Whatsoever the Lord saith unto you, do it." (T. Brooks.) *Obedience to God's will*:—It ought to be the great care of every one of us to follow the Lord fully. We must in a course of obedience to God's will and service to His honour, follow Him universally, without dividing; uprightly, without dissembling; cheerfully, without disputing; and constantly, without declining: and this is following Him fully. (M. Henry.) *Loving obedience*.—As fruits artificially raised or forced in the hothouse have not the exquisite flavour of those fruits which are grown naturally and in their due season; so that obedience which is forced by the terrors of the law wants the genuine flavour and sweetness of that obedience which springs forth from a heart warmed and meliorated with the love of God in Christ Jesus. (H. G. Salter.) *Obedience to God's will*:—Some of the members of the household of Tiberius were so attached to their master that they obeyed all his commands with the most implicit care. One of them had such perfect faith in him that, when he declared he never failed to do what Tiberius commanded, and was asked, if he had been ordered to burn the Capitol, whether he would have done it, he answered that Tiberius would never have given him the order; but, when the question was repeated, he declared that, had it been commanded, he should have thought it right, for Tiberius would never have laid such a command on him if it had not been for the advantage of the Roman people. When we render allegiance to the Saviour, it is with the express understanding that He bids us do nothing but that which is essentially right; that if anything is cruel in its nature He cannot order it; but that, if He appears to do so, there is some hidden good beneath the action that He bids us perform.

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 1-3. And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark.—The ark completed; or, the termination of definite moral service:—I. THE TERMINATION OF AN ARDUOUS TASK. 1. This termination would be a relief to his

physical energies. 2. This termination would be a relief to his mental anxieties. 3. This termination would inspire a sad but holy pride within his heart. And so Christian service often reviews its work, its calm faith, its patient energy, and its palpable result, with sacred joy, but when it is associated with the judgments of heaven upon the ungodly, the joy merges into grief and prayer. The best moral workman cannot stand unmoved by his ark, when he contemplates the deluge soon to overtake the degenerate crowds around, whom he would fain persuade to participate in the refuge he has built. II. THE INDICATION OF ABOUNDING MERCY (ver 4). 1. This indication of mercy was unique. Its occasion was unique. Neither before or since has the world been threatened with a like calamity. And the compassion itself was alone in its beauty and meaning. 2. This indication of mercy was pathetic. 3. This indication of mercy was rejected. The people regarded not the completion of the ark, they heeded not the mercy which would have saved them at the eleventh hour. III. THE SIGNAL FOR A WONDROUS PHENOMENON (vers. 8, 9). IV. THE PROPHECY OF AN IMPORTANT FUTURE. LESSONS: 1. Let the good anticipate the time when all the fatigue and anxiety of moral service shall be at an end. 2. Let them contemplate the joy of successful service for God. 3. Let them enter into all the meaning and phenomena of Christian service. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *God's invitation to the families of the good*.—I. THAT THE FAMILIES OF THE GOOD ARE EXPOSED TO MORAL DANGER. 1. This danger is imminent. 2. It is alarming. 3. It should be fully recognized. 4. It should be provided against. II. THAT THE FAMILIES OF THE GOOD ARE INVITED TO MORAL SAFETY. 1. They are invited to this safety after their own effort, in harmony with the Divine purpose concerning them. 2. The purpose concerning them was—(1) Divine in authority; (2) merciful in intention; (3) sufficient to its design. III. THAT THE FAMILIES OF THE GOOD SHOULD BE IMMEDIATE IN THEIR RESPONSE TO THE DIVINE REGARD FOR THEIR SAFETY. (*Ibid.*) *The house in the ark*.—I. AN EXHIBITION OF DIVINE CARE. II. A MANIFESTATION OF PARENTAL LOVE. III. THE IDEAL AND JOY OF DOMESTIC LIFE. (*Ibid.*) *The ark; a word to parents*.—I. THERE IS AN AWFUL PERIL HANGING OVER YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN. 1. Divinely threatened. 2. Generally disbelieved. 3. Absolutely certain. II. THERE IS SALVATION PROVIDED FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN. 1. Divinely constituted. 2. All-sufficient. 3. Popularly neglected. III. THERE IS A SOLEMN OBLIGATION RESTING UPON YOU IN RELATION TO YOUR CHILDREN. 1. If you do not care for them, who do you expect will? 2. If you cannot induce them to come, who do you expect can? (*Homilist.*) *The deluge*.—I. THE GLORY OF PURITY. 1. Uncontaminated in the midst of impurity. 2. Intrusted with the Divine intentions. 3. Employed in warning others of their danger. 4. Safe in the midst of dangers. 5. The true mark of distinction between man and man. II. THE POWER OF EVIL. 1. Rapid in its increase. 2. Complete mastery over the heart. 3. Terrific in its results. III. THE SAVING POWER OF GOD. 1. Employed wherever faith is found. 2. Employed in conjunction with man's efforts. 3. Employed only in the ark. (*Ibid.*) *A whole family in heaven*.—I. GOD IN THE SCRIPTURES DEALS WITH FAMILIES BOTH IN SAVING AND DESTROYING. II. SPECIAL OBLIGATION ON HEADS OF FAMILIES TO BRING THE HOUSEHOLD TO CHRIST. III. UNSPEAKABLE JOY OF THE FAMILY REUNION AFTER THE STORMS AND SEPARATIONS OF EARTH. What greetings—memories—unalloyed fellowship—blissful employments. (*The Homiletic Review.*) *A family sermon*.—I. THE CALL. 1. It was a call from the Lord. 2. A personal call. 3. Effectual. 4. A call to personal action. "Come thou." Noah must come, and he must come to the ark too. For him there was only one way of salvation, any more than for anybody else. It was of no use his coming near it, but he must come into it. Come, make the Lord Jesus your refuge, your deliverance, and your habitation. Now it would have been of no use for Noah to have gone on making preparations for his dwelling in the ark: that he had done long enough. Neither would it have done for Noah to go round the ark to survey it again. No longer look at Christ externally, nor survey Him even with a grateful eye for what He has done for others, but come now and commit yourself to Him. There stands the door, and you have to go through it, and enter into the inner chambers, or you will find no safety. Neither would it have been of any use for Noah to go up to the ark and stand against the door and say, "I do not say that I am not going in, and I do not even say that I am not in already; I have got one foot in, but I am a moderate man, and like to be friendly with both sides. I am in and yet not in. If the door was shut I do not know but that it would cut me in halves; but, anyhow, I do not want to be altogether out, and I do not want to be quite in. I should like to stand where I

could hurry in as soon as I saw the water coming up; but, still, while there is another opportunity of taking a walk on the dry land I may as well avail myself of it. There is no hurry about it, is there? You see, if a man keeps his finger on the latch of the door he can pop in as soon as ever he sees the first drop of rain descending, or the water coming up anywhere near him; but is there any reason for being so decided all at once? No, that would not do for Noah. God said to him, "Come into the ark," and he went in at once. Noah must not hesitate, or linger, or halt, but in he must go: right in. Again, Noah must come into the ark never to go out again. "Come thou," saith God, "into the ark." He is not to make a visit, but he is to be shut in. As far as that world was concerned, Noah was to be in the ark as long as it lasted. When the new world came, then he walked out in joyful liberty. But you and I are in Christ, not to be there for a time, but to abide in Him for ever and ever. II. THE OBEDIENCE (ver. 7). 1. Unquestioning. 2. Immediate. 3. Once for all. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Safety in the ark*:—I. THERE IS A DELUGE OF WRATH COMING UPON SINNERS. II. THERE IS AN AKE PROVIDED FOR PRESERVATION. III. GOD GRACIOUSLY INVITES SINNERS TO COME INTO IT. (G. Burder.) *Noah and the ark*:—I. HIS INGRESS, or entrance into it. II. HIS PROGRESS, or safe entertainment in it. III. HIS EGRESS, or joyful departure out of it. (C. Ness.) *The eve of the flood*:—1. God gave special notice to Noah, saying, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous." He who in well-doing commits himself into the hands of a faithful Creator, needs not fear being overtaken by surprise. What have we to fear, when He whom we serve hath the keys of hell and of death? 2. God gave him all his household with him. We are not informed whether any of Noah's family at present followed his example: it is certain that all did not; yet all entered with him into the ark for his sake. This indeed was but a specimen of the mercy which was to be exercised towards his distant posterity on behalf of him, as we have seen in the former chapter. But it is of importance to observe, that though temporal blessings may be given to the ungodly children of a godly parent, yet without walking in his steps they will not be partakers with him in those which are spiritual and eternal. 3. It is an affecting thought, that there should be no more than Noah and his family to enter into the ark. Peter speaks of them as few; and few they were, considering the vast numbers that were left behind. Noah had long been a preacher of righteousness; and what—is there not one sinner brought to repentance by his preaching? It should seem not one: or if there were any, they were taken away from the evil to come. We are ready to think our ministry has but little success; but his, as far as appears, was without any: yet like Enoch, he pleased God. 4. The righteousness of Noah is repeated, as the reason of the difference put between him and the world. This does not imply that the favour shown to him is to be ascribed to his own merit; for whatever he was, he was by grace, and all his righteousness was rewardable only out of respect to Him in whom he believed; but being accepted for His sake, his works also were accepted and honoured. (A. Fuller.) *The closed ark*:—We can conceive an angel anxious for the rescue of the world, but unknowing of the exact time for the fulfilment of its doom, looking curiously down each morning of the seven days, and saying, as the open door presented itself first to his eager gaze, "Thank God, it is not yet shut"; and how, while the evening shadows are closing down around the ark, the door still stands inviting any to enter within who are willing, and is the last object of which he loses sight, he again exclaims, "Thank God, it is yet open." But conceive his sorrow when the seventh day arrives, and when, as he looks, lo! the door is shutting! The ark has folded itself up, as it were, for its plunge, and the bystanders and the shore are being left behind; the day of grace is about to close. No! one other offer yet, one other cry, one other half-opening of the half-shut door, but in vain; and then the angel shrieks, and returns to heaven, as he hears the thunder of the closing door, and as, alas! he perceives in the blackening sky, that while the ark shuts, the windows of heaven open. (G. Gilvillan.) *Christ not an insecure refuge*:—Some parts of the coast abound with caves. In one of these was found the body of a poor Frenchman. He had been a prisoner and had escaped from prison, and for a long time concealed himself there, probably in the hope of escaping by some vessel which might pass. Many a weary day passed, however, and he still remained a prisoner, till at last, not venturing to leave his retreat, he perished from want. So it is with those who seek refuge in insufficient places. "They make lies their refuge, and under falsehood hide themselves." Alas! how often they find out their mistake when it is too late. (G. S. Bowes.) *The family in the ark*:—I should

like to see every father in this room safe in the ark; and then I should like to see each one of you fathers bring your children in. There is no safety for them or for you outside. They will not come in unless some one tell them of the danger of remaining outside. Who can tell them so well as you? Who can teach them that sin biteth like a serpent, and that its fangs are deadly, but you? They need your help, your prayers, and your influence. I would say to each father as God said to Noah, "Come thou, and all thy house." Come in yourselves, and be sure not to forget to bring your children in with you. (*D. L. Moody.*) *The whole family in the ark* :—"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." You can't spare any of them. Think of which one you would like to spare. On a western lake in America there was a father journeying with two daughters, and they were very poor. Their appearance told the story without a word of explanation. A very benevolent gentleman in that part came up to the father and said, "You seem to be very poor." "Oh!" said the other, "if there's a man in this world poorer than I am, God pity him, and pity me, and help us both."—"Well," said the benevolent man, "I will take one of those children and bring her up and make her very comfortable. I am a man of fortune, and you may find great relief in this way." "What," said the poor man. "What!—would it be a relief to have my hand chopped off my arm? Would it be a relief to have my heart torn out from my breast? What do you mean, sir? God pity us." Ah! no, he could not give up either of them, and you cannot give up any of your family. Which one would you give up? The eldest? Or would it be the youngest? Would it be the one that was sick last winter? Would it be the husband? Would it be the wife? No, no. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Let us join hands anew and come into the ark. Come father, come mother, come sister, come brother, come son, come daughter. It is not the voice of a stormy blast, but the voice of an all-loving God, who says, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." The Lord shut him in. (*T. de Witt Talmage.*) *Entering into Christ as into an ark* :—When I was in Manchester, I went into the gallery one Sunday night to have a talk with a few inquirers, and while I was talking a business man came in and took his seat on the outskirts of the audience. I think at first he had come merely to criticise, and that he was a little sceptical. At last I saw he was in tears. I turned to him and said: "My friend, what is your difficulty?" "Well," he said: "Mr. Moody, the fact is, I cannot tell." I said: "Do you believe you are a sinner?" He said: "Yes, I know that." I said: "Christ is able to save you;" and I used one illustration after another, but he did not see it. At last I used the ark, and I said: "Was it Noah's feelings that saved him? Was it Noah's righteousness that saved him, or was it the ark?" "Mr. Moody," said he, "I see it." He got up and shook hands with me, and said: "Good-night, I have to go. I have to go away in the train to-night, but I was determined to be saved before I went. I see it now." I confess it seemed almost too sudden for me, and I was almost afraid it could not live. A few days after, he came and touched me on the shoulder, and said: "Do you know me?" I said: "I know your face, but do not remember where I have seen you." He said: "Do not you remember the illustration of the ark?" I said: "Yes." He said: "It has been all light ever since. I understand it now. Christ is the ark; He saves me, and I must get inside Him." When I went down to Manchester again, and talked to the young friends there, I found he was the brightest light among them. (*D. L. Moody.*) For thee have I seen righteous before Me.—*True moral rectitude* :—I. TRUE MORAL RECTITUDE MAINTAINED IN DEGENERATE TIMES. Sinful companions and degenerate times are no excuse for faltering moral goodness. The goodness of Noah was—1. Real. 2. Unique. 3. Stalwart. II. TRUE MORAL RECTITUDE OBSERVED BY GOD. 1. It is personally observed by God. 2. It was observed by God in its relation to the age in which the good man lived. "In this generation." III. TRUE MORAL RECTITUDE REWARDED BY GOD. 1. Rewarded by distinct commendation. God calls Noah a righteous man. 2. Rewarded by domestic safety. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The illustrious one* :—I. THE CHARACTER WHICH NOAH SUSTAINED. "Righteous." 1. Few of the ancient worthies are more frequently or more honourably mentioned than Noah (*Ezek. xiv. 14; Luke xvii. 26; Heb. xi. 7*). 2. The faith of Noah was a lively, active faith; it produced obedience to the Divine command. 3. He was a man of deep piety. 4. He was a genuine philanthropist (2 Pet. ii. 5). II. THE TIME WHEN HE SUSTAINED THIS CHARACTER. "In this generation." 1. This generation was completely given up to infidelity and iniquity. 2. In this generation it is probable that Noah would meet with opposition and insult from all quarters. III. THE

CONSEQUENCE OF HIS SUSTAINING SUCH A CHARACTER. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." 1. While the flood was teeming upon the ungodly with dreadful impetuosity, Noah was safe in the ark, instructing his family, and communing with his God. 2. While the evil-doers were swept from the face of the earth and their names buried in eternal oblivion, Noah came safely out of the ark, became the father of a new race, and finally died in peace. IV. APPLICATION. 1. Noah heard, believed, and obeyed God. Do we imitate him? 2. Noah was righteous in that generation of universal degeneracy, when he had every difficulty, and no encouragements. Are we as righteous in this generation, when we have but few obstacles and many advantages? (*Benson Bailey*.)

Ver. 4. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth.—*The Divine threat of destruction*:—I. VERY SOON TO BE EXECUTED. II. VERY MERCIFUL IN ITS COMMENCEMENT. III. VERY TERRIBLE IN ITS DESTRUCTION. "And every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." 1. The destruction was determined. 2. The destruction was universal. 3. The destruction was piteous. IV. VERY SIGNIFICANT IN ITS INDICATION. The Fatherhood of God is not incompatible with the punishment of sinners. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Divine threatenings*:—1. That they will surely be executed. 2. At the time announced. 3. In the manner predicted. 4. With the result indicated. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 5. Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.—*The obedience of Noah to the commands of God*:—I. IT WAS OBEDIENCE RENDERED UNDER THE MOST TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES. II. IT WAS OBEDIENCE RENDERED IN THE MOST ARDUOUS WORK. III. IT WAS OBEDIENCE RENDERED IN THE MOST HEROIC MANNER. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Safely kept by God*:—When Paul was in danger from the forty men who laid wait to kill him, Providence shut him up in Cæsarea, where he was free from the peril. When Luther would probably have been slain by wicked Papists, he was taken by force to a strong castle, where he was in good keeping till it was safe for him to go abroad. Jesus, too, as a babe, was taken into Egypt for His preservation from death. *The entrance of the animals into the ark*:—At last the allotted time is fully or nearly expired. Noah has laid the last planks of the ark, which now stands up like a mountain, relieved against the sky. But that sky is as yet serene and cloudless, and there seems as little prospect of a deluge as there was a hundred and twenty years ago. The general interest in the matter has languished and nearly expired, when it is suddenly awakened into an intense glow by an extraordinary occurrence. The people had laughed at the immense size of the ark, at its many rooms, at the quantity of food Noah had collected, and had asked, "Whence are the animals to come that are to fill these corners and to consume these stores?" But now a strange rumour flies abroad; it is, that a vast and motley throng of birds, beasts, and creeping things are thronging from every quarter toward the ark. There are cries, indeed, in contradiction to this—"It cannot be, it is a mere report got up by Noah"; but soon it forces itself as a fact upon the conviction of all, and the most obstinately incredulous have to stand dumb beside; and worse, have no power to obstruct the passage. It is a sight the sublimity of which they are compelled to admire, even while they tremble thereat; being, indeed, a repetition on a larger scale of the passage of the animals before Adam. The lion and the lioness come, loth, it would seem in a degree, to circumscribe their wild freedom and majesty, yet unable to resist the pressure of the power above. The tiger and his mate, like fiends chained, but the chains not seen; the rhinoceros, buffalo, and mammoth, causing the earth to groan beneath their tread; panthers and leopards swiftly advancing; the slow-moving bear and the "solemn" elephant; the bull, the stag, and the elk, with their flashing horns; the horse, the glory of his nostrils terrible still, although tamed somewhat in the shadow of his unseen rider, God; the antelope and the wolf met together; the fox and the lamb embracing each other; the hyæna, horrible even in his transient tameness; besides fifty more forms of brutal life, clean or unclean, beneath whose ranks you see thick streams of reptile-existence, from the serpent to the scorpion, from the boa-constrictor to the lizard, wriggling on their ark-ward way. And high overhead are flights of birds, here all oracular of doom, winging their courses—the earnest eagle, the gloom glowing raven, the reluctant vulture, the heavy kite, the fierce-eyed falcon, the high-soaring hawk, the lark with her lyric melody, the dove with her spotless plumage, the humming-bird with her sparkling gem-like shape, the night-

ingale with her sober plumage and melting song, the swallow with the dark-light glance and shivered beauty of her wing, and a hundred more of those skiey demons or angels now sweep past to their prepared nests in the ark, even as spirits from a thousand deaths on a battlefield find their winged way to the "land of souls"! Surely you might have expected that such a throng of nature's children, all subdued into one harmony, aiming at one mark, and animated by one spirit, as by one supernatural soul, should have not only awed, but convinced and converted the multitude who saw their passage. But it was not so. In what way or through means of what sophistry they contrived to evade the impression made by such a startling event, we cannot tell; but evade it they did—proving that there have sometimes been hearts so hard and consciences so seared that the most stupendous miracles have been unable to move them or melt them into repentance. (*G. Gillan.*) *The ark open for all:*—On the morning when the ark door was opened you might have seen in the sky a pair of eagles, a pair of sparrows, a pair of vultures, a pair of ravens, a pair of humming-birds, a pair of all kinds of birds that ever cut the azure, that ever floated on wing, or whispered their song to the evening gales. In they came. But, if you had watched down on the earth, you would have seen come creeping along a pair of snails, a pair of snakes, and a pair of worms. There ran along a pair of mice; there came a pair of lizards; and in there flew a pair of locusts. There were pairs of creeping creatures, as well as pairs of flying creatures. Do you see what I mean by that? There are some of you that can fly so high in knowledge that I should never be able to scan your great and extensive wisdom; and others of you so ignorant that you can hardly read your Bibles. Never mind: the eagle must come down to the door, and you must go up to it. There is only one entrance for you all; and, as God saved the birds that flew, so He saved the reptiles that crawled. Are you a poor, ignorant, crawling creature, that never was noticed—without intellect, without repute, without fame, without honour? Come along, crawling one! God will not exclude you. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

Ver. 7. Because of the waters of the flood.—*Popular reasons for a religious life:*—There are many motives urging men to seek the safety of their souls. I. **BECAUSE RELIGION IS COMMANDED.** Some men are good *because* God requires moral rectitude from all His creatures, they feel it right to be pure. They wish to be happy, and they find that the truest happiness is the outcome of goodness. II. **BECAUSE OTHERS ARE RELIGIOUS.** Multitudes are animated by a desire to cultivate a good life *because* their comrades do. They enter the ark because of the crowds that are seen wending their way to its door. III. **BECAUSE RELIGION IS A SAFETY.** We are told that Noah's family went into the ark "because of the waters of the flood." Many only become religious when they see the troubles of life coming upon them; they regard piety as a refuge from peril. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Noah and the ark:*—I. **THE WARNED ACCEPTING ADMONITION.** The warning we have corresponds with the warning Noah had, in—1. Its source; 2. Its medium; 3. Its subject; 4. Its design. II. **THE IMPERILLED SEEKING REFUGE.** 1. The urgently-needed refuge. 2. The divinely-appointed refuge. 3. The wisely-adapted refuge. 4. The only-existing refuge (Acts iv. 12). III. **THE INVITED TRUSTING PROMISE.** IV. **THE OBEDIENT SECURING SAFETY.** (*J. Poulter, B.A.*)

Vers. 11-15. The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.—*The deluge; or, the judgments of God upon the sin of man:*—I. **THAT THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS IS IMPORTANT, AND SHOULD BE CAREFULLY NOTED AND REMEMBERED.** 1. The chronology of Divine retribution is important as a record of history. 2. The chronology of Divine retribution is important as related to the moral life and destinies of men. 3. The chronology of Divine retribution is important, as the incidental parts of Scripture bear a relation to those of greater magnitude. II. **THAT GOD HATH COMPLETE CONTROL OVER ALL THE AGENCIES OF THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE, AND CAN READILY MAKE THEM SUBSERVE THE PURPOSE OF HIS WILL.** "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up." 1. The Divine Being can control the latent forces and the unknown possibilities of the universe. 2. The Divine Being can control all the recognized and welcome agencies of the material universe, so that they shall be destructive rather than beneficial. 3. That the agencies of the material universe frequently co-operate with the providence of God. III. **THAT THE RETRIBUTIVE JUDGMENTS OF GOD ARE A SIGNAL FOR THE GOOD TO ENTER UPON THE SAFETY PROVIDED FOR THEM.** "In the self-same day entered Noah," &c. IV.

THAT THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS, THE AGENCIES OF RETRIBUTION, WHICH ARE DESTRUCTIVE TO THE WICKED, ARE SOMETIMES EFFECTIVE TO THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE GOOD. V. THAT IN THE RETRIBUTIVE JUDGMENTS OF GOD WICKED MEN ARE PLACED WITHOUT ANY MEANS OF REFUGE OR HOPE. VI. THAT THE MEASURE AND LIMITS OF THE RETRIBUTIVE JUDGMENTS OF GOD ARE DIVINELY DETERMINED (vers. 20, 24). LESSONS: 1. That the judgments of heaven are long predicted. 2. That they are commonly rejected. 3. That they are wofully certain. 4. That they are terribly severe. 5. They show the folly of sin. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *An important and eventful day*:—1. The fulfilment of the promise. 2. The commencement of retribution. 3. The time of personal safety. 4. The occasion of family blessing. (*Ibid.*) *The deluge*:—I. THE DELUGE ITSELF. 1. Its reality. (1) Christ refers to it (*Matt. xxiv. 37*). (2) It rests on the traditions of all nations. 2. The means by which it was effected. Some suppose it was effected by a comet; others, that by one entire revolution of the earth, the sea was moved out of its place, and covered the face of the earth, and that the bed of the ancient sea became our new earth. There is one simple means by which it might have been easily effected. Water is composed of two gases or airs, oxygen and hydrogen—eighty-five parts of oxygen, and fifteen hydrogen. An electric spark passing through decomposes them and converts them into water. So that God, by the power of lightning, could change the whole atmosphere into water, and thus the resources of the flood are at once provided. But read carefully the account given by Moses (*chap. vii. 11, &c.*). 3. Consider its universality extended to the whole earth. 4. Consider its terrific character. II. THE PROCURING CAUSE OF THE DELUGE. 1. Universal wickedness. 2. Impious rejection of Divine influences. 3. Final impenitency. III. THE DELIVERANCE OF NOAH AND HIS FAMILY. APPLICATION: 1. Learn how fearful is the wrath of God. See a world destroyed. 2. How dreadful is a state of carnal presumption and security. It is a deadly opiate, destroyer of the soul. 3. The distinctions and rewards which await the righteous. (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *Chaldean narrative of the deluge*:—In general we may say that we have two Chaldean accounts of the flood. The one comes to us through Greek sources, from Berosus, a Chaldean priest in the third century before Christ, who translated into Greek the records of Babylon. This, as the less clear, we need not here notice more particularly. But a great interest attaches to the far earlier cuneiform inscriptions, first discovered and deciphered in 1872 by Mr. G. Smith, of the British Museum, and since further investigated by the same scholar. These inscriptions cover twelve tablets, of which as yet only part has been made available. They may broadly be described as embodying the Babylonian account of the flood, which, as the event took place in that locality, has a special value. The narrative is supposed to date from two thousand to two thousand five hundred years before Christ. The history of the flood is related by a hero, preserved through it, to a monarch whom Mr. Smith calls Izdubar, but whom he supposes to have been the Nimrod of Scripture. There are, as one might have expected, frequent differences between the Babylonian and the Biblical account of the flood. On the other hand, there are striking points of agreement between them, which all the more confirm the Scriptural account, as showing that the event had become a distinct part of the history of the district in which it had taken place. There are frequent references to Erech, the city mentioned in *Gen. x. 10*; allusions to a race of giants, who are described in fabulous terms; a mention of Lamech, the father of Noah, though under a different name, and of the patriarch himself as a sage, reverent and devout, who, when the Deity resolved to destroy by a flood the world for its sin, built the ark. Sometimes the language comes so close to that of the Bible that one almost seems to read disjointed or distorted quotations from Scripture. We mention, as instances, the scorn which the building of the ark is said to have called forth on the part of contemporaries; the pitching of the ark without and within with pitch; the shutting of the door behind the saved ones; the opening of the window, when the waters had abated; the going and returning of the dove since “a resting-place it did not find,” the sending of the raven, which, feeding on corpses in the water, “did not return”; and, finally, the building of an altar by Noah. We sum up the results of this discovery in the words of Mr. Smith: “Not to pursue this parallel further, it will be perceived that when the Chaldean account is compared with the Biblical narrative, in their main features the two stories fairly agree; as to the wickedness of the antediluvian world, the Divine anger and command to build the ark, its stocking with birds and beasts, the coming of the deluge, the rain and storm, the ark resting on a mountain, trial being made by birds sent out to see if

the waters had subsided, and the building of an altar after the flood. All these main facts occur in the same order in both narratives, but when we come to examine the details of these stages in the two accounts, there appear numerous points of difference; as to the number of people who were saved, the duration of the deluge, the place where the ark rested, the order of sending out the birds, and other similar matters." We conclude with another quotation from the same work, which will show how much of the primitive knowledge of Divine things, though mixed with terrible corruptions, was preserved among men at this early period: "It appears that at that remote age the Babylonians had a tradition of a flood which was a Divine punishment for the wickedness of the world; and of a holy man, who built an ark, and escaped the destruction; who was afterwards translated and dwelt with the gods. They believed in hell, a place of torment under the earth, and heaven, a place of glory in the sky; and their description of the two has, in several points, a striking likeness to those in the Bible. They believed in a spirit or soul distinct from the body, which was not destroyed on the death of the mortal frame; and they represent this ghost as rising from the earth at the bidding of one of the gods, and winging its way to heaven."

Indian tradition.—The seventh king of the Hindoos was Satyavrata, who reigned in Dravira, a country washed by the waves of the sea. During his reign, an evil demon (Hayagriva) furtively appropriated to himself the holy books (Vedas), which the first Manu had received from Brahman; and the consequence was, that the whole human race sank into a fearful degeneracy, with the exception of the seven saints and the virtuous king, Satyavrata. The divine spirit, Vishnu, once appeared to him in the shape of a fish, and addressed him thus: "In seven days, all the creatures which have offended against me shall be destroyed by a deluge; thou alone shalt be saved in a capacious vessel, miraculously constructed. Take, therefore, all kinds of useful herbs, and of esculent grain for food, and one pair of each animal; take also the seven holy men with thee, and your wives. Go into the ark without fear; then thou shalt see God face to face, and all thy questions shall be answered." After seven days, incessant torrents of rain descended, and the ocean gave forth its waves beyond the wonted shores. Satyavrata, trembling for his imminent destruction, yet piously confiding in the promises of the god, and meditating on his attributes, saw a huge boat floating to the shore on the waters. He entered it with the saints, after having executed the divine instructions. Vishnu himself appeared, in the shape of a vast horned fish, and tied the vessel with a great sea-serpent, as with a cable, to his huge horn. He drew it for many years, and landed it at last, on the highest peak of Mount Himavân. The flood ceased; Vishnu slew the demon and received the Vedas back; instructed Satyavrata in all heavenly sciences, and appointed him the seventh Manu, under the name of Vaivaswata. From this Manu the second population of the earth descended in a supernatural manner, and hence man is called *manudsha* (born of Manu, *Mensch*). The Hindoo legend concludes, moreover, with an episode resembling in almost every particular that which resulted in the curse of Ham by his father Noah. (*M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Greek traditions.—The whole human race was corrupted, violence and impiety prevailed, oaths were broken, the sacredness of hospitality was shamelessly violated, suppliants were abused or murdered, and the gods mocked and insulted. Infamy and nefariousness were the delight of the degenerated tribes. Jupiter resolved, therefore, to destroy the whole human race, as far as the earth extends and Poseidon encircles it with the girdle of the waves. The earth opened all her secret springs, the ocean sent forth its floods, and the skies poured down their endless torrents. All creatures were immersed in the waves, and perished. Deucalion alone, and his wife Pyrrha, both distinguished by their piety, were, in a small boat which Deucalion had constructed by the advice of his father Prometheus, carried to the lofty peaks of Mount Parnassus, which alone stood out of the floods. They were saved. The waters subsided. The surviving pair sacrificed to Jupiter the flight-giving, and consulted the gods, who again, through them, populated the earth by an extraordinary miracle. This tradition appears in a still more developed form in Lucian. There was a very old temple in Hieropolis, which was universally asserted to have been built by Deucalion the Scythian, when he had been rescued from the general deluge. For it is related that enormous crimes, prevalent through the whole human race, had provoked the wrath of Jupiter and caused the destruction of man. Deucalion alone was found wise and pious. He built a large chest, and brought into it his wives and children; and when he was about to enter it, bears, lions, serpents, and all other animals came to him by pairs. Jupiter

removed all hostile propensities from their breasts, and they lived together in miraculous concord. The waves carried the chest along till they subsided. After this an immense gulf opened itself, which only closed after having totally absorbed the waters. This wonderful incident happened in the territory of Hieropolis; and above this gulf Deucalion erected that ancient temple, after having offered many sacrifices on temporary altars. In commemoration of these events, twice every year water is brought into the temple, not only by the priests, but by a large concourse of strangers from Syria, Arabia, and the countries of the Jordan. This water is fetched from the sea, and then poured out in the temple in such a manner that it descends into the gulf. The same tradition assumed, indeed, under different hands a different local character; Hyginus mentions the *Ætna* in Sicily as the mountain where Deucalion grounded; the Phrygians relate that the wise *Anakos* prophesied concerning the approaching flood; and some coins struck under the Emperor *Septimius Severus* and some of his successors in *Apamea*, and declared genuine by all authorities in numismatics, represent a chest or ark floating on the waves and containing a man and a woman. On the ark a bird is perched, and another is seen approaching, holding a twig with its feet. The same human pair is figured on the dry land with uplifted hands; and on several of those pieces even the name *NO* (*NQ*) is clearly visible. A legend, perhaps as old as that of Deucalion, though neither so far spread nor so developed, is that of *Ogyges*, who is mostly called a *Bæotian autochthon*, and the first ruler of the territory of Thebes, called after him *Oggia*. In his time the waters of the lake *Copais* are said to have risen in so unusual a degree that they at last covered the whole surface of the earth, and that *Ogyges* himself directed his vessel on the waves through the air. Even the dove of *Noah* bears an analogy to the dove which Deucalion is reported to have dispatched from his ark, which returned the first time, thus indicating that the stores of rain were not yet exhausted, but which did not come back the second time, and thereby gave proof that the skies had resumed their usual serenity. (*Ibid.*) *The flood*:—The sky now at last blackens into pitchy gloom, and hoarse are the thunders which seem to crash against the sides of the sky as if against iron bars. The rain comes down in solid torrents, cleaving the thick air as with wedges. Lightnings

“run crossing evermore,
Till like a red bewildered map the sky is scribbled o’er.”

Rivers rush down in fury, overflowing their banks, sweeping away the crops, undermining the rocks, tearing up the woods, and rising above the lesser hills, till they meet with the streams which have swollen aloft from neighbouring valleys, and embrace in foam and wild commotion on the summit. Oceans are stirred up from their depths, and distant seas on the top of aerial mountains, each bringing the ruin of whole lands for a dowry. The inhabitants of a city have fallen asleep, thinking that it is only a night of unusual severity of storm, till in the morning they find themselves cut off on all sides, and a hungry sea crying with the tongues of all its waters, “Give! give!” and there is no escape for them; and climbing the highest towers and idol-temples only protracts for a little their doom; and soon the boom of the waves, wantoning uncontrolled and alone in the market-place, takes the place of the hum of men. A gay marriage party, in order to enjoy themselves more, have shut out the gloomy daylight, are dancing to the light of torches, and are finding a luxury and a stimulus to greater gaiety in the lashing of the rain on the roof and the sides of the dwelling, when suddenly the angry waters burst in, and their joy is turned into the howl of expiring women and men. In another place a funeral has reached the place of tombs amidst drenching rains and paths rendered difficult by the storm, and the bearers are about to commit the corpse to the earth, when, lo! the water bursts up through the grave, and the waves gather on all sides around, and instead of one, forty are buried, and instead of a silent sepulchre, there are shrieks and outcries of grief and of desperate sorrow—the sorrow of multitudinous death. A village among the mountains is surprised by the fierce and sudden uprise of the neighbouring stream, and the inhabitants have just time to avoid its avenging path by betaking themselves to the hills. From point to point they hurry, from the wooded steep to the bald crags, thence to the heathy sides of the larger hills, and thence to their sky-striking summits; and to every point they are faithfully followed by the bloodhound of the flood, too certain of coming up with his prey to be hurried in his motions, and whose voice is heard, in an awful ascending gamut, climbing steep after steep, here veiled amidst thick woodlands, there striking sharp and shrill against craggy obstacles, and anon from hollow

defiles, sounding low in the accents of choked and restrained wrath, but always approaching nearer and nearer, and from the anger echoed in which no escape is possible. Conceive their emotions as, standing at last on the supreme summit, they listen to this cry! Inch after inch rises the flood up the precipice, the cry swelling at every step, till at last it approaches within a few feet of the top, where hundreds are huddled together, and then

"Rises from earth to sky the wild farewell;
Then shriek the timid, and stand still the brave;
And some leap overboard with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave,
And the sea yawns around them like a hell."

Husbands and wives clasped in each other's arms sink into the waves; mothers holding their babes high over the surge are sucked in, children and all; the grey hairs of the patriarch meet with the tresses of the fair virgin in the common grave of the waters, which sweep by one wild lash all the tenants of the rock away, and roll across a shout of triumph to the hundred surges, which on every side of the horizon have mounted their hills, and gained their victories at once over the glory of nature and the life of man. From this supposed peak, "Fancy with the speed of fire" flies to other regions of the earth, and sees "all the high hills under the whole heaven covered;" the Grampian range surmounted; and Ben Nevis sunk fathoms and fathoms more under the waves; the Pyrenees and the "infant Alps" or Apennines lost to view; the Cervin's sharp and precipitous horn seen to pierce the blue-black ether no more; the eye of Mont Blanc darkened; old "Taurus" blotted out; the fires of Cotopaxi extinguished; the tremendous chasm of snow which yawns on the side of Chimborazo filled up with a sea of water; the hell of Hecla's burning entrails slaked, and the mountains of the Himalayah overtopped; till at last, the waves rolling over the summit of Mount Everest, and violating its last particle of virgin snow, have accomplished their task, have drowned a world! (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Flood traditions in America.—It is a singular confirmation of the deluge as a great historical event that it is found engraven in the memories of all the great nations of antiquity; but it is still more striking to find it holding a place in the traditions of the most widely spread races of America, and indeed of the world at large. Thus Alfred Maury, a French writer of immense erudition, speaks of it as "a very remarkable fact that we find in America traditions of the deluge coming infinitely nearer those of the Bible and of the Chaldean religion than the legends of any people of the old world." The ancient inhabitants of Mexico had many variations of the legend among their various tribes. In some, rude paintings were found representing the deluge. Not a few believe that a vulture was sent out of the ship, and that, like the raven of the Chaldean tablets, it did not return, but fed on the dead bodies of the drowned. Other versions say that a humming-bird alone, out of many birds sent off, returned with a branch covered with leaves in its beak. Among the Cree Indians of the present day in the Arctic circle in North America, Sir John Richardson found similar traces of the great tradition. "The Crees," he says, "spoke of a universal deluge, caused by an attempt of the fish to drown one who was a kind of demigod with whom they had quarrelled. Having constructed a raft, he embarked with his family, and all kinds of birds and beasts. After the flood had continued some time, he ordered several waterfowls to dive to the bottom, but they were all drowned. A musk rat, however, having been sent on the same errand, was more successful, and returned with a mouthful of mud." From other tribes in every part of America, travellers have brought many variations of the same world-wide tradition, nor are even the scattered islands of the great Southern Ocean without versions of their own. In Tahiti, the natives used to tell of the god Ruahatu having told two men "who were at sea fishing—Return to the shore, and tell men that the earth will be covered with water, and all the world will perish. To-morrow morning go to the islet called Toamarama; it will be a place of safety for you and your children. Then Ruahatu caused the sea to cover the lands. All were covered, and all men perished except the two and their families." In other islands we find legends recording the building of an altar after the deluge; the collection of pairs of all the domestic animals, to save them, while the Fiji islanders give the number of the human beings saved as eight. Thus the story of the deluge is a universal tradition among all branches of the human family with the one exception, as Lenormant tells us, of the black. How else could this arise but from the ineradicable remembrance of a real and terrible event. It must, besides, have happened so

early in the history of mankind that the story of it could spread with the race from their original cradle, for the similarity of the versions over the earth point to a common source. It is, moreover, preserved in its fullest and least diluted form among the three great races, which are the ancestors of the three great families of mankind—the Aryans, from whom sprang the populations of India, Persia, and Europe; the Turanians, and the Semitic stock, who were the progenitors of the Jew, the Arab, and other related races, including the Cushite and Egyptian. These, it is striking to note, were the specially civilized peoples of the early world, and must have learned the story before they separated from their common home in western Asia. (*C. Geikie, D.D.*)

The extent of the flood:—Thoughtful men of all shades of religious opinion have come to the conclusion that the Noachian deluge was only a local one, though sufficiently extensive in its area to destroy all the then existing race of men. In support of this view many arguments have been offered, of which a few may be briefly stated. The stupendous greatness of the miracle involved in a universal deluge seems a strong reason to doubt the likelihood of God having resorted to a course wholly unnecessary to effect the end mainly in view—the judgment of mankind for their sins. There could certainly be no apparent reason for submerging the vast proportion of the world which was then uninhabited, or of raising the waters above the tops of mountains to which no living creature could approach. It is to be remembered, moreover, that the addition of such a vast mass of water to the weight of the earth—eight times that contained in the ocean beds—would have disarranged the whole solar system, and even the other systems of worlds through the universe; for all are interbalanced with each other in their various relations. Then this immeasurable volume of water, after having served its brief use, must have been annihilated to restore the harmony of the heavenly motions: the only instance in the whole economy of nature of the annihilation of even a particle of matter. Nor could any part of either the animal or vegetable worlds have survived a submersion of the planet for a year; and hence everything, except what the ark contained, must have perished; including even the fish; of which many species would die out if the water were fresh, others, if it were brackish, and others, again, if it were salt. Men of the soundest orthodoxy have further urged that physical evidences still exist which prove that the deluge could only have been local. Thus Professor Henslow supports De Candolle's estimate of the age of some of the baobab trees of Senegal as not less than 5,230 years, and of taxodion of Mexico as from 4,000 to 6,000; periods which carry still living trees beyond that of the flood. There is, moreover, in Auvergne, in France, a district covered with extinct volcanoes, marked by cones of pumice stone, ashes, and such light substances as could not have resisted the waters of the deluge. Yet they are evidently more ancient than the time of Noah; for since they became extinct rivers have cut channels for themselves through beds of columnar basalt, that is, of intensely hard crystallized lava, of no less than 150 feet in thickness, and have even eaten into the granite rocks beneath. And Auvergne is not the only part where similar phenomena are seen. They are found in the Eifel country of the Prussian Rhine province, in New Zealand, and elsewhere. Nor is the peculiarity of some regions in their zoological characteristics less convincing. Thus the fauna of Australia is entirely exceptional; as, for example, in the strange fact that quadrupeds of all kinds are marsupial, that is, provided with a pouch in which to carry their young. The fossil remains of this great island continent show, moreover, that existing species are the direct descendants of similar races of extreme antiquity, and that the surface of Australia is the oldest land, of any considerable extent, yet discovered on the globe—dating back at least to the Tertiary geological age; since which it has not been disturbed to any great extent. But this carries us to a period immensely more remote than Noah. Nor is it possible to conceive of an assemblage of all the living creatures of the different regions of the earth at any one spot. The unique fauna of Australia—survivors of a former geological age—certainly could neither have reached the ark nor regained their home after leaving it; for they are separated from the nearest continuous land by vast breadths of ocean. The polar bear surely could not survive a journey from his native icebergs to the sultry plains of Mesopotamia; nor could the animals of South America have reached these except by travelling the whole length northwards of North America and then, after miraculously crossing Behring Straits, having pressed westwards across the whole breadth of Asia, a continent larger than the moon. That even a deer should accomplish such a pedestrian feat is inconceivable, but how could a sloth have done it—a creature which lives in trees, never, if possible, descending to the ground, and able

to advance on it only by the slowest and most painful motions? Or, how could tropical creatures find supplies of food in passing through such a variety of climates, and over vast spaces of hideous desert? Still more—how could any vessel, however large, have held pairs and sevens of all the creatures on earth, with food for a year, and how could the whole family of Noah have attended to them? There are at least two thousand mammals; more than seven thousand kinds of birds, from the gigantic ostrich to the humming-bird; and over fifteen hundred kinds of amphibious animals and reptiles; not to speak of 120,000 kinds of insects, and an unknown multitude of varieties of infusoria. Nor does this include the many thousand kinds of mollusca, radiata, and fish. Even if the ark, as has been supposed by one writer, was of 80,000 tons burden, such a freightage needs only be mentioned to make it be felt impossible. Look which way we like, gigantic difficulties meet us. Thus, Hugh Miller has noticed that it would have required a continuous miracle to keep alive the fish for whom the deluge water was unsuitable, while even spawn would perish if kept unhatched for a whole year, as that of many fish must have been. Nor would the vegetable world have fared better than the animal, for of the 100,000 known species of plants, very few would survive a year's submersion. That a terrible catastrophe like that of the flood—apart from the all-sufficient statements of Scripture—is not outside geological probability, is abundantly illustrated by recorded facts. The vast chains of the Himalayah, the Caucasus, the Jura mountains, and the Alps, for example, were all upheaved in the Pliocene period, which is one of the most recent in geology. A subsidence or elevation of a district, as the case might be, would cause a tremendous flood over vast regions. Nor are such movements of the earth's surface on a great scale unknown even now. Darwin repeatedly instances cases of recent elevation and depression of the earth's surface. On one part of the island of St. Maria, in Chili, he found beds of putrid mussel shells still adhering to the rocks, ten feet above high-water mark, where the inhabitants had formerly dived at low-water spring tides for these shells. Similar shells were met with by him at Valparaiso at the height of 1,300 feet. And at another place a great bed of now-existing shells had been raised 350 feet above the level of the sea. No difficulty on geological grounds can therefore be urged against such a catastrophe having happened in the early ages of our race as would have swept the whole seat of human habitation with a deluge in whose waters all mankind must have perished. The great cause, without question, of the belief that the flood was universal has been the idea that the words of Scripture taught this respecting that awful visitation. But it by no means does so. The word translated "earth" in our English version has not only the meaning of the world as a whole, but others much more limited. Thus it often stands for Palestine alone, and even for the small district around a town, or for a field or plot of land. Besides, we must not forget that such words are always to be understood according to the meaning attached to them by the age or people among whom they are used. But what ideas the ancient Hebrews had of the world has been already shown, and the limited sense in which they used the most general phrases—just as we ourselves often do when we wish to create a vivid impression of wide extent or great number—is seen from the usage of their descendants, in the New Testament. When St. Luke speaks of Jews dwelling at Jerusalem out of "every nation under heaven," it would surely be wrong to press this to a literal exactness. When St. Paul says that the faith of the obscure converts at Rome was spoken of throughout the whole world, he could not have meant the whole round orb, but only the Roman Empire. And would any one think of taking in the modern geographical sense his declaration that already, when he was writing to the Colossians, the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven? (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 16. *And the Lord shut him in.*—*The door was shut*:—I. IT TEACHES US, AS GOD IS THE AUTHOR SO IS HE THE FINISHER OF OUR WORK. God implants in the mother's heart the desire to teach her children of Himself, but He must apply the instruction. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God must give the increase. The seeker after salvation may pray, and read the Word, and attend the means of grace, but God only can save the soul. II. IT TEACHES THAT THEY WHO DO HIS WILL SHALL NOT GO UNREWARDED. Noah built the ark, so God insures his safety therein. Those who put their trust in God shall never be confounded. III. IT TEACHES THAT THOSE WHO DO GOD'S WILL ARE PRESERVED FROM ALL DANGERS. The Lord shut him in, so that he might not perpetrate any rash act. Had he possessed the power of opening the door, he might have jeopardized the safety of the whole family by

bringing down the vengeance of God. Noah's had been a critical position but for this. Think of him as he hears the rush of waters; the shrieks of the drowning; the cries of the young and old. If you had been in his position, with the knowledge you could open the door and take some in, would you not have been tempted to do so? But God shut him in, and when He shutteth no man can open. So shall God fortify the soul at the great day of final judgment. Mothers, fathers, children, shall see their relatives cast out, and yet be preserved from one rash word or unbelieving act. IV. IT TEACHES THAT THOSE WHO DO GOD'S WILL MUST NOT EXPECT IMMEDIATE REWARD. Noah becomes a prisoner—for five months he had no communication with God—for twelve months he resided in the ark. But God remembered Noah, and brought him out into a wealthy place. V. IT TEACHES THAT THE HAND WHICH SECURES THE SAINT DESTROYS THE SINNERS. (*R. A. Griffin.*)

Shut in, or shut out:—I. SHUT IN. 1. Separated from the world. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; but to Noah the dance and the viol, the feast and the revel, called in vain. He could not now hoard up wealth, nor seek for fame among the sons of men. He was shut out, too, from all their possessions; even from his own farm he was now expatriated. Blessed is that man who, whatsoever he hath, hath it as though he had it not; he sets no store by earthly things, and does not lock up his soul in his iron safe. He is shut out from the things which rust and corrupt, so that they are not his god nor his treasure. 2. Shut in by God. (1) Very close shutting, so as to keep out the water. (2) The door was shut very fast, to prevent the entrance of enemies from outside. (3) This divine shutting in of Noah was very necessary; for I suppose that no one else could have moved the gigantic door upon its enormous hinges. It was probably too massive to have been stirred by Noah or his united family. (4) And the Lord did this not only necessarily, but graciously. I call your attention to the change of the names in the text—a very significant change indeed: "They that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him; and the Lord"—that is Jehovah—"shut him in." Elohim, as the Creator and Preserver, takes care of living things to preserve them; but the Lord, even Jehovah, the covenanting God, interposes in great mercy to protect His chosen servant. It was Jehovah who entered into solemn league and covenant with His servant Noah that He would preserve him in the ark, and float him into the new world in it; and as Jehovah, the Covenanting One, He shut him in. There is no security like that which is given us by the covenant of grace. 3. Shut in with God. In verse 1 we read, "The Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark"; and this clearly shows that the Lord was in the ark already. Oh what a joy it is to know that when a soul is buried to the world it lives with Christ. God is in Christ Jesus, and we are in Christ Jesus, and thus we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus. 4. Next, notice that Noah's happiness was all the greater because he was shut in the ark with all his family. This is a great joy, to have all your household brought unto the faith of Christ. 5. Noah and his household were shut in, to be perfectly preserved, and then to come forth into a new world.

II. SHUT OUT. 1. Who they were. (1) A people that had been preached to. (2) A people who had been prayed for. (3) A people who had, many of them, been associated with Noah in his work. 2. What they did. (1) Took delight in earthly things. (2) Did not believe. 3. What came of it. Door shut. No hope. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Noah's ark:*—I. The first thing we have to consider is THE ARK. And here we must inquire the circumstances which gave rise to its being built. Sin was one cause; and the love of God towards Noah and his family, and His intention to preserve them from destruction. 1. Who commanded it to be built? God. And here we see marks of love, favour, and a determination to preserve him and his family while He destroyed the world. 2. Of what and how was it to be built? Of Gopher wood, to denote its strength and durability. Its dimensions, reckoning eighteen inches to the cubit, were 450 feet in length, 75 feet in breadth, 45 feet in height. 3. Its suitability. This is clearly seen by the number it held; for all that God had appointed entered the ark. 4. The shape of the ark is supposed to have been that of a chest or coffin. And, indeed, by the description here set down, the ark, in shape, was like to a coffin for a man's body, six times as long as it was broad, and ten times as long as it was high; and so fit to figure out Christ's death and burial, and ours with Him, by the mortification of the old man, as the apostle applies this type to baptism (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21); whereby we are become dead and buried with Christ (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 6). We must now look at this ark spiritually; and here we are led at once to see the Lord Jesus as set forth.

I. Christ, as the ark, is a place—to preserve life. He not only is the preserver, but He is the author of natural and spiritual life, and He alone can preserve that life, and cause it to increase in the hearts of His people. 2. To support the soul. For the believer cannot live, in a spiritual sense, upon anything short of Christ. All his spiritual food is in Him. 3. To warm and cheer the heart. 4. A place of safety. “For the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and are safe.” Again, He is spoken of as “a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” Again. In Christ the spiritual ark there is—1. Pardon for every sin-convicted and repentant soul; for every broken-hearted subject. 2. In Him there is peace, which flows to us through His blood; which gives ease to the troubled soul, calms the agitated mind, and is “the acceptable year of the Lord.” 3. In Him there is righteousness, which all His people enjoy—(1) By imputation. (2) Internally. (3) Externally. II. THE PERSONS IN IT. Noah and his family, and a portion of living creatures, while the rest were drowned. So it will be again; the world will presently be destroyed by fire, and only those who are in the spiritual Ark will be preserved. Who are the persons in this spiritual Ark, which is the Lord Jesus Christ? Believers in all ages of the world. They are made up of persons out of all countries, tribes, people, tongues, nations, under heaven. And as to their number, I would refer you to Revelation vii. 9, 10. The ark was open six days, giving sufficient time for all to get in; and which sets forth the spiritual Ark which has been open now nearly six thousand years. But we must consider the creatures going into the ark spiritually. 1. There are many lion-hearted Christians, who are richly blessed with grace and faith, and are great in the divine life; who press through crowds, and overcome every opposition, and enter fully and firmly into the spiritual Ark, the Lord Jesus Christ. 2. There are many lamb-like ones, gentle in their movements, who proceed by quiet steps, and whose progress is marked by nothing very particular; whose natures naturally are tame, and in whose hearts the grace of God does not shine so conspicuously, but equally effectual. Hence their movements towards the ark are progressive, but yet silent and oftentimes unobserved by others. 3. There are many who fly in the divine life, and, like the hare, pass every one on the road; they are born again to-day, in Christ on the morrow, and many steps up the spiritual ladder, while others are only just brought into, and still continue under the convicting operations of the Holy Ghost. 4. There are many weak ones, whose strength at times appears to fail; they see others passing them, while they are so weak and feeble, that their progress to themselves appears to be at an end; but yet, if these weak ones will but look back, they will perceive they have already come a good distance in the divine life. 5. There are many who can only walk in the divine life, but yet their movements towards the Ark are characterized by their evenness, unbroken, and yet firm step: there is nothing out of the ordinary way; the work in their hearts is only to be seen in the path they take, the object they have in view, and the way their faces are turned, which is towards the ark. 6. There are many who go to the Ark broken-hearted and weighed down by their sins; their cry is, Unclean! unclean! Their face, their eyes, their heart, their language, all bespeak the anguish of the soul, and the conflict within. “The Lord is nigh them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” 7. There are some who are going to the Ark, but it is only by sighing and groaning. If you look at one of these poor souls, you will hear them say, “Lord, save, or I perish!” “God be merciful to me a sinner!” “Will the Lord hear?” But yet the sighing of the prisoner comes up before God; their cry is heard above; and He says to them, “Turn to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.” 8. There are some who can only creep towards the Ark, like the tortoise, and there are a great number of this class; and to enumerate the doubts, the fears, misgivings, tremblings of soul, hard thoughts, discouragements, diffidence, and distress, these souls pass through, would be more than I can do; their pace is so slow towards the Ark, that they fear they are making no progress; but they still are enabled to look that way, and sometimes when they look back they are surprised that they have come on so far. But hark! what is that I hear from one of them? “I fear the Ark is closed; I fear all is over, and I am lost.” But the inquiry comes, Shall I get in? Will the Ark door be left open until I am in?—Yes! yes! Let such souls mark for their comfort and encouragement, and to spur them on still to persevere, that the ark was not closed until the slowest creeping thing was

in; so spiritually the door of Christ, the Ark, shall not be closed so long as there is a soul on the road. III. WHO PUT HIM IN? "And the Lord shut him in." Not Noah, for if he had shut the door perhaps he would have left something out; but God, who knew all about it, shut the door Himself; therefore, what He does is well done. So it is spiritually; God puts poor sinners into Christ, the Ark. How does He do it? By His Spirit, who shows unto them—1. Their state as sinners, which He causes them to feel in a twofold sense—in Adam and in themselves. 2. This teaching points out to them the greatness of their danger. 3. This teaching begets alarm and anxiety, for it breaks their hearts, subdues their will, causes tears of genuine repentance to flow from their hearts, and they cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" 4. Then they see that He is the glorious Person who has "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." IV. THEIR GREAT SAFETY. Being in the spiritual Ark by faith, they are safe—1. From the wrath of God against sin; for God, having received at the hands of the Lord Jesus a full satisfaction, He having made the great atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Himself, has obtained for His people an eternal redemption from the wrath of God, and the right to all the blessings contained in this redemption. 2. From the malice and rage of Satan, who hates the Lord's people, and would destroy them if he could; but, blessed be God, they are kept by the mighty power of God. 3. From a wicked world; for the Lord again addresses them, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and the tongue that riseth up in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." 4. They shall be safe when God shall overthrow the world by fire, which will not be till all His people are in the Ark. Lastly. 1. Learn for information that God has prepared an Ark, in the person of His Son, for the saving of poor sinners. 2. Are we in it? 3. Are we running to it? The steps which lead to and into it are conviction, repentance, and faith in Christ. 4. Happiness of getting into the ark. 5. Misery of being without when God shuts the door. (*R. B. Isaac.*) *The ark of refuge*:—I. A PLACE OF SAFETY. The door that excludes the faithless and unbelieving, includes in the safe refuge those who hear and obey God's voice (*Psa. xxvii.*) 5. Noah and his family were safe, because they used God's appointed way of salvation. II. A POSITION OF PEACE. Noah and his family knew that in God was their help. III. A PLEDGE OF HOPE. Expecting a "new world," where they should have full scope for their energies, and new blessings from God their Saviour. God, who had safely shut them in, and who had preserved them in peace from the universal ruin, would assuredly perfect their salvation. Is it not so with us? (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *The shut door*:—In the life of the late Hugh Miller, we find the following passage from Mr. Stewart, of Cromarty, whom Miller considered one of the very best and ablest of Scotland's ministers:—"Noah did not close the door. There are works that God keeps for Himself. The burden is too heavy for the back of man. To shut that door on a world about to perish would have been too great a responsibility for a son of Adam. Another moment, and another, and another, might have been granted by Noah, and the door might never have been shut, and the ship that carried the life of the world might have been swamped. And so it is in the ark of salvation. It is not the church nor the minister that shuts or opens the door. These do God's bidding; they preach righteousness, they offer salvation, and it is God that shuts and opens the door. Oh! what a sigh and shudder will pass through the listening universe when God will shut the door of the heavenly ark upon the lost!" *Instruction derived from Noah's ark*:—I. In God's dealings with Noah we see THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL FAVOUR. Noah, in all that wicked generation, was one alone. He was one singled out from many. In this singular dispensation of God, in His concern for the security of Noah and those belonging to him, we see paternal care, a fatherly goodness—we see provision made for objects certainly dear and highly valued. Now, to be the subjects of so much paternal attention is no small mercy. II. IT IS WELL TO MARK SURROUNDING MISERY WHEN WE ARE PROTECTED AND SECURED. Have we not seen in many instances pale disease and pinching poverty hovering all around, while we have been protected, comforted, or even enriched? Look back and recount the mercies of God; call to mind seasons of affliction, of trial, of distress; when, as Noah from his ark, you have seen the descending torrents, witnessed the inundation of woe by which others have perished. God said to you, fear not, be still, my child, it shall not come nigh you. In epidemical diseases, in burning fevers, has not this been literally the case? While we

pity these sufferers; while our hearts bleed over these unhappy, these devoted victims, we may, with gratitude, exult in our own security, and give glory to God for discriminating grace. III. Where God is the protector, as here in the case of Noah, ALL ATTEMPTS OF ENEMIES TO INJURE OR DESTROY ARE PERFECTLY VAIN. When God shut Noah in the ark, He shut all his enemies out; and presently distanced both the young and the old by the descending rains and the separating waves. IV. TO BE REMEMBERED OF GOD, AND TO BE REGARDED BY HIM IN TIMES OF PUBLIC CALAMITY, IS AN EXCEEDINGLY GREAT MERCY. (*The Evangelist.*)

Ver. 17. *And the waters increased.*—*Increased affliction*:—I. THAT AFFLICTION IS PROGRESSIVE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT AND SEVERITY. II. THAT INCREASED AFFLICTION IS THE CONTINUED AND EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT OF GOD. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *The judgment on an ungodly world*:—I. JUDGMENT THREATENED. II. JUDGMENT DELAYED. God's forbearance and long-suffering. Every day brings judgment nearer. III. JUDGMENT EXECUTED. God did as He said. This judgment was—1. Terrible. 2. Unavoidable. 3. Universal. LESSONS:—1. Listen to God's warnings. Abuse not God's long-suffering. 3. Flee from the wrath to come. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *The destruction of the wicked*. 1. Numbers, learning, wealth, combination, could not save. "Though wickedness join hand in hand, it shall not go unpunished." 2. Their destruction complete and universal. None escaped. 3. They were not without an offer of mercy. In 120 years longer, after the warning was given, they were striven with. This was their day of grace. By word and life, Noah preached to them. 4. At length "the flood came and took them all away." Consternation, when they saw the ark drifting away, and the water still rising. Despair. A too-late repentance. (*J. C. Gray.*)

Ver. 23. *Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.*—*The almost solitary preservation of a good man from imminent and long-continued peril*:—I. THEN MORAL GOODNESS IS SOMETIMES A SAFEGUARD FROM THE IMMINENT PERILS OF LIFE. II. THEN MORAL GOODNESS IS SIGNALLY HONOURED AND REWARDED BY GOD. III. THEN MORAL GOODNESS MAY SOMETIMES BRING A MAN INTO THE MOST UNUSUAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. It may make a man lonely in his occupation and life-mission, even though he be surrounded by a crowded world; it may make him unique in his character, and it may render him solitary in his preservation and safety. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *God destroys that He may save*:—A mariner in a storm would very fain save his goods, but to save his ship he heaves them overboard. A tender-hearted mother corrects her child, whereas the stripes are deeper in her heart than in its flesh. As it was said of a judge who, being about to pass sentence of death upon an offender, said, "I do that good which I would not." Thus God, more loving than the careful mariner, more tender than the indulgent mother, and more merciful than the pitiful judge, is willingly unwilling that any sinner should die. He punisheth no man as he is a man, but as he is a sinful man; He loves him, yet turns him over to justice. It is God's work to punish, but it is withal His strange work, His strange and foreign act, not His good will and pleasure. (*J. Spencer.*) *Noah's sojourn in the ark*:—Now, first of all, it was a great mercy to escape the wickedness of a wicked world, to be delivered from the blasphemies, the daring excess of iniquity which abounded openly on every side, to be rescued from sights and sounds that only jarred upon a soul that thirsted for the living God; when the door was closed, and the little Church and family of God were separated from the sinners; when the rain descended and the world began to drown; when Noah and his children felt themselves alone with God, there must have been an inexpressible sensation of release. However awful the scene without, they were able to live without disturbance, and to be at rest. And yet while in this, their awful and most merciful severance from the world, we see some, though lesser, trials. As that calm and holy house moved on from day to day, from month to month, was there not with all its peace, with all its opportunity of undisturbed intercourse with God, the loss of much that had rejoiced the soul? As day rose on day, must not the sense of confinement and restraint have come at times over the faithful Noah and his sons? Must there not have risen some longings for the green meadows and the evening walk, the beauty of the fields and the cheerful sights of God's excellent works, that give great pleasure to godly men? To be shut in that lonely house, and to see the spring and the summer come round, the changing seasons without any change to them, all watery and blank without, must have been a trial; and yet

the very fact of such a cutting off from the world and worldly things, of such loss and privation of pleasures, innocent and allowed, likens this sojourn in the ark to a long and holy fast—a lengthened Lent filling up the circle of a year. But still, we may be sure that Noah looked upon it as a space of retirement, which was to be carefully husbanded and spent for the profit of his soul. The very loss of innocent delights, the very separation from the world, must have led Noah to search for some proper duties and proper work, there providentially assigned, and there to be fulfilled. We cannot but believe that the months were crowded with constant meditations on the things of God, constant liftings up of soul, and constant exercises of faith. No idle space was it to the man of God, and, though inactive as regards the labours of the world, it was a season of spiritual husbandry and of inward toil. And thus when Noah walked forth on that sort of Easter-time of the visible material world, he was doubtless all the more prepared for future trials, with a still firmer trust in God, a still sublimer faith, a deeper knowledge of the things of God, and with a larger measure of spiritual strength. And now to turn from the stay of Noah in the ark to ourselves, it is true that, while such a kind of retirement from the world can never be given to us, and that such a length of retirement may never be given, yet God does carry us away, at times, from active life, and shuts upon us the door of our house, as it were the door of the ark. Often in the midst of our life, our hand is forced from the plough, our feet from the crowded ways of the world; and even of the guileless pleasures which good men may find in the works of God, we are for a time deprived. Surely, in our wiser and more thoughtful hours, we may thank God for these forced seasons of retirement, forced upon us that we may escape the pollutions of the world, study our Saviour's will and word, give ourselves to fervent and more frequent prayer, commune with our heart and in our chamber, and be still—examine the tenor of our past lives, repent deeply, and at length, of those things which we have done amiss and contrary to the motions of the Spirit of grace, break off evil habits that have been formed, or are beginning to be formed, and by dwelling on all the love and all the truths of Jesus our Lord, be moved to consecrate ourselves afresh to Him, and to make our sickness the beginning of a more holy life. (*Ep. Armstrong.*)

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 1-5. The waters assuaged.—*The gradual cessation of Divine retribution:—*

I. THAT IT IS MARKED BY A RICH MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE MERCY TO THOSE WHO HAVE SURVIVED THE TERRIBLE RETRIBUTION. 1. God's remembrance of His creatures during the cessation of retribution is merciful. 2. God's remembrance of His creatures during the cessation of retribution is welcome. 3. God's remembrance of His creatures during the cessation of retribution is condescending. **II. THAT IT IS MARKED BY THE OUTGOING AND OPERATION OF APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL AGENCIES.** "And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged." There have been many conjectures in reference to the nature and operation of this wind; some writers say that it was the Divine Spirit moving upon the waters, and others that it was the heat of the sun whereby the waters were dried up. We think controversy on this matter quite unnecessary, as there can be little doubt that the wind was miraculous, sent by God to the purpose it accomplished. He controls the winds. The Divine Being generally works by instrumentality. 1. Appropriate. 2. Effective. 3. Natural. And in this way is the cessation of Divine retribution brought about. **III. THAT IT IS MARKED BY A STAYING AND REMOVAL OF THE DESTRUCTIVE AGENCIES WHICH HAVE HITHERTO PREVAILED.** Here we see—1. That the destructive agencies of the universe are awakened by sin. 2. That the destructive agencies of the universe are subdued by the power and grace of God. 3. That the destructive agencies of the universe are occasional and not habitual in their rule. **IV. THAT IT IS MARKED BY A GRADUAL RETURN TO THE ORDINARY THINGS AND METHOD OF LIFE.** This return to the ordinary condition of nature is—1. Continuous. 2. Rapid. 3. Minutely chronicled. The world is careful to note the day on which appeared the first indication of returning joy, when after a long period of sorrow the mountain tops of hope were again visible. It is fixed in the memory. It is written in the book. It is celebrated as a festival. Lessons—1. That the judgments of God, though long and severe, will come to an end. 2. That the cessation of Divine judgment is a

time of hope for the good. 3. That the cessation of Divine judgment is the commencement of a new era in the life of man. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) **The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.**—*The village of the ark* :—On the slopes of Ararat was the second cradle of the race, the first village reared in a world of unseen graves. I. It was **THE VILLAGE OF THE ARK**, a building fashioned and fabricated from the forests of a drowned and buried world. To the world's first fathers it must have seemed a hallowed and venerable form. II. The village of the ark was **THE VILLAGE OF SACRIFICE**. They built a sacrificial altar in which fear raised the stones, tradition furnished the sacrifice, and faith kindled the flame. III. The first village was **THE VILLAGE OF THE RAINBOW**. It had been seen before in the old world, but now it was seen as a sign of God's mercy, His covenant in Creation. IV. The village of the ark gives us our **FIRST CODE OF LAWS**. As man first steps forth with the shadows of the Fall around him, scarce a principle seems to mark the presence of law. Here we advance quite another stage, to a new world; the principles of law are not many, but they have multiplied. As sins grow, laws grow. Around the first village pealed remote mutterings of storms to come. V. The village of the ark was **THE VILLAGE OF SIN**. Even to Noah, the most righteous of men, sin came out of the simple pursuit of husbandry. A great, good man, the survivor of a lost world, the stem and inheritor of a new, he came to the moment in life of dreadful overcoming. (*E. P. Hood.*) **Mount Ararat**; or, *The landing of the ark* :—I. **SIN PUNISHED**. Mount Ararat was a solemn witness to the severity of God's judgments upon a guilty world. II. **GRACE REVEALED**. Mount Ararat saw Divine grace displayed to sinful men. III. **SALVATION ENJOYED**. Mount Ararat beheld salvation enjoyed by believing sinners. This temporal deliverance was a type of the spiritual. Immeasurably grander, however, will be the salvation of the saints. 1. In respect of its character, being spiritual instead of merely temporal. 2. In respect of its measures, being complete and not merely partial. 3. In respect of its duration, being eternal, and not merely for a brief term of years. IV. **GRATITUDE EXPRESSED**. Mount Ararat heard the adorations and thanksgivings of a redeemed family. V. **SAFETY CONFIRMED**. Mount Ararat listened to the voice of God confirming the salvation of His people. (*T. Whitelaw, M.A.*) *The resting of Noah's ark* :—The ark of Noah, so far as man was concerned, was left alone upon the waters—no human hand steered it, no human counsel guided it. It was like many a poor soul which is struggling, perhaps, its heavenward way through difficulties and fears, without one earthly friend to comfort it, or one heart in all the world to which to turn for solace and advice. And yet not alone was it tossed and heaved upon this solitary waste. There was an arm unseen directing it, there was strength unseen supporting it, and love unseen that was wafting it. The inhabitants of the ark, at that time, constituted the whole body of God's believing people. "Are there few that shall be saved?" asked one of old. Yes, they are few, but they are all that can be saved; all that, by the largest stretch of mercy, consistent with God's justice, can be brought in, shall be brought in. There is no class on earth, if I may so speak, which has not got its representative in heaven. For 150 days—and when, we would ask you, was waiting time stretched out so long?—for 150 days Noah was left without any visible token of God's care, when, as the narrative simply and beautifully goes on, "God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark." Yes; for everything when it comes into covenant with God becomes, from that moment, dear to God. You may be the least—you may be the vilest of all His creatures, but if you are in the ark, if you are a Christian, God must love you. If the whole world is crying in terror, to a good and merciful God we must go: He has a store for His children. How many a man has had reason to look back and say, "That long, tedious affliction which seemed to me as if it would never end—what has it been to me but the saving of my soul? It has been the snatching of me from that destruction where thousands of my companions have perished, and where perhaps I should have been this day, but for God afflicting me?" The heaviest storm that follows you must one day be calmed; the rudest wind that assails you must one day be hushed. The waters at last began to assuage, and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month—it is well for the mind to keep an accurate record of the date of mercies—the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. But Noah was not so soon as this to be released from his confinement, his term was not yet half completed: five months he had been locked in the ark, but seven months more must he yet remain in it. It is natural to imagine, that this last seven months must have seemed to pass more slowly than

all the time while they were lying on the waves. If the troubled time of life brings its trials, so also does its calms. It is a hard thing to sit still, and very often there are the greatest perils in the still seasons of life. When is it that the soul of man is so tempted to presumption and self-righteous confidence? When is it that we become careless? When is it that the practical duties of life are neglected, and we sit down in a most dangerous spiritual slumber? Is it not in seasons when we have been imagining that we have reached a place of rest; when the soul, through an overweening confidence, abandons its efforts as if the work were done, and settles down on its lees? Oh, when I think of the dangers of life's calms, I bless God, that the voyage is generally a rough one! When I remember the trials of the resting ark, I bless God that it is kept so long struggling in the storm! We look at the ark resting seven months upon the mountains of Ararat. What a lesson have we here against impatience! Did Noah and his family complain that they had to wait so long? Oh, no; on the contrary, we know the feelings of the mariner, after a long and dangerous voyage, when he is becalmed within sight of his native land, how he looks at the land and longs to spring upon the shore,—and much more than that, probably, was Noah's feeling;—but now mark his conduct: no impatient prayer escapes his lips, no restlessness seems to disturb his mind, his faith—as God will expect all faith to be—was a waiting faith. Not even when the last drop of water had dried away would he venture to leave the ark unbidden. God had shut the ark, and God, Noah knows, must open it. Not till the welcome word is given, “Go forth,” will he presume to leave the place, how dark and how dreariness soever that place may be. Now learn, from Noah's example, your line of duty under many a similar dispensation. Let us learn not to be impatient—I do not say of forbidden pleasures, that would be an easy thing; but do not be impatient of pleasure which it is permitted, nay, of pleasure which it is commanded you to enjoy; no, not for heaven itself. If God has shut any Noah in, be content to wait patiently till God shall open. It is your confidence to sit still. Take another lesson from the resting of the ark. The flood—the type of this our present life—was not yet half completed when Noah found a resting-place on earth. From that hour he is, indeed, to wait for many a day before he shall be permitted to come forth; but from that hour Noah is safe. He can thus change no more, for he is anchored on a Rock. Now just so may it be with us on life's long voyage. The time when it shall be good for us to land on the eternal shore, God alone has fixed—be it ours to wait for it. Long before our sojourn is nigh full—ay, at any time in all the course—we may find a safe anchorage under the Rock of Ages; and from the happy moment when you shall have been received upon a better mountain than that of Ararat, you will feel that you will move no more. There may be a rising of the deep waters around you, but you will be settled and at rest; and oh, how triumphant will you look down on the waters and floods of this world's struggles, while your faith, standing high on the mountain of God, can feel that the foundations of eternity are under you. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*)

The ark resting:—What a splendid spectacle! The resting of an eagle who, after soaring half-way to the sun, and stretching across whole provinces; at last, the light of the evening gleaming on her golden feathers, folds on the crag her unwearied wing; the resting of a ship of the line at anchor after contending all day with the angry billows; even the resting of the great moon, as if tired with her long journey through the ether, upon some mount of pines or some hill of snow—are only faint images of the sublimity of the scene, when the Wanderer of the Waters, the God-built ship, its journey done, its work accomplished, its glory gathered, its crew safe, the commencement of a new era of hope for earth through it secured, calmly, and one would almost dream, consciously, reposes upon the proud summit which God has prepared to bear its burden and to share in its immortal fame. (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Safety:—Noah anchored his ark to the Providence of God. No sails were unfurled to the breeze, no oars were unshipped to move the lumbering ark, no rudder was employed to steer. The Providence of God was deeper than the winds and waves and contrary current; and to that, he fastened his barque with the strong cable of faith. Hence the security of the ark with its living freight. (*W. Adamson.*)

Security:—When Alexander the Great was asked how he could sleep so soundly and securely in the midst of surrounding danger, he replied that he might well repose when his army was watched. Noah might well be in peace, since God had him in charge. A gentleman, crossing a dreary moor, came upon a cottage. When about to leave, he said to its occupant, “Are you not afraid to live in this lonely place?” To this the man at once responded, “Oh! no, for faith closes the door at night, and mercy

opens it in the morning." Thus was Noah kept during the long night of the deluge; and mercy opened the door for him. (*Ibid.*) **Tops of the mountains seen.**—*The emerging world*:—To realize this, let us suppose ourselves standing on a hill on a September morning, surrounded by a sea of mist. Nothing for awhile is visible but wild, rolling waves of dripping darkness, till at last the sun looks out, a wind begins to blow, and then there loom forth, peak after peak, the hundred hills around, starting up, as if newly created, from the gulf below, their bases still bathed in mist, but their tops crowned with light, and resembling the islands of some "melancholy main." It is one of the sublimest of spectacles, reminding you of the worlds rising out of chaos, of God's "calling the things that were not, and they appeared," and compelling you, the spectator, to uncover, as the mountains have done, in the presence of the God of day, although you see in him, what they do not, only the vicegerent of his heavenly King. And similar, but still more striking, must have been to Noah's eye, as he stood on the sides of the resting ark, the sight of the ancient landmarks of nature reappearing, the ridges of Taurus heaving up like islands through the waters, their snows for the time melted, and perhaps over them all, in the remote distance, the "Finger Mount" arising, relieved against, and pointing significantly to the calm blue sky! Sight reminding us of the rising of great buried truths, as at the Reformation, out of the darkness of ages; struggling, too, to free themselves from the incrustations of error, as the lion from the impediments of the Daedal earth. Sight reminding us of the resurrection of great reputations buried under loads of calumny, or whelmed in deluges of oblivion, into the light of general appreciation, and the consecration of long-denied reverence and love. Sight reminding us of the resurrection of the dead from their sepulchres—specially, shall we say, of the resurrection of aged and venerable patriarchs, having left their hoary hairs in the dust, arising to the vigour and freshness of immortal youth. (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Vers. 6-8. Noah opened the window of the ark.—*The judicious conduct of a good man in seeking to ascertain the facts of life, and his relation thereto*:—We observe: I. THAT NOAH DID NOT EXHIBIT AN IMPETUOUS HASTE TO GET OUT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH GOD HAD PLACED HIM. 1. We see that God does sometimes place men in unwelcome positions. 2. That when God does place men in unwelcome positions, it is that their own moral welfare may be enhanced. 3. That when men are placed in unwelcome positions they should not remove from them without a Divine intimation. II. THAT NOAH WAS THOUGHTFUL AND JUDICIOUS IN ENDEAVOURING TO ASCERTAIN THE WILL OF GOD IN REFERENCE TO HIS POSITION IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHANGING CONDITION OF THINGS. 1. Noah felt that the time was advancing for a change in his position, and that it would be necessitated by the new facts of life. 2. Noah recognized the fact that the change in his position should be preceded by devout thought and precaution. III. THAT NOAH EMPLOYED VARIED AND CONTINUOUS METHODS OF ASCERTAINING THE FACTS OF HIS POSITION AND HIS DUTY IN RELATION THERETO. 1. These methods were varied. 2. Continuous. 3. Appropriate. IV. THAT NOAH YIELDED A PATIENT OBEDIENCE TO THE TEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH HE HAD EMPLOYED. V. THAT INDICATIONS OF DUTY ARE ALWAYS GIVEN TO THOSE WHO SEEK THEM DEVOUTLY. The dove returned to Noah with the olive leaf. Men who seek prayerfully to know their duty in the events of life, will surely have given to them the plain indications of Providence. Lessons:—1. That men should not trust their own reason alone to guide them in the events of life. 2. That men who wish to know the right path of life should employ the best talents God has given them. 3. That honest souls are divinely led. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Lessons*:—1. God in wisdom sometimes lengthens trials to the proof of the faith and patience of His saints. 2. Believing saints though God appear not, will stay contentedly forty days, that is, the time fit for His salvation. 3. Lawful means believers may use for their comfort, when there is no immediate appearance of God. Noah opens the window which God forbids not (ver. 6). 4. Visible experiments of the ceasing of God's wrath may be desired and used by His people where the Lord sets no bars. 5. Unclean, or the worst of creatures, may be of use sometimes to comfort the Church. As the ravens fed Elijah. 6. Instinct of creatures from God teach His people of His providences to them (ver. 7). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Noah's messengers*:—I. MESSENGERS SELECTED. After long floating, during which time Noah would know little of what was passing in the outer world, save that he heard the rain and tempest, the ark grounded. Doubtless he would often look forth on the waste of waters. The rapid evaporation, &c., would very much intercept a distant view. Fogs and mists, &c.

Hence to know the state of things beyond the reach of his vision he would send forth messengers. Birds. Birds of swift and strong wing, and clear vision. Land birds. Aquatic birds would not have returned. Birds that may be domesticated and having local attachments. Hence they would return to the ark. II. MESSENGERS SENT FORTH. III. MESSENGERS RETURNING. Though Noah might not follow their far flight, they could see the huge ark, to which also their unerring instinct—perhaps supernaturally—would guide them. The joy of Noah on looking once more upon a branch of olive. One of the most beautiful and useful of trees also. Learn—1. Gratitude for that reason which adapts means to ends. 2. God's creatures thus employed in the service of man. 3. The ark a type of Christ; and the dove and olive branch, of the soul hastening with peaceful feelings and first-fruits to Jesus. (*J. C. Gray.*) *Raven and dove* :—Noah sent out the raven first, probably because it had been the most companionable bird and seemed the wisest, preferable to "the silly dove"; but it never came back with God's message. And so has one often found that an inquiry into God's will, the examination, for example, of some portion of Scripture, undertaken with a prospect of success and with good human helps, has failed, and has failed in this peculiar ravenlike way; the inquiry has settled down on some worthless point, on some rotting carcass, on some subject of passing interest or worldly learning, and brings back no message of God to us. On the other hand, the continued use, Sabbath after Sabbath, of God's appointed means, and the patient waiting for some message of God to come to us through what seems a most unlikely messenger, will often be rewarded. It may be but a single leaf plucked off that we get, but enough to convince us that God has been mindful of our need, and is preparing for us a habitable world. Many a man is like the raven, feeding himself on the destruction of others, satisfied with knowing how God has dealt with others. He thinks he has done his part when he has found out who has been sinning and what been the result. But the dove will not settle on any such resting-place, and is dissatisfied until for herself she can pluck off some token that God's anger is turned away and that now there is peace on earth. And if only you wait God's time and renew your endeavours to find such tokens, some assurance will be given you, some green and growing thing, some living part, however small, of the new creation which will certify you of your hope. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *The bird on the mast* :—A sailing vessel was driven before the hurricane—a white bird suddenly descended on the mast: the hearts of the crew were cheered; hope dawned. . . . Such consolation may be always mine! One bright, holy, faithful thought is my dove upon the mast. However sadly I toss over the waves of this troublesome, weary world, that gentle bird of paradise revives and strengthens me. It tells me that the storm will soon be over and gone, and the green land, with the singing of birds, is come. (*Wilmott.*)

Ver. 9-12. **But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark.**—*The dove's return to the ark* :—I. LOOK AT THE DOVE SETTING OUT UPON HER VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY. Why did she fly away? 1. Because she had wings. Natural instinct. So it is with us. Our soul has many thoughts and many powers which make the spirit restless. If we were without imagination, we might be content with the few plain truths which we have so well known and proved; but having an imagination, we are often dazzled by it, and we pant to know whether certain things which look like solid verities really are so. If we had no reason, but could abide entirely in a state of pure and simple faith, we might not be exposed to much of the restlessness which now afflicts us, but reason will draw conclusions, ask questions, suggest problems, raise inquiries, and vex us with difficulties. Therefore, because our souls are moved by so vast a variety of thoughts, and possess so many powers which are all restless and active, it is readily to be understood, that while we are here in our imperfect state, our spirits should be tempted to excursions of research and voyages of discovery, as though we sought after some other object of love besides the one who still is dearer to us than all the world besides. 2. Possibly there was another reason. This dove was once lodged in a dovecote. Yes, the dovecote still has its attraction. The best of men have still within them the seeds of those sins which make the worst of men so vile. I marvel not that the dove flew away from the ark when she recollected her dovecote, and I do not wonder that at seasons, the old remembrances get the upper hand with our spirit, and we forget the Lord we love, and have a hankering after sin. 3. Yet it would not be fair to forget that this dove was sent out by Noah; so that whatever may have been the particular motives which ruled the creature, there was a higher

motive which ruled Noah who sent her out. Even so there are times when the Lord permits His people to endure temptation. II. Now MARK THE DOVE AS SHE FINDS NO REST. No rest outside of Christ for intellect, heart, conscience III. WHY THE DOVE COULD FIND NO REST FOR THE SOLE OF HER FOOT. 1. The dove had a will to find rest for the sole of her foot, but she could not. It is not from want of will that I am compelled to say I cannot find anything beneath these stars, nor within the compass of the skies, that can satisfy my soul's desires; I must get my God and have Him to fill my large expectations, or I shall not be content. I mention these things because people are apt to suppose that Christians are all a set of melancholy dyspeptics, who put up with religion because there is nothing else that helps to make them to be so happily miserable, and therefore they take to it as congenial with their melancholy disposition; but it is not so; we are a cheerful, genial race, and yet for all that we are not resting the sole of our foot anywhere in earthly things. 2. Again, the reason why the dove could find no rest, was not because she had no eye to see. I know not how far a dove's eye can discern, but it must be a very vast distance, perfectly incredible I should think. We see the dove sometimes mount aloft: we can see nothing, and yet she perceives her dovecote, and darts towards it. I know many Christians who are as quick in apprehension as refined in taste, and as ready to appreciate anything that is pleasurable as other men, and yet these men who are not fanatics, who are not shut up to a narrow range of things, but whose vision can take in the whole circle of sublunary delights, these men who have not only seen but even tasted, yet bear their witness that like the dove they can find no rest for the sole of their foot. 3. Moreover, the reason why the dove found no rest, was not because she had no wings to reach it. So the Christian has power to enter into the enjoyments of the world if he liked. Now, what was the reason then? It was not want of will, it was not want of eye, nor was it want of wing—what was it? The reason lay in this, that she was a dove. If she had been a raven, she would have found plenty of rest for the sole of her foot. It was her nature that made her unresting, and the reason why the Christian cannot find satisfaction in worldly things is because there is a new nature within him that cannot rest. "Up! up! up!" cries the new heart, "what hast thou to do here?" IV. Being disappointed, WHAT DID THE DOVE THEN DO? When she found there was no contentment elsewhere, what then? She flew back to the ark. Josephus tells us that the dove came back to Noah, with her wings and feet all wet and muddy. Some of you have grown wet and muddy. You have been trying to find rest in the world, Christian, and you have got mired with it. V. I want you now to turn your eye for a moment to THE VERY BEAUTIFUL SCENE, so it seems to me to be, at the end of her return journey. Noah has been looking out for his dove all day long. Mark that: "pulled her in unto him." It seems to me to imply that she did not fly right in herself, but was too fearful, or too weary. Did you ever feel that blessed gracious pull, when your heart has been desiring to get near to Christ? Lord! pull me in. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *The homebound dove—a lesson of faith:*—God has designed but one resting-place for the soul, and that is the restoration of peace between it and Himself. On Jesus' breast we may lay our weary heads. Here at last the dove finds a sure perch. I. AS IT WANDERED TO AND FRO, IT COULD FIND REST NOWHERE SAVE BY RETURNING TO THE ARK. There, and only there, was rest. Oh, weary soul, have you not come to that point? You will not come until you give up all confidence in your self-power. II. When the dove came back, IT CAME WITHOUT ANYTHING. Bring no excuse. III. God had provided but ONE ARK. Only one name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. IV. That ark had only ONE WINDOW, and THAT WINDOW WAS OPEN. A woman, who was striving to find rest for her soul, was sitting in her summer-house, when in through an open door flew a bird. It was alarmed, and flew up toward the roof, and tried to get out at this window and at that. It flew from side to side until it panted with fright and weariness. The woman said, "Poor bird, why do you not come down lower, then you would see this open door, and you could fly out easily?" But the bird kept wounding itself against the closed windows and at every crevice. At last its wings grew tired, and it flew lower and lower until it was on a level with the open door, when quickly it escaped, and soon its song was heard in the trees of the churchyard near by. A new light dawned upon the mind of the woman: "I, like that poor bird, through my pride and self-sufficiency, have been flying too high to see the door which stands wide open." Her heart was humbled, and soon she too was singing songs of gladness. (T. L. Cuyler, D.D.) *If we cannot be as we would, we must be as we can:*—The ark to the dove was

like a prison, a place of restraint, and not according to her kind, which was to fly abroad; yet, finding no rest, rather than she will perish, she returneth to the same again. It may teach us this, that better is a mischief than an inconvenience. If we cannot as we would, we must as we can. I speak it against all heathenish and unchristianlike impatience. The heathens, rather than they would serve, they would kill themselves. And many in these days, rather than they will suffer what God imposeth, will do what God detesteth. Let it not be so. If we cannot be abroad and at liberty, because God's judgment against sin hath taken away our footing in such or such sort, whilst it shall please Him let us be content; return, as the dove did, to the place appointed, and thank Him for mercy even in that, that yet there we live, and are not destroyed as others have been. (*Bishop Babington.*)

A quaint epitaph.—The following quaint epitaph has reference to a little girl buried at the age of five months: "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark." (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*)

An olive leaf.—*The olive leaf.*—I. Let us look at the profound, far-reaching SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREEN LEAF in the mouth of the dove, as the first production of a new and regenerated world. 1. In the first place, the green leaf is the great purifier of nature. This is one of the most important offices which it was created to fulfil. In the early ages of the earth, long before man came upon the scene, the atmosphere was foul with carbonic acid gases, so poisonous that a few inspirations of them would be sufficient to destroy life. These formed a dense covering which kept in the steaming warmth of the earth, and nourished a rank and luxuriant vegetation. Gigantic ferns, tree-mosses, and reeds grew with extraordinary rapidity, and absorbed these noxious gases into their own structures, consolidating them into leaves, stems, and branches, which in the course of long ages grew and decayed, and by subtle chemical processes and mechanical arrangements were changed into coal-beds under the earth. In this wonderful way two great results were accomplished at the same time and by the same means—the atmosphere was purified and made fit for the breathing of man, and animals useful to man, and vast stores of fuel were prepared to enable future generations to subdue the earth and spread over it the blessings of civilization. And what the green leaves of the early geological forests did for the primeval atmosphere of the world, the green leaves of our woods and fields are continually doing for our atmosphere still. They absorb the foul air caused by the processes of decay and combustion going on over the earth, and by the breathing of men and animals, and convert this noxious element into the useful and beautiful products of the vegetable kingdom. They preserve the air in a condition fit for human breathing. These considerations will show us how significant it was that the first object of the new world that was about to emerge from the flood should be a green leaf. It was a symbol, a token to Noah that the world would be purified from the pollution of those unnatural sins which had brought death and destruction upon it, and would once more be fitted to be the home of a peculiar people zealous of good works. What the green leaf is in nature the leaves of the tree of life are in the spiritual sphere. The gospel of Jesus Christ, which the Heavenly Dove carries to the homes and the hearts of men, is the great purifier of the world. 2. In the second place, the green leaf is the source of all the life of the world. It is by its agency alone that inert inorganic matter is changed into organic matter, which furnishes the starting-point of all life. Nowhere else on the face of the earth does this most important process take place. Everything else consumes and destroys. The green leaf alone conserves and creates. In this light how suitable it was that an olive leaf freshly plucked should have been the first object brought to Noah in the ark! For just as the green leaf is the means in the natural world of counteracting all the destructive forces that are reducing its objects to dust and ashes, and clothing its surface with vegetable and animal life, so the olive leaf in the mouth of the dove spoke to Noah of the undoing of the work of destruction caused by the flood, and of the raising up of a new and fairer creation out of the universal wreck. And just as all this beautiful world of life and joy is the product of the work of the green leaf, so all that mankind has achieved and enjoyed since the flood—the great results of civilization and the still greater results of redemption—arose out of the work of grace whose dawning the green leaf intimated, and whose operation it typified. For sin and grace are in constant antagonism—like the force of the fire that burns everything to ashes, and the force of the green leaf that builds up life and beauty out of the ashes; and God has suffered sin to continue because He knows that grace can conquer it, strip its spoils, and convert its ruins into higher and nobler forms of life. 3. In the third

place, the green leaf is the best conductor of electricity—that most powerful and destructive of all the forces of the earth. A twig covered with leaves, sharpened by nature's exquisite workmanship, is said to be three times as effectual as the metallic points of the best constructed rod. And when we reflect how many thousands of these vegetable points every large tree directs to the sky, and consider what must be the efficacy of a single forest with its innumerable leaves, or of a single meadow with its countless blades of grass, we see how abundant the protection from the storm is, and with what care Providence has guarded us from the destructive force. And was not that green leaf which came to Noah in the ark God's lightning-conductor? Did it not bear down harmlessly the destructive power of heaven? Did it not assure Noah that the wrath of God was appeased, that the storm was over, and that peace and safety could once more be enjoyed upon the earth? And is not He to whose salvation that leaf pointed—who is Himself the "Branch"—God's lightning-conductor to us? He bore the full force of the Father's wrath due to sin; He endured the penalty which we deserved; and having smitten the shepherd, the sheep for whom He laid down His life are scathless and unharmed. He is now our refuge from the storm; and under His shadow we are safe from all evil. 4. In the fourth place, the green leaf is the source of all the streams and rivers in the world. It is by the agency of the leaf that water circulates as the life-blood of the globe. And how appropriately in this light did the green leaf come to Noah as the earnest and the instrument of the rearrangement of a world which had been reduced to a desert by the punishment of man's sin! That leaf assured him that the old rivers would flow again; that the former fields would smile anew; that the forests would, as in previous times, cover the earth with their shadow; and that all the conditions of seed-time and harvest, and of a pleasant and useful home for man, would be present as of yore. And is not the Heavenly Dove bringing to us in the ark of our salvation a leaf of the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, as a token that beyond the destructive floods of earth, beyond the final conflagration in which all things shall be burned up, the river of life will flow again; and amid the green fields of the paradise restored the Lamb shall lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes? 5. In the fifth place, the green leaf is the type upon which the forms of all life are moulded. All organisms, whether animal or vegetable, are similar in their elementary structure and form; and the most complicated results are attained by the simplest conceivable means, and that without the slightest violation of the original plan of nature. Thoreau has said that the whole earth is but a gigantic leaf, in which the rivers and streams resemble the veins, and the mountains and plains the green parts. And did not He who sent the dove with the olive leaf to Noah thereby assure him that out of that leaf would be evolved the whole fair world of vegetable and animal life, which for a while had perished beneath the waters of the flood; that it would be reconstructed upon the old type and developed according to the old pattern? And did not He who developed this great world of life out of the single leaf develop all the great scheme of grace, all the wondrous history of redemption, out of the first simple promise to our first parents after their fall? Amid all the varying dispensations of His providence He has been without variableness or shadow of turning, unfolding more and more the germinating fulness of the same glorious plan of grace. II. Of all the green leaves of the earth it was most fitting that the olive leaf should have been selected as the first product of the new restored world. The olive tree spreads over a large area of the earth; it combines in itself the flora of the hills and the plains. It clothes with shade and beauty arid slopes where no other vegetation would grow. It extracts by a vegetable miracle nourishment and fatness from the driest air and the barest rock; on it may be seen at the same time opening and full-blown blossoms, and green and perfectly ripe fruit. Each bough is laden with a wealth of promise and fulfilment; beauty for the eye and bounty for the palate. No tree displays such a rich profusion and succession of flowers and fruits. It is the very picture of prosperity and abundance. Its very gleanings are more plentiful than the whole harvest of other trees. It strikingly illustrates, therefore, the overflowing goodness of the Lord, to whom belong the earth and the fulness thereof. What the olive leaf began in Noah's case was consummated under the olive trees of Gethsemane. He who destroyed the antediluvian sinners by the flood endured the contradiction of greater and more aggravated sinners against Himself. He who sent the flood as a punishment for sin, now suffered it Himself in a more terrible form as an atonement for sin. The olive leaf of Noah's dove showed that God's strange work was done, and that He had returned

to the essential element of His nature, and love shone forth again. The olive leaves of Gethsemane, that thrilled with the fear of the great agony that took place beneath them, tell us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What sweeter message, what dearer hope, could come to us in our sins and sorrows than this! (*H. Macmillan, D.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. God's delay of answer and His saints waiting are fitly coupled. 2. God's gracious ones are of a contented, waiting and hoping frame. 3. Faith will expect from seven to seven, from week to week, to receive answers of peace from God. 4. After waiting, faith will make trial of lawful means again and again. It will add messenger to messenger (ver. 10). 5. Waiting believers shall receive some sweet return by use of means in God's time. 6. He that sends out for God is most likely to have return from Him. 7. Visible tokens of God's wrath ceasing sometimes He is pleased to vouchsafe to His. 8. It concerns God's saints to consider His signal discoveries of grace, to know them, and gather hope and comfort from them. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Servants good and bad*:—First, mark the often sending of the dove, when the raven goeth but once. It showeth the difference of a good servant and a bad. The first is often used, because he is faithful and true; the latter but once, because then he is found to be a raven, more heeding the carrions that his nature regardeth than performing his message which his sender desireth. The praise of these two fowls, how they differ in this place for their service we all see, and it should thus profit us as to prick us to the good and afay us from the evil. In some place or other we are all servants, as these fowls were, to God, to prince, to master, to some or other. Let us be doves, that they may often use us; let us not be ravens, that they may justly refuse us. Secondly, in the dove's not returning any more let us mark a type of the saints of God, that having sundry times discharged the truth of their places, as the dove did, at last have their departure out of the ark—that is, out of this life and Church militant—and, finding rest for their foot in God's blessed kingdom, return no more to the ark again, but there continue and abide for ever. (*Bp. Babington.*) *The returning dove*:—Noah stayed upon this seven days, and then sent out the dove again, saith the text, which returned to him in the evening, bringing in her mouth an olive leaf which she had plucked, whereby Noah knew the waters were abated. This dove may note the preachers also of the Word again, who bring in their mouths some good tidings to the ark—that is, to the Church; and every good news may be compared also to an olive leaf, and the tellers to doves. That good news that the women brought to the disciples, that Christ was risen, was like an olive leaf in their mouths, and they like this dove in this place. So all others. Read 2 Kings vii. of the good news of the lepers, and 2 Sam. xviii. 27. "He is a good man," saith David; "and cometh with good tidings." So good men and women have words of comfort in their mouths, when others have [the poison of] asps under their tongues; they have olive leaves to cheer up Noah and his company withal, when others have wormwood and gall to make their hearts ache with the bitterness thereof. Such does God make us evermore, and if this be regarded of us, we will endeavour it. (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 13, 14. Noah removed the covering of the ark.—*Noah's first consciousness of safety after the deluge*:—I. He would probably be impressed with the GREATNESS OF THE CALAMITY HE HAD ESCAPED. The roaring waters had subsided, but they had wrought a terrible desolation, they had reduced the earth to a vast charnel-house; every living voice is hushed, and all is silent as the grave. The patriarch, perhaps, would feel two things in relation to this calamity. 1. That it was the result of sin. 2. That it was only a faint type of the final judgment. II. He would probably be impressed with the EFFICACY OF THE REMEDIAL EXPEDIENT. How would he admire the ark that had so nobly battled with the billows and so safely weathered the storm! 1. This expedient was Divine. Christianity, the great expedient for saving souls from the deluge of moral evil, is God's plan. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." Philosophy exhausted itself in the trial. 2. This expedient alone was effective. When the dreadful storm came, we may rest assured that every one of that terror-stricken generation would seize some scheme to rescue him from the doom. "There is no other name," &c. 3. The expedient was only effective to those who committed themselves to it. III. He would probably be impressed with the WISDOM OF HIS FAITH IN GOD. He felt now—1. That it was wiser to believe in the Word of God than to trust to the conclusions of his own reason. 2. That it was wiser to believe in the Word of God than to trust

to the uniformity of nature. 3. That it was wiser to believe in God's Word than to trust to the current opinion of his contemporaries. (*Homilist.*) *Lessons*:—1. The giving in of one step of mercy maketh God's saints to wait for more. 2. God's gracious ones desire to let patience have its perfect work towards God. 3. The saint's disposition is to have experience of mercy by trying means, as well as to wait for it. 4. In the withholding of return of means may be the return of mercy. Though the dove stay, yet mercy cometh. 5. Providence promotes the comfort of saints when He seems to stop them, as in staying the dove (ver. 12). 6. As times of special mercy are recorded by God, so they should be remembered by the Church. 7. At His appointed periods God measures out mercy unto His Church. 8. The saints' patient waiting would God have recorded, as well as His performing mercies. 9. As mercies move to God's Church, so He moveth His saints to remove veils and meet them. 10. Manifestations of mercies God vouchsafeth His, as well as mercy itself. 11. Several periods of time God takes to perfect salvation to His Church. 12. After all patient waiting, in God's full time full and complete mercy and salvation is given into His Church (ver. 13). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Vers. 15-19. Noah went forth.—*Man's going forth after the judgments of God*:—**I. THAT HE GOES FORTH UPON THE DIVINE COMMAND** (vers. 15-17). 1. That Noah was counselled to go forth from the ark on a day ever to be remembered. 2. That Noah was commanded to go forth from the ark when the earth was dry. **II. THAT HE GOES FORTH IN REFLECTIVE SPIRIT.** We can readily imagine that Noah would go forth from the ark in very reflective and somewhat pensive mood. 1. He would think of the multitudes who had been drowned in the great waters. 2. He would think of his own immediate conduct of life, and of the future before him. **III. THAT HE GOES FORTH IN COMPANY WITH THOSE WHO HAVE SHARED HIS SAFETY.** 1. He goes forth in company with the relatives of his own family. God permitted the family of Noah to be with him in the ark, to relieve his solitude, to aid his efforts, to show the protective influence of true piety; and now they are to join him in the possession of the regenerated earth, that they may enjoy its safety and aid its cultivation. 2. He goes forth in company with the life-giving agencies of the universe. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*)

Ver. 20. And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord.—*Noah's sacrifice*:—**I. THERE IS AN EVIDENT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SACRIFICE OF NOAH AND THOSE OF CAIN AND ABEL.** Here, under God's guidance, the mound of turf gives place to the altar which is built. An idea is discovered in the dignity of the inferior creatures; the worthiest are selected for an oblation to God; the fire which consumes, the flame which ascends, are used to express the intention of him who presents the victim. **II. WE MUST FEEL THAT THERE WAS AN INWARD PROGRESS IN THE HEART OF MAN CORRESPONDING TO THIS PROGRESS IN HIS METHOD OF uttering his submission and his aspirations.** Noah must have felt that he was representing all human beings; that he was not speaking what was in himself so much as offering the homage of the restored universe. **III. THE FOUNDATION OF SACRIFICE IS LAID IN THE FIXED WILL OF GOD; in His fixed purpose to assert righteousness; in the wisdom which adapts its means to the condition of the creature for whose sake they are used.** The sacrifice assumes eternal right to be in the Ruler of the universe, all the caprice to have come from man, from his struggle to be an independent being, from his habit of distrust. When trust is restored by the discovery that God means all for his good, then he brings the sacrifice as a token of his surrender. (*F. D. Maurice, M.A.*) *Sacri-ficial worship*:—The text teaches—**I. That worship should succeed every act of Divine deliverance.** **II. That sacrifice is the only medium through which acceptable service can be rendered.** Noah's sacrifice expressed—1. A feeling of supreme thankfulness. 2. A feeling of personal guilt. **III. That no act of worship escapes Divine notice.** **IV. That human intercession vitally affects the interests of the race.** (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The devout conduct of a good man after a special deliverance from imminent danger*:—**I. THAT NOAH GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED HIS DELIVERANCE AS FROM GOD.** **II. THAT NOAH DEVOUTLY OFFERED TO GOD A SACRIFICE IN TOKEN OF HIS DELIVERANCE.** 1. This sacrifice was the natural outcome of Noah's gratitude. 2. This sacrifice was not precluded by any excuse consequent upon the circumstances of Noah. **III. That the sacrifice of Noah was ACCEPTABLE TO GOD AND PREVENTIVE OF FURTHER EVIL TO THE WORLD.** 1. It was fragrant. 2. It was preventive of calamity. 3. It was preservative of the natural agencies of the universe. (*J. S. Ezell, M.A.*) *Noah's offering on coming forth from the ark, and its results*:—**I. THE OCCASION ON**

WHICH THIS OFFERING WAS MADE. 1. How impressively would Noah and his family be reminded of the Divine forbearance which had been displayed to the whole world. 2. With what solemn awe would Noah and his family now view the earth bearing on every part of its surface the marks of recent vengeance. 3. With what adoring and grateful feeling would Noah and his family view their own preservation on this occasion. II. ITS NATURE. 1. An expression of gratitude. 2. An acknowledgment of dependence. 3. A lively exhibition of his faith in the future atonement, as well as an appropriate testimony that his recent preservation was owing to the efficacy of that atonement. III. ITS RESULTS. 1. The offering was accepted. 2. The promise which was given. 3. The covenant which was made. (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *Priest, altar, sacrifice*.—1. A believing priest. 2. A sanctified altar. 3. A clean sacrifice. 4. A type of Christ. (*J. S. Exell, M.A.*) *Fragrant offerings*.—I. NOAH'S SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS. 1. Observe WHAT HE OFFERED. (1) Burnt-offerings. (2) Clean beasts. 2. See how he offered. (1) Voluntarily. (2) Promptly. (3) Liberally. (4) Simply. II. THE LORD'S GRACIOUS ACCEPTANCE THEREOF. 1. The Lord accepts a limited offering, if it be our best. 2. It is the sacrifice of faith which pleases God. 3. The Lord loves gratitude in return for mercies received. 4. The Lord visits the remnant of His people where there is family devotion. 5. In seeking to please God, the Christian secures richest blessings. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Noah's sacrifice blessing the world; and God's decree for all nature*.—I. THE ACCEPTANCE OF NOAH'S SACRIFICE, AND ITS TYPICAL IMPORT. 1. Look at the acceptance of Noah's sacrifice. 2. Noah's sacrifice was typical of Christ's, and like His brought a blessing on the world. II. THE WISE ECONOMY OF GOD, IN HIS WISE LAWS OF NATURE FOR TEMPORAL BLESSINGS. 1. The wisdom and benevolence of God are visible in the variety of the seasons, and in the profusion of earthly blessings. 2. The wisdom of God is visible for faith in all His providential arrangements for the good of the world. III. PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS. 1. Reflect that it is because of Christ's sacrifice the whole world is blessed. 2. Reflect how God deals with sinful men in great long-suffering mercy. 3. Reflect and remember that the Lord Jesus shall stand like Noah, when a deluge of fire rolls over this world. (*J. G. Angley, M.A.*) *The worshippers of the new world*.—1. It was an altar of obedience. With Noah the will of God was paramount. What is religion but obedience?—"the obedience of faith"—of which the entire simplicity constitutes its true perfection. Noah's career in the new world began in the spirit of essential obedience. At the command, "Go forth," the Ark is deserted; and, doubtless, in the spirit of faith the altar was erected. 2. It was an altar of gratitude and dedication. Noah was grateful to his Almighty Friend; and, as gratitude is a quality which loses its fragrance by delay, so he postponed every business and consideration to the thankful acknowledgment of his mercies. 3. It was an altar of propitiation. This is its most important feature. Worship and sacrifice are incorporated and identified from the beginning of the world. Man was always a sinner. He could never approach his Maker in any other character. 4. The altar of Noah was a family altar. He was the priest of his family. He required their presence before the throne of grace. He persuaded them to assist in praising God, and in making a covenant by sacrifice. A family altar is, transcendently and incalculably, a family blessing. With Noah, the worship of God was the first business he attended to. He lacked neither calls of necessity nor momentous cares; but he postponed all other considerations to the service of God. Not like the majority amongst us, who fancy that they have too much to do to devote any time to religion. In the patriarch's worship there was no trace of selfishness. Many think there is no worship like free worship, and are most willing to pray where they have little to pay. What a reproof may they find in Noah! The seventh part of his whole stock and substance he dedicated to God. He reasoned not about future wants, but made an instant and "a whole burnt-offering" to his Maker. He did it because it was God's appointment. (*C. Burton, LL.D.*)

Ver. 21. *The Lord smelled a sweet savour.*—*The sweet savour*.—How important is it, that this truth shall be as a sun without a speck before us! Hence the Spirit records that, when Noah shed the blood which represented Christ, "The Lord smelled a sweet savour." Thus the curtains of God's pavilion are thrown back; and each attribute appears rejoicing in redemption. The Lamb is offered, and there is fragrance throughout heaven. First, let Justice speak. Its claim strikes terror. It has a right to one unbroken series of uninterrupted obedience through all life's

term. Each straying of a thought from perfect love incurs a countless debt. Here Jesus pays down a death, the worth of which no tongue can reckon. Justice holds scales, which groan indeed under mountains upon mountains of iniquity: but this one sacrifice more than outweighs the pile. Thus Justice rejoices, because it is infinitely honoured. Next, there is a sweet savour here to the Truth of God. If Justice is unyielding, so too is Truth. Its yea is yea; its nay is nay. It speaks, and the word must be. Heaven and earth may pass away, but it cannot recede. Now its voice is gone forth, denouncing eternal wrath on every sin. Thus it bars heaven's gates with bars of adamant. In vain are tears, and penitence, and prayers. Truth becomes untrue, if sin escapes. But Jesus comes to drink the cup of vengeance. Every threat falls on His head. Truth needs no more. It claps the wings of rapturous delight, and speeds to heaven to tell that not one word has failed. Need I add that Jesus is a sweet savour to the holiness of God. Sweet too is the savour which mercy here inhales. Mercy weeps over misery. In all afflictions it is afflicted. It tastes the bitterest drop in each cup of woe. But when anguish is averted, the guilty spared, the perishing rescued, and all tears wiped from the eyes of the redeemed, then is its holiest triumph. (*Dean Luce.*)

What does God see in the sacrifice of His Son to please Him? 1. The reflection of His own love. 2. The vindication of His righteousness. God prescribes the sacrifice in order that He may be just when He justifies (Rom. iii. 25, 26). 3. The willingness of the self-devotion. 4. The prospect of pure service. Human nature, in Christ's obedience and death, is purified and restored. Noah's sacrifice might be compared to a morning prayer at the dawn of a new epoch in human history. It was a dedication of restored humanity to the service of God, the Deliverer. The hope of the human race consists in possessing acceptable access unto God. This we have in Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit (Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12; Heb. x. 19-22). (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*)

The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.—*Man's tendency to go wrong*.—I. These words were said by our Maker more than four thousand years ago, and they have been true ever since down to this very hour. There is so much more bad than good in us that we should certainly go wrong if left to ourselves, and the bias of our nature to evil is so strong that it can only be corrected by changing the very nature itself; or, in the words of Scripture, by being born again of the Spirit. Everything is properly called good or evil according as it answers or defeats the purpose for which it was made. We were made for our Maker's glory, after His own image, that we should make His will the rule of our lives, and His love and anger the great objects of our hope and fear; that we should live in Him, and for Him, and to Him, as our constant Guide and Master and Father. If we answer these ends, then we are good creatures; if we do not, we are bad creatures. Nor does it matter how many good or amiable qualities we may possess; like the blossoms or leaves of a barren fruit-tree, we are bad of our kind if we do not bring forth fruit. II. Now, instead of living to God, we by nature care nothing about God; we live as if we had made ourselves, not as if God had made us. This is the corruption of our nature, which makes us evil in the sight of God. Christ alone can make us sound from head to foot. He alone can give us a new and healthy nature; He alone can teach us so to live as to make this world a school for heaven. All that is wanted is that we should see our need of Him, and fly to Him for aid. (*T. Arnold, D.D.*)

Human depravity and Divine mercy.—I. A MOST PAINFUL FACT. Man's nature is incurable. The statement of Scripture is corroborated by—1. The confessions of God's people. 2. Our own observation. II. God's EXTRAORDINARY REASONING. Good reasoning, but most extraordinary. He says, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Strange logic! In the sixth chapter, He said man was evil, and therefore He destroyed him. In the eighth chapter, He says man is evil from his youth, and therefore He will not destroy him. Strange reasoning! to be accounted for by the little circumstance in the beginning of the verse, "The Lord smelled a sweet savour." There was a sacrifice there; that makes all the difference. When God looks on sin apart from sacrifice, Justice says, "Smite! Smite! Curse! Destroy!" But when there is a sacrifice God looks on us with eyes of mercy, and though Justice says, "Smite!" He says, "No, I have smitten My dear Son; I have smitten Him, and will spare the sinner." Rightly upon the terms of Justice, there is no conceivable reason why He should have mercy upon us, but grace makes and invents a reason. III. INFERENCES. If the heart be so evil, then it is impossible for us to enter heaven as we are. Another step; then it is quite clear that if I am

to enter heaven no outward reform will ever do it, for if I wash my face, that does not change my heart. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Man's natural imaginations*:—I. OF MAN'S NATURAL THOUGHTS CONCERNING GOD. 1. Of this thought there is no God. 2. That the word of God is foolishness. 3. I will not obey God's word. 4. It is a vain thing to worship God. 5. Of man's thought of distrust—God will not regard, or be merciful to me. II. OF MAN'S NATURAL THOUGHTS AGAINST HIS NEIGHBOUR. 1. Thoughts of dishonour. 2. Thoughts of murder. 3. Thoughts of adultery. III. OF MAN'S NATURAL THOUGHTS CONCERNING HIMSELF. 1. Man's proud thoughts of his own excellency. 2. Man's proud thoughts of his own righteousness. 3. Man's thought of security in the day of peace. IV. OF THE WANT OF GOOD THOUGHTS IN EVERY MAN NATURALLY. 1. Good thoughts about temporal things are much wanting. 2. In spiritual things they are much wanting. 3. The fruits of this want of good thoughts. 4. The timely preventing of evil thoughts by good parents and teachers. 5. The repentance of evil thoughts. V. RULES FOR THE REFORMATION OF EVIL THOUGHTS. 1. They must be brought into obedience to God. 2. The guarding of our hearts. 3. The consideration of God's presence. 4. The consideration of God's judgments. (W. Perkins.) *Punishment not reformatory*:—The first thing we learn after this solemn declaration is that there is to be no more smiting of every living thing, plainly showing that mere destruction is a failure. I do not say that destruction is undeserved or unrighteous, but that it is, as a reformatory arrangement, a failure as regards the salvation of survivors. We can see men slain for doing wrong, and can in a day or two after the event do the very things which cost them their lives! It might be thought that one such flood as this would have kept the world in order for ever, whereas men now doubt whether there ever was such a flood, and repeat all the sins of which the age of Noah was guilty. You would think that to see a man hanged would put an end to ruffianism for ever; whereas, history goes to show that within the very shadow of the gallows men hatch the most detestable and alarming crimes. Set it down as a fact that punishment, though necessary even in its severest forms, can never regenerate the heart of man. From this point, then, we have to deal with a history the fundamental fact of which is that all the actors are as bad as they can possibly be. "There is none righteous, no not one." "There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." (J. Parker, D.D.) *The end answered by the deluge*:—It must have been a day of intense solemnity; and if ever men could be struck with awe, if ever men could feel their spirits bowed down and overwhelmed by the tremendousness of God—those who now presented that sacrifice, the lonely wreck of an unnumbered population, must have crouched, and trembled, and been full of the most earnest humility. And possibly they might have thought that, since the wicked were removed, a moral renovation would pass over mankind, and that themselves and their posterity would differ altogether from the ungodly race which had perished in the waters. It could not have seemed improbable that, after removing the multitude which had provoked Him by their impieties, God would raise up a people who should love Him and honour Him, seeing that, if there was to be the same provocation of wickedness, there was nothing to be looked for but a recurrence of the deluge; and if this earth were to be again and again the theatre of the same provocations and the same vengeance, it would be hard to say why God spared a remnant, or why He allowed the rebellious race to be continued and multiplied. Yet, however natural it might have been for Noah and his sons to calculate on a moral improvement in the species, it is certain that after the flood, men were just the same fallen creatures that they had been before the flood. There had been effected no change whatever on human nature, neither had God destroyed the wicked, expecting the new tenantry would be more obedient and more righteous than the old. And it is every way remarkable, that the reason which is given why God sent one deluge is given as the reason why God sent not a second deluge. He sent one flood because "the imagination of man's thoughts was only evil continually"; and He resolved that He would not send another flood because—or, at least, though—this evil imagination remained unsubdued. Now, it is scarcely necessary for us to remark that wickedness must at all times be equal in God's sight; and that however various the modes by which He sees fit to oppose it, He is alike earnest in punishing it. Why, then, did He not follow the same plan throughout? Or why did He administer once that punishment which He thought fit not to repeat? Such questions, you observe, are not merely speculative. If God Himself had not given the same reason for sparing as for smiting, we might have thought that the flood had made a change in the moral

circumstances of our race, and there was not again the same intense provocation; but when we hear from the lips of Jehovah Himself, that there was precisely as much after the deluge as before, yea, that He refrained from cursing in the face of that very wickedness, we are only endeavouring to be wise up to what is written in searching out the reason for the change in God's conduct. I. SINCE A FLOOD WAS AS MUCH CALLED FOR TWICE AS ONCE, WHY SHOULD IT HAVE BEEN SENT ONCE, THE PROVOCATION BEING JUST THE SAME, AND YET THE DEALING MOST DIFFERENT? WAS ANY END ANSWERED BY THE DELUGE? Now, our first thought on finding that there was just the same reason for destroying the world twice as for destroying it once is, that no end was answered by the deluge which might not have been answered without a deluge. But though it is most certain that there was as much provocation after as before the deluge, it is a most unwarranted conclusion that no great ends were answered by the deluge. The deluge was God's sermon against sin, whose echoes will be heard until the consummation of all things. We give no harbourage for a moment—we know there could be nothing more false than the opinion—that the antediluvians must have been more wicked than ourselves because visited with signal and unequivocal punishment: but if you infer from this that the flood was unnecessary, that the antediluvians might as well have been spared as their successors, we at once deny the conclusion. Had there never been a flood, we should have wanted our most striking attestation to the truth of the Bible. We are prepared to contend that, in bringing water upon the earth, God was wondrously providing for the faith of every coming generation, and was writing in characters which no time can efface, and no ingenuity prove to be forgeries, that He hates sin with perfect hatred, and will punish it with rigid punishment. But it is important to bear in mind that, when God visibly interferes for the punishment of wickedness, there are some ends of His moral government to be answered, over and above that of the chastisement of the unrighteous. Ordinarily God delays taking vengeance till the last day of account; and we judge erroneously if we judge from God's dealings with man on this side eternity. When there is a direct interposition, such as the deluge, we may be sure it answers other designs besides that of punishing unrighteousness: and before, therefore, we can show that there was the same reason for a second deluge as for one, we must not only show there was the same amount of wickedness, and the same evil in the imagination of the heart—we must show there was the same end of moral government to be answered, over and above that of the punishment of the rebellious. And here it is you will feel established in the belief that a great lesson was recorded as to God's hatred of sin, and His determination to destroy, sooner or later, the impenitent. And God furnished this lesson, so that ages have obliterated no letter of the record, by bringing a flood on the earth, and burying in the womb of waters the unnumbered tribes that crowded its continents. But the lesson required not to be repeated; it was sufficient that it should be given once—sufficient, seeing that it is still so powerful and persuasive that it leaves inexcusable all who persist in rejecting it. II. We propose to seek an answer to the inquiry, WHETHER LONG-SUFFERING CAN PRODUCE THE SAME RESULTS AS PUNISHING. And this, after all, is the question most forcibly presented in our text. Whether God smites, or whether He spares, we know He must have the same objects in view—the promotion of His own glory and the well-being of the universe. But how comes it, then, to pass that it was best at one time to smite, and at another time to spare? We have given a reason for one deluge, which could not be given for a second. The lesson of the deluge was to be spread over the whole surface of time; and thus the one act of punishment was to have its effect throughout the season of long-suffering. Punishment was a necessary preliminary to long-suffering, to prevent the abuse of long-suffering. God is only taking consecutive steps in one and the same design; and if we are right in saying that punishment was necessarily preliminary to long-suffering, than even a child can perceive that God was only acting out the same arrangement when He said, "I will not spare," and when He said, "I will spare, for the imagination of man's heart is evil." It is as though He said, "I might send flood after flood, and leave again only an insignificant fraction of the population; but the evil lies deep in the heart, and would not be swept away by the immensity of waters. I might deal with succeeding generations as I have with this very one; and as soon as the earth sent up new harvests of wickedness, I might come forth, and put in the scythe of My vengeance; but after all there would be no renovation, and evil would still be predominant in this section of the creation. Therefore I will be long-suffering; nothing but long-suffering can effect My purpose, for nothing but an atonement can reconcile the

fallen : and long-suffering is nothing but the atonement anticipated. I will not, then, again curse the ground, for man's imaginations are evil. I will not curse—the evil will not be grappled with by the curse—the evil would not go away before the curse. If the evil were not in the very heart, it might be eradicated by judgment; if it were not engraven into the very bone and sinew and spirit, it might be washed out by the torrent; and I would again curse. But it is an evil for which there must be expiation; it is an evil which can only be done away by sacrifice, it is an evil which can only be exterminated by the entering in of Deity into that nature." It is thus that, so far as we can judge, without overstraining the passage, the corruption of human nature will furnish a reason why there was no repetition of the deluge. God's object was not to destroy, but to reconcile the world : and the reconciliation could not be effected by judgments; the machinery must be made up of mercies. Judgments might make way for mercies, but they could not do the work of mercies. Punishment was preliminary to sparing, but punishment continued would not have effected the object of the Almighty. So that long-suffering was the only engine by which the machinery could be mastered. The whole of Christ's work was gathered, so to speak, into long-suffering. III. But who can give himself to an inquiry which has to do with the cause or reason of the deluge, and not feel his attention drawn to the TYPICAL CHARACTER of that tremendous event? The history of the world before the flood is nothing but the epitome of the history of the world up to that grand consummation, the second coming of the Lord. And if we wanted additional reasons why one deluge should be sent and not a second, we might find it in the fact that all the affairs of time shall be wound up by a single visitation. The antediluvian world had been dealt with by the machinery of the most extensive loving-kindness: the Almighty had long borne with the wickedness of the earth; and it was not till every overture had been despised that He allowed Himself to strike. Shall it not be thus with the world of the unrighteous? Wonderful has been the long-suffering of the Almighty: and as there has gone on the building of the ark—as the Church of Christ has been gathered and cemented and enlarged, the voice and entreaties of ministers and missionaries have circulated through Christianity; and the despiser has been continually told, sternly, and reproachfully, and affectionately, that a day will yet burst upon the creation, when all who are not included in the ark shall be tossed on the surges and buried in the depths of a fiery sea. But as the time of the end draws near, the warning will grow louder, and the entreaty more urgent, that all men put away their wickedness, and prepare themselves for meeting their Judge. (*H. Melvill, B.D.*)

Ver. 22. **While the earth remaineth, seed-time, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.**—*The sermon of the seasons*:—I. In the text there is a SOLEMN HINT OF WARNING. "While the earth remaineth." 1. It is implied that the earth will not always remain. 2. The time when the earth shall no longer remain is not mentioned. The uncertainty of the end of all things is intended to keep us continually on the watch. 3. Let me further remark that the day when the remaining of the earth shall cease cannot be very far off; for according to the Hebrew, which you have in the margin of your Bibles, the text runs thus: "As yet all the days of the earth, seed-time and harvest shall not cease." The "while" of the earth's remaining is counted by days; not even months or years are mentioned, much less centuries. II. Thus, then, there is a hint of warning in our text; but secondly, there is a SENTENCE OF PROMISE, rich and full of meaning: "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease." It is a promise concerning temporal things, but yet it breathes a spiritual air, and hath about it the smell of a field that the Lord hath blessed. 1. This promise has been kept. It is long since it was written, it is longer still since it was resolved upon in the mind of God; but it has never failed. There have been times when cold has threatened to bind the whole year in the chains of frost; but genial warmth has pushed it aside. The ordinances of heaven have continued with us as with our fathers. 2. So long-continued is the fulfilment of this promise, and even this race of unbelievers has come to believe in it. We look for the seasons as a matter of course. Why do we not believe God's other promises? 3. Brethren, we have come not only to believe this promise as to the seasons and to make quite sure about it, but we practically act upon our faith. The farmers have sown their autumn wheat, and many of them are longing for an opportunity to sow their spring wheat; but what is sowing but a burial of good store?

Why do husbandmen hide their grain in the earth? Because they feel sure that seed-time will in due time be followed by harvest. Why do we not act in an equally practical style in reference to the rest of God's promises? True faith makes the promises of God to be of full effect by viewing them as true and putting them to the test. 4. If a man did not act upon the declaration of God in our text, he would be counted foolish. Equally mad are they who treat other promises of God as if they were idle words; no more worthy of notice than the prophecies of a charlatan. 5. Let me close this point by noticing that, whether men believe this or not it will stand true. A man says there will be no winter, and provides no garments; he will shiver in the northern blast all the same when December covers the earth with snow. III. There is also in the text, I think, a suggestion of analogies. Reading these words, not as a philosophical prediction, but as a part of the Word of God, I see in them a moral, spiritual, and mystical meaning. 1. While the earth remaineth there will be changes in the spiritual world. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." No one of these states continues; it comes and goes. The seasons are a perpetual procession, an endless chain, an ever-moving wheel. Such is this life: such are the feelings of spiritual life with most men: such is the history of the Church of God. 'It will be so while the earth remaineth, and we remain partakers of the earth.' 2. Yet there will be an order in it all. Cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, do not come in a giddy dance or tumultuous hurly-burly; but they make up the fair and beautiful year. Chance has no part in these affairs. So in the spiritual kingdom, in the life of the believer, and in the history of the Church of God, all things are made to work for good, and the spiritual is being educated into the heavenly. 3. Great rules will stand while the earth abideth, in the spiritual as well as in the natural world. For instance, there will be seed-time and harvest, effort and result, labour and success. IV. Last of all, I want you to regard my text as a token for the assurance of our faith. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." And they do not. In this fact we are bidden to see the seal and token of the covenant. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

The harvest:—I. A TESTIMONY FOR GOD'S FAITHFULNESS. The return of harvest speaks to you in language not to be mistaken. "Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering; for He is faithful that has promised." "My covenant will I not break, saith the Lord; nor alter the thing that has gone out of My lips." "But," you will say perhaps, "it is not God's faithfulness I question—I doubt His mercy. The Word of the Lord, that shall stand; but 'His mercy is in the heavens.' It reacheth not to me." And why not? What but mercy, infinite mercy, so prevailed with the Almighty that He should promise "seed-time and harvest" so long as the earth endureth! II. THE HARVEST IS A FIGURE OF THE CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS. 1. The end of the world is as sure as the harvest. 2. As in harvest the reaper casts aside the weed, so every false professor will be "cast into outer darkness," while the righteous will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear." 3. Again, it is in harvest we receive of that we have sown; and it is in harvest we see the end of the husbandman's labour—why he hath so long "waited for the early and latter rain." And so in the end of the world. Then is it that we shall see the purposes for which the world was made, and wherefore it has been sustained so long. Then we shall see the long-suffering of God, and wherefore He hath borne with us so long. (*W. M. Munger, B.A.*)

The duty of thanksgiving for the harvest:—I. WHEN WAS THIS PROMISE GIVEN? Immediately after the deluge. In wrath God remembered mercy. II. WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE PROBABLE RESULT, IF GOD HAD GIVEN US JUDGMENT AND NOT MERCY? If the covenant with the seasons had been suspended, all happiness and comfort must have been instantly paralysed, and all animal life extinguished; existence would no longer have been possible, and your palaces, mansions, and cottages would have been mere sepulchres, full of dead men's bones. III. But thirdly, let us inquire WHETHER A TIME IS NOT COMING WHEN SEED-TIME AND HARVEST, HEAT AND COLD, SUMMER AND WINTER, DAY AND NIGHT, WILL CEASE? Yes, the covenant in the text is limited in time, it holds good only "whilst the earth remaineth." Let this consideration lead us to seek an interest in the better covenant, founded on better promises, and which lasts for eternity; and let us rest our hopes on that firm foundation. (*H. Clissold, M.A.*)

Lessons from the harvest:—1. Every harvest teaches the fact of God's wise providence. 2. Every harvest teaches the fact of God's definite purpose. One vast magnificent purpose

has kept everything in exact order during all these years of Divine fidelity. 3. God expects every one of His creatures to be as faithful to a purpose as He Himself has been. (C. S. Robinson, D.D.) *God's goodness in nature*:—Once there was a peasant in Switzerland at work in his garden very early in the spring. A lady passing said, "I fear the plants which have come forward rapidly will yet be destroyed by frost." Mark the wisdom of the peasant:—"God has been our Father a great while," was his reply. What faith that reply exhibited in the olden promise, "While the earth remaineth," &c. *Cold needful*:—A minister going to church one Lord's Day morning, when the weather was extremely cold and stormy, was overtaken by one of his neighbours, who, shivering, said to him, "It's very cold, sir." "Oh!" replied the minister, "God is as good as His Word still." The other started at his remark, not apprehending his drift, or what he referred to; and asked him what he meant. "Mean!" replied he, "why, He promised above three thousand years ago, and He still makes His Word good, that 'while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, shall not cease.'"

Spiritual winter:—1. Spiritual winter is an ordination of God. The true spiritual analogue of winter is not spiritual death, not even feeble spiritual life. There is an orderly change in the soul. Unseen, yet very really, God's Spirit is at work, altering influences, changing modes. He introduces a new state of spiritual experiences, seeking to accomplish varied objects, and summoning to new modes of improving His presence. 2. The objects of spiritual winter are: (1)—To confirm and strengthen faith. (2) To act as a check upon excesses. (3) To help in the training of the Christian character and the Christian Church. 3. How are we to improve spiritual winter? (1) By learning a lesson of mutual Christian tolerance. (2) By treasuring up the clear vision and calm judgment which the winter of the soul is fitted to impart, for the improvement of the season when fervour shall be renewed and emotion once more excited. (A. Mackennal, D.D.)

The moral significance of winter:—The seasonable changes to which our earth is subject are of vast importance to man. They serve—1. To impress us with the fact of the brevity of life. 2. To keep the soul in constant action. 3. To revive the recollections of old truths. What are the truths that nature reproduces in winter? I. THE EVANESCENT FORMS OF EARTHLY LIFE. Individuals, families, and nations have their seasons—their spring, summer, autumn, winter. II. THE STERN ASPECTS OF NATURE'S GOD. Winter significantly hints that the Absolute cannot be trifled with—that He curses as well as blesses, destroys as well as saves. III. THE RETRIBUTIVE LAW OF THE CREATION. Winter brings on men the penalties for not rightly attending to the other seasons. IV. THE PROBABLE RESUSCITATION OF BURIED EXISTENCE. The life of the world in winter is not gone out, it is only sleeping. 1. The resuscitation of Christian truth. 2. The resuscitation of conscience. 3. The resuscitation of the human body. (Homilist.)

Autumn-tide:—1. Something ought, by the time we have arrived at autumn, to have been got ready to give to man. Have you done it? What fruit have you borne in life for your brother-men; how much wheat will God find in you when He comes to reap your fields? We have read the answer that should be given in the harvest-time every year. Few sights are fairer than that seen autumn after autumn round many an English homestead, when, as evening falls, the wains stand laden among the golden stubble, and the gleaners are scattered over the misty field; when men and women cluster round the gathered sheaves, and rejoice in the loving-kindness of the earth; where, in the dewy air, the shouts of happy people ring, and over all the broad moon shines down to bless with its yellow light the same old recurring scene it has looked on and loved for so many thousand years. It is the picture of a fruitful human life when its autumntide has come; and blessed are they of whom men can feel the same as when they share in a harvest-home—of whom they can say, "He has reached his autumn, we reap his golden produce, and we thank him in our hearts"; and in whose own spirit glimmers fair the moonlight of peace in the evening of life, the peace that is born of work completed, the humble, happy knowledge that can say, "Men will feed on my thoughts, my work shall nourish them, and God in whose strength I have lived, will garner all for me." There is no blessedness in life to be compared with that; it is the true, unselfish joy of harvest. 2. There is a second aspect of autumn that follows upon the harvest. A fortnight ago I went into Epping Forest in the morning. The wind blew keen and strong through a cloudless sky: but a faint, fine mist was on the ground. The air was full of leaves that fluttered to their rest on the red earth and the dark green pools scattered through the wood. The grass was silver-sown with frosted dew, and the

birds sang cheerily but quietly. Things were just touched with the breath of decay; one knew that the time of mirth, that even the harvest-time was gone away; but the light was too fresh and the sky too bright for sadness. There was an inspiration of work in the air—of quiet, hopeful work—though the ingathering of the year was over. And looking through the thin red foliage of the trees, beyond the skirt of the wood, I saw the rest of the autumn work of man—two dark-brown fields of rich earth, the upturned ridges just touched with the bright footprints of the frost, and in one, looming large through the light mist, two horses drew the plough, and tossed a darker ridge to light, and in the other a sower was sowing corn. And I thought, as I beheld, that our autumn life is not only production, but preparation; not only harvests, but ploughing and sowing. It is not enough to have produced a harvest: we must make ready for a new harvest for men and for ourselves, and more for men than for ourselves. To do so for ourselves alone were selfish, and would defeat its end, for work with that motive has from the very beginning the seed of corruption in it, and the harvest it may reach will be cankered. To begin with one's self is to end in fruitlessness. Begin, on the contrary, your work of sowing with the motive of Christ: "I do this for the love of men"; and you will then find that, without knowing it, and because you did not know or think about it, you have ploughed and sown in the noblest way for yourself. In the new spring-time of God's paradise, where only summer's fullness, but never autumn's decay is known, you will fulfil your being, and not one aspiration shall fail of its completion, not one failure but shall be repaired, not one yearning for truth but shall be satisfied, not one effort made here to bring forth a harvest, to plough the land of the world, to sow the seed of good and truth, but shall find at last a noble scope, and expand itself into an infinite sphere of labour. These are the hopes of autumn. 3. There is yet another aspect of autumn, and it is the aspect of decay. The evening falls, the damp air is chill, the mist rises, and the leafless trees are hooded in its ghostly garment. Our feet brush in the avenues through the thick floor of sodden leaves, and through the places we remember green and bright as paradise a low wind sighs in sorrow for the past. (*Stopford A. Brooke, M.A.*)

The doctrine of the harvest:—I. THAT THERE IS A CERTAINTY OF A REGULAR RETURN OF THE NATURAL HARVEST, RESTING UPON THE UNCHANGEABLE PURPOSE OF GOD. 1. The harvest is a time of poetry, rich in meaning, full of beauty, and set to music by God Himself, the poetry of nature smiling in her loveliness and ripe fruition, accompanied by the music of the breeze, as it rustles among the golden ears of bearded grain, and enlivened by sounds of human gladness. 2. Harvest is a time of joy. Then is seen the fruit of long and arduous toil, the fulfilment of ardent hopes and doubtful promises. 3. It is not only the result of work and the triumph of work, but it needs work to secure its golden spoils. Labour is the price of securing as well as of cultivating the fruits of the soil? What more joyous occupation than gathering the fruits of the soil? Man is here a worker with God. 4. Harvest is a time for thankfulness. Whose is the earth we till? God's. Whose the seed we sow? God's. Whose the influences of the sunshine, rain, and air? God's. Whose are the appointed laws by which the seed develops into the plant, and by which the plant bears the precious grain? God's. Whose gift is the intelligence that wields the reaper and drives the team afield? God's. All come from God. II. THE NATURAL HARVEST REPRESENTS OTHER HARVESTS IN WHICH MEN HAVE A PART. Nature is a picture-lesson for man to learn, and there are realities in the world of mind and man corresponding to her images. 1. There is a seed-time and harvest in the history of man, analogous to that established by God in nature. Look over the record of the ages and do you not find that the exertions, the struggles, the sacrifices of the men in one age have produced results for the benefit of later generations? Who sowed the harvest of civilization which we are now reaping? Was it not the sages and the poets of ancient Greece, the lawyers and rulers of ancient Rome; the prophets and apostles, the martyrs and evangelists of the Jewish and of the early Christian Church? These were the men that sowed the seeds of law, of learning, of morality, and of religion; and we to-day, in conjunction with other Christian people, are reaping in our Christian civilization, with all its faults and deficiencies, still great and glorious, the fruit of all their toils, the rich results of their laborious exertions. To bygone ages, to bygone men, how much, then, do we owe! Ah! you cannot separate the ages. One sows, another reaps, and the world of man is richer. 2. There are seed-time and harvest for every individual life. The young especially ought to remember that they are now to make those preparations without which age will bear but little fruit. Now is the season to

deposit the store of knowledge in their memories as into genial soil, there to take root and germinate into blissful fruit, so that when future years come they may reap the harvest of ripened wisdom and be enriched with the results of work which has gone before, and looking into their minds, as into rich storehouses, they may view the accumulated thoughts, facts, and principles, which form the abundant harvest of their minds. Nor is it with knowledge and wisdom in secular affairs that the individual seed-time and harvest should be solely concerned. The spirit requires cultivation. Seed-time and harvest is also going on at the same time in the sphere of Christian experience. No sooner do we know the Saviour than we begin to reap the fruits of believing; every gain to our Christian knowledge, or effort of the Christian life, procures for us a greater benefit. We reap as we go on sowing and cultivating our immortal nature—sowing truth, love, and holiness, we reap present satisfaction, delight, and peace, and prepare the way for grander and richer harvests on high. And even in heaven the cultivation of our powers of love and wisdom will go on for ever, and bring us increasing harvests of progress in all that is excellent and godlike—world without end. 3. But there is, strictly speaking, a spiritual harvest. And this spiritual harvest has a double aspect—as it respects the righteous, as it respects the wicked. Have you never seen the drunkard, the sensualist, the debauchee, sowing to the lusts of his flesh, nourishing, cultivating, pampering his passions and the brute-like instincts of his nature, and reaping in like kind, creating evil and degraded habits for himself, brutalizing and polluting his thoughts and his imagination, destroying his strength, and health, and manly beauty, and ruining his immortal soul? He is reaping what he sows. Have you never seen, on the other hand, the noble Christian, sowing to the higher life of the spirit, sowing love and kindness to all around him, to come back to him in a harvest of gratitude and affection; sowing intelligence and wisdom to be paid to him in happy thoughts, beautiful fancies, and glorious aspirations; sowing piety, and adoration, and devotion to God, and reaping here the peace that passeth understanding, joy in the Holy Ghost, sweet communion with God, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Let us be thankful for nature's kindly law, the regular return of seed-time and harvest, the ordinance of our covenant Jehovah, our loving Father in heaven. (*E. E. Bayliss.*)

The revolving seasons:—This promise still holds good. It has never yet failed. It cannot fail, for it is the Word of God. 1. Common things are too often taken as matters of course. The Source and Author of them all is forgotten. 2. God not only orders all these things, maintaining them in constant succession, as He said He would, but He orders them in the best and wisest manner. He takes in at a glance the wants of all His creatures, foresees all the consequences, both near and far off, of what He does, and sends His dealings accordingly. A labouring man used to say, when he heard people complaining of the weather—"It is such weather as God sends, and therefore it pleases me." 3. But all this concerns the present life only. May we not learn something from the text concerning the life to come? The very words carry our thoughts on to the future state. "While the earth remaineth." This promise, then, sure as it is, is only for a time—"while the earth remaineth"; and the earth will not remain for ever as it now is. A great change will come—a new heaven and a new earth. Then at length seed-time and harvest will be no longer distinguished. 4. Not only the promise of the text, but every other promise that God has made, will be fulfilled. (*F. Bourdillon, M.A.*)

Lesson from God's covenant faithfulness:—One vast, magnificent purpose has kept everything in exact order during all these years of Divine fidelity. And the single point you need to observe most closely is this: He has expected every one of His creatures to be as faithful to a purpose as He has been. Take one of the most insignificant flowers in the meadow for an illustration. Let a naturalist tell you of the private history it has wrought out since the spring opened. Let him show you how the leaves were held out on either side, like palms of two hands, just to catch the falling showers in their hollow; how they drew in unreckoned moisture by a million ducts unseen, transmitting it hastily into their great laboratory; how they distilled it and mingled and separated it and saturated it with sunshine and with mould, until it was ready to be lodged upon the spot where it was needed as an increment of growth; how they laboured on thus for months, till the day arrived for a supreme effort to give forth a blossom; and then how they borrowed this little substance from the soil, and received that little substance from the atmosphere, and commissioned fluid messengers to go down to the roots for help; how they mysteriously wrought with exquisite skill the delicate tissues into new forms of beauty, until at last the petals and pistils came forward into life, and the field grew brilliant with a

fresh flower. That entire meadow could go on repeating the lesson. Let us remember that each small spear and leaflet, when it found that its parent stalk no longer had need of it—indeed, would be better if it would put itself out of the way—quietly sacrificed itself for the general good, dropped off the stem to let sunshine come unhindered. So the seed—that one great, precious thing, the seed—had its chance to be fashioned and ripened to fulness and grace. You may learn thus very easily, by inquiring at each door of existence of Science, who is keeper of them all, that God has given for every one of His creations its fixed work in the orderly round of effort, as well as in the narrower circles of reciprocal duties. (*C. S. Robinson, D.D.*)

CHAPTER IX.

Vers. 1-7. *God blessed Noah and his sons.—The Divine benediction on the new humanity:—*I. PROVISION FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF ITS PHYSICAL LIFE. This divinely-appointed provision for the continuance of man upon the earth—1. Raises the relation between the sexes above all degrading associations. 2. Tends to promote the stability of society. 3. Promotes the tender charities of life. II. PROVISION FOR ITS SUSTENANCE. The physical life of man must be preserved by the ministry of other lives—animal, vegetable. For this end God has given man dominion over the earth, and especially over all other lives in it. We may regard this sustenance which God has provided for man's lower wants—1. As a reason for gratitude. Our physical necessities are the most immediate, the most intimate to us. We should acknowledge the hand that provides for them. We may regard God's provision herein—2. As an example of the law of mediation. Man's life is preserved by the instrumentality of others. God's natural government of the world is carried on by means of mediation, from which we may infer that such is the principle of His moral government. That "bread of life" by which our souls are sustained comes to us through a Mediator. Thus God's provisions for our common wants may be made a means of educating us in higher things. Nature has the symbols and suggestions of spiritual truths. 3. As a ground for expecting greater blessings. If God made so rich and varied a provision to supply the necessities of the body, it was reasonable to expect that He would care and provide for the deeper necessities of the soul. III. PROVISION FOR ITS PROTECTION. 1. From the ferocity of animals. 2. From the violence of evil men. IV. PROVISION FOR ITS MORALITY. V. PROVISION FOR ITS RELIGION. 1. Mankind were to be educated to the idea of sacrifice. 2. Mankind were to be impressed with the true dignity of human nature. 3. Mankind must be taught to refer all authority and rule ultimately to God. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Noah a representative person:—*1. In the earliest fauna and flora of the earth, one class stood for many. The earliest families combined the character of several families afterwards separately introduced. This is true, for instance, of ferns, which belong to the oldest races of vegetation. Of them it has been well said that there is hardly a single feature or quality possessed by flowering plants of which we do not find a hint or prefiguration in ferns. It is thus most interesting to notice in the earliest productions of our earth the same laws and processes which we observe in the latest and most highly-developed flowers and trees. 2. At the successive periods of the unfolding of God's great promise, we find one individual representing the history of the race, and foreshadowing in brief the essential character of large phases and long periods of human development. Hence it is that here Noah becomes the representative of the patriarchal families in covenant with God. He is the individual with whom God enters into covenant, in relation to the successive generations of the human race. 3. And in this respect Noah is a retrospective type of Him who, in the eternal ages, consented to be the representative of redeemed humanity, and with whom the Father made an everlasting covenant; and a prospective type of that same Representative who, in the fulness of time, received the Divine assurance that in Him should all nations of the earth be blessed. (*W. Adamson.*) *The new world and its inheritors—the men of faith:—*1. The first is the new condition of the earth itself, which immediately appears in the freedom allowed and practised in regard to the external worship of God. This was no longer confined to any single region, as seems to have been the case in the age subsequent to the Fall. The cherubim were located in a particular spot, on the east of the garden of Eden; and as the symbols of God's presence were there, it was only natural that the celebration of Divine worship should there also have found its common centre.

But with the Flood the reason for any such restriction vanished. Noah, therefore, reared his altar, and presented his sacrifice to the Lord where the ark rested. There immediately he got the blessing, and entered into covenant with God—proving that, in a sense, old things had passed away, and all had become new. But this again indicated that, in the estimation of Heaven, the earth had now assumed a new position; that by the action of God's judgment upon it, it had become hallowed in His sight, and was in a condition to receive tokens of the Divine favour, which had formerly been withheld from it. 2. The second point to be noticed here is the heirship given of this new world to Noah and his seed—given to them expressly as the children of faith. A change, however, appears in the relative position of things, when the flood had swept with its purifying waters over the earth. Here, then, the righteousness of faith received direct from the grace of God the dowry that had been originally bestowed upon the righteousness of nature—not a blessing merely, but a blessing coupled with the heirship and dominion of the world. There was nothing strange or arbitrary in such a proceeding; it was in perfect accordance with the great principles of the Divine administration. Adam was too closely connected with the sin that destroyed the world, to be reinvested, even when he had through faith become a partaker of grace, with the restored heirship of the world. Nor had the world itself passed through such an ordeal of purification, as to fit it, in the personal lifetime of Adam, or of his more immediate offspring, for being at all represented in the light of an inheritance of blessing. 3. The remaining point to be noticed in respect to this new order of things is the pledge of continuance, notwithstanding all appearances or threatenings to the contrary, given in the covenant made with Noah, and confirmed by a fixed sign in the heavens. There can be no doubt that the natural impression produced by this passage in respect to the sign of the covenant is, that it now for the first time appeared in the lower heavens. The Lord might, no doubt, then, or at any future time, have taken an existing phenomenon in nature, and by a special appointment made it the instrument of conveying some new and higher meaning to the subjects of His revelation. But in a matter like the present, when the specific object contemplated was to allay men's fears of the possible recurrence of the deluge, and give them a kind of visible pledge in nature for the permanence of her existing order and constitution, one cannot perceive how a natural phenomenon, common alike to the antediluvian and the postdiluvian world, could have fitly served the purpose. In that case, so far as the external sign was concerned, matters stood precisely where they were; and it was not properly the sign, but the covenant itself, which formed the guarantee of safety for the future. We incline, therefore, to the opinion that, in the announcement here made, intimation is given of a change in the physical relations or temperature of at least that portion of the earth where the original inhabitants had their abode; by reason of which the descent of moisture in showers of rain came to take the place of distillation by dew, or other modes of operation different from the present. The supposition is favoured by the mention only of dew before in connection with the moistening of the ground (Gen. ii. 6); and when rain does come to be mentioned, it is rain in such flowing torrents as seems rather to betoken the outpouring of a continuous stream, than the gentle dropping which we are wont to understand by the term, and to associate with the rainbow. (*P. Fairbairn, D.D.*)

Ver. 6. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.—Death for murder a Divine decree:—1. First, I assert that the punishment of death for murder is a Divine decree. As some persons are opposed to the execution of any murderer, it is well to examine both the objections they urge and the command by which this law is asserted. Death for murder is recognized from the beginning of the world. It seems to be written on the conscience of man by God that such a doom rightly awaits a murderer. The case of Cain—the strong case of the opposers of death for murder—is, when rightly understood, a strong case against them. Cain declared that the first person that met him would slay him. Who but God had written this in the tables of his heart? who save He could have engraven this on his conscience? It was a recognized principle from the beginning that the murderer should not live. But it is objected, "God interfered and saved his life." Quite true. But then, if God had not interfered, his life would have been justly taken in obedience to the general laws of God implanted in the consciences of all men; and therefore, unless God similarly interferes now by a special and marked revelation, the original rule holds good, and the murderer is put to death. Observe, in order

to save Cain, "God set a mark upon" the man. Why? Because without this he was liable to death. The exception in this case clearly proves the rule! Again: you cannot but be struck with the remarkable care which God manifests in His laws to Israel concerning blood. He warns them against suffering their "land to become polluted with blood." The law of inquest is founded upon one part of the Jewish law; and the humane provisions which rendered the owner of any infuriated animal a loser of a vast fine if the animal caused the death of any person not only commends itself for its justice, but again shows the value which is set upon human life. And with a view, I deem, yet further to impress this truth upon mankind, the blood even of the animal, since "it is the life thereof," is distinctly ordered to be in nowise eaten, but to be "poured upon the ground like water." You may say that these were laws to the Jewish nation, and it is true; but I am persuaded that the polity of the Jewish nation is given as a specimen for all nations to follow. It involves a very great principle, namely, the care which is to be taken over life. It is important also on physiological grounds, or rather physiology supports the great wisdom of this command, for it is known that disobedience to it produces pernicious results on the body and the mind of man. II. And now, secondly, we have to INQUIRE INTO THE REASON WHY THIS COMMAND OF DEATH FOR MURDER IS GIVEN. It might suffice indeed for our guidance to know what God had decreed, and in some instances we have His direction given without any reason being added; yet it is not so here. God, in giving this universal law, has added a reason equally universal. Man is to put the murderer to death because in the image of God man was made. I have heard men contend, "Oh! let the murderer live, for life will be more miserable to him than death; and if he is so unfit to live, surely he is unfit to die; why, therefore, put him to death?" There is here a strange fallacy, however; for the argument presumes, in the first place, that the sparing of the man aggravates his woe, while the concluding sentence intimates a desire to prevent this agony. Others, again, contend that the murderer being locked up in perpetual prison, society is as safe as though he were executed. This also may be true as far as the individual felon is concerned, but is incorrect probably so far as the example to others is regarded. But the truth of the matter simply is, you have nothing at all to do with it. God has decreed it, and God has assigned a reason for that decree. It is no question about society, or policy, or necessity at all—it is a matter of revelation. God asserts that man was made by Him in His own glorious image; and "therefore," and without any other reason, you are to execute death upon every murderer. And mark you, God watches to see that this is done. III. And, in the third place, I must ask you to observe A REMARKABLY IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE WHICH IS INVOLVED IN THE REASON WHICH GOD ASSIGNS TO ORDERING DEATH AS THE PUNISHMENT FOR MURDER. To those who have been accustomed to view this matter as a simple act of the community in defence of social safety, the principle which I am about to allude to cannot, of course, have presented itself; but to the attentive student of the reason appended in the text, it will follow, I think, as a matter of necessity. It is there plainly enough commanded that death shall by man be inflicted upon the murderer, because man was made in the image of God; so that death is thus inflicted because that which was made in the likeness of God had been destroyed. Now, you need not be reminded that the great destroyer of man as the image and glory of God is sin. I will not detain you on a subject which you all agree upon. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." What then follows? Sin must be destroyed. It is the thing which brought destruction upon man; it is the defiler of that which was the temple of the Holy Ghost; it is the murderer of man, both body and soul. How shall it be destroyed? By one man it entered: can it be by one Man punished and removed? God Himself has, in the text, announced a principle on earth to man. This principle on earth is only a material image of that which is true in the spiritual kingdom. How shall it be made manifest? Behold, then, slowly toiling up the ascent to Golgotha, One whom the Eternal has singled out as "the Man that was His Fellow;" and who Himself had said, "Lo, I come." The sin which ruined us all and secured our destruction is there borne by Him. "God made Him," though sinless, "to be sin for us"; and when at that hour "it pleased the Father to bruise Him, to put Him to grief," and to "lay on Him the iniquities of us all"—when thus bearing that on Him in our stead, which would murder us, He suffered the penalty, and was "cursed" as He "hung upon the tree." He was at once thus suffering that we might have the means of escape, and was as a personal Being, on whom all sin was placed in its highest and most spiritual meaning, undergoing the penalty of that law which

enacts, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man." All nature, every physical law, and every revealed law of God on earth, is but a material image of the spiritual; "as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." The heavenly laws are presented to us in our earthly state in an earthly form, and are images to us of the spiritual truths which we shall recognize in our heavenly condition. Sin destroyed the image and glory of God in man. Christ undertook to restore all, and in doing so must bear sin away. It is man's destroyer. Christ takes it; and with it His blood was shed. (*G. Venables, S.C.L.*) *Capital punishment*:—"Whoso sheddeth blood, by man shall his blood be shed." "A prediction," say some, "not a command." Nay, we reply, not so; for what says God in the preceding verse? "Your blood of your lives will I require." Yes; and so sacred is human life, that even the unreasoning beast who kills a man is to be put to death, and no use made of his carcass. "At the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man." It is, then, a distinct command. I. Now notice THE GROUND UPON WHICH THE COMMAND IS BASED; and notice also, in passing, how completely applicable it is to present as well as former times. 1. In the first place, murder is a sin against human brotherhood. God made men members of one family, and this particular offence strikes at the very root of the tie which binds us together. "At the hand of every man's brother"—he is brother to the man he has slain—"will I require the life of man." 2. God made man in His own image; and though man has fallen, he still retains something of the heavenly resemblance. Murder, in its essence, if you trace it far enough, is not merely an injury inflicted on our fellow—not merely an act by which pain and deprivation are caused to the individual, and loss to society. It is all this, of course; but it is also more than this—it is a striking at God in the person of him who was made in the image of God. Now it is obvious that these two reasons assigned for the treatment of the murderer are of universal and permanent application. Men are brethren now, men are made in the image of God now; and therefore our conclusion is that this commandment given to Noah in the days when God was making a covenant with the whole human race, centred and represented in those eight persons, stands unreppealed on the statute-book of heaven, and will stand there so long as there are men to be murdered, and other men who for gain or lust or hatred or malice are willing to murder them. II. It is idle to object, as some do, that Christianity forbids revenge. It is worse than idle—it is a blundering confusion of thought. Revenge is the gratification of personal feeling, a desire to inflict upon another the suffering which he has inflicted on you; whilst the act which God here commands is the carrying out of a solemn, judicial sentence, the assertion of Divine justice, the practical announcement of God's eternal wrath against unrighteousness. More idle still is it to say, as some do, that the murderer too is made in the image of God, and is therefore to be spared. Accept this view, and the Divine command before us becomes a nullity. God says expressly that he is not to be spared; God demands his life in return for the life he has taken; God affirms that the offence committed will not be expiated except by the murderer's death, that the land in which such a thing is done will remain under the curse of pollution, and that "it cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." Now, if the view thus placed before you be really correct, it follows that there is no room really left for much of the discussion upon the subject of capital punishment which occasionally goes on about us. Let me say that we speak only of the crime of murder. We see no warrant in the Word of God for taking human life for any other offence. But if the view be right, a people, a nation, professing to serve and obey the God revealed to us in the Scripture, has really no option in the matter. It is useless to heap up statistics, to accumulate precedents, to construct elaborate arguments, to make tender and touching appeals—God has spoken, not to Noah only, but to the whole human race; not to one generation only, but to the whole of the successive ages of mankind; and from His authoritative decision there is, and there can be, no possible appeal. And let me say, in conclusion, that I dread these humanitarian views, for this reason, among others—because they seem to shift the basis on which human society rests, and on which alone it can permanently stand. They go upon the assumption that what men decide shall be right, thus ignoring God's eternal laws of right and wrong. But you must go up to God ultimately for the decision of such a question as this. (*G. Cuthrop, M.A.*) *Our relationships*:—The terms of the passage are too general to make any narrowing of them down within family limits

legitimate. They contain the very advanced truth that every man belongs to every other man; that there is but one great human family; and that our action is not according to the will of God when it is conducted on lines of exclusion. Whether we see it or not, the fact is everywhere assumed in Scripture that that which is good for the whole humanity is good for each member of it. Our policy is to be broadly sympathetic. In Church, in State, religiously, politically, everywhere. The charge is put upon us to preserve human life, not simply our own individual life, but to do all we can to preserve human life everywhere. And this is every man's duty. "The life of man," what is it? The true human life, what is it? That which is fitting and proper to you and me and all men, what is it? Because that is the life we have to preserve. We are not allowed to live in the front of great human problems we never so much as touch with the tip of our finger. Almighty God will not have that. It is contrary to His idea of man and his responsibility. But how many, how very many, even now, in these Christian times, live on a very much lower plane than that! How often do we find ourselves saying, "It's no concern of mine whether people are this, that, and the other; if only I can be let alone to do my own business and enjoy my own life, that is all I ask." But that is not all that God asks; it is not all of which our nature is capable; and every man is accountable to God for the capability within him. We live in a world indefinitely improvable. In a right condition of society we live in a world capable of supporting an almost countless population. Now, in this movement the Christian Church has a very important place to fill, and for this simple reason, that it is the trustee of the truth which is to leaven the mass of human opinion and feeling. No life ever yields comfort to its possessor until it is conformed to the idea which He had for it who originally gave it. Everything has its state of fixity, and there is no content and no satisfaction until that state is reached. This is specially and emphatically true of the life of man. We are members of a great human race, in every one of whom there is the feeling of something attainable which has not yet been attained. As to what the something is there is endless diversity of opinion. Now, the Church has something more to do than to take care of itself. Very little good can it do on the principle of simply caring for itself. It has to sound in the ear of humanity, of men everywhere, the truth that is in these words, "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." It has to illustrate by its spirit and temper and by its deeds this fact, that all men belong to all other men. Missionary it must be or die. It has to declare God's ideas, God's favour, God's will to the world, as these have come to us in Jesus. It has to live those ideas before the world, and thus gradually but surely renew the world. It has to be the leaven in the meal. It must be that every man is accountable for the right use of the noblest ideas which ever come into his soul. Quench them he must not. Stifle them he must not. He must nourish them into growth, or his soul will be a graveyard in which are buried the murdered innocents which would have grown into manhood but for the strangling hand of his scepticism. And so, while I speak of the Church as the collective of all God-inspired souls, I beseech you to note that in our text there is no absorption of the individual into the mass. "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." The whole life of man concerns each of us—all of us. That is the truth at the base of universal suffrage. We are responsible for the high or low tone of the life of man in the community in which we live, in the town, in the city, in the state, in the nation. "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." Why, says one, should I be punished for what another man does? Because we are all partakers of one life, and are related, and are a family, and the law is that if one member suffer, all the members shall suffer with it. And so, if there be small-pox in the poor streets, you who live in the better streets begin to be concerned. You don't ask, What have I to do with that man's small-pox? You say to the authorities, "Get the man off to the hospital; disinfect his house. Go in and do it." But what right have you to enter that man's house and haul him away to the hospital? What right have you to send the health officer with his disinfectant? You see, your doctrine of individualism breaks down in presence of a contagious and desolating disease, and very properly so. But is it not a miserable confession to make, that we have to learn the doctrine of our relationship to others on the lowest side of it, because we will not recognize it on its highest side? Soul and body are so closely married in this life that no one can divorce them. They act and react on each other. Organization does not produce life; life produces organization. We cannot separate the material and the spiritual. The life of a man is too much of a unit to allow us to do that. And,

says the Almighty One, "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." We are part of a nation's life. All its questions are our questions; all its struggles are our struggles; all its failures are our failures; all its triumphs are our triumphs. Not till the regenerated brotherhood of the Church rises above its sectisms and boldly puts itself in the fore-front of the nation's life as the truth-teller, the evangelizer, claiming the life of man for Christ, and testing everything by the principles of life He has given us, does it do its duty or fulfil its mission. (R. Thomas.)

Vers. 8-11. I establish My covenant with you.—God's covenant with Noah:—I. The covenant God made with Noah was intended to remedy every one of the temptations into which Noah's children's children would have been certain to fall, and into which so many of them did fall. They might have become reckless from fear of a flood at any moment. God promises them, and confirms it with the sign of the rainbow, never again to destroy the earth by water. They would have been likely to take to praying to the rain and thunder, the sun and the stars. God declares in this covenant that it is He alone who sends the rain and thunder, that He brings the clouds over the earth, that He rules the great awful world; that men are to look up and believe in God as a loving and thinking Person, who has a will of His own, and that a faithful and true and loving and merciful will; that their lives and safety depend not on blind chance or the stern necessity of certain laws of nature, but on the covenant of an almighty and all-loving Person. **II.** This covenant tells us that we are made in God's likeness, and therefore that all sin is unworthy of us and unnatural to us. It tells us that God means us bravely and industriously to subdue the earth and the living things upon it; that we are to be the masters of the pleasant things about us, and not their slaves as sots and idlers are; that we are stewards or tenants of this world for the great God who made it, to whom we are to look up in confidence for help and protection. (C. Kingsley, M.A.) *The covenant with Noah:—I.* GOD'S SYMPATHY WITH MAN, AND LOVE FOR HIM. **Ver. 8.** **II.** THE TRANSMISSION OF PARENTAL BLESSINGS TO CHILDREN. **Ver. 9.** Dispositions of good or evil are almost sure to transmit themselves to succeeding generations. The descendants of a single vicious man and his wife, in the state of New York, numbered by scores, have been paupers and criminals. Put against this another illustration. The grandfather of Mary Lyon, the devoted principal of Mount Holyoke Seminary, was accustomed to pray daily for the blessing of God upon his children and the generations that should follow. Nearly all his descendants have been earnest Christians. In one graveyard lie fifty who died in the Lord. So when God covenants with Noah, it is with his children also. Here was the ground of circumcision in the Jewish Church. But it was because of this Divine principle that Peter said, "The promise is unto you and to your children." We ought to expect that our children will grow up Christians, and labour for it. **III.** THE ADVANTAGE ENJOYED BY OTHER CREATED BEINGS IN THE BLESSINGS GIVEN TO GOD'S PEOPLE. **Ver. 10.** Men often enjoy privileges that are solely due to a Christianity at which they scoff. Certain scientific unbelievers, who deride prayer and declare man an automaton, and seek to prove the blight of Christian influence on society in the Middle Ages, would find no market for their books but for the quickened intellect that Christianity has induced. They are basking in the gospel's sunlight. There are heathen nations that are pierced through and through with Divine rays of light. Japan will illustrate this fact. A while since an embassy from Japan was in this country (United States of America), studying our national characteristics. It carried back for use in its own land our systems of education, of railroading, of manufacturing, of newspaper publication, of post-office management, and what not beside. In doing this, it carried back Christian influences, for as Joseph Neesima, himself a Japanese, assured the embassy, our civilization is built upon the Bible. To-day every prison warden in Japan has been studying a book furnished him for his guidance by the Japanese Government. That book was written by a missionary, and contains a chapter on Christianity as an influence in managing prisons. Thus do the Divine shafts of the gospel fling themselves into the most inaccessible places. Even the animals are blessed through our religion. To be sure, some heathen nations have considered certain animals to be gods, and cared for them in consequence. But the tenderness of Christian people toward the inferior creation extends to all forms of sentient life, and springs from reverence to God and a religious desire to spare His creatures suffering. **IV.** GOD'S PROMISE OF CARE AND PROTECTION. **Ver. 11.** We distrust God when the lightning affrights us,

or when we tremble in a storm at sea. Let us seek the spirit of the Christian sailor, who, when asked, as the waves were raging, how he could have so little fear, replied, "Though I sink, I shall only drop into my heavenly Father's hand, for He holds all these waters there." V. NATURE APPEARS IN THE NARRATIVE AS A TEACHER OF MORALS AND RELIGION. Vers. 12-14. God designs that we should learn spiritual truths from the open pages of creation. His power and wisdom, His plans for man's good, are manifest in sky and earth and sea. The world is a most elaborate and perfect machine, fashioned by the hand of a Master. It is as manifestly fitted for man's needs as is a mansion furnished with the luxurious contrivances of modern ingenuity. (*A. P. Foster.*) *God's covenant with the new humanity*:—I. A COVENANT ORIGINATING WITH GOD HIMSELF. 1. Men have no right to dictate to God. 2. God reserves the power to bestow goodness. 3. The character of God leads us to expect the advances of His goodness towards men. 4. When God enters into covenant with His creatures, He binds Himself. II. A COVENANT OF FORBEARANCE. 1. This was an act of pure grace. 2. Human history is a long comment upon the forbearance of God. (*Acts xiv. 15; Rom. iii. 26.*) 3. This forbearance of God was unconditional. It was not a command relating to conduct, but a statement of God's gracious will towards mankind. 4. This forbearance throws some light upon the permission of evil. We ask, why does God permit evil to exert its terrible power through all ages? Our only answer is that His mercy triumphs over judgment. III. IT WAS A COVENANT WHICH, IN THE FORM AND SIGN OF IT, WAS GRACIOUSLY ADAPTED TO MAN'S CONDITION. Man was weak and helpless, his sense of spiritual things blunted and impaired by sin. He was not able to appreciate Divine truth in its pure and native form. God must speak to him by signs and symbols, and encourage him by promises of temporal blessing. In this way alone he can rise from sensible things to spiritual, and from earthly good to the enduring treasures of heaven. 1. The terms of the covenant refer to the averting of temporal punishment, but suggest the promise of higher things. 2. The sign of the covenant was outward, but full of deep and precious meaning. Covenants were certified by signs or tokens, such as a heap or pillar, or a gift (*Gen. xxxi. 52; xxi. 30*). The starry night was the sign of the promise to Abraham (*Gen. xv.*). Here, the sign of the covenant was the rainbow; a sign beautiful in itself, calculated to attract attention, and most fitting to teach the fact of God's constancy, and to encourage the largest hopes from His love. All this was an education for man, so that he might adore and hope for the Divine mercy. (1) Mankind were to be educated through the beautiful. The beauty of the rainbow helped men to thoughts of heaven. (2) Mankind were to be taught the symbolic meaning of nature. All nature is a mighty parable of spiritual truth. (3) Mankind were to be taught that God is greater than nature. The creature, however beautiful, or capable of inspiring awe and grandeur, must not be deified. This was God's bow, not Himself. God is separate from nature, and greater than it; a living personality above all things created. If we could pursue nature to its furthest verge, we should find that we could not thus enclose and limit God; He would still retire into the habitation of eternity! (4) Mankind were to be taught to recognize a presiding mind in all the phenomena of nature. "My bow." God calls it His own, as designed and appointed by Him. There is no resting place for our mind and heart in second causes; we must come at last to a spiritual and intellectual subsistence—to a living personality. Nature without this view becomes a ruthless machine. (5) Man was to be assured that the mercy of God is equal to his extremity. He will remember men for good in their greatest calamities and dangers. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Divine covenants*:—God's covenants show—1. That He is willing to contract duties towards man. Man can therefore hope for and obtain that which he cannot claim as a right. Thus "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (*James ii. 13*). 2. That man's duty has relation to a personal Lawgiver. There is no independent morality. All human conduct must ultimately be viewed in the light of God's requirements. 3. That man needs a special revelation of God's love. The light of nature is not sufficient to satisfy the longings of the soul and encourage hope. We require a distinct utterance—a sign from heaven. The vague sublimities of created things around us are unsatisfying, we need the assurance that behind all there is a heart of infinite compassion. 4. That every new revelation of God's character implies corresponding duties on the part of man. The progress of revelation has refined and exalted the principle of duty, until man herein is equal unto the angels, and learns to do "all for love, and nothing for reward." (*Ibid.*) *The covenant with Noah*:—I. THE PARTIES OF THE COVENANT. 1. The all-loving and everlasting God. (1) The time when God makes this covenant

is instructive. (2) The Divine motive which prompted this covenant is encouraging. (3) The Divine power to fulfil the terms of this covenant is all-sufficient. 2. Noah and his sons and their posterity, and every living thing. (1) Its comprehensiveness. (2) Its duration. II. THE BENEFITS OF THE COVENANT. 1. The regularity of the seasons is guaranteed. 2. Food for man and beast. III. THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT. 1. The beauty of the token is suggestive. (1) Its arched form, whose apex touches the sky, and whose base is on earth, and suggests that it is God's covenant that connects heaven with earth, and is the crown of human hope. (2) Its colours suggest both the infinite variety and immaculate glory of God's covenant-blessings. 2. The permanency of the token is suggestive. (1) That God never forgets His covenant with us. (2) That He would have our faith in His promises as constantly exercised as His memory of His covenant is unfailing. 3. Its heavenly sphere is suggestive. LESSONS: 1. God's most endearing title: our covenant-God. 2. As covenant-God He is full of grace and truth. 3. The centre of both grace and truth is He whose blood is the blood of the covenant. (D. C. Hughes, M.A.) *God's covenant with Noah*:—We see here—1. The mercy and goodness of God, in proceeding with us in a way of covenant. He might have exempted the world from this calamity, and yet not have told them He would do so. The remembrance of the flood might have been a sword hanging over their heads *in terrorem*. But He will set their minds at rest on this score, and therefore promises, and that with an oath, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth. Thus also He deals with us in His Son. Being willing that the heirs of promise should have strong consolation, He confirms His word by an oath. 2. The importance of living under the light of revelation. Noah's posterity by degrees sank into idolatry, and became "strangers to the covenants of promise." Such were our fathers for many ages, and such are great numbers to this day. So far as respects them, God might as well have made no promise; to them all is lost. 3. The importance of being believers. Without this, it will be worse for us than if we had never been favoured with a revelation. 4. We see here the kind of life which it was God's design to encourage—a life of faith. "The just shall live by faith." If He had made no revelation of Himself, no covenants, and no promises, there would be no ground for faith; and we must have gone through life feeling after Him, without being able to find Him: but having made known His mind, there is light in all our dwellings, and a sure ground for believing not only in our exemption from another flood, but in things of far greater importance. (A. Fuller.) *The scheme of Providence—the promise and pledge of the Divine forbearance*:—The scheme of Providence, in the world after the flood, is of the nature of a dispensation of forbearance, subservient to a dispensation of grace, and preparatory to a dispensation of judgment; and of this forbearance, on the part of God, Noah receives a promise and a pledge. I. Looking, then, to the original purpose, of which we read as existing in the mind of God (chap. viii. 21, 22), HIS DETERMINATION TO SPARE THE EARTH IS EXPLAINED ON TWO PRINCIPLES, WHICH IT IS IMPORTANT TO OBSERVE. The first of these principles is the inveterate and desperate depravity of man. "Why should ye be stricken any more?" is the indignant voice of God to Israel by His servant Isaiah:—ye will but increase revolt, "ye will revolt more and more." "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness at all; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores" (chap. i. 5, 6). Why, then, should ye be stricken any more? There is no sound part in you on which the stroke can take effect; discipline, correction, chastisement, is thrown away upon you; ye are beyond the influence of its salutary efficacy; ye become worse and worse under its infliction; I will strike no more, for ye are too far gone to be thus reclaimed. So also the Lord says in His heart respecting the world after the flood;—I will not again curse the earth—I will not again visit it with so desolating a judgment. Why should I? What good purpose would it serve? Thus considered, this Divine reasoning is, in many views, deeply affecting. It rebukes the presumptuous security of unbelief (Eccl. viii. 11). Again, this argument, as thus used by God, places in the clearest light the extreme depravity of man. The disorder of his nature is too inveterate, inborn, and inbred, to be remedied by a discipline of correction and chastisement. Undoubtedly there is an efficacy in the chastisements which God ordains, to amend, to purify, and sanctify the soul; but this efficacy depends upon there being some health and soundness, some principle of life, in those to whom such chastisements are applied. Therefore the Lord chastens and corrects His own people. But on the heart of man, as it is by nature, the Lord here emphatically testifies that the warnings and visitations of

judgment will never effectually tell. Why should I smite the earth any more? The imagination of man's heart is so thoroughly evil from his youth, that My smiting is altogether in vain. There is a tremendous truth involved in this argument;—it shuts for ever the door of mercy on the impenitent and unbelieving. But while this saying of God presents on one side a dark and ominous aspect, on the other side it reflects a blessed gleam of light. It indicates the purpose of God, that in His treatment of the world, during the remainder of its allotted time, He is not to deal with its inhabitants according to their sins, nor to reward them after their iniquities. His providence over the earth is to be conducted, not on the principle of penal or judicial retribution—the human race being too corrupt to be thus reclaimed or amended—but on another principle altogether, irrespective of the merits or the works of man. What that other principle is, appears from the relation which the Lord's decree bears to the sacrifices offered by Noah, by which He is said to be propitiated (chap. viii. 20, 21). These sacrifices undoubtedly derive their efficacy from the all-sufficient sacrifice of atonement which they prefigured. And it is that sacrifice, offered once for all, in the end of the world—the sacrifice of the Lamb virtually slain from the foundation of the world—which alone satisfactorily explains the Lord's determination to spare the earth. It does so in two ways. In the first place, the interposition of that sacrifice vindicates and justifies the righteous God in passing by the sins of men (Rom. iii. 25)—in exercising forbearance, and suspending judgment. It is this alone which renders His long-suffering consistent with His justice;—otherwise as the righteous Judge, He could not spare the guilty for a single hour. Secondly, that sacrifice of Christ reaches beyond mere forbearance, and is effectual to save. The very design of it—its direct and proper object—is not merely to provide that the barren tree may be let alone, but to secure that it shall be cultured and revived, so as to become fruitful. Therefore God spares the earth on account of the sacrifice of Christ, that those for whom it is offered may be saved, and that in them Christ may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

II. Afterwards, in its announcement or publication to the human family (chap. ix. 8–17), THIS DECREE IS EMBODIED IN THE FORM OF A COVENANT, AND RATIFIED BY A SIGNIFICANT SEAL. In the first place, the Lord establishes a covenant on the earth. “My covenant,” saith the Lord. And what covenant can that be, but the covenant of grace? “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saveth us.” This, and this alone, is pre-eminently His covenant; always the same in its character and terms, whatever may be the kind of salvation meant. In the present instance, it is exemption, or deliverance from the temporal judgment of a flood. But still this is secured to the earth, and to all the dwellers on the earth, by the very same covenant in which the higher blessings of life eternal are comprehended. Then again, secondly, the covenant, as usual, has a seal, or an outward token and pledge; designed, as it were, to put the Lord in remembrance of His promise, and to settle and confirm the confidence of men. It is God's proof of His faithfulness to the children of men—the pledge that He is keeping, and will keep, His covenant. He looks on the bow, that He may remember the covenant. And as the covenant, being made by sacrifice, not only secures a season of forbearance to the earth, but looks to an end infinitely more important, to which that forbearance is subordinate and subservient;—as it is the covenant of grace or the covenant of redemption, of which the promise of exemption from the judgment of another flood forms a part;—so the rainbow becomes the seal of the covenant in this higher view of it also—and is the token and pledge of its spiritual and eternal blessings. Hence, among the ensigns and emblems of redeeming glory, the rainbow holds a conspicuous place (Ezek. i. 28; Rev. iv. 3, x. 1); and hence, moreover, the covenant which it seals, respecting the days and seasons of the earth's period of long-suffering, gives to God's faithful people an argument of confidence, not for time only, but for eternity. He is true to His covenant, in sparing the world; will He not much more be true to the same covenant, in saving those for whose sake the world is spared? (Isa. liv. 9, 10; Jer. xxxiii. 20–25). (R. S. Candlish, D.D.)

Ver. 12–17. This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set My bow in the cloud.—*The rainbow the type of the covenant*:—I. Among the many deep truths which the early chapters of the Book of Genesis enforce, there is none which strikes the thoughtful inquirer more forcibly than does THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE DISORDER OCCASIONED BY MAN'S SIN AND THE REMEDY ORDAINED BY THE WISDOM AND THE MERCY OF GOD. This connection may be traced in a very remarkable

manner in the appointment of the rainbow as sign and pledge of the covenant. Rainbow equally dependent for its existence upon storm and upon sunshine. Marvellously adapted, therefore, to serve as type of mercy following upon judgment—as sign of connection between man's sin and God's free and unmerited grace. Connected gloomy recollections of past with bright expectations of future. Taught by anticipation the great lesson which it was reserved for Christ's Gospel fully to reveal, that as sin had abounded, so grace should "much more abound." II. Further, not only is the rainbow, as offspring equally of storm and sunshine, a fitting emblem of covenant of grace, it is also type of that equally distinctive peculiarity of Christ's Gospel, THAT SORROW AND SUFFERING HAVE THEIR APPOINTED SPHERE OF EXERCISE BOTH GENERALLY IN THE PROVIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORLD, AND INDIVIDUALLY IN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL HOLINESS. Other religions have enforced lessons of patience and of submission beneath the pressure of irremediable ill. It is the Gospel of Christ Jesus alone which converts sorrow and suffering into instruments for the attainment of higher and more enduring blessings. In all God's dealings with His people, when He brings a cloud upon the earth, He sets His bow in that cloud, inasmuch that they cease to fear when they enter into it by reason of the presence of Him whose glory inhabits it (Isa. liv. 9, 10). III. For the full comprehension of the bow, given as a sign of the covenant to Noah and beheld in vision by Ezekiel (i. 4, 28), we must turn to the New Testament. There we read of One in the midst of a throne, round about which "there was a rainbow, in sight like unto an emerald" (Rev. iv. 3). And in close conjunction with this we must have regard to the "mighty angel" beheld by the same seer, "clothed with a cloud and a rainbow upon his head" (Rev. x. 1). Here we seem to find the explanation which is needed of the close and inseparable connection between the cloud and the rainbow—i.e., between judgment and mercy; between the darkness of the one and the brightness of the other. In the person and work of the atoning Mediator we find the only solution of that marvellous combination of judgment and of mercy which is the distinctive characteristic of the whole of the Divine economy. As the rainbow spans the vault of the sky and becomes a link between earth and heaven, so, in the person and work of Christ, is beheld the unchangeableness and perpetuity of that covenant of grace which, like Jacob's ladder, maintains the communication between earth and heaven, and thus, by bringing God very near to man, ushers man into the presence-chamber of God. IV. NECESSARY IMPERFECTION IN ALL EARTHLY TYPES OF HEAVENLY THINGS. In nature continued appearance of rainbow is dependent on continued existence of cloud. In heaven, the rainbow will ever continue to point backward to man's fall, and onward to the perpetuity of a covenant which is "ordered in all things and sure." But the work of judgment will then be accomplished, and therefore the cloud will have no more place in heaven. (*E. B. Elliot, M.A.*) *The flood and the rainbow*:—I. GOD SENT A FLOOD ON THE EARTH; God set the rainbow in the cloud for a token. The important thing is to know that the flood did not come of itself, that the rainbow did not come of itself, and therefore that no flood comes of itself, no rainbow comes of itself, but all comes straight and immediately from one living Lord God. The flood and the rainbow were sent for a moral purpose: to punish sinners; to preserve the righteous; to teach Noah and his children after him a moral lesson concerning righteousness and sin, concerning the wrath of God against sin—concerning God, that He governs the world and all in it, and does not leave the world or mankind to go on of themselves and by themselves. II. THE FLOOD AND THE RAINBOW TELL US THAT IT IS GOD'S WILL TO LOVE, TO BLESS, TO MAKE HIS CREATURES HAPPY, IF THEY WILL ALLOW HIM. They tell us that His anger is not a capricious, revengeful, proud, selfish anger, such as that of the heathen gods; but that it is an orderly anger, and therefore an anger which in its wrath can remember mercy. Out of God's wrath shines love, as the rainbow out of the storm. If it repenteth Him that He hath made man, it is only because man is spoiling and ruining himself, and wasting the gifts of the good world by his wickedness. If God sends a flood to destroy all living things, He will show, by putting the rainbow in the cloud, that floods and destruction and anger are not His rule; that His rule is sunshine and peace and order. III. The Bible account of the flood will teach us HOW TO LOOK AT THE MANY ACCIDENTS WHICH STILL HAPPEN UPON THE EARTH. These disasters do not come of themselves, do not come by accident or chance or blind necessity; God sends them, and they fulfil His will and word. He may send them in anger, but in His anger He remembers mercy, and His very wrath to some is part and parcel of His love to the rest. Therefore these disasters must be meant to do good, and will do good to

mankind. (*C. Kingsley, M.A.*) *The sign of the covenant*:—The appointment of the sign of the covenant, or of the rainbow as God's bow of peace, whereby there is at the same time expressed—1. The elevation of men above the deification of the creature (since the rainbow is not a divinity, but a sign of God, an appointment which even idolatrous nations appear not to have wholly forgotten, when they denote it God's bridge, or God's messenger). 2. Their introduction to the symbolic comprehension and interpretation of natural phenomena, even to the symbolizing of forms and colours. 3. That God's compassion remembers men in their dangers. 4. The setting up of a sign of light and fire, which, along with its assurance that the earth will never be drowned again in water, indicates at the same time its future transformation through light and fire. (*J. P. Lange, D.D.*) *The bow in the cloud*:—I. THAT GOD DELIGHTETH NOT IN JUDGMENTS. 1. Because they imply the existence of evil. 2. Because suffering is connected with them. 3. Because they are the last means employed to humble the proud and impenitent. II. THAT GOD PROVIDES FOR THE WELL-BEING OF MAN. 1. By removing every cause of fear. 2. By giving us perfect liberty of action. III. THAT GOD EMPLOYS MEANS TO WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF MAN. 1. By giving us a ground for trust in Him. 2. By the comprehensiveness of the covenant. 3. By giving us visible evidence of His faithfulness. IV. GOD'S COVENANTS WILL NEVER BE BROKEN. 1. Because they are freely given. 2. Because there is power to perform them. 3. Because the honour of His government is pledged in their performance. (*Homilist.*) *The bow of promise*:—I. THE SACRIFICE. A token of—1. Gratitude. 2. Penitence. 3. Good resolve. Dedication of himself and family to God's service. II. THE COVENANT. 1. A renewal of the primal blessing. 2. Animal food permitted to be used, with a particular restriction. 3. A strict law is given against murder, implying that men are responsible both to God and to their fellow-men, for any violence done. 4. A promise is given by God, that there shall be no more a flood to destroy the earth. III. THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT. The rainbow: the light of sunshine on a departing storm. A cheering, gladdening sight. Fit symbol of mercy, and of hope. LEARN: 1. From the sacrifice, self-consecration to God our Saviour. 2. From the covenant, obedience to God, and love to our fellow-men. 3. From the beautiful token of God's faithfulness, an undying hope in His mercy which endureth for ever. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *The bow in the cloud*:—How often after that terrible flood must Noah and his sons have felt anxious when a time of heavy rain set in, and the rivers Euphrates and Tigris rose over their banks and submerged the low level land! But if for a while their hearts misgave them, they had a cheering sign to reassure them, for in the heaviest purple storm-cloud stood the rainbow, recalling to their minds the promise of God. I. If it be true that God's rainbow stands as a pledge to the earth that it shall never again be overwhelmed, is it not also true that HE HAS SET HIS BOW IN EVERY CLOUD THAT RISES AND TROUBLES MAN'S MENTAL SEY? Beautiful prismatic colours in the rainbow that shines in every cloud—in the cloud of sorrow, in the cloud of spiritual famine, in the cloud of wrong-doing. II. We are too apt in troubles to settle down into sullen despair, to look to the worst, instead of waiting for the bow. There are many strange-shaped clouds that rise above man's horizon and make his heavens black with wind and rain. But each has its bow shining on it. Only wait, endure God's time, and the sun will look out on the rolling masses of vapour, on the rain, and paint thereon its token of God's love. (*S. Baring-Gould, M.A.*) *Lessons from the rainbow*:—Whenever we see a rainbow, let us—(1) Call to mind that it is God's bow seen in the cloud. (2) Conclude, that in His darkest dispensations, there is ever a gracious purpose towards us. (3) Consider that all warnings of wrath to come are accompanied with offers of pardon to the penitent. (*W. Adamson.*) *The bow in the cloud*:—I. IT IS LIKE OUR GOD TO GIVE THE CLOUD; IT IS ALSO LIKE HIM TO PLACE A BOW IN THE CLOUD (*Lam. iii. 32*). 1. The cloud turns our attention to God who sends it. 2. The bow kindles again our faith and love. II. IN THE NATURE OF THINGS, WHERE THERE IS NO CLOUD THERE CAN BE NO BOW. The clouds of suffering make the promises precious. III. THOUGH THE CLOUD MAY COVER AND OVERWHELM US, THE BOW SPANS THE ENTIRE CLOUD, AND REACHES ON BOTH SIDES, FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN. IV. THOUGH WE PRIZE THE BOW AND FEAR THE CLOUD, THE REAL VALUE IS GENERALLY IN THE CLOUD RATHER THAN IN THE BOW, WHICH IS GIVEN TO HELP US TO ENDURE THE CLOUD. V. THE CLOUD AND THE BOW BELONG NOT MERELY TO THE TIME WHEN WE ARE UNDER THEM, BUT TO ALL TIME. When Noah first saw the bow after the deluge, he would be delighted; many storms, and many bows, and many deliverances, would go to perfect faith and to establish love. So our trials and restings on Divine words and deliverances consolidate themselves into our life.

and become part of our permanent manhood. VI. THE CLOUD WILL FORCE ITSELF ON THE ATTENTION OF ALL WHO ARE UNDER IT, AND THE BOW MAY BE ADMIRIED BY EVERY BEHOLDER, BUT THE REAL VALUE OF THE CLOUD AND THE TRUE BEAUTY OF THE BOW CAN ONLY BE KNOWN TO THOSE WHO CONTEMPLATE THEM IN THE LIGHT OF GOD. 1. Affliction, when it comes personally, will force the attention and thought of the most stoical. But suffering is not necessarily sanctifying, or devils might exceed the angels in holiness. 2. Many from various causes, and with various motives, read the Scriptures. The true beauty of the Divine words can only be beheld in the light of Him who spake them. (*F. G. Marchant.*) *The bow in the cloud* :—I. THERE IS A DIVINE USE OF VISIBLE AND MATERIAL THINGS FOR SPIRITUAL PURPOSES. II. THE BOW IN THE CLOUD SUGGESTS GRACE AFTER JUDGMENT. III. THE BOW IN THE CLOUD IS A SIGN OF THE STABILITY OF THE DIVINE COVENANT, THE CHANGELESS CHARACTER OF THE GRACIOUS PURPOSE WHICH EMBRACES HUMANITY. IV. THE BOW IN THE CLOUD SYMBOLIZES THE DIVINE ELEMENT OF BRIGHTNESS IN THE DARKEST AND SADDEST OF HUMAN HISTORIES—THE PROMISE WHICH ENCIRCLES DIVINE DISPENSATIONS, AND GLADDENS THE DESOLATE HEART. (*The Preacher's Monthly.*) *The covenant connection between the cloud and the bow* :—I. IN A WORLD LIKE THIS IT IS TO BE EXPECTED, AS A THING OF COURSE, THAT CLOUDS SHOULD ARISE. It is a matter inseparable from the constitution of things here existing. And just so it is in the world of Providence, with those trials and afflictions of which we may consider the clouds of heaven as an illustration. We are here in a vale of tears, in which "it must needs be that afflictions will come." There are causes at work here which must as necessarily lead to this result, as in the world of nature the operation of the sun's heat on the water's surface must give rise to clouds. II. WHENEVER THESE CLOUDS ARISE, AND WHATEVER COURSE THEY TAKE, THEY ARE ALWAYS UNDER DIVINE GUIDANCE. How much like a thing of chance it seems when the moisture arises, almost imperceptibly to human vision, and floats away into the air of heaven! But there is nothing casual or chanceful about it. God is as truly present in that silent operation as He was when the world was made. The language of the text is true of every cloud that forms in the air—"I do bring it." And as He brings it, so He guides it. "Doubtless the sailing of a cloud hath Providence for its pilot." The hand which forms them as they rise is never removed from them while they exist. They go where God directs: they do what God designs; and when God wills, they dissolve and disappear. And just so it is with the clouds of trial and affliction which rise and float in the Providential firmament. From whatever source they come; whatever character they assume; or whatever instrumentality is employed to produce them, still, we are to look beyond all these, and to consider that it is God alone who brings them. III. THERE EXISTS AN INSEPARABLE COVENANT CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CLOUDS THAT RISE, EITHER IN THE NATURAL OR PROVIDENTIAL FIRMAMENT, AND THE BOW OF GOD'S PROMISE. In conclusion, several important practical questions are suggested by this subject: we may inquire—1. What is needed in order that the bow should appear in the heavens? The cloud, the sun and the rain must exist, and that, too, in a certain relation with each other. The cloud is needed as the canvas on which the bow of beauty shall be painted. The sun is needed to give the light, the colours, of which the painting is composed; and the drops of falling rain are needed, as the pencil by which those colours are applied—the medium required to decompose the rays of light, and spread out their varying hues in blended loveliness. And in the spiritual world, to which we are applying the subject, there must be that which answers to these three requirements. There must be cloud, a ground-work of human-guilt and sorrow, on which the bow can be projected. There must be a Sun of Righteousness—a Divine Saviour causing the beams of His favour to shine forth; and there must be the descending showers of Divine grace to refract those glorious rays, and illumine with their brightness the dark horizon of man's prospects. 2. But what is necessary to the seeing of this bow when it does appear? A man must be led to see himself a ruined sinner; he must turn, under a sense of this ruin, in true penitence to Christ; he must submit himself, without reserve, to Him; he must seek pardon through His blood, and acceptance in His merits; he must be led to the exercise of heart-felt living faith in Him and His precious word; he must have a personal and saving interest in the blessings of His covenant, and then he will be occupying the proper point of view from which to see distinctly the bow of the covenant, and feel the covenant and delight which that view can give. 3. But what is implied in seeing this bow? It denotes a thorough, inwrought, abiding conviction, that God's hand is in every rising, threatening cloud, and that it is there for good. It denotes a lively, vigorous hope, entering within the veil, and keeping the

soul steady in her heavenward course, whatever storms may burst and beat around it. (*R. Newton, D.D.*) *The token of the covenant*:—I. THE TIME WHEN IT WAS MADE WAS JUST AFTER THE FLOOD, AND CONSEQUENTLY: 1. A time of desolation. A father runs to the comfort of a frightened child; so our heavenly Father is never so ready to come to our comfort, as when the soul is filled to the full with a trembling fear of Him. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant." 2. In confirmation of this, observe again, the Lord made this covenant with Noah, when Noah was humbling himself as a sinner before Him. II. BUT WHAT WAS THIS COVENANT THAT THE LORD ENTERED INTO WITH NOAH AT THIS TIME? It is remarkable that, though detailed in this chapter with much minuteness, it relates only to temporal blessings. Not one spiritual promise does it contain. All it stipulates is, that there shall never again be a general flood or famine on the earth. And yet, notwithstanding this, it bears in many particulars so close a resemblance to that everlasting covenant established in Christ between Jehovah and His Church, that we cannot look at the one without thinking of the other; we see the same God acting in both on the same principles; making in fact the one almost a type or counterpart of the other. 1. This covenant had God alone as its author. 2. This covenant was a disclosure to Noah of God's secret thoughts and purposes. The history describes it as such, for it traces it not simply to God, but to the heart and mind of God. 3. This covenant with Noah was connected with a sacrifice; it was, indeed, founded on one. III. Let us pass on now to THE APPOINTED TOKEN OF THIS COVENANT. Now, what is there resembling this in the Christian covenant? We may turn to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. It is of the same character. It is a memorial to us of our sinfulness and danger, and of the promises God has given us in our crucified Lord of security from that sinfulness and danger. It is, too, like the rainbow, a memorial of God's own appointment; and being such, we may safely look on it in the same light in which He holds up this shining bow to us, as a memorial to God Himself of His promises. On our part, it is a reminding Him of them, a pleading of them before Him; and it is like an assuring of us on His part, that He will never forget them. Hence we sometimes call it a seal of God's covenant of grace. Every time it is celebrated among us, it confirms and ratifies anew that covenant, as a seal ratifies the earthly contract to which it is affixed. And hence our Church tells us that our Lord "instituted and ordained these holy mysteries as pledges of His love, as well as for a continual remembrance of His death." (*C. Bradley, M.A.*) *The bow in the cloud*:—I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE BOW APPEARS IN THE CLOUD. 1. God does not display the bow upon a blue and cloudless sky, but when there are clouds, and there is rain. The bow does not remove the clouds, but beautifies and illumines them. So the promises of God do not remove, but beautify and illumine, the darkness and mysteries of earth. The cloud of guilt is arched with the bow of pardon. The cloud of sorrow has the promise of support and relief; for bereavement, there shall be reunion; for cross-bearing, crown-wearing; for conflict, victory; for labour, rest; for pilgrimage, home. The cloud of mystery has the bow of providence arching it. The cloud of death has the bow of hope. 2. The bow can be seen only when the sun is shining. So the promises of God which arch the clouds of sin, sorrow, death, are produced by the light of the benign countenance of God, who is a sun and shield, and gives both grace and glory. 3. The bow can only be seen when the beholder looks up. II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOW IN THE CLOUD. 1. To remind God of His covenant. 2. To remind man of his comfort. (1) That God accepts human worship when associated with Divinely appointed sacrifice. (2) That God is slow to anger. (3) That God is great in power. (4) That God is faithful to His promises. (*F. W. Brown.*) *The rainbow*:—We have to talk of two things—first, the tenor of the covenant, and secondly, the token of it—running parallel all the way through between the two covenants. I. First, then, the covenant itself: WHAT IS ITS TENOR? 1. We reply that it is a covenant of pure grace. There was nothing in Noah why God should make a covenant with him. 2. The covenant, we note, in the next place, was all of promise. You will be struck, if you read these verses, how it runs over and over again: "I establish"—"it shall come to pass"—"I will"—"it shall"—"I will." "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your iniquities will I save you." 3. There is this about Noah's covenant, and about the covenant of grace, that it does not depend in any degree at all upon man; for, if you will notice, the bow is put in the cloud, but it does not say, "And

when ye shall look upon the bow, and ye shall remember My covenant, then I will not destroy the earth," but it is gloriously put not upon our memory, which is fickle and frail, but upon God's memory, which is infinite and immutable. "The bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant." Oh! it is not my remembering God, it is God's remembering me; it is not my laying hold of His covenant, but His covenant laying hold on me. 4. And hence—for all these reasons it is an everlasting covenant. For ever has God established this covenant in heaven. Even so the covenant of grace is not intended to be fleeting and temporary. "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." "He hath made with us an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." "He will ever be mindful of His covenant." II. THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT. The covenant needs no token, as far as God is concerned; tokens are given for us, because of our littleness of heart, our unbelief, our constant forgetfulness of God's promise. The rainbow is the symbol of Noah's covenant; and Jesus Christ, who is the covenant, is also the symbol of that covenant to us. He is the Faithful Witness in heaven. 1. Briefly, upon this part of the subject let us notice when we may expect to see the token of the covenant. (1) The rainbow is only to be seen painted upon a cloud. Expect no tokens, except when thou needest them. (2) Nor does a cloud alone give a rainbow. So, beloved, our sorrows must not only threaten, but they must really fall upon us. (3) But, then, there must be a sun; for clouds and drops of rain make not rainbows, unless the sun shineth. 2. What do we see in our covenant witness in heaven? We see in Him what we see in the rainbow. (1) In the rainbow we see transcendent glory and beauty. As one of the works of God, it is worthy to be sought out by them that have pleasure therein. (2) Again: in the rainbow, and in Christ, I see vengeance satisfied. Is not the bow the symbol of the warrior's power? (3) The rainbow, yet again, is a token that vengeance itself has become on our side. You see, it is, an unbroken "bow." Vengeance is there, justice is there; but which way is it pointed? It is turned upward; not to shoot arrows down on us, but for us, if we have faith enough to string it, and to make it our glorious bow—to draw it with all our might, to send our prayers, our praises, our desires, up to the bright throne of God. 3. How ought we to act with regard to this rainbow, and Jesus Christ as the symbol of the covenant? (1) First, let us act like little children. Little children run in clapping their hands with glee: "Father, there's a rainbow!" Out they run to look at it; and they wonder whether they could find the end of it; they wish you would let them run till they could catch it. Whenever we think of Christ let us be little children, and look, and look, and look again; and let us long to get at Him, for, unlike the rainbow, we can get at Him. (2) While we gaze, ought we not to praise and admire? One or two of the nations of antiquity had it as a part of their religion always to sing hymns when they saw the rainbow. Should not we whenever we see Christ? (3) And again, when we see Christ, we ought to confess our sin with humiliation. An old writer says that the Jews confess their sins when they see the rainbow. I am sure, whenever we see Christ, we ought to remember the deluge of wrath from which He has delivered us, the flames of hell from which He has saved us; and so, humbly bowing ourselves in the dust, let us love, and praise, and bless His name. (C. H. Spurgeon.) *The bow in the cloud*:—I. LET US NOTICE THE CLOUDS WHICH FREQUENTLY COME OVER OUR PATH. 1. Whoever may claim exemption from afflictions personal and relative, it is not the Christian, for, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." 2. Believers, in a peculiar manner, like their Lord, are exposed to temptations from the great adversary. 3. And frequently are they exposed to persecution from the world. II. THERE IS A BOW TO BE SEEN IN THE CLOUDS. God's promises (Zech. xiii. 9; James i. 12; Matt. v. 10; Isa. l. 10). III. THIS LEADS US TO INQUIRE WHAT THE BOW IN THE CLOUD BETOKENS. 1. Have not the clouds of affliction ever proved to be big with blessings in the experience of all true children of God? 2. Temptation has proved a blessing when it has been met with in the path of duty, and when it has been combated with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. 3. Persecution, when it has come upon the Church, has always purified it, and in like manner its effect has been, in the case of all sincere Christians, to make them more earnest than ever in the Divine life. 4. Clouds of spiritual darkness are not permitted to come upon the believer in vain. (The Evangelical Preacher.) *God's covenant and its token*:—I. THE COVENANT. II. THE TOKEN. The rainbow. "My bow." 1. An old thing invested with a new meaning. To the Christian common things are remembrancers of higher truths. The vine, the sun, &c., speak of Christ. Birds and flowers speak of Providence.

They are silent on these matters to the worldly man. 2. Conspicuous. The rainbow, an object vast and visible. Spanning the heavens. 3. Attractive. Beautiful in shape and colour. Though often seen, always looked upon with a new delight. 4. Universal. Wherever the falling rain could bring the flood to mind, there the rainbow preaches of the mercy and faithfulness of God. LEARN : I. The condescension of a covenant-making God. II. The faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God. III. The obligation we are under of covenanting to serve God, and of keeping that covenant. IV. To see in natural objects remembrancers of Divine thoughts and truths. (*J. C. Gray.*) *The bow in the cloud* :—1. The cloud of speculative doubt. 2. The cloud caused by secular occupation. 3. The cloud of social distress. 4. The cloud caused by spiritual depression—"Cast thy burden on the Lord." (*A. F. Barfield.*) *The bow in the cloud* :—How many spiritual lessons concerning the covenant itself are shadowed forth in this beautiful emblem. I would we never looked on it without remembering them. 1. "The bow shall be seen in the cloud." We make too much of clouds: the prophet tells us "the clouds are the dust of His feet" (*Nahum i. 3*); and the Psalmist tells us He maketh the clouds His chariot oftentimes, as He once came to His disciples walking upon the waters; the clouds are the way by which He comes down to people's hearts, or brings them up to Him. It may be a cloud in our families, a cloud impending over our circumstances, a cloud in our experience, some conflict, some temptation it may be; but if God has brought the cloud, do not fear; the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And we cannot have the bow if we have not the cloud. We make too much of clouds; welcome the cloud, if the bow of your God is seen there. 2. Again observe, the bow surrounds the cloud, encompasses it; it is crowned with the bow; the bow is coloured rain, the edge of the cloud gilded. 3. Again, it is not from earth that bow comes, but from the heavens. The clouds all arise from the earth, the sun made by God shines down upon them, and they reflect its beauty; and so it is the Sun of Righteousness that gilds the clouds arising from our own murky hearts; the promise of a time to come, when rain and clouds shall be over and gone. 4. We may learn another lesson from the bow. Some people are puzzled with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity; they wonder very much if so difficult and seemingly contradictory a doctrine can be true. Why, God has hung up in the heavens a natural trinity to remind us of the covenant of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the sinner's salvation. See how the three primal colours blend in that arch in all the varieties of beauty. There are three in one in that beautiful arch. Whenever you are puzzled as to the Trinity, look at the rainbow, God's natural emblem of the fulness of the Father, the fulness of the Son, and the fulness of the Holy Ghost, pledged for the salvation of poor sinners. 5. Yet again, look at the rainbow. It is a gateway without gates between heaven and earth. The beautiful arch lies open; no bolted gates hang there on golden hinges; it is a doorway without a door; for the rent veil has made a new and living way, and God has come down to us that He might have fellowship with us. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." 6. And again, consider the rainbow. It is a bow not bent towards us, but bent from us heavenwards, a bow without an arrow, a window in heaven, that our prayers may go up and enter in, and be presented by Him who stands before the throne, that we and they may be accepted. 7. Once again, the earth hides half of that beauteous bow. If you were above the earth, away beyond its mists, beyond its clouds and darkness, and beyond its hills and vales, the bow would appear a circle to you; now earth hides half of it, but by-and-by, when we are in heaven, the rainbow will be seen all round the throne. Now we see in part, we understand in part, we know in part; the mists of earth, and the earthliness of earth, hide much of the splendour and of the glory that our God has pledged Himself to bestow, but we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known, where the rainbow is about the throne, and round about the head of Him who sits upon the throne. 8. Lastly, we read of another circle round about the throne, the company of the redeemed! There they are under the shadow of the rainbow, which was to them the pledge of the love and care of the God in whom they trusted. (*M. Rainsford, B.A.*) *The rainbow* :—Well may we adopt the language of the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, and say, "Look upon the rainbow and praise Him who made it. It compasseth the heaven about with a glorious circle: and the hands of the Most High have bended it" (*chap. xliii. II, 12*). The prophet Isaiah has also a very remarkable reference to the rainbow, when speaking of the strength and perpetuity of the Church (*Isa. liv. 7, &c.*). Never more shall calamities overspread the whole Church, and threaten its complete destruction.

Times of trial and persecution must, indeed, come, but Zion will always be safe. As the rainbow is only to be seen painted upon a cloud, so when the conscience is covered with thickest, darkest gloom, at the remembrance of many and grievous sins, Christ Jesus is revealed as the covenant rainbow, displaying all the loveliest attributes of the Divine character, and betokening peace. The bow in the cloud is not a mere general assurance that God will keep His promises with His people, but it is a special token of His grace; and as we gaze upon the beautiful iris arching the eastern horizon, and resting on its dark background of clouds, our thoughts reach far beyond the covenant made with Noah, to a more glorious covenant of grace, and we may read in its glorious colourings, as in an illuminated Bible, a pledge of the provisions of mercy secured to us by His death and sacrifice. "Many years ago," says a pastor in his sketch-book, "I was intimately acquainted with a man of uncommon intellectual powers and social qualities, which endeared him to a large circle of friends. He had keen wit; was a close observer of character; courteous in his manner: he was without a personal enemy in the world. His parents were people of simple but fervent piety, and he was accustomed from childhood to attend public worship, and continued the practice—though not regularly—when he became a man. A lawyer by profession, his circumstances were so easy that he had no occasion to apply himself to business, and his social qualities proved a snare, and led to his ruin. In the meridian of life he was seized with a fatal disease, and slowly sank into the grave. His minister was attentive in visiting him, but the sick man seemed in good spirits, and even made a jest of the emaciation of his limbs. As death drew nearer, however, this careless state of mind gave place to a horror of great darkness. His Christian friends watched with sleepless anxiety, and prayed with earnest importunity for some token of mercy, but the sick man still wandered in the wilderness where there was no way. A sister's gentle voice inquired if he felt no relief; his uniform reply, given in broken and despairing accents, was, 'Not a ray of hope yet! Not a ray of hope!' Among his near relatives was an aged Christian who lived in a distant city, and, on one occasion, the silence of the chamber was disturbed by an exclamation from the sick man, who seemed to have been musing upon the dreary hopelessness of his condition: 'I used to laugh at uncle's prayers: but I would give the world for an interest in them now.' In this state of fearful apprehension and despair, the poor man went down to the grave, his last intelligible words being but a repetition of his oft-repeated complaint, 'Not a ray of hope yet!'" God has set His bow in the cloud as a token of His covenant of grace, and the most undeserving of us may now find acceptance in the Beloved. Aye, even amidst the awful scenes of the judgment, we shall not be disappointed of our hope, when we behold the Redeemer in whom we have trusted, coming with power and great glory; for there shall be "a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald!" (*J. N. Norton, D.D.*)

The rainbow and its lessons:—Well might a reflecting mind look with wonder at the marvellous arch, which in magic swiftness, and in more magic colours, encompasses the still cloud-covered part of heaven; whilst the radiant sun sends his glorious beams from the other part, already restored to its usual serenity. Its beauty delights the eye, whilst its grandeur elevates the mind; it teaches the omnipotence of God, but still more His love; when the flashes of lightning have ceased, and the roaring of the tempest is silent, its chaste brilliancy falls like morning dew on the desponding heart; admiration and gratitude mingle in the breast; and when the pearly bow then appears, like an eternal bridge, to connect heaven and earth, the soul rises on the soft wings of veneration, disturbed by no doubt, and awed by no fear, to those regions where love and beauty never cease. Almost all ancient nations, therefore, have connected religious ideas with the appearance of the rainbow. The Greeks considered it generally as the path on which Iris, the messenger of the king and queen of Olympus, travelled from heaven to earth; Homer describes it as fixed in the clouds to be a sign to man, either of war or of icy winter. But Iris herself was very frequently identified with the rainbow, and she was considered to be the daughter of Thaumias (*Wonder*), by Electra (*Brightness*), the daughter of Oceanus, which parentage describes appropriately the nature and origin of the rainbow. Her usual epithets are "swift-footed," and "gold-winged"; and the probable etymology of her name points either to the external, or, perhaps, to the internal connection between earth and heaven, between man and the deity; and thus she is the conciliating, the peace-restoring goddess, and is represented with the herald-staff in her left hand. The Persians seem likewise to have connected the office of divine messenger with that phenomenon; for an old picture represents a winged

boy on a rainbow, and before him kneels an old man in a posture of worship. The Hindoos describe the rainbow as a weapon in the hands of Indras, with which he hurls flashing darts upon the impious giants, and the Chinese consider it as foreboding troubles and misfortunes on earth; but the former regard it as also the symbol of peace, which appears to man when the combat of the heavens is silenced. These analogies are sufficient to prove the generality with which higher notions were attached to the rainbow; they account for its application in the Pentateuch to a very remarkable purpose; they explain why the New Testament represented the rainbow as an attribute of the Divine throne (Rev. iv. 3), or of angels sent as messengers upon the earth (Rev. x. 1); but they are likewise clear enough to manifest in this point also the great superiority of Biblical conceptions. In the Mosaic narrative every superstitious element is banished; it serves no other end but to remind God of His merciful promise never again to destroy the earth and its inhabitants; it is, indeed, appointed more for God than for the sake of man; God sees it, and remembers thus the everlasting covenant with the earth; and if the men are rejoiced at the sight of that beautiful phenomenon, it is merely because it gives them the certainty that the covenant is not forgotten; when torrents of rain begin to inundate the earth, and the thunder rolls through the heavy air, when lowering clouds conceal the light of the orb of day, and the heart of man begins to despond and to tremble, the rainbow appears suddenly like a thought from a better world; it announces the peace of nature, and the renewal of the eternal promise. And this implies another proof that the Noachian covenant imposed no obligations upon man, and that it was a pure act of mercy. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

The bow in the cloud.—The bow, which cheers us in the first pages of our Bible, shines brightly to the last. We read in the Revelation that John was in the Spirit; a door was opened before him in heaven; and, behold, a throne was set. But what encircled it? The rainbow (Rev. iv. 3; Rev. x. 1). Thus in the fullest blaze of the Gospel, the bow continued the chosen emblem of the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Let a few cases from the diary of experience illustrate this. In our journey through the wilderness, the horizon is often obscured by storms like these; terrors of conscience—absence of peace—harassing perplexities—crushing burdens of difficulties. But from behind these dusky curtains, the bow strides forth in its strength. It is indeed a cheerless day, when errors of conscience pour down pitiless peltings. Spectres of past sins start up. A grim array of bygone iniquities burst their tombs; and each terrifies by hideous form, and each points to eternal death as its due. The light of life seems excluded by the dread, Can there be hope, when sins have been so many and so grievous, and against the clearest knowledge, and after such tender pardons, and such healings of mercy? Wild is this tempest's roar; but in its midst faith can still look upwards, and see Jesus with outstretched arms before the throne of God. There is a rainbow upon His head, and the bright colours write, "Father, forgive them." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The darkness vanishes, and clear joy returns. Absence of peace, too, is a heavy cloud. Many a cross of spiritual distress lies in the believer's path. To-day he may recline joyously on the sunny slopes of the Gospel; to-morrow the thunders of Sinai affright. To-day David sits high at the banquet of the king; to-morrow he is an outcast in the cave of Adullam. But in these dreary hours the gladdening bow, which crowns the Redeemer's head, will suddenly appear. In letters of light the truth is emblazoned, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." "I change not; therefore are ye not consumed." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Again the darkness vanishes, and clear joy returns. Perplexities are often as a mass of clouds. The pilgrim would climb the hill of Zion, but impassable rocks are on either side: the sea is in the front; the Egyptians in the rear. He sighs, as the lepers of Samaria, "If we say, we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit still here, we die also" (2 Kings vii. 4). He is in the straits of David. The enemy has left him desolate; his friends are ready to stone him (1 Sam. xxx. 6). But he looks aloft to Jesus, and the bow is bright. The "faithful and true Witness" cheers him onward: "This is the way, walk in it." "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with Mine eye." So, also, burdens of difficulties often oppress. The believer is ready to sink beneath the weight. Moses felt this when he said, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel?" But a bow was in the cloud, and it sparkled with the promise, "Certainly I will be with thee." He went and prospered. The women on the way to the sepulchre

were in gloom: "Who," said they, "will roll us away the stone?" But a bow was in the cloud. Hoping against hope, they advanced, and the stone was gone. Paul trembled when he was to stand alone before the tyrant and his court. But a bow was in the cloud, and he took courage: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." (*Dean Loe.*)

The Rainbow.—I. Let us contemplate the INTERESTING BEAUTY OF THE RAINBOW. The rainbow is an object with which all are familiar. This beautiful rainbow could not be overlooked by the ancient heathens. They saw it, and were rapt in admiration. They thought it must be something Divine. They consecrated it—they fell prostrate and adored it—they called it Iris, whom they imagined to be the messenger of the gods. It is worthy of remembrance that, in this undoubted fact, we have another convincing evidence of the strength of ancient tradition; and of the importance of revelation being considered as the basis of a great portion of the heathen mythology. But how beautifully consonant with Divine truth is the idea embodied in this pagan mystery! The rainbow is, truly, a "messenger" of God—a messenger of peace and joy—a herald of truth, security, and love.

II. It may be desirable, in furtherance of our design, to examine the NATURE OF THIS PHENOMENON; and to explain its formation and physical properties. The rainbow is produced by rays of light falling upon drops of water. 1. There must be rain descending the whole breadth of the rainbow. 2. The sun must shine exactly opposite to the falling shower. 3. The spectator must stand with his back to the sun, placing himself thus opposite the rainbow. Then the following phenomenon will be observed:—If the sun shines upon the drops of rain as they are falling, the rays which come from those drops to the eye of the spectator will cause the appearance of the primary or strongly-coloured rainbow. And the reason of the colours being exhibited is, that every drop of rain, being globular and transparent, receives the pencil of light, which, as soon as it touches the outside of the higher part of the drop, is refracted or bent; it then passes on through the drop to the inside of the globule at the opposite or back part of it, where the inner surface acts like a concave mirror, and reflects or throws back the incident pencil of light to the outer or lower surface, through which it passes, and so is refracted a second time; and then it comes down to the eye of the spectator. But, as the rays emerge from the drop, they proceed each in a divergent line; therefore, one ray only of that pencil can reach the eye, giving the perception of one of the seven prismatic colours. Those rays which are contiguous and parallel produce the same colour; and its strength or vividness will depend upon the number of rays which, being contiguous and parallel, reach the eye. But, in the rainbow we observe the seven prismatic colours—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet; and always in the same order of arrangement. And this appearance of seven colours, in order, one above another, is caused by the drops being disposed in the same manner; and, as each drop makes a different angle with the eye, the different colours will be perceived in succession; and thus the whole bow will be presented to view.

III. Our subject especially requires that we should advance from this general view of the nature of this phenomenon, to the NOVELTY OF THE SPECTACLE AT THE ERA OF THE DELUGE. IV. Our serious reflections are now demanded for the consideration of the DESIGN AND UTILITY OF THIS PHENOMENON. This is expressed by the sacred historian: it is "set" as a sign—the token of a covenant between God and the earth. All the works of God praise Him—they show His eternal power and Godhead. In some of His works, Jehovah utters a more significant voice. The bush burns unconsumed; the pillar of fire goes before the people; the sea makes a pathway through its parted waves; the rock send forth its stream in the desert; the manna descends from the skies; the star guides the magi to Bethlehem; the sun refuses to shine upon the hour of the Saviour's crucifixion. So, in the present instance, we behold a sublime and beautiful phenomenon—a lecture printed in golden letters, on the tablet of the skies. 1. The rainbow is the memento of a dispensation of mercy and judgment. To creatures of sense, simple revelation seems insufficient for the purposes of faith. Feeble and faltering man "seeks after a sign." He requires something to impress his organs of perception as well as to convince his judgment. And He who made man, and considers his frame and constitution—his wants and fears—gives him sign upon sign, as well as precept upon precept. Hence, the great value of sacramental symbols. The bow of earth is the emblem of hostility; and is joined, in martial regalia, with the shield and the sword and the battle: but the celestial bow

has no array of vengeance—no shaft of perdition. It reminds, most powerfully, of the storm retiring, and the deluge past to return no more. 2. It is an illustration of the meeting of mercy and judgment. Behold the glorious arch! it rises heavenward; it descends to earth; it spans the concave of the skies; it thus brings heaven and earth together. It beams, like a bond of glory, between the accursed soil and the propitious heaven. 3. It is a demonstration of the triumph of mercy over judgment. To the spectator, the prismatic bow presents its brightest aspect—its dark side leans upon the storm—it tells the shelter-seeking husbandman that the sun hath pierced the clouds, and the winds are driving off the tempest. Its beaming is the radiance of love. 4. The rainbow is a striking symbol of our glorious Mediator. Come and behold how heaven and earth are made one in Christ Jesus: yea, believe, for yourselves, that God is in Christ reconciling you unto Himself, and not imputing your trespasses unto you! (*C. Burton, LL.D.*)

The rainbow:—A pledge more appropriate or significant it is not possible to conceive. The theory of the rainbow, physically considered, can be minutely worked out only by the intricate processes of calculus. Every time the arch is formed, there comes into harmonious play a multitude of laws; for example, laws of gravitation, which determine the position of the cloud and the curve of the descending rain and the size and the shape of each molecule; laws of light, according to which the solar rays are absorbed and transmitted and reflected and refracted and polarized, and this, too, in every variety of angle and direction and velocity; laws of geometry, which determine all the angles of incidence and reflection and refraction and interference and polarization; laws of vision and consciousness, by which the beholder perceives on his own retina the image of the beautiful phenomenon, and recognizes it as a rainbow. In other words, the bow in the cloud and our perception of it is the natural result of a perfect adjustment in space and in time of all these multitudinous, complicated, delicate processes. What a peculiar appropriateness, then, in God's selecting this phenomenon of exquisite beauty as the pledge of His veracity in respect to the constancy of nature, when we remember that the rainbow, involving as it does every time it is formed the perfect adjustment of countless contingencies, is nevertheless of frequent recurrence! What a sublime testimony each recurrence of the rainbow through the ages that have gone before us has been to the infinite regularity with which the Lord of nature has administered His own manifold laws! Had the bow in the cloud never been seen except when Noah and his family gazed on it, we should have ranked it, like the flood, among supernatural events. But the frequent recurrence of the phenomenon, ever and anon spanning our horizon, brings it down within the plane of the natural. Thus the natural becomes itself a sign of the supernatural. (*G. D. Boardman, D.D.*)

Everlasting covenant:—The rainbow of the covenant of grace lasts for ever; it never melts. The one on which Noah gazed soon lost its brilliancy. Fainter and fainter still it grew, until, like a coloured haze, it just quivered in the air, and then faded from the vision. Ten thousand rainbows since have arched our earth, and then melted in the clouds; but the rainbow of God's mercy in Christ abides for ever. It shines with undiminished splendour from all eternity, and its brilliancy will dazzle the eyes of redeemed humanity through the countless cycles of the same eternity. As has been said by Guthrie, it gleams in heaven to-night, yea, it beams sweetly on earth with harmonious hues, mellowed and blended into each other as fresh as ever. And when the sun has run his course and given place unto eternity, that bow of grace will still remain for ever, and be the theme of the ceaseless songs of spirits glorified in heaven, as, wrapt in the radiance of that sinless, sunless land, they realize that the darkness of earth was but the shadow of God's wing sheltering them from earth's too scorching sun. (*W. Adamson.*)

Was there a rainbow before?—The covenant is that there shall not be any more a flood to destroy the earth, and the token of the covenant is bow in the cloud. But was there not a rainbow before there was a flood? Of course there was. You do not suppose that the rainbow was made on purpose? There were rainbows, it may be, thousands of ages before man was created, certainly from the time that the sun and the rain first knew each other. But old forms may be put to new uses. Physical objects may be clothed with moral meanings. The stars in heaven and the sand by the seashore may come to be unto Abraham as a family register. One day common bread may be turned into sacramental food, and ordinary wine may become as the blood of atonement! The rainbow which was once nothing but a thing of evanescent beauty, created by the sun and the rain, henceforward became the token of a

covenant and was sacred as a revelation from heaven. When you lived in a rich English county the song of the lark was nothing to you, it was so familiar; you had heard the dinning trill of a hundred larks in the morning air; but when you went out to the far-away colony, and for years did not hear the voice of a single home bird, you suddenly caught the note of a lark just brought to the land, and the tears of boyhood streamed down your cheeks as you listened to the little messenger from home. To hear it was like hearing a gospel. From that day the lark was to you as the token of a covenant! In speaking to Noah, God did not then create the bow; He turned it into the sign of a holy bond. The fear is that we may have the bond and not the oath. We may see physical causes producing physical effects, and yet may see no moral significations passing through the common scenery of earth and sky. Cultivate the spirit of moral interpretation if you would be wise and restful: then the rainbow will keep away the flood; the fowls of the air will save you from anxiety; and the lilies of the field will give you an assurance of tender care. Why, everything is yours! The daisy you trod upon just now was telling you that if God so clothe the grass of the field, He will much more clothe the child that bears His own image. Very beautiful is this idea of God giving us something to look at, in order to keep our faith steady. He knows that we need pictures, and rests, and voices, and signs, and these He has well supplied. We might have forgotten the word, but we cannot fail to see the bow; every child sees it, and exclaims at the sight with glad surprise. If any one would tell the child the sweet meaning of the bow, it might move his soul to a still higher ecstasy! And so with all other things God has given us as signs and tokens: the sacred Book, the water of baptism, the bread and wine, the quiet Sabbath, the house of prayer;—all these have deeper meanings than are written in their names; search for those meanings, keep them, and you will be rich. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *The rainbow like God's promises*:—The rainbow arches the sky. A summer or two since, standing on a hill-top and looking eastward, I saw a wondrous sight. A fierce shower had just ended, and yonder, arching the heavens from extreme north to extreme south, was a magnificent rainbow. Each end of it rested on a mountain-top, while under its very centre, in a deep valley between the mountains, nestled a city whose spires and windows glistened in the reflection of the setting sun. Not more sublime was this than that which it symbolized. God's promises span the universe; they cover all the needs of man. Not a community exists which might not look up and see the jewels of Divine love arching the sky above them. (*A. P. Foster.*) *The bow of the covenant*:—"Oh," cries an impassioned lover of nature, "that I, on my deathbed, may behold a rainbow!" And let every Christian echo the voice, and say, "Oh, that on my deathbed I may behold the rainbow of the covenant." (*G. Gilfillan.*) *The covenant sign*:—The native account of the last martyrdom in Madagascar concludes in these touching words:—"Then they prayed, 'Oh Lord, receive our spirits, for Thy love to us hath caused this to come to us; and lay not this sin to their charge.' Thus prayed they as long as they had any life, and then they died—softly, gently; and there was at the time a rainbow in the heavens which seemed to touch the place of the burning." (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*) *I will look upon it*.—*God looking at the rainbow*:—While we are looking at the objects of nature, as well as at the events of Providence and the mysteries of grace, from below, God is looking at them from above. While we are gazing at the thunder-cloud with terror, and cowering under it, God sees it from a serene sky, and cast far beneath His feet. While the shadow of eclipse is darkening whole continents, the sun seems as bright a mote as ever it did to the eye of God. When a world or a system of worlds has ceased to shine, it appears to God as the melting of a little patch of snow on a spring mountain does to us. But while this is true in one view, it is also in another true; that often what seems little to us is great in the sight of God. The common order of men see no beauty in the rainbow; the man of science thinks little of it except as a complete analysis of light; the poet sings its splendour; the Christian, even while admiring, seldom thinks of it as a God-built bulwark against the return of the waters of Noah; but the Almighty never rears again its arch, or looks upon it when reared, without remembering His promise; it is to Him His original oath, cast in ærial architecture, transcribed in letters of gold. And so, too, with things of a moral kind. The difference between the famous contradictory conclusions of the two knights in reference to the golden and silver sides of the shield, is only a type of the difference between the estimates formed of various subjects by God and by man; only a type, because both these were right, and right equally; whereas God's thoughts are not only not as our thoughts, but are ineffably nearer the truth.

How solemn and how humbling to remember that, whatever we are looking at or thinking on, whether in the physical or moral world, God is looking at, and judging of too, from a far superior point of view; that our notions of things differ from His now by exaggeration, now by diminution, and now by distortion, but are never exactly the same; and that, even if they differ by a single iota, they are so far wrong. This consideration might indeed well drive us to despair, for how can we tell what are God's views, were it not that in the Bible, echoing too the voice of conscience, the "God within the breast," we are not altogether left to conjecture as to the Divine "thoughts," and all its writers justly can boast that they have the mind of God. (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Vers. 18, 19. **The sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth.**—*The factors of human culture:*—Mankind have a common calling as human beings, to which we give the name of culture. This comprehends all influences from without that form the human character and create history. The world of mankind is a complex product which several elements have helped to form. The names of these progenitors of the new race are significant of great principles of thought and action, which have guided the progress and shaped the destinies of mankind. We have here those effective powers which have been at work throughout the whole course of history. I. **RELIGION.** This is represented by Shem, which signifies "the name," i.e. the name of God with all its fullness of meaning for man. The knowledge of that name was to be preserved through Shem, for without it the race must fail to reach its highest perfection. Shem is mentioned first because religion is the chief glory of man, the only source of his true greatness, and the only worthy end of his life. Consider religion: 1. As a system of thought. It has certain truths addressed to the intellect, heart, and conscience. Religion comprises—(1) The knowledge of God; (2) the knowledge of man; (3) the knowledge of things. 2. As a rule of life. 3. As a remedy for sin. II. **THE SPIRIT OF WORK AND ENTERPRISE.** This is another factor which enters into the culture of the human race. It is represented by Japheth, which signifies "enlargement." There was in him an energy by which he could overcome obstacles and expand his empire over the world. This spirit of work and enterprise has given birth to civilization. The union of external activity with mental power is the source of man's greatness and superiority in the world. 1. It is necessary to material progress. In the division of human labour the thinkers stand first of all. Mind must survey the work and plan the means by which it is to be accomplished. But for the practical work of life, there must be energy to carry out the thoughts of the mind, and render them effective in those labours which minister to prosperity and happiness. 2. It is necessary to mental progress. By far the larger proportion of human knowledge has been acquired by the actual struggle with the difficulties of our present existence. The battle of life has drawn out the powers of the mind. 3. It is necessary to religious progress. The knowledge of spiritual truth must be expressed in duty, or man can have no religion. Doctrines are only valuable as they teach us how to live. Activity without contemplation has many evils, but united with it is the perfection of spiritual life. True thoughts of God and ourselves must be manifested in that energy by which we contend with evil, and perform our duty. III. **THE POWER OF EVIL.** This is represented by Ham, who is the picture of moral inability—of one who knows his duty, but is unable to perform it. A large portion of the energy of mankind is spent in contention with evil, in neutralizing the labours of one another, and but a poor remainder issues in useful work. This power of evil accounts for—1. The slow education of the race. 2. The monstrous forms of vice. These are developed even in the midst of the best influences and restraints. 3. The limited diffusion of religion. 4. The imperfection of the best. Still, our great hope for the race is that evil is not the strongest power in it. (*T. H. Leale.*)

Vers. 20-27. **Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and was drunken.**—*The lessons of Noah's fall:*—I. **THE MORAL DANGERS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.** 1. Increased temptations to sensual indulgence. 2. It exercises a tyranny over us. 3. It tends to make us satisfied with the present. II. **THE SPREADING POWER OF EVIL.** He who once allows evil to gain the mastery over him, cannot tell to what degrading depths he may descend. III. **THE TEMPTATIONS WHICH ASSAIL WHEN THE EXCITEMENT OF A GREAT PURPOSE IS PAST.** IV. **THE POWER OF TRANSGRESSION TO DEVELOP MORAL CHARACTER IN OTHERS.** 1.

The sins of others give occasion for fresh sins in ourselves. 2. The sins of others may give occasion for some high moral action. V. THE APPARENT DEPENDENCE OF PROPHECY UPON THE ACCIDENTS OF HUMAN CONDUCT. The words of Noah take too wide a range and are too awful in their import to warrant the interpretation that they were the expression of a private feeling. They are a sketch of the future history of the world. The language is prophetic of the fate of nations. It may seem strange that so important an utterance should arise out of the accident of one man's transgression. The same account, too, must be given of the greater part of the structure of Scripture. Some portions were written at the request of private persons, some to refute certain heresies which had sprung up in the Church. Many of the books in the New Testament owe their origin to the needs and disorders of the time. But this does not destroy the authority or Divine origin of the Scripture, for the following reasons: 1. The Bible has thus imparted to it a human character and interest. 2. The Bible is unfolded by an inner law. 3. The Bible shows the advance of history towards an end. (*T. H. Leale.*)

Noah drunk:—I. A SINFUL ACT CASTING A GLOOM OVER A PURE LIFE. 1. That sin-stricken humanity cannot reach perfection in the present life. 2. That a man is not invariably influenced by society. Noah stood firm as a rock against the multitude, but now in his own tent falls. 3. That witnessing the greatest judgments, and experiencing the tenderest mercies of God, will not preserve us from sin. II. A SENSUAL ACT RIGHTLY PUNISHED. 1. This act is an index of a debased mind. 2. It shows an indifference as to the means of gratifying his sinful propensity. 3. The punishment is degrading to himself and to his descendants. III. A VIRTUOUS ACT WELL REWARDED. 1. The commendation of their own conscience. 2. The blessing of an aged father. 3. The approbation of God. (*Homilist.*) *Noah's sin*:—Noah's sin brings before us two facts about sin. First, that the smaller temptations are often the most effectual. The man who is invulnerable on the field of battle amidst declared and strong enemies, falls an easy prey to the assassin in his own home. The temptations Noah had before known were mainly from without; he now learnt that those from within are more serious. Many of us find it comparatively easy to carry clean hands before the public, or to demean ourselves with tolerable seemliness in circumstances where the temptation may be very strong but is also very patent; but how careless are we often in our domestic life, and how little strain do we put upon ourselves in the company of those whom we can trust. What petulance and irritability, what angry and slanderous words, what sensuality and indolence could our own homes witness to! Secondly, we see here how a man may fall into new forms of sin, and are reminded especially of one of the most distressing facts to be observed in the world, viz., that men in their prime and even in their old age are sometimes overtaken in sins of sensuality from which hitherto they have kept themselves pure. We are very ready to think we know the full extent of wickedness to which we may go; that by certain sins we shall never be much tempted. And in some of our predictions we may be correct; our temperament or our circumstances may absolutely preclude some sins from mastering us. Yet who has made but a slight alteration in his circumstances, added a little to his business, made some new family arrangements, or changed his residence, without being astonished to find how many new sources of evil seem to have been opened within him? While therefore you rejoice over sins defeated, beware of thinking your work is nearly done. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *Noah's husbandry and excess*:—1. The best and holiest of men upon God's seating them here below, must undertake some honest calling. So Noah is for husbandry. 2. Man's labour and planting must serve God's providence to bring the fruits of the earth unto their due use and end (ver. 20). 3. Feeding or drinking on a man's own labours is a privilege not denied to man. 4. The best of men may be apt to exceed in the use of creature comforts. 5. Wine is a mocker, and may deceive the holiest men that are not watchful (Prov. xx. 1). God hath not spared to discover the worst as the best of his saints (ver. 20). (1) To humble them. (2) To warn others. (3) To glorify grace, that their righteousness is of Him only (ver. 21). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Drink and drunkenness*:—It is related of a converted Armenian on the Harport mission field, that he was a strong temperance man. On one occasion, disputing with a drinker of the native wine, he was met with the rejoinder, "Did not God make grapes?" To this, with native warmth, the Armenian replied: "God made dogs; do you eat them? God made poisons; do you suck them?" While not prepared to argue after this fashion, all must admit the appalling follies of excessive drinking. Thomas Watson says

that there is no sin which more defaces God's image than drunkenness. And sadly as it mars and blots the face and form of the body, its deleterious and destructive influences upon the mental powers and moral principles are more distressing. "Alcohol is a good creature of God, and I enjoy it," said a drinker to James Mowatt. To this he replied, "I dare say that rattlesnakes, bon-constrictors, and alligators are good creatures of God, but you do not enjoy swallowing them by the half-dozen." As Guthrie says, "No doubt, in one sense, it is a creature of God; and so are arsenic, oil of vitriol, and prussic acid. People do not toss off glasses of prussic acid, and call it a creature of God." *The sin of drunkenness*:—Noah, as soon as he could get settled, betook himself to the employment of husbandry; and the first thing he did in this way was to plant a vineyard. So far all was right; man, as we have seen, was formed originally for an active, and not an idle life. Adam was ordered to keep the garden and to dress it; and when fallen, to till the ground from whence he was taken, which now required much labour. Perhaps there is no occupation more free from snares. But in the most lawful employments and enjoyments, we must not reckon ourselves out of danger. It was very lawful for Noah to partake of the fruits of his labour; but Noah sinned in drinking to excess. He might not be aware of the strength of the wine, or his age might render him sooner influenced by it: at any rate, we have reason to conclude from his general character that it was a fault in which he was overtaken. But let us not think lightly of the sin of drunkenness. "Who hath woe; who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine." Times of festivity require a double guard. Neither age nor character are any security in the hour of temptation. Who would have thought that a man who had walked with God, perhaps more than five hundred years, and who had withstood the temptations of a world, should fall alone? This was like a ship which had gone round the world, being overset in sailing into port. What need for watchfulness and prayer! One heedless hour may stain the fairest life, and undo much of the good which we have been doing for a course of years! Drunkenness is a sin which involves in it the breach of the whole law, which requires love to God, our neighbours and ourselves. The first as abusing His mercies; the second as depriving those who are in want of them of necessary support, as well as setting an ill example; and the last as depriving ourselves of reason, self-government, and common decency. It also commonly leads on to other evils. It has been said, and justly, that the name of this sin is Gad—a troop cometh! (*A. Fuller.*) *Drunkenness the way to ruin*:—One fine summer evening as the sun was going down, a man was seen trying to make his way through the lanes and cross-roads that led to his village home. His unsteady, staggering way of walking showed that he had been drinking; and though he had lived in the village over thirty years, he was now so drunk that it was impossible for him to find his way home. Quite unable to tell where he was, at last he uttered a dreadful oath, and said to a person going by, "I've lost my way. Where am I going?" The man thus addressed was an earnest Christian. He knew the poor drunkard very well, and pitied him greatly. When he heard the inquiry, "Where am I going?" in a quiet, sad, solemn way he answered: "To ruin." The poor staggering man stared at him wildly for a moment, and then murmured, with a groan. "That's so." "Come with me" said the other, kindly, "and I'll take you home." The next day came. The effect of the drink had passed away, but those two little words, tenderly and lovingly spoken to him, did not pass away. "To ruin! to ruin!" he kept whispering to himself. "It's true, I'm going to ruin! Oh, God, help me and save me!" Thus he was stopped on his way to ruin. By earnest prayer to God he sought the grace which made him a true Christian. His feet were established on the rock. It was a rock broad enough to reach that poor, miserable drunkard, and it lifted him up from his wretchedness, and made a useful, happy man of him. *Saints' sins*:—1. As the photographic art will not make the homely beautiful, nor catch a landscape without catching the shadow of deformity as readily as the shadow of beauty; so, says Swin, the historic genius of the Bible gathers up all virtue and vice equally, and transfers it to the record—the one for human as Divine commendation—the other for human as Divine condemnation. And thus it comes to pass that we do not see a Hebrew nation adorned in the gay robes of a modern fresco, but one that sinned against God: a beacon tower of warning to all future nations of the earth that the Merciful and All-gracious will by no means clear the guilty. 2. When the painters of the last century painted the great heroes of that age, they threw upon their subjects the costumes of that day; and now, when in our days their dresses seem ridiculous and create a smile, we rise above the dress

—fasten our eye upon the firm-set lips, the chiselled nose and noble forehead, and bless God that we have such portraits of such giants. Just so in the Bible, its great heroes are all represented in the clothes they wore—from Noah, in the cloak of drunkenness, to Peter, in the robe of equivocation: and it is for us to let those garments alone, and admire the matchless contour of their spiritual countenances. (*W. Adamson.*) *The original home and diffusion of the vine:*—The early history of the vine cannot be traced with any certainty. It is first introduced to our notice, in the above passage, as the cause of Noah's shameful drunkenness, and as one of the articles of provision hospitably offered by Melchizedek to Abraham. It was, in all probability, a native of the hilly region on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, and of the Persian province of Ghilan. The tradition of the Jews is that the vine was first planted by God's own hand on the fertile slopes of Hebron. It has been gradually introduced into other countries, and it has been said that the great revolutions of society may be traced in its gradual distribution over the surface of the globe; for wherever man has penetrated, in that spirit of change and activity which precedes or accompanies civilization, he has assisted in the dissemination of this useful plant, much more surely and rapidly than the ordinary agencies of nature. Now, the range of the vine extends from the shores of the New World to the utmost boundaries of the Old; its profitable cultivation in the open air, however, being still confined to a zone about two thousand miles in breadth, and reaching in length from Portugal to India. (*Things Not Generally Known.*) **Shem and Japheth took a garment.**—*Piety in children:*—1. Piety in children hastens to cover that which impiety discloseth to reproach. 2. Some gracious seed is vouchsafed to the saints for their comfort, as wicked for their grief. 3. Piety to parents will use lawful means to cover their shame. 4. Piety turns its back to the discovery of parents' evils, as unnatural. 5. It is piety in children to cover the infirmities or nakedness of parents. Yet this is no rule for all to hide wilful sinners. 6. Piety turns the face away, and would not willingly see the shame of parents. A sweet pattern. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *On covering the sins of others:*—Charity is the prime grace enjoined upon us, and charity covers a multitude of sins. And whatever excuses for exposing others we may make, however we may say it is only a love of truth and fair play that makes us drag to light the infirmities of a man whom others are praising, we may be very sure that if all evil motives were absent, this kind of evil-speaking would cease among us. But there is a malignity in sin that leaves its bitter root in us all, and causes us to be glad when those whom we have been regarding as our superiors are reduced to our poor level. And there is a cowardliness in sin which cannot bear to be alone, and eagerly hails every symptom of others being in the same condemnation. Before exposing another, think first whether your own conduct could bear a similar treatment, whether you have never done the thing you desire to conceal, said the thing you would blush to hear repeated, or thought the thought you could not bear another to read. And if you be a Christian, does it not become you to remember what you yourself have learnt of the slipperiness of this world's ways, of your liability to fall, of your sudden exposure to sin from some physical disorder, or some slight mistake which greatly extenuates your sin, but which you could not plead before another? And do you know nothing of the difficulty of conquering one sin that is rooted in your constitution, and the strife that goes on in a man's own soul and in secret though he show little immediate fruit of it in his life before men? Surely, it becomes us to give a man credit for much good resolution and much sore self-denial and endeavour, even when he fails and sins still, because such we know to be our own case, and if we disbelieve in others until they can walk with perfect rectitude, if we condemn them for one or two flaws and blemishes, we shall be tempted to show the same want of charity towards ourselves, and fall at length into that miserable and hopeless condition that believes in no regenerating spirit nor in any holiness attainable by us. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *Filial reverence:*—1. Lettice would quietly watch for her father, and as quietly lead him home, that none of the neighbours might see his shame as a drunkard. With what tenderness she led the reeling form within doors; and when he had flung himself upon his poor bed, how tenderly she covered him, ere she herself retired to rest. She could not bear the thought of friends around knowing that her father lived to drink. 2. Joe Swayne, the street Arab, had been lured to Sunday school by a teacher on her way. In conversation he had mocked over his mother's propensity for drink, and jocosely described her words and ways when she returned to their wretched garret after a deep debauch. At school, God's word taught, and God's grace trained him to think otherwise. Child could not be kinder

to his mother than he was. No one ever heard him mention his mother's shame. (*W. Adamson.*)

Vers. 25-27. Cursed be Canaan.—*The sons of Noah*:—I. The curse of Canaan was **SERVITUDE**. Noah saw in Ham and his son some traits of character that showed a moral inferiority, which he foresaw would have an effect upon their descendants, and would be visited by God with chastisement and disapproval. II. The blessing of Shem was **RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGE**. Israel was "alone among the nations" in respect of their superior knowledge of God. From this "Shemitic" people was in future days to go forth the "Law" and the "Word" of God (*Isa. ii. 3*), which were to bring all other nations to God. III. The blessing of Japheth was **ENLARGEMENT**. His name means "widely-extending"; and his descendants were great colonizers, spreading over Europe in one direction, over Persia and India in another. **Lessons**:—1. That the Lord is King ruling over all, and that He judges among the nations. 2. That the Lord is Saviour, and provides for the way in which His truth shall be preserved amid the wickedness of men, and shall finally subdue and renovate the world. 3. That all nations, whether subjected to others, or widely-extending their power, should learn to serve and praise "Jehovah, God of Shem." (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) **Lessons**:—1. Gracious souls may sleep awhile in sin, but they awake again. 2. Awaking saints sadly resent their falls, and depart from evil. 3. God brings to light the wicked practices of ungracious ones against His saints, and sheweth it to His prophets (*ver. 28*). 4. Cognisance taken by God and His prophets of wicked practices foreruns a curse. 5. A father may be a minister of a curse from God upon his own children, and he must not spare, as here in Noah, and in Jacob. 6. The curse of God on body and soul finds men in their impieties against Him and their parents. 7. God's curse pursueth the children that go on in their fathers' steps (Canaan). 8. Such as abuse sonship in the Church, may justly look to be made slaves unto it. The vilest of slavery is their portion. Such is the curse of Ham. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) **Scripture predictions**:—The manner of Scripture here is worthy of particular remark. 1. The prediction takes its rise from a characteristic incident. The conduct of the brothers was of comparatively slight importance in itself, but in the disposition which it betrayed it was highly significant. 2. The prediction refers in terms to the near future and to the outward condition of the parties concerned. 3. It foreshadows under these familiar phrases the distant future, and the inward, as well as the outward, state of the family of man. 4. It lays out the destiny of the whole race from its very starting-point. These simple laws will be found to characterize the main body of the predictions of Scripture. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) **The curse of Canaan, and its fulfilment**:—Canaan is under a curse of servitude to both Shem and Japheth: the former was fulfilled in the conquest of the seven nations of Israel; and the latter in the subjugation of the Tyrians and Carthaginians, who were the remainder of the old Canaanites, by the Greeks and Romans. So far as the curse had reference to the other descendants of Ham, it was a long time, as I have said, ere it came upon them. In the early ages of the world they flourished. They were the first who set up for empire; and so far from being subject to the descendants of Shem or Japheth, the latter were often invaded and driven into corners by them. It was Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, who founded the imperial city of Babylon; and Mizraim, another of his descendants, who first established the kingdom of Egypt. These, it is well known, were for many ages two of the greatest empires in the world. About the time of the Captivity, however, God began to cut short their power. Both Egypt and Babylon within a century sank into a state of subjection, first to the Persians, who descended from Shem, and afterwards to the Greeks and Romans, who were the children of Japheth. Nor have they ever been able to recover themselves: for to the dominion of the Romans succeeded that of the Saracens, and to theirs that of the Turks, under which they with a great part of Africa, which is peopled by the children of Ham, have lived and still live in the most degraded state of subjection. To all this may be added that the inhabitants of Africa seem to be marked out as objects of slavery by the European nations. Though these things are far from excusing the conduct of their oppressors, yet they establish the fact, and prove the fulfilment of prophecy. (*A. Fuller.*) **The question of a curse upon children to remote periods**:—Let us proceed to offer a remark or two on the justice of the Divine proceeding in denouncing a curse upon children, even to remote periods, for the iniquity of their parents. It is worthy of notice that the God of Israel thought it no dishonour to His

character to declare that He would "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children in those that hated Him, any more than that He would show mercy to those that loved Him," which He did in an eminent degree to the posterity of Abram. And should any object to this, and to the Bible on this account, we might appeal to universal fact. None can deny that children are the better or the worse for the conduct of their parents. If any man insist that neither good nor evil shall befall him but what is the immediate consequence of his own conduct, he must go out of the world; for no such state of existence is known in it. 1. There is, however, an important difference between the sin of a parent being the occasion of the prediction of a curse upon his posterity, who were considered by Him who knew the end from the beginning as walking in His steps, and its being the formal cause of their punishment. The sin of Ham was the occasion of the prediction against the Canaanites, and the antecedent to the evil predicted; but it was not the cause of it. Its formal procuring cause may be seen in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. To Ham, and perhaps to Canaan, the prediction of the servitude of their descendants was a punishment: but the fulfilment of that prediction on the parties was no farther such than as it was connected with their own sin. 2. There is also an important difference between the providential dispensations of God towards families and nations in the present world, and the administration of distributive justice towards individuals with respect to the world to come. In the last judgment, "every one shall give an account of himself to God, and be judged according to the deeds done in the body": but while we are in this world we stand in various relations, in which it is impossible that we should be dealt with merely as individuals. God deals with families and nations as such; and in the course of His providence visits them with good and evil, not according to the conduct of individuals, but as far as conduct is concerned, that of the general body. To insist that we should in all cases be treated as individuals, is to renounce the social character. (*Ibid*). *Predictions respecting the sons of Noah*:—I. WE RETRACE SACRED HISTORY TO FIND WHEN GOD SPOKE, AND TO KNOW WHAT GOD HAS SPOKEN OF A PREDICTIVE CHARACTER. Noah "began to be an husbandman." Upon partaking of the wine produced from the first full-ripe grape, unaccustomed to such a beverage, and indulging too incautiously in its use, "he was drunken"! Yes, in the most lawful duties and pleasures we are liable to temptation. Neither age nor character afford perfect security from spiritual harm. Connected with this evil of excessive drinking, was the loss of self-government. Shamelessness and drunkenness are common associates. "He lies uncovered within his tent." And as the sins of Israel rarely escape the eyes of the Canaanites, so Ham observed his father, and, "fool-like," made "a mock of his sin." It is a terrible mark of a vitiated mind when men "not only do evil, but take pleasure in them that do the same"! Shem and Japheth, displeased at the conduct of their brother, and concerned for their father's reputation, "took a garment and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father." II. We shall now proceed to make some remarks relating to THE MEANING OF THESE PREDICTIONS, and thus prepare the way for marking their agreements with history. 1. The order of names is not the order of the age of the sons of Noah, but rather of the development of the truth of the predictions relating to them. 2. These predictions relate to the nations originating in these sons of Noah, and not to the sons of Noah themselves. 3. These predictions wear a general aspect. Here in some six or seven sentences we have an epitome of the world's history. There is no room for detail. Here are portrayed certain commanding features. 4. In tracing the fulfilment of these predictions we must have assistance from the geography of the world, over which these descendants of Noah were scattered. We must see these nations separate; or if together, we must see some strong physical or philological affinities between the families issuing from these several parent sources. 5. In tracing the settlement of these descendants of Noah, we must remember that their first division only embraced a small portion of the earth's surface. Now, here is wisdom; as these separate tribes enlarged, they went on to occupy regions more and more remote from each other. III. Let us now consider THE AGREEMENT SUBSISTING BETWEEN THESE PREDICTIONS AND THE GREAT OUTLINES OF HISTORY. 1. Adopting the order before us, we shall first notice the descendants of Ham and their servitude. "Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants—a slave—shall he be unto his brethren." Looking at the early history of his descendants, we see that Nimrod, one of that number, founded the Babylonian, and some think the Assyrian states. Reading the eleventh verse of the eighteenth chapter thus: "Out of that

land he went forth to Assyria and built Nineveh": a reading the more probable, because the historian is there relating the exploits of "the mighty hunter." Mizraim established the kingdom of Egypt. Indeed, Egypt is called, in Scripture, the "land of Mizraim"; and the Easterns designate it in the same way. My brethren, you are familiar with the names of Egypt and Babylon. You know that the Hebrews, the seed of Shem, were subdued and oppressed for a season by both of these powers. And yet the method of their deliverance from this servitude afforded a brilliant discovery of God's mindfulness of His covenant. What terrible judgments were inflicted upon Egypt, in order to effect the exodus of the Israelites! How many curses fell upon the children of Ham, because they oppressed the seed of Shem! The people that once tyrannized over the Israelites are now under despotic power, taxed in their produce almost beyond endurance, inflicting injuries upon their own persons to unfit them for the service of their proud governor: they tell us that "the sceptre of Mizraim has passed away," that "Egypt is the basest of kingdoms." They serve as slaves, and are wasted by the hands of strangers. May "He who smote Egypt, heal it." May they "return to the Lord, and He shall be entreated of them and shall heal them" (Isa. xix.). Look at Africa! See how its better portions have been subjected by the Romans, the Saracens, the Turks. It was on her coast that a colony of emigrants from Tyre—Phœnicians, descendants of Ham, and a people distinguished for navigation and commerce—sought to make to themselves a name and a kingdom, by founding the famed city of Carthage. But the proud city was destroyed by the Romans, and a consul was directed to preside over the province as the deputy of a Japhetic power. Numbers survived the terrible massacre and ruin. And numbers still survive these and kindred calamities, and people the interior of that mighty continent. Still the children of Ham dwell upon Africa's burning sands; but what curses follow them. 2. We pass on to notice the descendants of Shem and their privileged connection with Jehovah. "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." As there is a special line of descent referred to in the tenth chapter of Genesis, we shall confine our remarks to the prediction before us as agreeing with certain facts in the history of the Jewish people. Now, the prediction refers us not so much to their temporal importance, or to the extent of their territory, as to certain moral and religious advantages. "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem." Some critics render it, "Blessed of Jehovah my God be Shem." Following our own version, it amounts to the same; for "blessed is that people whose God is the Lord." But there is a difference in the form of "cursing" and "blessing." The prophetic patriarch says, "Cursed be Canaan," for all evil is from men themselves; and you will remember that the children of Ham were first wicked and then wretched. But when he speaks of "blessing," he ascribes all the praise to that Being "from whom cometh every perfect gift." The holiness of Shem must be traced to the free grace of God. And had the holiest Hebrew been dealt with according to his desert, he would have lost "the blessing." "Not unto them, O Lord, but unto Thy name be all the praise, for Thy mercy and Thy truth sake." The facts of Jewish history, which we think at agreement with the prediction before us, are these. The knowledge of the true religion, the knowledge of God, and covenant relationship to Jehovah as a visible Church, were confined, from Noah to Christ, two thousand years, almost entirely to the descendants of Shem, and especially to the Hebrews. It appears that Eber was living, and had two sons at the time the earth was divided (Gen. x. 25); and upon the supposition that his name gave rise to that of the Hebrew language and people, it is likely that by him and by his posterity the original Adamic and Noachic language (supposing that the Hebrew) was preserved uncorrupt; that he was the follower of Shem, his pious ancestor, and that from him proceeded that visible Church which has remained in "the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" a "witness" for Jehovah. The sacred historian having told us of "the children of Eber," informs us that "then was the earth divided," and henceforward the genealogy of Noah's descendants is confined to the line of Shem. Reading on in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, we arrive at the Abrahamic era; whence Matthew, the New Testament historian, traces the ancestry of Messias. As a pledge to Abram that his seed should possess the land of promise, and to intimate their religious distinction, we find the patriarch leaving Ur, entering Canaan, and there "building an altar unto the Lord who appeared unto him." It would be easy to show you how God entered into covenant with Abraham, and renewed the same with the other ancestors of the Jewish people. How He at length conducted their posterity out of Egypt, established a system of

religion amongst them, caused them to rear a tabernacle and then a temple for His worship, sanctuaries consecrated by a visible and luminous cloud, the symbol and token of His peculiar presence. How He raised up prophets for their instruction, and how "the lively oracles" of His word were preserved amongst them notwithstanding all their difficulties and dispersions. Brethren, compared with this favoured nation, all the other nations were "without God." "Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." Think of their religious peculiarities; think of the unusual and miraculous interpositions of "the Most High" so often made for their rescue and supply; think how subservient all the vicissitudes of surrounding nations were made to their well-being; and say, Did not Jehovah dwell in Zion, and was not her King in her? And then, when you remember, "how oft they provoked the Most High, and lightly esteemed the rock of their salvation," will you not unite with Noah in the language of adoration, the ascription of praise, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem"! Nor is this all. After the lapse of two thousand years, and "in the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son as the spiritual Deliverer of a fallen world." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." "God was manifest in the flesh." But "to them is He sent first." And do you ask His genealogy? He is "the Son of David, the Seed of Abraham, the Descendant of Shem." Yes; "of him, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, and blessed for ever." "Blessed be the God of Shem, who remembered us in our low estate, for His mercy endureth for ever." Let the seed of Abraham, on whose nature He took hold, say so; for "His mercy endureth for ever." 3. It remains for us to notice the descendants of Japheth, and their enlargement. The prediction concerning Japheth is, as his name imports, "enlargement" or "persuasion." Some expositors prefer the latter rendering. Then it may be said to have been accomplished in the accession of the Gentiles to the Church of God. It is an important fact, that Christianity has prevailed chiefly in the countries of Japheth. Japheth "dwells in the tents of Shem." Shem laboured, and Japheth enters into his labours. But few of the descendants of Ham or Shem have as yet professed the Christian faith in its purity, whilst multitudes of Japheth's posterity, in Asia, America, and Europe, "bless the God of Shem," and enjoy His former distinction. But as the word, when meaning "to persuade," usually has a bad sense; we incline to our version: "God shall enlarge Japheth." And we ask you if history is not at agreement with this ancient prediction? Understand it as referring to multitude, territory, or dominion, Japheth is enlarged. It appears that Ham had four sons, Shem had five, and Japheth had seven. We cannot think of the Germanic and northern nations, without associating the idea of multitude: the invasion of the barbarian hordes! The northern hive has always been remarkable for its fecundity, sending forth swarms to colonize the more southern parts both of Europe and Asia. Consider the nations of Japhetic origin—Median, Grecian, Roman, Turkish, and many others, and ask whether multitude, if that be the meaning of the prediction, is not traceable in the history of Japheth's posterity. We attach importance to the ideas of territory and influence—dominion. Possibly, in the early ages of the world, this prediction appeared obscure and its truth doubtful. Ham and Shem put on strength, and the former was subjected to the latter, when Canaan was gained for a possession. But where is Japheth? Where is his enlarged territory or extended sway? I said it might have appeared obscure, but, possibly, we have not well considered its meaning. God "shall enlarge." Then the early, as well as later, history may yet accord with the prediction. It may, by subsequent enlargement, imply original straitness. God is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," but we must sometimes "wait to see"! Well, since "upon us the ends of the world are come," let us now look abroad. Where does Japheth dwell? Take the map in your hand, divide the hemisphere you tenant pretty nearly equally north and south: the northern half is Japheth's home; yes, his alone. Then turn to the new world, the western hemisphere. The Aborigines seem to be of Shemitic origin; but the civilized parts, the United States, these acknowledge Japheth. I know not how to avoid anticipating the closing part of my subject. These "tents of Shem" are the "dwellings of Japheth," and so are Australia and Canada and Newfoundland. Finally, the sacred text intimates one direction of Japheth's enlargement. "He shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Conclusion:—1. From this subject we should learn to dread sin and to repose implicit confidence in the Word of God. "It is a bitter thing to sin!" See it in the history of nations, and let Britons not be high-minded, but fear. 2. And learn to trust in God's Word. Look at these predictions. Think

when they were uttered and how they have been fulfilled; and dare you think Moses an impostor, or can you suppose that Noah spake these words except as "moved by the Holy Ghost"? 3. Let us seek the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. He alone is fit to be "King over all the earth." (*B. S. Hollis.*) **Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.**—*Lessons*:—1. God by His prophets speaks good unto the pious, as well as evil to the wicked seed. 2. Noah and the prophets spake of some good to the Church, which themselves saw not. As here to Shem's seed. 3. Prophecies of good unto the Church are best given and received with blessing unto God. 4. The promise of Jehovah's being the God of His Church is the great blessing (*Psa. cxliv. 15.*) 5. Jehovah is more peculiarly the God of some men than of others, as here in Shem. 6. Where God is truly Lord of His people, all adversaries are made servants to them. 7. The Church shall in its appointed seasons triumph in God, and all enemies be laid under her foot. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) **God shall enlarge Japheth.**—*Lessons*:—1. God hath made known that some in the Church to the last times shall divide from it. 2. All divisions from the Church are not irreconcilable. 3. God Almighty alone is the cause of making up the breaches of such as divide from His Church. 4. Prophecy of good to any, as it is by promise, so it is brought about by prayer. 5. Blessing of posterity in abundance may be to such as divide from the Church. 6. Heart enlargement toward the ways of God in His promise and work. 7. Souls divided are only persuadable by God to have communion with His Church. 8. God's persuasion upon souls is effectual to bring them to the Church's tents. 9. The Gentiles' succession of, and communion with the Jewish Church, is foretold of God. 10. A tent habitation hath God allotted to His Church below. 11. The world's palaces will be changed for the Church's tents when God works. 12. Subjection of all enemies is surely prophesied to them who join with the Church of God. (*Ibid.*) **God shall enlarge Japheth**;—There is in the original a play upon the word Japheth, which itself signifies "enlargement." This enlargement is the most striking point in the history of Japheth, who is the progenitor of the inhabitants of Europe, Asia, and America, except the region between the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, the Euxine, the Caspian, and the mountains beyond the Tigris, which was the main seat of the Shemites. This expansive power refers not only to the territory and the multitude of the Japhethites, but also to their intellectual and active faculties. The metaphysics of the Hindoos, the philosophy of the Greeks, the military prowess of the Romans, and the modern science and civilization of the world, are due to the race of Japheth. And though the moral and the spiritual were first developed among the Shemites, yet the Japhethites have proved themselves capable of rising to the heights of these lofty themes, and have elaborated that noble form of human speech which was adopted, in the providence of God, as best fitted to convey to mankind that farther development of Old Testament truth which is furnished in the New. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*) **And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem**:—We regard Japheth as the subject of this sentence; because, if God were its subject, the meaning would be substantially the same as that of the blessing of Shem, already given, and because this would intermingle the blessing of Shem with that of Japheth, without any important addition to our information. Whereas, when Japheth is the subject of the sentence, we learn that he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, an altogether new proposition. This form of expression does not indicate a direct invasion and conquest of the land of Shem, which would not be in keeping with the blessing pronounced on him in the previous sentence. It rather implies that this dwelling together would be a benefit to Japheth, and no injury to Shem. Accordingly we find that, when the Persians conquered the Babylonian empire, they restored the Jews to their native land. When Alexander the Great conquered the Persians, he gave protection to the Jews. And when the Romans subdued the Greek monarchy, they befriended the chosen nation, and allowed them a large measure of self-government. In their time came the Messiah, and instituted that new form of the Church of the Old Testament, which not only retained the best part of the ancient people of God, but extended itself over the whole of Europe, the chief seat of Japheth; went with him wherever he went, and is at this day, through God's blessing, penetrating into the moral darkness of Ham as well as the remainder of Shem and Japheth himself. (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 28, 29. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.—*The years of Noah: their solemn lessons*:—Here is a brief record of a noble life. There is little besides the simple numeration of years—merely a refer-

ence to the great event of Noah's history, and his falling at length under the common fate of all the race. This record, short as it is, teaches us some important lessons. I. THE SLOW MOVEMENTS OF DIVINE JUSTICE. Before the flood the wickedness of man had grown so great that God threatened to cut short his appointed time upon the earth. His days were to be contracted to one hundred and twenty years—a terrible reduction of the energy of human life when man lived nearly one thousand years. (Gen. vi. 3.) But, from the instance of Noah, we find that this threat was not executed at once. Divine justice is stern and keen, but it is slow to punish. II. THE ENERGY OF THE DIVINE BLESSING. God blessed man at the first, and endowed him with abundant measures of the spirit of life. Even when human iniquity required to be checked and punished by the curtailing of this gift, the energy of the old blessing suffered little abatement. God causes the power of that blessing still to linger among mankind. The hand of Divine goodness slackens but slowly in the bestowal of gifts to man. How often are the favours of Providence long continued to doomed nations and men! Underlying all God's dealings with men there is the strong power of redemption, which is the life of every blessing. That power will yet overcome the world's evil and subdue all things. III. GOD'S PROVISION FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE RACE. When men depended entirely upon verbal instruction, and teachers were few, the long duration of human life contributed to the preservation and the extending of knowledge. But as the education of the world advanced, new sources of knowledge were opened and teachers multiplied, the necessity for long life in the instructors of mankind grew less. The provisions of God are wonderfully adjusted to human necessity. IV. AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO PATIENT ENDURANCE. Here is one who bore the cross for the long space of nine hundred and fifty years. What a discipline in suffering as well as in doing the will of God! Time is the chief component among the forces that try patience, for patience is rather borne away by long trials than overwhelmed by the rolling wave. If tempted to murmur in affliction, or at our protracted contest with temptation and sin, let us think of those who have endured longer than we. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Noah's life and death*:—1. He lived accepted of God, promoted by Him, testifying against sin, preaching righteousness, giving laws from God to the generation wherein he was; and sometimes slipping into sin, and falling into bitter afflictions. 2. He died a death befitting such a man; he died a saint, a believer, a glorious instrument in Christ's Church, and so died in hope when by faith he had seen the promises. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Review of the Chapter*:—I. GOD IS ALWAYS FAITHFUL to His promises, and mindful of those who trust in Him. II. THE GOODNESS AND FAITHFULNESS OF God are further seen in His care for all His creatures, and in the steadfast order of nature. (Ch. viii. 1-22; ix. 9, 10.) III. NOAH'S SIN is a most solemn warning. (1 Cor. x. 12; Eph. v. 18; 1 Pet. v. 8.) It is a sad finish to the history of so eminent a saint; an ominous beginning to the history of a new world. The first recorded sin after the Flood was a sin of self-indulgence and sensuality. It is hard to say which of these two classes of sin has been, and is, the greatest curse to mankind. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Lessons*:—1. Chronology is given by God's Spirit. Special uses of it are in the Church. 2. Times and conditions of His Church God would have us know. 3. In the greatest desolations God hath raised some for His Church's good. 4. God extends the life of His saints as He hath use of them (ver. 28). 5. The longest life of saints wades through various conditions (ver. 29). 6. The longest living saint must die, yet like a saint, not fall as the wicked. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 1-32. Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah:—*A chapter of genealogies*:—Many readers might be disposed to undervalue a chapter like this, since it is but a collection of names—some of which are quite unknown—and is made up of barren details promising little material for profitable reflection. Yet a thoughtful reader will be interested here, and discover the germs and suggestions of great truths; for the subject is man, and man, too, considered in reference to God's great purpose in the govern-

ment of the world. This chapter "is as essential to an understanding of the Bible, and of history in general, as is Homer's catalogue, in the second book of the Iliad, to a true knowledge of the Homeric poems and the Homeric times." The Biblical student can no more undervalue the one than the classical student the other. I. IT IS MARKED BY THE FEATURES OF A TRUTHFUL RECORD. 1. It is not vague and general, but descends to particulars. The forgers of fictitious documents seldom run the risk of scattering the names of persons and places freely over their page. Hence those who write with fraudulent design deal in what is vague and general. 2. Heathen literature when dealing with the origin of nations employs extravagant language. The early annals of all nations, except the Jews, run at length into fable, or else pretend to a most incredible antiquity. National vanity would account for such devices and for the willingness to receive them. The Jews had the same temptations to indulge in this kind of vanity as the other nations around them. It is therefore a remarkable circumstance that they pretend to no fabulous antiquity. We are shut up to the conclusion that their sacred records grew up under the special care of Providence, and were preserved from the common infirmities of merely human authorship. 3. Here we have the ground-plan of all history. II. THAT HISTORY HAS ITS BASIS IN THAT OF INDIVIDUAL MEN. The general lesson of this chapter is plain, namely, that no man can go to the bottom of history who does not study the lives of those men who have made that history what it is. III. THAT MAN IS THE CENTRAL FIGURE OF SCRIPTURE. Infidels have made this characteristic of revelation a matter of reproach; but all who know how rich God's purpose towards mankind is, glory in it, and believe that great things must be in store for a race which has occupied so much of the Divine regard. IV. THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT OF HISTORY TOWARDS AN END. All the interest centres successively in one people, tribe, and family; then in One who was to come out of that family, bringing redemption for mankind. "Salvation is of the Jews." The noblest idea of history is only realized in the Bible. Those of the world had no living Word of God to inspire that idea. That book can scarcely be regarded as of human origin which passes by the great things of the world, and lingers with the man who "believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." (T. H. Leale.) *Circumstances attendant on man*:—Instead of saying that man is the creature of circumstances, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of circumstances. It is character that builds an existence out of circumstance. Our strength is measured by our plastic power. From the same materials one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas; bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect can make them something else. Thus it is that, in the same family, in the same circumstances, one man rears a stately edifice, while his brother, vacillating and incompetent, lives for ever amid ruins; the block of granite which was an obstacle in the pathway of the weakly becomes a stepping-stone in the pathway of the strong. (T. Carlyle.) *Oneness of humanity*:—A clear conception of the import of this marvellous chapter should enlarge and correct our notions in so far as they have been narrowed and perverted by our insular position. We should recognize in all the nations of the earth one common human nature. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth." This reflection is both humbling and elevating. It is humbling to think that the cannibal is a relative of ours; that the slave crouching in an African wood is bone of our bone; and that the meanest scum of all the earth started from the same foundation as ourselves! On the other hand, it is elevating to think that all kings and mighty men, all soldiers renowned in song, all heroes canonized in history, the wise, the strong, the good, are our elder brothers and immortal friends. If we limit our life to families, clans, and sects, we shall miss the genius of human history, and all its ennobling influences. Better join the common lot. Take it just as it is. Our ancestors have been robbers and oppressors, deliverers and saviours, mean and noble, cowardly and heroic; some hanged, some crowned, some beggars, some kings; take it so, for the earth is one, and humanity is one, and there is only one God over all blessed for evermore! If we take this idea aright we shall get a clear notion of what are called home and foreign missions. What are foreign missions? Where are they? I do not find the word in the Bible. Where does home end; where does foreign begin? It is possible for a man to immure himself so completely as practically to forget that there is anybody beyond his own front gate; we soon grow narrow, we soon become mean; it is easy for us to return to the dust from whence we come. It is here that Christianity redeems us; not from sin only, but from all narrowness, meanness,

and littleness of conception; it puts great thoughts into our hearts and bold words into our mouths, and leads us out from our village prisons to behold and to care for all nations of mankind. On this ground alone Christianity is the best educator in the world. It will not allow the soul to be mean. It forces the heart to be noble and hopeful. It says, "Go and teach all nations"; "Go ye into all the world"; "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others"; "Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, heaped up, and running over." It is something for a nation to have a voice so Divine ever stirring its will and mingling with its counsels. It is like a sea breeze blowing over a sickly land; like sunlight piercing the fogs of a long dark night. Truly we have here a standard by which we may judge ourselves. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." If we have narrow sympathies, mean ideas, paltry conceptions, we are not scholars in the school of Christ. Let us bring no reproach upon Christ by our exclusiveness. Let us beware of the bigotry of patriotism, as well as of the bigotry of religion. We are citizens of the world: we are more than the taxpayers of a parish. A right view of this procession of the nations will show us something of the richness and graciousness of Christ's nature. What a man must he have been either in madness or in Divinity who supposed that there was something in himself which all these people needed! (J. Parker, D.D.)

The planting of nations great responsibility:—The one point to which I would draw your attention is that which lies upon the very surface of this history, and to which, as a great law imprinted by God upon our race, I wish to call your special notice. It is the degree in which the original features of the founders of a race reproduce themselves in their descendants, so as to become the distinct and manifest types of national life. This is so plain here that it has rarely escaped some observation. The few words wherein, according to the wont of patriarchal times, Noah, as the first-born priest of his own family, pronounces on his sons his blessing and his curse, sketch in outline the leading characteristics of all their after progeny. Thus, the "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem," can hardly fail to convey to the hearer's mind the impression that devotion to, and a trust in God, as his portion, marked the character of the first-born of Noah. And so it proved in fact, for it was the line of Abraham and the Semitic race, in the tribes of Israel and Judah, which filled this office of the priests of mankind for two thousand years. So also with regard to the second son of Noah. Sensuality and filial irreverence manifestly stained his character. In the future of such a man lay naturally cruelty—the inseparable companion—and degradation—the unfailing consequence—of lust. A "servant of servants" should he be. He who disregarded the duties of a son should lose the place of a brother: he who sacrificed to sensual appetite every highest duty, should in the end barter for it his own liberty; and his character, too, has through unnumbered generations reproduced itself in his descendants. Without entering upon the difficult task of tracing in some of its details the outline of the Hamitic race, it is clear beyond all contradiction, that through past ages, and even to the present day, the nations which manifestly sprung from his loins are marked by these characteristics—lust, cruelty, and servitude. The character of Japhet is perhaps, at first sight, less plainly to be traced in his father's benediction. His words would seem, however, to point to a character marked less strongly than that of his first-born by piety towards God, but possessed of those family virtues with which, in the course of things, an increasing posterity is commonly connected and endued with the practical activity and vigour, which, as opposed to the more contemplative character of Shem, were essential to that subduing of the earth, which must accompany its replenishment by the enlarging seed. Beyond this lay the unexplained and mysterious blessing of his future dwelling in the tents of Shem, pointing probably, in the personal life of the patriarch, to the pious rest into which the later years of a virtuous activity would so probably subside. And all this has plainly marked the Japhetic races: their increase has furnished the nations of the Gentiles; whilst family virtue, and that practical activity which to this day has so wonderfully subjected the material earth to its obedience, are the distinction of their blood. In all these cases, then, we may trace on the broadest scale the action of that of which I have spoken, as a law impressed upon our common nature, that nations, in their after generations, bear, repeat and expand the character of their progenitor. And then, further, we may observe adumbrations of a mode of dealing with men which seems to imply that in His bestowal of spiritual gifts, God deals with them after some similar law. Hence, then, we may conclude further, that, by the laws of grace as well as of nature, there is a re-

production in the after seed of the character of the progenitor. Now, it is to the application of this principle to our past history and our present duty, that I would specially invite your notice. And first, FOR THE FACT. Since the opening of the historical period, there has been scarcely any national planting of the earth through emigration, until within the last three centuries. Even those events of far distant times, which most resembled it, were widely different. For they were rather irruptions than emigration; and the great wave of life which they brought into some new land, first cast out races in possession, often as numerous as, and commonly more civilized than, their invaders, and who not unfrequently tinged their subduers with their religion, their manners, and their language. The direct replenishment of the earth for the last three hundred years by the Japhetic family, is altogether different. These emigrations have set forth exclusively from Christian lands. They have been directed to vast tracts of thinly peopled countries; and they have borne to them men who have been, in the fullest sense of the words, founders of nations. In this work, we have borne a larger share than any other people. Now, with what an awful character of responsibility does the truth which we have before considered invest such acts! A sensual seed will produce a degraded people; a godless seed will grow into an atheistic empire; nay, even the lesser evils of a worldly, or a sectarian origin, will mark and renew themselves in successive generations. How plainly, then, must it be one of the very highest duties of a Christian people to provide all that is needful to bless and hallow such a national infancy:—to plant a chosen seed, and not a refuse; to send forth with them that faith, which alone can exalt and renew the race of man in its purest form, and with every advantage for its reproduction! How far, then, has England, which has been the chiefest of the nations in this sacred work, acted up to her responsibilities? Let North America,—let Australasia answer. How scanty in its measure—how imperfect in its form—how divided in its character—was the Christianity we mingled with the abundant seed of man which we scattered broadcast over North America; how fearful a paternity of crime did we assume, when we conceived and almost executed the enormity of planting the antipodes with every embodiment of reckless wickedness, and giving it no healing influence of our holy faith! What then must be herein our guilt and shame! But our chief concern is not with the past: it is with that present in which the future lies enfolded. Never has the tide of emigration risen so high as now; never were we so freely planting the earth with our energetic, increasing race as the seed of future empires; never, then, did the duty of planting it, aright press so heavily upon us: and what is the prime essential for its adequate discharge? Surely, far beyond all other, that with the seed of fallen man we plant that Church of Christ, through which God the Holy Ghost is pleased to work for his recovery. This, and no less than this, can fulfil our obligations. (*Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.*)

In their nations.—*The characteristics of a nation:*—1. It is descended from one head. Others may be occasionally grafted on the original stock by intermarriage. But there is a vital union subsisting between all the members and the head, in consequence of which the name of the head is applied to the whole body of the nation. In the case of Kittim and Dodanim we seem to have the national name thrown back upon the patriarchs who may have themselves been called Keth and Dodan. Similar instances occur in the subsequent parts of the genealogy. 2. A nation has a country or “land” which it calls its own. In the necessary migrations of ancient tribes, the new territories appropriated by the tribe, or any part of it, were naturally called by the old name, or some name belonging to the old country. This is well illustrated by the name of Gomer, which seems to reappear in the Cimmerii, the Cimbri, the Cymry, the Cambri, and the Cumbri. 3. A nation has its own “tongue.” This constitutes at once its unity in itself and its separation from others. Many of the nations in the table may have spoken cognate tongues, or even originally the same tongue. Thus the Kenaanite, Phœnician and Punic nations had the same stock of languages with the Shemites. But it is a uniform law, that one nation has only one speech within itself. 4. A nation is composed of many “families,” clans, or tribes. These branch off from the nation in the same manner as it did from the parent stock of the race. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

Ham's posterity:—1. The most cursed man may have a numerous seed: it enlargeth the curse. 2. Cursed ones bring out sometimes an eminent rebellious seed to hasten vengeance (ver. 8). 3. The greatest judgments will not keep wicked ones from sin though being but a little escaped from them. 4. Under a wise providence, power and violence is suffered to rise and spring in the earth (ver. 8). 5. It is the property of giants in sin and earthly power to hunt to

death God's saints to His face. 6. God makes in vengeance the names of such wicked ones a proverb (ver. 9). 7. The beginning and chief of all the power of wicked ones is but confusion, and the place of wickedness. Babel and Shinar (ver. 10). 8. Wicked potentates are still invading others to enlarge themselves (ver. 11). 9. Edifying cities, and places of strength, is the wicked's security. 10. Great cities they may have, but such as are under the eye and judgment of God (ver. 12). (G. Hughes, B.D.) **Nimrod.**—*Nimrod*:—Nimrod was not merely a giant or mighty one in hunting, but also a cruel oppressor and bloody warrior. He is represented by some ancient historians as having renewed the practice of war, which had for some time been abandoned for agriculture, and hence the well-known couplet—

“Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man.”

Obscurity rests, and ever shall rest, on his particular achievements, although his figure and name have been found of late in Nineveh. What animals he slew, what weapons he employed, what battles he fought, with the blood of what enemies he cemented the cities which he built, how long he lived and where, how and where he died, are not recorded either in profane history or in the Book of God. Imagination figures him as another Hercules, clad in the skins of lions, and pursuing his prey with sounding bow and fiery eye over the vast plains of Asia, and when wild beasts are not to be found, turning his fury against his neighbours. Such men are the ragged and menacing shadows which the sun of civilization casts before it; their “strong heart is fit to be the first strong heart of a people”; their crimes, for which they must answer to God, are yet made useful to God's purpose, and from the blood they shed springs up many a glorious harvest of arts and sciences, of culture and progress. Without questioning their guilt or the evil they do, or seeking to solve the mystery why they exist at all, we see many important ends which their permission answers; and acknowledge that the page of history were comparatively tame, did it want the red letters which record the names of a Nimrod, a Nebuchadnezzar, a Charlemagne, a Henry the Eighth, a Rienzi, and a Napoleon. (G. Gilfillan.) *Gospel archery*:—My text sets forth Nimrod as a hero when it presents him with broad shoulders and shaggy apparel and sun-browned face, and arm bunched with muscle—“a mighty hunter before the Lord.” I think he used the bow and the arrows with great success practising archery. I have thought if it is such a grand thing and such a brave thing to clear wild beasts out of a country, if it is not a better and braver thing to hunt down and destroy those great evils of society that are stalking the land with fierce eye and bloody paw, and sharp tusk and quick spring. I have wondered if there is not such a thing as Gospel archery, by which those who have been flying from the truth may be captured for God and heaven. The archers of olden times studied their art. They were very precise in the matter. The old books gave special directions as to how an archer should go, and as to what an archer should do. But how clumsy we are about religious work. How little skill and care we exercise. How often our arrows miss the mark. 1. In the first place, if you want to be effectual in doing good, you must be very sure of your weapon. There was something very fascinating about the archery of olden times. Perhaps you do not know what they could do with the bow and arrow. Why, the chief battles fought by the English Plantagenets were with the long-bow. They would take the arrow of polished wood, and feather it with the plume of a bird, and then it would fly from the bow-string of plaited silk. The broad fields of Agincourt, and Solway Moss, and Neville's Cross heard the loud thrum of the archer's bow-string. Now, my Christian friends, we have a mightier weapon than that. It is the arrow of the Gospel; it is a sharp arrow; it is a straight arrow; it is feathered from the wing of the dove of God's Spirit; it flies from a bow made out of the wood of the cross. Paul knew how to bring the notch of that arrow on to that bowstring, and its whirr was heard through the Corinthian theatres, and through the court-room, until the knees of Felix knocked together. It was that arrow that stuck in Luther's heart when he cried out: “Oh, my sins! Oh, my sins!” In the armoury of the Earl of Pembroke, there are old corslets which show that the arrow of the English used to go through the breast-plate, through the body of the warrior, and out through the back-plate. What a symbol of that Gospel which is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and body, and of the joints and marrow! Would to God we had more faith in that Gospel! 2. Again, if you want to be skilful in spiritual archery, you must hunt in unfrequented

and secluded places. The good game is hidden and secluded. Every hunter knows that. So, many of the souls that will be of most worth for Christ and of most value to the Church are secluded. They do not come in your way. You will have to go where they are. 3. I remark, further, if you want to succeed in spiritual archery, you must have courage. If the hunter stand with trembling hand or shoulder that flinches with fear, instead of his taking the catamount, the catamount takes him. What would become of the Greenlander if, when out hunting for the bear, he should stand shivering with terror on an iceberg? What would have become of Du Chaillu and Livingstone in the African thicket, with a faint heart and a weak knee? When a panther comes within twenty paces of you, and it has its eye on you, and it has squatted for the fearful spring, "Steady there." Courage. O ye spiritual archers! There are great monsters of iniquity prowling all around about the community. Shall we not in the strength of God go forth and combat them? We not only need more heart, but more back-bone. What is the Church of God that it should fear to look in the eye any transgression? 4. I remark again, if you want to be successful in spiritual archery, you need not only to bring down the game, but bring it in. I think one of the most beautiful pictures of Thorwaldsen is his "Autumn." It represents a sportsman coming home and standing under a grape-vine. He has a staff over his shoulder, and on the other end of that staff are hung a rabbit and a brace of birds. Every hunter brings home the game. No one would think of bringing down a reindeer or whipping up a stream for trout, and letting them lie in the woods. At eventide the camp is adorned with the treasures of the forest—beak, and fin, and antler. If you go out to hunt for immortal souls, not only bring them down under the arrow of the Gospel, but bring them into the Church of God, the grand home and encampment we have pitched this side the skies. Fetch them in; do not let them lie out in the open field. They need our prayers and sympathies and help. That is the meaning of the Church of God—help. O ye hunters for the Lord! not only bring down the game, but bring it in. (*Dr. Talmage.*) *Lessons*:—1. The last mention of the Church's line is not the least in God's account. 2. Fruitfulness is given to the Church of God, for its continuance on earth. 3. Visible distinction hath God made between the lines of the world and of the Church. 4. Heber's children are the true Church of God. 5. The name and blessing of Shem is on that Church. 6. Sharers in the promise are especially brethren. 7. The first in birth may be last in grace (ver. 21). 8. Out of the same holy stock may arise enemies to the Church as well as the right seed (ver. 22). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. Syrians may arise from the Father of the Church according to the flesh, very enemies to it. 2. God's mind is to keep the line of His Church distinct; from all who turn aside (ver. 23). 3. The line of the Church is but short in respect of the world (ver. 24). 4. Memorable as well as terrible is that division of people and tongues which God hath made (ver. 25). 5. Saints have been careful to keep in memory such judgments of division; the naming of the child (ver. 25). 6. Numerous is the seed departed from the Church (ver. 26, 29). 7. God has given a dwelling-place to degenerate seed (ver. 30). 8. The Church hath its family, tongue, place, and people, distinct from all (ver. 37). (*Ibid.*)

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 1-3. Of one language.—*God's gift of speech*:—1. Language or speech God hath allowed to men as men. 2. One language did God vouchsafe to all for good. It was mainly to keep them to the Church. 3. Sin perverts the sweet blessing of one speech to conspiracy against God (ver. 2). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Two kinds of unanimity*:—Men may do wrong things unanimously, as well as things that are right. We must distinguish between union and conspiracy; we must distinguish between identity and mere association for a given object. Twelve directors may be of one language and of one speech, but the meaning of their unity may be self-enrichment, at the expense of unsuspecting men, who have put their little all into their keeping and direction. It is nothing, therefore, to talk about unanimity in itself considered. We must, in all these things, put the moral question, "What is the unanimity about?" "Is this unanimity moving in the right direction?" If it be in a wrong direction, then unanimity is an aggravation of sin; if it be in a right direction, then union is power, and one-heartedness is triumph. But it is

possible that unanimity may be but another word for stagnation. There are words in our language which are greatly misunderstood, and unanimity is one of them; peace is another. When many persons say peace, what do they mean? A living, intelligent, active co-operation, where there is mutual concession, where there is courtesy on every hand, where there is independent conviction, and yet noble concert in life? Not at all. They say that a Church is unanimous, and a Church is at peace, when a correct interpreter would say it was the unanimity of the grave, the peace of death. So I put in a word here of caution and of explanation: "The whole earth was of one language and of one speech"; here is a point of unanimity, and yet there is a unanimous movement in a wrong direction. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

One language and one speech:—What that language was it is not necessary on the present occasion to examine. The arguments are very strong that it was Hebrew. But the fact that all men did use the same tongue, and the way in which the fact is recorded, lead us to infer that there was something much more than identity of dialect. For we all well know how language is connected with thought and feelings, and how our words react and determine our feelings. So that a oneness of expression will go a great way to produce oneness of soul. Have we not all proved its effect to unite and bind us one with another? Is not that the charm of the familiar language of co-patriots in foreign lands? Is not this one of the secrets of the bliss of song? So that a real and perfectly "one language and one speech" might be expected to have a most united result on the minds of all who used it, and a most favourable influence on the spirit of true religion. But it is a thing which now is not. No one country has it within itself. No two persons that ever meet have it. It is a lost thing. There is not, truly, upon this earth, in any fraction of it, "one language" and "one speech"; and hence a very great part of our sin and our misery! And even if there were a language perfectly the same, yet until there was a setting to rights of disorders which have come into human thought, and until minds were themselves set in one accord, there could not be unity. So that, indeed, there must be something which belongs to a higher dispensation than this. For if the thoughts were disordered, they would themselves give disordered senses to the words spoken. And remember one other thing. In that age, it was not so long after the flood, nor had people been so divided, nor truth so lapsed, but that all must have known the faith of the one true God. And, therefore, their worship must have been one, the same thoughts and the same expressions going up to the same God everywhere. But the world was evidently not yet ripe for unity. Unity is a beautiful flower, but it can only grow in its own proper soil. Then the Fall cropped up, and at once poisoned human nature. They could not use even their one language or their one mind without its unity becoming sin. So they took occasion, by their very oneness, to determine to do two things, which real unity never does. They resolved to make a great monument to their own glory, and they thought to frustrate an original law of God and to break a positive rule of our being. For the primary principle of all religion is that we should seek first the glory of our Maker. Therefore God breathed upon their work, and it was crushed. It was a false unity. They sought their own praise, and it ran contrary to the mind of God. And God Himself at once traced the sin to that root—an unhallowed and unsanctified oneness of mind and language; and God proceeded to punish them in that very thing which they thus misused, and to take away from them that privilege and blessing for which man was not yet educated and prepared. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth. Said I not right they were not ripe for this precious gift—the omnipotence of unity? Generations must pass; new eras must unfold; Christ must come down and suffer; the Holy Spirit dwell amongst us; the Church must live and work; missionaries must preach; martyrs must die; the whole earth must be regenerate before men could bear their own, their higher, their destined unity. And so the unity, the profane unity, was dashed into hundreds of divergent atoms, and was carried by the four winds to the four corners of the earth. And what was the consequence of this judicial scattering, and this division of the human race which began on the plains of Shinar, and has been increasing ever since, and which we see all around us now? God never does a work, how purative soever it may be, in which there is not a mercy and some purpose or another. Doubtless this scattering of the early post-diluvians carried the knowledge of the true God and of the one faith into all the lands whither they went, even as the early Christians, when they fled from Jerusalem, bore the seed of the gospel into every land. And that knowledge, diluted, indeed, and marred, would go down from generation to generation; and

hence, perhaps, the fact—the remarkable fact—that there is no instance in the history of the whole earth of a people, even in the remotest islands of the Pacific, who had not some vestige of the knowledge and worship of a god. And once more there was a plea for prayer, an argument for hope, a pledge of promise—"We were all one once, Lord. Thou didst scatter us. Bring back again Thine own image. Give us, give the whole earth, its unity again." I will not now speak of the evil results of that broken language and these severed interests of the family of man. They are too large and too patent to be catalogued here. I will proceed with the unfolding, as it seems to me, of God's great means for the restitution of unity. From that moment God has steadily, progressively, uniformly carried on His great design to restore the unity which man then fulfilled. Just as He set Himself at once to give back the lost paradise—a better than the first was—has He graciously worked in His working to repair, and much more than repair, the fractured oneness. It became necessary by this dispersion that God should select one family and one race which He should make a special and secure depository of His one truth. Otherwise probably the truth, split and scattered, would not have survived in the earth. And therefore the next fact in history is the call of Abraham. And when God elected Abraham and his descendants to be the stewards of revelation, it was for this very end—that truth might continue one in the world. But in that act of electing grace God did not choose Abraham only, but in Abraham that "Seed" which was to gather together not only all truth, but all people into Himself. Accordingly, "in the fulness of time" Christ came. And by His life, death, resurrection, and ascension He became the Head into which all members—thousands and millions of members—were to be gathered and united, and so to make a oneness—oh! how different from all before! how glorious! how entire!—the oneness of one body and one life, the oneness of God. To give effect to, to supplement and complete that unity, the Holy Ghost came as at Pentecost. And at once—mark the fact—He dealt with language, that lost gift—the "one language" and the "one speech"; language, doubtless a gift to man at the creation, but now how much more better a gift by the redemption. So it came to pass that the gulf of separation—unknown speech—that great gulf of separation, was, at that moment, taken away. But it was not only in tongue and in speech that they assimilate, but in mind and heart. For the theme and interest of all are one—"We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." Observe, then, the effects. At that moment all the Church was really and truly of one heart and one soul; and that union expressed itself in the gift of speech which made all language one. So that the unity was the same, only greater and purer than that before judgment fell upon Babel. And why was it, why was it at Pentecost? It was a beautiful thing, but it did not last. It was a bright rift in the cloud of separation. Why was it, and why did some retain the power of language while in the Church by the gift of tongues, why was it? I have no doubt in my own mind that it was the first drop in the shower—a pledge of what is to be. And will it not one day come—one pure language on the whole earth, one worship, and one service with one consent? But this, I conceive, is the order: First, the body of Christ made one, made one by the individual embodiment into Him of each one of His elect, in His own proper season. Then the mind, made one by the indwelling and inworking of the same Holy Spirit. And then the language, made one by some infusion of the power of the Holy Ghost in the latter days. You have read, perhaps, of two heathen men of different countries, both converted, who met, but could not understand each other's speech, when one by chance or providence said "Hallelujah," and the other, taking up the formula, said "Amen." And they ran into each other's arms. The story may be true or not, but it is a pretty allegory, and a true type of what I believe shall one day be. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*)

Ver. 4. Go to, let us build us a city and a tower.—*The tower of Babel*:—I. Three motives may have led to the building of the tower of Babel. 1. A feeling that in union and communion lay the secret of man's renown and strength; that to disperse the family was to debilitate it. 2. A remembrance of the deluge, and a guilty dread of some similar judgment, leading them to draw close to each other for support. 3. Man was awaking to self-consciousness and a knowledge of his own resources. He was gaining a glimpse into the possible progress of civilization. The tower was to be a focus where the rays of his power would be concentrated. II. To all philanthropists this narrative preaches this simple and sublime truth—that genuine unity is not to be effectually compassed in any other manner than by

striking at the original root of discord. Every scheme for the promotion of brotherhood which deals only with the external symptoms of disunion, and aims at correcting only what appears on the surface of society, is ultimately sure of frustration. III. In His own good time and manner God realized the presumptuous design of the Babel-builders, and united in one central institution the scattered families of man. In the mediation of His Son He has reared up a Tower whose top reaches to heaven. It was in order to gather the nations into this world-embracing community that the apostles of Christ went forth charged with a message of peace and love. When the Spirit descended at Pentecost the physical impediment obstructing union—that difference of language which the sin of Babel had introduced—was removed. The apostles spake with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (*Dean Goulburn.*)

The tower of Babel.—The events connectd with the building of the tower of Babel forcibly illustrate the power and the weakness of man. There is great power of scheming, great power of working, ending in an ignominious failure. So it is in all the ways of life; there is a way of spending force for naught, and there is a way of turning every effort to good account; there is a scheming that is nothing but inflation, and there is a purposing which gives shape and strength to one's daily life. The courses of Providence, as revealed in the history of the world, enable us now to judge programmes by anticipation; before we begin to build we can now tell how we shall finish, or whether we shall finish at all. Poor self-deceiving heart! How many bricks has it made, and burnt throughly, and yet how few towers it has ever finished! The people constitute themselves into a community of builders, and they propose to themselves a city and a tower. In this plan there are three things which men generally account laudable—1. There is self-reliance. The loudest cry of to-day is, Help yourselves! It is thought that the man who trusts his own arm trusts a good servant. So far, therefore, there is nothing amiss in these builders. 2. There is a desire for self-preservation—"lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Self-preservation is held to be the first law of nature. If a man will not take care of himself, who will take care of him? Still, therefore, the builders have not trespassed. 3. There is ambition—a city, and a tower, and a name! No man can make much headway in life who is not ambitious. The finalist grows weaker every day; the progressionist strengthens with every encounter. The whole work was within man's own sphere. They wanted more than a city and a tower; they wanted a name, "let us make us a name." That has been the ruin of many a man: anything for a name—any price for renown! This is not the ambition which is commended; this stands to a true ambition as presumption to faith. One thing is clear, viz., that God is observant of human plans. He knows our purpose, He overhears our secret communings. He allows men to build for awhile, and in the time of their rejoicing over the work of their hands He throws the city and tower to the dust. The error of these people was not in having a plan, but in having a plan without God. (1) Carefully examine the quality and meaning of every new plan of life. Many a man has been ruined by ideas which he deemed necessary to the success of his fortune; (a) Appearances; (b) Miscalculations; (c) Oversights; have contributed their share to his disasters. (2) Beware of the sophism that heaven helps them that help themselves. The doctrine is true only in so far as men may by helping themselves in accordance with the will of heaven. 3. Regulate ambition by the Divine will. 4. If we make great plans let us make them in God's name and carry them out in God's strength. See the folly of planning without God. (a) God has all forces at command. (b) God has set a limit to every man's life. (c) God has pronounced Himself against those who dishonour His name. All these considerations have also a reflex bearing on those who plan in a right spirit. (5) Let us learn what is meant by all the unfinished towers that we see around us. "This man began to build," &c. Job said, "My purposes are broken off." Look at disappointed men, &c.; ruined men, &c. (6) Co-operation with God will alone secure the entire realization of our plans. Application: (a) We all have plans. (b) Examine them. (c) Remember the only foundation, on which alone men can build with safety. (*The Pulpit Analyst.*)

The builders of Babel.—It is a melancholy fact that the evil of our nature tends continually to increase, and assume a sad variety of forms. As men abide under the power of evil they wax worse and worse. We have an instance of this downward tendency in the builders of Babel. Since the flood the course of sin may be thus traced; 1. In the form of sensual indulgence. The type was drunkenness, of which Noah has given a sad example. 2. Disregard of parental authority.

Ham, 8. In the form of ambition. Builders of Babel. I. LOVE OF GLORY. They would indulge the passion for fame at all costs. 1. The holdest schemes of ambition are generally the work of a few. 2. Such ambition involves the slavery of the many. II. FALSE IDEAS OF THE UNITY OF THE RACE. 1. They thought that it was external. "City." "Tower." 2. They held that the individual must be sacrificed to the outward grandeur of the State. This is the genius of all Babel-building, to make the city supreme, and to sink the individual. All must be sacrificed to one idea: the nation—State—Constitution. It is not within the province of worldly ambition to recognize the sublime importance of the individual soul. Hence the conflict between the policies of statecraft and the interests of true religion. This exaltation of the State above the individual has—(1) A political form; (2) an ecclesiastical form. III. PRESUMING TO PLACE THEMSELVES ABOVE PROVIDENCE. 1. God interferes in all matters which threaten His government. 2. God often interferes effectually by unexpected means. These foolish builders imagined that they were safe in the unity of their speech, yet it was here that they were vanquished. IV. A PREMATURE ATTEMPT TO REALIZE THAT BETTER TIME COMING FOR HUMANITY. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Babel bricks* :—These emigrants to Shinar were evidently dissatisfied with a patriarchal life, and desirous of founding a great monarchy. I. AMBITION, or the perversion of the divinely-implemented principle, "Excelsior." It—1. Cautions us to beware of our own hearts; and—2. Counsels us to be careful of the Divine will. II. ASSUMPTION, or the presupposition of man's independence of God. It—1. Cautions us to remember our entire dependence; and—2. Counsels us to regard the Divine pre-eminence as essential to our happiness. III. ASSOCIATION, or the persuasion that human unity means human perpetuity. It—1. Cautions us against forgetting that God must come into any scheme after unity; and—2. Counsels us about fulfilling the Divine ideal of unity in Him. Lessons: 1. Moral towers of Babel (great or small) should be erected in God's name, and carried through in God's strength. 2. Moral towers of Babel (great or small), if not so attempted and accomplished, tend to dishonour God's name, and to disown God's strength. 3. Moral towers of Babel (great or small), thus dishonouring Him, are sure, sooner or later, to be overthrown by God, who has all forces at His command; and—4. Moral towers of Babel (great or small) conceived in God's name, constructed by God's strength, and contributing to God's glory, are certain of the Divine permission and permanence. (*W. Adamson.*) *Human labour* :—I. HUMAN LABOUR ALWAYS DEVELOPS THE NATURE OF MAN. 1. The constructive element. 2. The ambitious element. 3. The social element. 4. The co-operative element. II. HUMAN LABOUR GENERALLY ILLUSTRATES THE PATIENCE OF HEAVEN. 1. Their enterprise from the beginning was rebellion against heaven. 2. They were allowed to go on almost to its final accomplishment. III. HUMAN LABOUR MUST ULTIMATELY MEET WITH THE JUST TREATMENT OF GOD. 1. He discloses its purpose. 2. He arrests its progress. 3. He frustrates its design. (*Homilist.*) *The tower of Babel* :—I. THAT SELF-RENEWAL IS AN OBJECT TOO LOW FOR MAN TO AIM AT. 1. Because he has duties to perform towards others. 2. Because man's highest and best powers cannot be properly developed by having this as the only object in view. (1) The sense of right cannot be quickened. (2) Self is a sphere too limited for a man's sympathy to be fully manifested. (3) Self is an object too cold and limited to strengthen and intensify man's love. 3. Because there is no true happiness in the pursuit, nor actual attainment of the object. II. THAT UNION PRODUCES STRENGTH. 1. It concentrates the powers of many towards one object. 2. It is recognized in heaven. (1) For evil (*Psa. ii. 1-5*). (2) For good (*Matt. xviii. 20*). 3. The more Divine the union, the greater will be its reality and strength. III. THAT HUMAN EFFORTS ARE FRUITLESS WHEN NOT IN HARMONY WITH THE DIVINE INTENTIONS. 1. A higher intelligence is opposed to them. 2. A greater power. 3. A purer love. They deserved to be destroyed, but were only scattered. 4. This failure was—(1) Humiliating. (2) From an unexpected source. (3) Complete. Conclusion: 1. In every undertaking, let us endeavour to know if it be according to God's will. 2. Let us have God's glory as the sole object of life. (*Ibid.*) *Universal monarchy* :—But why, it may be asked, should it be the will of God to prevent a universal monarchy, and to divide the inhabitants of the world into a number of independent nations? This question opens a wide field for investigation. Suffice it to say at present, such a state of things contains much mercy, both to the world and to the Church. With respect to the world, if the whole earth had continued under one government, that government would, of course, considering what human nature is, have been exceedingly despotic and oppressive. The division of the world into independent nations has also been a great check on persecution,

and so has operated in a way of mercy towards the Church. If the whole world had been under one government, and that government inimical to the gospel, there had been no place of refuge left upon the earth for the faithful. From the whole we may infer two things—1. The harmony of Divine revelation with all that we know of fact. If all that man can be proved to have done towards the formation of any language be confined to changing, combining, improving, and reducing it to a grammatical form, there is the greatest probability, independent of the authority of revelation, that languages themselves were originally the work of God, as was that of the first man and woman. 2. The desirableness of the universal spread of Christ's kingdom. We may see in the reasons which render a universal government among men incompatible with the liberty and safety of the world abundant cause to pray for this, and for the union of all His subjects under Him. Here there is no danger of tyranny or oppression, nor any need of those low motives of rivalry to induce him to seek the well-being of his subjects. A union with Christ and one another embraces the best interests of mankind. (*A. Fuller.*)

Lessons:— 1. Sinful apostates are active in drawing each other to sin. 2. Wickedness is studious for means to effect its ends. 3. No difficulties usually hinder sin from its undertakings. 4. It is but brick and slime wherewith wickedness builds (ver. 3). 5. Wicked ones are much encouraging one another to evil. 6. Cities and towers, ornament and strength, are sinners' trophies. 7. Sin's structure would be as high and stately as heaven. 8. Sinners are ambitious of a name on earth. 9. Dispersion is the evil which sinners fear. 10. Sinners resolve to provide their own security against God's judgments by the works of their own hands (ver. 4). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Right building:—*There are times in life when lucky ideas strike men; when there is a kind of intellectual springtide in their nature; when men rise and say, "I have got it! Go to, this is it!" And in the bright hours when such ideas strike one the temptation is to be a little contemptuous in reference to dull men who are never visited by conceptions so bright and original as we deem them. A man has been in great perplexity, month after month, and suddenly he says, "Go to, the solution is now before me; I see my way right out of this dark place"; and he heightens his tone as the joy swells in his heart. That is right. We could not do without intellectual birthdays; we could not always be carrying about a dead, leaden brain, that never sees light or shouts victory. We like these moments of inspiration to break in upon the dull monotony of such a lifetime as ours. So it is perfectly right that men should express their new conceptions—their new programme—and lay out a bold policy in a clear and confident tone. But are all our ideas so very bright? When we see our way to brickmaking, is it always in the right direction? When we set our mind upon founding a city and building a tower the top of which shall rest against the stars, is it right? You see that question of "right" comes in again and again, and in proportion as a man wishes to live a true Divine life he will always say, before going to his brickmaking and his city-founding and his tower-building, "Now, is this right?" Many of us could have built great towers, only we knew we should be building downwards if we set our hands to such work as has often tempted us. Do not let us look coldly upon apparently unsuccessful men, and say, "Look at us; we have built a great city and tower, and you, where are you?—stretching in the dust and grovelling in nothing." They could have built quite as large a tower as ours; they could have been quite as far up in the clouds as we are, only we had perhaps less conscience than they had. When we saw a way to burning bricks, we burned them; and a way to establishing towers, we founded them; and they, poor creatures, unsuccessful men, began to pray about it, and to wonder if it was right, and to ask casuistical questions, and to rack themselves upon conscience; and so they have done no building! And yet they may have built. Who can tell? All buildings are not made of brick; all men do not require to lay out brick-fields, and burn clay, in order to build. It may be found one day, when the final inspection takes place, that the man who has built nothing visible has really built a palace for the residence of God. It may be found, too, that some successful people have nothing but bricks—nothing but bricks, bricks, bricks! Then it will be seen who the true builders were. What I pause here to say is this: We may have bright ideas, we may have (to us) new conceptions; there are, to our thinking, original ways of doing things; now and again cunning plans of overcoming difficulties strike us. Do I condemn this intellectual activity? No; I simply say, Let your intellect and your conscience go together; do not be one-sided men; do not be living altogether out of the head, be living out of your moral nature as well; and if it be right, then build the tower with all industry and deter-

mination. Let it be strong and lofty, and God shall come down upon your work and glorify it, and claim it as His own. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Ambition*.—Bold men—men of vigorous mind, striking out something that is very definite, and about which there could be no mistake. We, too, are doing just what they did; we are following the god Ambition—the restless god Ambition, who never sleeps, never pauses, never gives his devotees vacation, but is always stirring them up to more and more furious desires. Do I condemn ambition? Nothing of the kind. I praise ambition; I say to every young man who may to-day accept me as his teacher, Be ambitious; build loftily; let your aspirations be confined only by the limits which God Himself has set to human power and human capability; but—but—that old question comes in again, Is it right? Is it right? Our ambitions may be our temptations; our ambitions may be stumbling-blocks over which we fall into outer darkness; our ambitions may be the cups out of which we drink some deadly intoxicant, poisoning the mind and destroying the heart's life. Therefore I pause again to ask, Is it right? Then, too, we pronounce some men ambitious who are really not ambitious. All men do not understand the word ambition. Ambition has been vulgarized, taken out altogether from its refined and beautiful associations, and debased into something that is intensely of the earth, earthy. I call men to intellectual ambition; to spiritual ambition; to the ambition which says, "I count not myself to have attained; this one thing I do, I press." Alas! there are ten thousand men in our city streets to-day who are "pressing"; but the question is, Towards what do they press? The apostle says, "I press towards the mark for the prize of my high-calling of God in Christ Jesus." That is better than saying, "Let us build a tower whose top shall reach even unto heaven"; and yet it is true tower-building—it is palace-building. (*Ibid.*) *Bad advice soon taken*.—It must needs be that one man gave his counsel first, saying to the rest, "Come, let us build," &c. But when once it was broached not one man allowed it, but even all full quickly yielded to it. Whereby we see, first, the vileness of man, not only to devise that which is naught, but to set it full greedily abroad when it is devised, and to labour to persuade others to embrace and follow the same. Again, to consent to that which is wickedly devised of others, and to make a particular conceit a general judgment, action, and work at last. Great cause, therefore, that men's lewd devices should be restrained from being published, since both the deviser's wish and man's great corruption is so prone to yield a wicked consent and following of the same. Caiaphas's counsel, when it once sounded of Christ's death, was quickly hearkened unto, and from that day forward consultation had together how they might accomplish the same. Whosoever broached it first that the people should ask Barabbas and refuse Jesus, it was soon received, liked, and followed of such ignorant spirits and giddy heads. That a sort should combine together and kill the apostle had a beginner, and how quickly pleased the plot such other bloody minds and spiteful hearts! How soon embraced Lot's younger daughter the counsel of the elder to do so vile a thing! That unbrotherly conspiracy against Joseph was soon yielded unto when once it was uttered. Do you remember the murmuring against Moses and Aaron, in the Book of Numbers? How began it? Had it not a captain, then a second, then a third, then a number? Once broached that Moses and Aaron took too much upon them; that others were equal with them, and therefore should be in like authority; that the people were wronged, and so forth—soon was it liked, soon was it caught, soon was it prosecuted of proud minds, that would be aloft, and knew not to obey. Conclude we, then, upon all those that sin, some be wicked to broach a wickedness, and thousands weak to follow the same when once they hear it; yea, though it be to build a tower against God. It never was, nor ever shall be, either godly policy or Christian duty to suffer men's brains to broach what they list, and others to follow unquiet devices, hateful to God and hurtful to His Church in a high degree. (*Bishop Babington.*) *The tower of Babel*.—In Babylonia there are at present the remains of three stupendous ruins, each of which have been claimed by different travellers as occupying the site of the tower of Babel. One of these especially has much to support its claim. The temple of Belus was in all probability erected on the site of the tower of Babel, so the arguments which settle the position of one of these erections serve to fix the other. Rawlinson says of these particular ruins:—"It is an oblong mass, composed chiefly of unbaked bricks, rising from the plain to the height of one hundred and ten feet, and having at the top a broad flat space with heaps of rubbish. The faces of the mound are about two hundred yards in length, and thus agree with Herodotus' estimate. Tunnels driven through the structure

show that it was formerly covered with a wall of baked brick masonry : many such bricks are found loose, and bear the name of Nebuchadnezzar." The difficulty of identifying the site of the scriptural Babylon arises chiefly from the fact that the materials of which it was built have at various times been removed for the construction of the great cities which have successively replaced it. Nebuchadnezzar either repaired Babylon, as many suppose, or built it anew upon a neighbouring site with the remains of the more ancient Babel. The kind of building which was erected, and known as the tower of Babel, may be best understood by the description of the great temple of Nebo at Borsippa, known to moderns as the *Birs-Nimrud*. It was a sort of oblique pyramid, built in seven receding stages. "Upon a platform of crude brick, raised a few feet above the level of the alluvial plain, was built of burnt brick the first or basement stage—an exact square, two hundred and seventy-two feet each way, and twenty-six feet in perpendicular height. Upon this stage was erected a second, two hundred and thirty feet each way, and likewise twenty-six feet high; which, however, was not placed exactly in the middle of the first, but considerably nearer to the south-western end, which constituted the back of the building. The other stages are arranged similarly—the third being one hundred and eighty-eight feet, and again twenty-six feet high; the fourth one hundred and forty-six feet square and fifteen feet high; the fifth one hundred and four feet square, and the same height as the fourth; the sixth sixty-two feet square, and again the same height; and the seventh twenty feet square, and once more the same height. On the seventh stage there was probably placed the ark or tabernacle, which seems to have been again fifteen feet high, and must have nearly, if not entirely, covered the top of the seventh story. The entire original height, allowing three feet for the platform, would thus have been one hundred and fifty-six feet, or without the platform, one hundred and fifty-three feet. The whole formed a sort of oblique pyramid, the gentler slope facing the N.E., and the steeper inclining to the S.W. On the N.E. side was the grand entrance, and here stood the vestibule, a separate building, the *débris* from which having joined those from the temple itself, fill up the intermediate space, and very remarkably prolong the round in this direction." (*Things Not Generally Known*.) The materials used to build it:—The materials generally used for the construction of Babylonian buildings are here most faithfully described (ver. 3). As in Egypt, the edifices of Mesopotamia consisted of sun-dried, but often also burnt bricks, baked of the purest clay, and sometimes mixed with chopped straw, which materially enhances their compactness and hardness; these bricks were generally covered with inscriptions, promising to prove of the greatest historical value. But instead of mortar, the Babylonians used as a cement that celebrated asphalt or bitumen, which is nowhere found in such excellence and abundance as in the neighbourhood of Babylon. One of the most gifted of the modern explorers declared the ruins of Birs-Nimroud a specimen of the perfection of Babylonian masonry, and remarked, "that the cement by which the bricks were united is of so tenacious a quality, that it is almost impossible to detach one from the mass entire" (Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 499). Nothing but the violence of a fearful conflagration, the ravages of which are manifest in the ruins of Birs-Nimroud, would have been able to annihilate a building which appeared to be beyond the destructive power of time. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) *Babel*:—This, we may depend upon it, was no republic of builders; no co-operative association of bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers, bent on immortalizing themselves by the work of their own hands. This early effort at centralization, with a huge metropolis as its focus, sprang, we may be quite sure, from the brain of some one ambitious potentate, and was baptized, from the very first, in the blood and sweat and misery of toiling millions. That "Go to, let us make brick, let us build us a city, let us make us a name," is not the language of voluntary association; but is the stately style, which emperors affect. By this time we know only too well what it means—the cynical indifference to human suffering, the wastefulness of human life, the utter selfishness, the cruelty, the hardness of heart, masked under gilded forms. The characteristic of all world-empires—that which makes them world-empires—is that they lean upon might, and not upon right. Just in so far as they do this, they are world-empires. And, doing this, they are a defiance to the eternal righteousness of God. And, being this, they are doomed to decay. In such world-empires there is no true cohesion. The force which unites is purely external. The moment its pressure relaxes, the thing breaks up. In other words, man, seeking to make himself as God, can offer no rest, no centre of unity, no position of stable equi-

librium, to his fellow-men. He may be armed with irresistible might. He may be statesman and general, as well as king or emperor. By his very success he sows the seeds of decay. Collapse and disintegration overtake his work, even in the very hour of its seeming triumph. I remember visiting the tomb of the First Napoleon in Paris on one of the last days of the June of 1870. You know it, or you have heard about it. It struck me irresistibly, with all its accompaniments, as the symbol of just such a world-empire, as I have been speaking about to-night. Within three months from that day, that empire—like its predecessor—had collapsed in blood and disaster. Not he, who, being man, would make himself as God; but He, who being God, makes Himself man; is the true centre of rest and union for a suffering and divided humanity. (*David J. Vaughan, M.A.*)

Let us make us a name.—*Human greatness*:—1. A "name" is an important thing for a man. 2. All men make some kind of "name" for themselves. 3. Striving to "make a name" as the chief end of life is a grand mistake. This is what the men in "the land of Shinar" were now doing. Men have a natural desire for distinction; but what is the legitimate object? Is it to appear great, or to be great? Reputation is one thing, character another. The words of Christ, in Matt. xxiii. 12, will enable us to discover the right and wrong direction of this ambition.

I. A GREATNESS THAT COMES TO HUMILIATION. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." 1. In the moral reflections of his own soul. Conscience can never be satisfied by achievements the most brilliant, or possessions the most splendid, where selfishness has been the spring of their attainment. 2. In the estimation of all Christly men. These men see no greatness where there is not goodness. 3. In the retributions of Providence. There is a moral government over us all, there is a Nemesis that tracks the steps of men.

II. A GREATNESS THAT COMES FROM HUMILIATION. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." 1. In their own spirits. They master their passions, rise superior to mere personal considerations, rule their own souls, and are greater than they who take a city. 2. In the moral judgment of society. Just as a man makes himself of no reputation and works from disinterested love—unostentatiously and with no selfish motives—does he get enthroned in public sentiment. 3. In the friendship of God. (*Homilist.*)

Vainglory foolish:—That we may get a name: see the madness of the world ever to neglect heaven, and seek a name in earth, where nothing is firm, nothing continueth, but fadeth away and perisheth as a thought. This madness the prophet David mentioneth in his 49th Psalm, and laugheth at it, saying, "They think their houses and their habitations shall continue," &c.

Making a name:—This is a disease that cleaves to us all, to "receive honour one of another, and not to seek the honour which comes from God only" (John v. 44). A rare man is he surely that hath not some Babel of his own, whereon he bestows pains and cost, only to be talked of. *Hoc ego primus vidi*, was Zabarelle's *ἐνίκηον*. Epicurus would have us believe that he was the first that ever found out the truth of things. Palaemon gave out that all learning was born and would die with him. Aratus, the astrologer, that he had numbered the stars and written of them all. Archimedes, the mathematician, that if he had but where to set his foot, he could move the earth out of its place. Herostratus burnt Diana's temple for a name. And Plato writes of Protagoras, that he vaunted that, whereas he had lived sixty years, forty of them he had spent in corrupting of youth. Tully tells us that Gracchus did all for popular applause, and observes that those philosophers that have written of the contempt of glory, have yet set their names to their own writings, which shows an itch after that glory they persuaded others to despise. "These two things," saith Tully somewhere of himself, "I have to boast of, *Optimarum artium scientiarum gloriam*, my learned works, and noble acts." Julius Cæsar had his picture set upon the globe of the world, with a sword in his right hand, a book in his left, with this motto, *En utroque Cæsar*. Vibius Rufus used the chair wherein Cæsar was wont to sit, and was slain; he also married Tully's widow, and boasted of them both, as if either for that seat he had been Cæsar, or for that wife an orator. When Maximus died in the last day of his consulship, Caninius Rebulus petitioned Cæsar for that part of the day that he might be said to have been consul. So many of the popish clergy have with great care and cost procured a cardinal's bat, when they have lain a-dying, that they might be entitled cardinals in their epitaph, as Erasmus writeth . . . And Sextus Marius, being once offended with his neighbour, invited him to be his guest for two days together. The first of those two days he pulled down his neighbour's farmhouse, the next he set it up again far bigger and better than before. And all this for a name, that his neighbours might

see, and say, what hurt or good he could do them at his pleasure. (*J. Trapp.*) *End of worldly ambition*:—Look to the end of worldly ambition, and what is it? Take the four greatest rulers, perhaps, that ever sat upon a throne. Alexander, when he had so completely subdued the nations that he wept because he had no more to conquer, at last set fire to a city and died in a sense of debauch. Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the slaughtered knights, died at last by poison administered by his own hand, unwept, and unknown, in a foreign land. Cæsar having conquered 800 cities, and dyed his garments with the blood of one million of his foes, was stabbed by his best friends, in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest triumph. Napoleon, after being the scourge of Europe, and the desolator of his country, died in banishment, conquered and captive. So truly “the expectation of the wicked shall be cut off.” (*G. S. Bowes.*)

Ver. 5. The Lord came down to see.—*God's visitation*:—1. Men's apostasy and proud attempts are knit together with God's visitation. 2. God is below when men think He hath forsaken the earth, and is near to visit the wickedness of man. 3. God's descent is for vengeance sometimes upon sinners. 4. God doth visit the beauty and strength of wickedness. 5. The apostate sons of Adam may build their fabrics to prevent God's judgments. 6. Jehovah will mark for vengeance the sons of wickedness and weakness in all their buildings against Him (ver. 5). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. God speaks, as well as marks, the attempts of the ungodly to their reproach and confusion. 2. God points out the greatest advantages of violent workers of iniquity to scorn. 3. Unity of minds, resolutions, and communications, are the greatest props to wicked undertakers. 4. Violent workers of iniquity presume to finish as well as begin: that nothing shall be withheld from them. 5. Proud and presumptuous undertakings of men are a scorn and derision to God (ver. 6). (*Ibid.*) *God's inspection*:—Almighty God Himself came down to see what the children of men were doing, and when He comes down (a phrase which is used to accommodate Himself to our methods of expression), nothing can escape the penetration of His eye. He looks at our day-books, ledgers, and other memorandum books, to see how we are building the tower of our life; He visits our country residences and palatial buildings for the purpose of trying their foundations; He looks into all the building of our fortune, that He may see whether our gains have been honestly secured. Terrible is the day for the bad man on which Almighty God lays His great hand—the hand on which the winds are hidden, the great palm in which all the stars of the heaven are gathered—upon the tower which is being built. He will shake it, and, if the foundation is bad, the whole superstructure will be thrown down to the dust! When men build their towers under the conviction that every stone of them will be tried by Divine power—when they build their cities, and erect their towers, and extend their properties, under the assurance that not one thing of all the things that their hands are doing will escape the test of God's Spirit—we may expect life to be built upon a true foundation, and according to a righteous plan. What we have to ponder is this most certain fact, that God will come down to see our work, and that there is no possibility of concealing from Him any incorrectness of plan or any deficiency of service. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Ver. 9. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth.—*God causing confusion in order to restore peace*:—I. GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION, BUT OF PEACE. Yet once, in His wise compassion, He made confusion in order to prevent it; He destroyed peace, that in the end He might restore it. II. God, who hath made of one blood all nations of men, did, by that exercise of His power, THE BEST THING THAT COULD BE DONE TO CHECK AND RETARD THE RAPID GROWTH OF EVIL, AND TO PREPARE THE MEANS BY WHICH MAN MIGHT BE BROUGHT BACK TO OBEDIENCE. While there was but one tongue, men easily corrupted each other; when there were many, evil communications were greatly hindered. God marred the Babel-builders' work, but it was in order to mar their wickedness; and meanwhile He had His own gracious designs for a remedy. Pentecost. (*F. E. Paget, M.A.*) *Divine order in confusion*:—1. The confusion of tongues was not at random. It was a systematic distribution of languages for the purpose of a systematic distribution of man in emigration. The dispersion was orderly, the difference of tongue corresponding to the differences of race. By these were the Gentiles divided in their lands, every one after his tongue, after their families in their nations. 2. From the earliest period

there has been manifested, in the history of scientific progress, an invincible faith among scientific men that the facts of nature are capable of being arranged in conformity with laws of geometry and algebra. In other words, all have a profound conviction of the existence of what Argyll calls "the reign of law," *i.e.*, order in the midst of apparent confusion and aimlessness. 3. There is no illogical course in arguing that those who believe in God as the Creator of order in nature have a right to conclude that He preserves the same order in history. The cataclysms in nature have an order and object; why not then the catastrophes of history. There is Divine order in the midst of historical confusion, as palpable and manifest as in that of science. Looking back upon the pathway which history has trodden, we can perceive traces of design—powerful evidences of an infinite aim—order in the midst of confusion. Over the wheels of history, as over the wheels in Ezekiel's sublime vision, is the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. (*W. Adamson.*) *The scattered builders*:—I. THE AMBITIOUS BUILDERS. 1. Worldly wisdom. 2. Desire for worldly power. 3. Worldly pride. II. THE SUPREME RULER. 1. God looked. 2. God intervened. 3. God governed. So it is always. God restrains the power of evil, and makes it serve Him (*Psa. lxxvi. 10*). LEARN: 1. Not to be self-willed, proud, ambitious. 2. To submit to God's will, and trust always in His wisdom and love. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *The tower of Babel*:—I. THE BUILDERS. 1. Numerous. For one hundred years the posterity of Noah had continued to increase. 2. Of one speech. Hence present variety of language corroborative of the dispersion; otherwise there must have been many sources of the human race. 3. Disobedient. Had been expressly commanded to "replenish," *i.e.* refill, the earth. Instead of obeying God, they lived together. Thus, too, the population of the world was retarded. Men increase more rapidly in new countries. 4. United in rebellion. II. THE BUILDING. 1. Purpose. Not to escape another flood, for not only had they the promise, but very few could in such a case escape that way. Probably it was to serve some idolatrous purpose, and be a landmark around which they could unite as one people and nation. 2. Material. 3. Character. Lofty. Eastern buildings not generally marked by loftiness. This, a grand and solitary exception. III. THE INTERRUPTION. 1. The person. "God," whom they thought least of, and practically defied. 2. The mode. "Confound their language." IV. THE CONSEQUENCES. 1. The building abandoned. If some speaking one tongue had continued, the jealousy of the rest would have hindered. But so strange an event would confound them as well as their speech. 2. They separated. Into how many tribes or nations we know not. The most eminent philologists (as Bunsen, &c.) find three original stocks, which some even call the Semitic, Japhetic, and Hamitic. 3. The earth was more widely peopled. Thus was the Divine will enforced. But had this been obeyed, without the need of resorting to this compulsory method, how much more easily had missionary efforts, and commercial enterprises, &c., now been carried out. Thus the world is this day suffering through the sin of these builders of old. LEARN: I. The sin and folly of disobeying God. II. The ease with which God can punish sin. III. The far-reaching consequence of sin. IV. No confusion of tongues in heaven. All sing the one new song. (*J. C. Gray.*) *Lessons*:—1. How vain and disastrous it is for men to contend against God; they cannot effectually resist Him; they can only destroy themselves. Especially if their contention is against any of the plans and arrangements connected with His eternal covenant—if the work which they are opposing, or the providential dispensation against which they are rebelling, has a direct bearing on His glorious design for the redemption of the world, and the salvation of souls,—if they are labouring to shut out Christ, or what is Christ's, from His own domains, from hearts and homes that should be His,—how idly and madly do they kick against the pricks! 2. How wise it is, and how blessed, to acquiesce in God's allotment of the good things of life, and in His manner of bringing His purposes of love to pass! The blessed Lord is the God of Shem;—but Shem suffers wrong, and has to exercise long patience before deliverance comes. Still it is enough that Jehovah is his God; let him not be careful or anxious. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all other things shall be added unto you." 3. In regard to the duty and the destiny of nations, the purpose of God is here revealed. (1) On the one hand, schemes of conquest, and of concentrated dominion, are seen not to be of God; and however He may sometimes make them subservient to His own purposes, He will always, in the end, pour contempt on the proud ambition of man. (2) Orderly dispersion and colonization are of God. In particular, in the line of Japheth, to which we belong, and among the isles of the Gentiles, colonization

seems to be especially the Divine rule. (3) But even if Japheth should prove unfaithful in the use of the privileges and opportunities of his high-calling, as enlarged by God, and permitted to dwell in the tents of Shem,—and for his unfaithfulness should be cast away,—there is hope for the world still. “Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem,” is still, after all, the rallying watchword by which faith is quickened, and expectation stirred. For “salvation is of the Jews”; and it is concerning the seed of Shem that the animating question is put,—“If their fall be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?” (Rom. xi. 12). The Lord, whose name is blessed, is still the God of Shem: Israel is still “beloved for the fathers’ sake.” (4) Finally, the division of languages, though an obstacle to schemes of human ambition, will not be suffered to be an obstacle to the triumph of the cause of God. Of this, God Himself gave a proof and pledge, in the miracle wrought on the day of Pentecost,—the counterpart of the miracle at Babel. The separation of nations will not hinder the unity of the faith. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*)

The dispersion at Babel.—I. LET US INQUIRE WHO WERE DISPERSED OVER THE FACE OF THE EARTH AT THE DESTRUCTION OF BABEL. Who were those that lived on the plains of Shinar, built the tower of Babel, and were scattered over all the earth? It is evident they could not be the whole of mankind; for they had before been sent to the various places of their Divine destination. Some had gone to one quarter of the world, and some to another. Who, then, could the builders of Babel be that, after the general dispersion of mankind, were scattered over the earth? The Scripture history will inform us upon this subject. They were the sons of Ham; for the sacred historian tells us, “The sons of Ham were Cush, and Misraim, and Phut, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha; and the sons of Raamah, Sheba and Dedan. And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: whereof it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel.” But how came Nimrod the son of Ham, and his posterity, at Babylon, where Babel was built? This portion of the earth was allotted to Shem; and Nimrod with all the posterity of Ham was appointed to go to Africa. What right, then, had Nimrod, or any of the sons of Ham, to take possession of the plains of Babylon? Undoubtedly they had no right at all. But this is the Scripture account of the event. “And every region was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass in the journeying of the people from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar.” The people, then, who journeyed from the east were not all the people of the earth, but only the posterity of Ham, and especially Nimrod and his posterity. This is a very rational account. But it is absurd to suppose that the posterity of Noah, who consisted of a hundred and twenty or a hundred and thirty thousand, should all move in a body from the rich and fertile country around Mount Ararat, where they first settled after the flood, without any Divine direction or natural necessity. Hence it is natural to conclude that the people who journeyed from the east to the plain of Shinar were Nimrod and his posterity. Especially when we reflect it is expressly said that “the beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom was Babel.” But how came Nimrod to pitch upon the plain of Shinar after the general dispersion of mankind, and after he was directed to go to Africa, a country far distant from Babylon? To this I would answer, There seems to be no account given of his conduct but the following. When the posterity of Shem and Japheth obeyed the Divine direction to separate and go to the places allotted them, the posterity of Ham, or at least Nimrod and his descendants, refused to obey the Divine command. In open defiance to God they moved from the east and came to the pleasant land of Babylon, and there by force of arms took the plain of Shinar out of the hands of the children of Shem. They determined not to disperse, as God had required, and as the other branches of Noah’s family had done. This shows that they built Babel in rebellion against God, and that God had just cause to come down and defeat their impious design by confounding their language. II. I now proceed to INQUIRE WHAT WERE THE MOST REMARKABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISPERSION OF THE CHILDREN OF HAM AT THE DESTRUCTION OF BABEL AND THE CONFUSION OF LANGUAGE. 1. That their dispersion was productive of war. They waged the first war after the flood in taking possession of Babylon. And after they were driven from thence they maintained their rebellious and warlike spirit. Their course was everywhere marked with violence and cruelty. 2. This knowing and powerful people carried the arts and sciences with them wherever they went. In these they

excelled all other people. And notwithstanding their tyranny and cruelty, they did much to spread light and knowledge among the inhabitants of the earth. Of this they have left astonishing monuments in almost all parts of the world. 3. That this learned and ingenious people were gross idolaters, and spread idolatry through all nations whom they subdued and among whom they lived. They were the most corrupt and wicked part of Noah's family. **IMPROVEMENT.** 1. This subject gives us reason to think that true religion prevailed and flourished for many years after the flood. Everything was suited to produce this happy effect. Neither Noah nor his family could ever forget the solemn, instructive, and affecting scenes through which they had passed, nor erase from their minds the deep impressions those scenes had made upon them. They would naturally relate to their children what they had seen, and heard, and felt during the awful period of the flood, and they again would relate the same things from one generation to another. 2. We learn from the Scripture history of mankind which we have been considering, that infidelity has been the principal source of the wars and fightings that have deluged the world in blood. 3. It appears from what has been said that all false religion is only a corruption of the true. 4. It appears from what has been said how much easier it is to spread any false religion in the world than the true religion. 5. It is a strong evidence in favour of the religion contained in the Bible that it has been so long preserved in the world, notwithstanding all mankind could do to destroy it. 6. We learn from what has been said, the deplorable state in which mankind in general have been involved for ages and are still involved. It is indeed a dark mystery that God has suffered them so long to walk in their own way without using such effectual means to enlighten and save them as He always has had power to use. But we have good reason to believe that He will yet bring light out of their darkness, holiness out of their blindness, and happiness out of their misery. 7. This subject shows the great reason that Christians have to expect, desire, and pray for a better state of things in the world. (*N. Emmons, D.D.*) **Lessons:—**1. God's execution of vengeance falleth soon after His resolution. 2. Jehovah will be the executioner of His own sentence on the wicked. 3. It is God's work to set confederates against each other who conspire against Him. 4. The place of sin may sometimes prove the place of vengeance. 5. Sinners' consultations to strengthen themselves in one place may end in a universal dispersion. 6. The earth is overspread with sinners against God by His judgment taken on them. 7. The strongest councils of sin will be frustrated by God. 8. High resolutions of sinners fall short of all their ends (ver. 8). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) **Good architecture:—**Good architecture is the work of good and believing men. (*J. Ruskin.*) **God's infinite resources for punishing sinners:—**This brings before us a hint of the unknown resources of God, in the matter of punishing those who disobey His will. Who could have thought of this method of scattering the builders of the city? God does not send a fire upon the builders; no terrible plague poisons the air; yet in an instant each workman is at a loss to understand the other, and each considers all the rest as but raving maniacs! Imagine the bewildering and painful scene! Men who have been working by each other's side days and weeks are instantly conscious of inability to understand one another's speech! New sounds, new accents, new words, but not a ray of intelligence in all! "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God." God has innumerable ways of showing His displeasure at human folly and human crime. A man may be pursuing a course of prosperity in which he is ignoring all that is moral and Divine, and men may be regarding him as the very model of success; yet, in an instant, Almighty God may blow upon his brain, and the man may sit down in a defeat which can never be reversed. God is not confined to one method of punishment. He touches a man's bones, and they melt; He breathes upon a man's brain, and henceforth he is not able to think. He comes in at night-time and shakes the foundations of man's most trusted towers, and in the morning there is nought but a heap of ruins. He disorganizes men's memories, and in an instant they confuse all the recollections of their lifetime. He touches man's tongue, and the fluent speaker becomes a stammerer. He breaks the staff in twain, and he who was thus relying upon it is thrown down in utter helplessness. We know but little of what God means when He says "Heaven"; that word gives us but a dim hint of the infinite light and blessedness and triumph which are in reserve for the good. We have but a poor conception of what God means when He says "Hell"; that word is but a flickering spark compared with the infinite distress, and endless ruin and torment, which must befall every man who defies his Maker. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Confusion of language.—Speaking of this confusion of language, may I not be permitted to inquire whether even in our own English tongue there is not to-day very serious confusion? Do men really mean words to be accepted in their plain common-sense? Does not the acute man often tell his untrained client what he intends to do in language which has double meanings? Do we not sometimes utter the words that have one meaning to the world and another meaning to our own hearts? Yea does not always mean yea, nor does nay always mean nay; men sign papers with mental reservations; men utter words in their common meaning, and to themselves they interpret these words with secret significations. The same words do not mean the same thing under all circumstances and as spoken by different speakers. When a poor man says "rich," he means one thing; when a millionaire says "rich," he means something very different. Let us consider that there is morality even in the use of language. Let no man consider himself at liberty to trifle with the meaning of words. Language is the medium of intercourse between man and man, and on the interpretation of words great results depend. It behoves us, therefore, who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, so to speak as to leave ourselves without the painful reflection of having taken refuge in ambiguous expressions for the sake of saving ourselves from unpleasant results. It will be a sign that God is really with us as a nation, when a pure language is restored unto us—when man can trust the word of man, and depend with entire confidence upon the honour of his neighbour. (*Ibid.*)

The confusion of tongues.—The late Bishop Selwyn devoted a great part of his time to visiting the Melanesian Isles, and he thus writes home about the difficulty of languages: "Nothing but a special interposition of the Divine power could have produced such a confusion of tongues as we find here. In islands not larger than the Isle of Wight we find dialects so distinct that the inhabitants of the various districts hold no communication one with another." (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*)

No architect.—The late Mr. Alexander, the eminent architect, was under cross-examination at Maidstone by Serjeant, afterwards Baron, Garrow, who wished to detract from the weight of his testimony, and, after asking him what was his name, he proceeded: "You are a builder?" "No, sir, I am an architect." "They are much the same." "I beg your pardon, sir; I cannot admit that. I consider them to be totally different." "Oh, indeed! Perhaps you will state wherein the difference consists?" "An architect, sir, conceives the design, prepares the plan, draws out the specifications—in short, supplies the mind; the builder is merely the bricklayer or the carpenter. The builder is the machine; the architect the power that puts it together and sets it going." "Oh, very well, Mr. Architect, that will do. And now, after your very ingenious distinction without a difference, perhaps you can inform the court who was the architect of the Tower of Babel?" The reply, for promptness and wit, is not to be rivalled in the history of rejoinder:—"There was no architect, sir, and hence the confusion." (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 10-26. These are the generations of Shem.—*The generations of Shem*.—**I. THE LINE IN WHICH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUE GOD WAS PRESERVED.** **II. THE DIRECTION OF THE STREAM OF HISTORY TOWARDS THE MESSIAH.** "God calmly and resolutely proceeds with His purpose of mercy. In the accomplishment of this eternal purpose He moves with all the solemn grandeur of long-suffering patience. One day is with Him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Out of Adam's three sons He selects one to be the progenitor of the seed of the woman. Out of Noah's three sons He again selects one. And now out of Terah's three is one to be selected. Among the children of this one He will choose a second one, and among his a third one before He reaches the holy family. Doubtless this gradual mode of proceeding is in keeping with the hereditary training of the holy nation, and the due adjustment of the Divine measures for at length bringing the fulness of the Gentiles in the covenant of everlasting peace." **III. THE GRADUAL NARROWING OF HUMAN LIFE.** "In the manifold weakenings of the highest life endurance, in the genealogy of them, there are, nevertheless, distinctly observable a number of abrupt breaks—1. From Shem to Arphaxad, or from 600 years to 438; 2. From Eber to Peleg, or from 464 years to 239. 3. From Serug to Nahor, or from 230 years to 148; beyond which last, again, there extend the lives of Terah, with his 205, and of Abraham, with his 175 years. Farther on we have Isaac with 180 years, Jacob 147, and Joseph 110. So gradually does the human term of life approach the limit set by the Psalmist (Psa. xc. 10). Moses reached the age of 120 years. The deadly efficacy goes on still in the bodily sphere,

although the counter-working of salvation has commenced in the spiritual." (*T. H. Leale.*) *Post-diluvial genealogy*:—The general title is expressed thus, "These are the generations of Shem." Of these Moses was speaking (chap. x.), so far as Peleg, whose name was given him upon the occasion of dividing the earth; by way of parenthesis, he includes the history and cause of this earth's division, in the former part of this chapter. He now returns to draw up the line full unto Abram, about which this title is set in the front. Consider the use of all these mentioned in the title. 1. To point where the Church of God was after the flood. 2. To show God's providence in singling out some generations in the world for His Church, these and not others. 3. To make known to us the state of the Church either for truth or for corruption at this time. 4. To continue to us the right chronology of the world, not for speculation only, but for pious practice to us, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 5. To make us better understand some passages of the prophets mentioning these persons or their conditions. 6. To show us the true line of Christ, and to confirm the New Testament given by Him. Every generation in the Church from the flood is but to bring Christ nearer. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Race of man*:—The human race may be compared to an immense temple ruined, but now rebuilding, the numerous compartments of which represent the several nations of the earth. True, the different portions of the edifice present great anomalies; but yet the foundation and the corner-stone are the same. All spring from the same level, and all should be directed to the same end. The walls of the building have been thrown down, and the stones scattered by a great earthquake; yet a mighty Architect has appeared, and His powerful hand is gradually raising the temple walls. The only difference between one side of the edifice and the other is, that here the restoration is somewhat further advanced, while there it is less forward. Alas! some places are still overgrown with thorns, where not a single stone appears. Yet the great Architect may one day look down on these desolate spots, and there the building may suddenly and rapidly spring up, reaching the summit long before those lofty walls which seem to have outgrown the others, but which are still standing half-raised and incomplete. "The last shall be first." (*Merle D'Aubigné.*) *Lessons*:—1. God's providence hath pointed out His Church and recorded its line, after as before the flood; herein helping the faith of following ages. 2. God chooseth what generations and families He pleaseth to pitch His Church in them. 3. A family God may choose out of the world to set His name upon them, when the world is passed by; a few or little remnant God reserveth. 4. Every generation in the Church from the flood is but to bring Christ nearer. 5. Times are appointed for the birth of every one in the Church for His work (ver. 10). 6. Length of days, &c., God giveth to His chief witnesses, as Shem was to Isaac's days; much work he had to do in that compass of time. 7. The eminentest in the Church, may have many children degenerate from it. More care should be used to keep them closer to God (ver. 11). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Vers. 27-32. Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.—*The dawn of Abram's history*:—Here we have the commencement of the sixth document, indicated by the usual preface, "These are the generations." This portion is intended to bring Abram before us, and therefore goes to the roots of his history, showing us from what a source so eminent an example of righteousness sprang. The history is brief, but it may be considered as a condensed outline of Abraham's life. Here we find him—I. POSSESSED OF GREAT MORAL COURAGE. Terah, the father of Abram, was an idolator (*Josh. xxiv. 2*). Both himself and his children were ignorant of the true object of worship, or if they had any knowledge of this, they did not retain that knowledge, but suffered themselves to be led away by the impiety around them. Such is the hole of the pit from whence this sublime character was digged. II. UNDER THE SHADOW OF A FUTURE TRIAL (ver. 30). (*T. H. Leale.*) *Children dying before their parents*:—I. THAT HUMAN HAPPINESS IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE DEAREST OBJECTS OF NATURAL AFFECTION. II. THAT THE NATURAL OBJECTS OF HUMAN CONFIDENCE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN US. III. THAT CHILDREN SHOULD BE EDUCATED FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR NATURES RATHER THAN WITH A VIEW TO THEIR CALLING IN LIFE. IV. THAT PREPARATION FOR ETERNITY IS AS URGENT FOR THE YOUNG AS FOR THE OLD. (*Homilist.*) *Death in the prime of life*:—I. DIVINE PROVIDENCE SO ORDERS DEATH THAT HUMAN CALCULATION CANNOT BE A FACTOR IN LIFE. 1. Youth is no security. 2. Health is no protection. 3. The order of nature is set at defiance. 4. No reliance can be placed on the distinctions of society—on the law of heredity, on favourable conditions.

II. GOD'S DESIGN IN ALL THIS IS TO TEACH MANKIND, from the cradle to the grave, THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE. Death is ever in our path. (*The Homiletic Review*.)

Death in the prime of life.—I. FACTS. 1. Death is no respecter of persons. 2. No respecter of age. 3. No respecter of condition. 4. No respecter of character.

II. LESSONS: 1. To fully understand and accept these facts, and shape life by them. 2. To make our salvation the first and main duty of life. 3. In whatever state, condition, or period of life we are, to risk nothing on the contingent of living. (*Ibid.*)

Third age—patriarchal era.—I. God trained him by separation; by a series of separations. This is the key-thought of Abraham's life. We are accustomed to consider faith as the key to Abraham's life. Certainly it is; but did not his faith manifest itself in just this, that he was willing to separate himself from all for the Lord's sake? 1. You find him first called of God to leave his country and his father's house. 2. The second separation is from his father Terah. 3. The next separation is from Canaan itself as a home. 4. Fourthly, separation from Egypt. 5. The next thing we read of is his separation from Lot. 6. After separation from Lot, comes separation from Ishmael. 7. Passing over what may be called Abraham's separation from himself, in the twentieth chapter, we come to his separation from Isaac. 8. The next thing we learn of Abraham is his separation from Sarah. "And it came to pass after all these things that Sarah died." 9. Then, finally, we find Abraham separated from all. In Gen. xxv. 5, we are told that "Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." Abraham had been a rich man, but his heart had not been set on his riches, as was evident whenever questions of property came up. II. This leads us to the second great subject: the gospel unto which Abraham was separated—the blessing of Abraham—the "Abrahamic covenant" of theology. It is, as already remarked, the same old covenant of grace, plus the idea of separation and consequent restriction. And here, as we are entering upon this period of restriction, this narrowing of the channel of blessing to the line of a single family first, and a single nation afterward, it is important for us to remember three things: In the first place this policy of restriction was not adopted until the offer of mercy had been thrice made to all mankind, and thrice rejected. In the second place, this restriction of the blessings of grace to a single family and a single nation was for the sake of all. It was the only way by which the blessing could be secured finally to all. Abraham was called, not for his own sake, nor for his descendants' sake only, but for the world's sake—"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (xii. 3); and again (xxii. 18): "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." There is no real narrowing. It is still, "God so loved the world." In the third place, even though in the meantime the channel must be narrowed to a single family and nation, "whosoever will" may come. The door is open all the while. "The sons of the stranger" have simply to leave their country and their family, and come and join themselves to the family of Abraham, and to the nation of the Jew, and they are made welcome. (*J. M. Gibson, D.D.*)

Setting out, but stopping short of the promised land.—How many are there who set out on the way to Canaan, but never reach that land of promise—who run well for a time, but are afterwards hindered! In the present life they obtain rest, in peace with God, in the exercise of the grace He ministers, and in a conscious sense of His approbation; and these first-fruits of the Spirit are the earnest of the rich, everlasting harvest. Those only who enter by faith into the land of promise here shall be admitted into the Canaan above. But how many are there who seem to set out well, and even to make some progress, and yet die before they gain that happy reversion! I. We ask, HOW FAR MEN MAY GO IN THE WAY TO CANAAN, AND YET, LIKE TERAH, DIE IN HARAN? in other words, How far they may proceed in the ways of religion, yet fall short of the kingdom of grace and glory? 1. We may be visited with many convictions, and even with great terrors, and yet fall short of a state of grace. Does conscience admonish you that you have been neglecting your duty to your God and your Saviour—your highest duties, your first interests, even the interests of your immortal souls? Does the fear of futurity sometimes visit you, urging you to say, "What must I do?" It may be well—it shall be well, if those alarms impel you to the Saviour. But rest not in convictions; for if these be the whole extent of your experience, you are still in Haran, separated by a wide boundary from the land of promise, the spiritual Canaan: and if you die in your present state, you are excluded from the Canaan that is above. 2. We may be conscious of tender religious emotions—sorrow, desire, joy—and yet fall short of real grace. Not only may the conscience be convinced, but the heart may be in some measure softened, and yet remain unconverted; for it is "deceitful above all things."

3. We may form many good resolutions, and yet be dwelling in Haran. Who is there that has not often formed these? In a season of conviction, in an hour of compunction, in a day of trial and adversity, we resolve to apply to the things that belong to our peace, to attend to the warnings of the word and providence of God, and to seek after that portion that is satisfying and abiding. But alas! the conviction wears off, the trial passes by, the danger is averted; and we forget all our purposes and resolutions. Or perhaps we set about fulfilling them, and adhere to them for a time; but, trusting in our own strength, we are overcome and brought again under the power of the enemy. What avail an army of good resolutions, unaccompanied by prayer, and unsupported by grace, against the subtlety and power of the enemy of souls? "The way to hell," it has been emphatically said, "is paved with good resolutions." 4. We may actually enter on the work of reformation, and proceed a certain length in it, and yet fall short. Herod not only feared John, but "did many things." Thus are men often induced to abstain from particular transgressions, to exercise some degree of self-denial, to address themselves to various duties—things in themselves, no doubt, promising and right, but being done only from temporary impulse, or from selfish and slavish motives, consistent still with an unregenerate state, are usually as transient in their duration as defective in their principle. These facts are affecting, and even alarming. You are ready to say, If all the attainments you have mentioned are ineffective, what is there that will avail? My brethren, nothing will avail without a change of heart—"a new heart" must be given us, "a new spirit" put within us. II. We proceed to ask, WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES THAT INTERRUPT THE PROGRESS OF THOSE WHO SEEM TO SET OUT IN THE WAY TO CANAAN? 1. Here the analogy of a journey leads us to mention, first, sloth, spiritual sloth. Like a paralysis extending over our whole frame, it completely unfits us for prosecuting our journey. 2. We mention, as a second obstacle, the love of the world; a principle that entangles and enchains—that perverts the heart, and turns the feet out of the right path. 3. In fine, the grand obstacle is, an inward aversion to the ways of God, a dislike of serious religion. III. We inquire, WHAT IS THE STATE AND PROSPECT OF THOSE WHO STOP SHORT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD? Surely it may well awaken both sorrow and fear. Do you not lament the fate of a promising youth who, in the near prospect of succeeding to a large estate, is cut off by the hand of death? Do you not mourn when any object, exceedingly desirable, seems just ready to be attained, and is then unexpectedly snatched from us and lost for ever? How deplorable! to have gone so far in the way to Canaan and yet to come short; to have approached so near the promised land, yet never to enter; to come to the gate of heaven, and to be cast down into hell! 1. Consider; those who stop short of the kingdom lose the benefit of all they have felt and done in the things of religion. 2. Nay, further, all that they have felt and done in religion will really serve to aggravate their guilt and embitter their disappointment. 3. Once more; the conduct of such persons brings peculiar reproach upon religion. For they convey to others an injurious conception of it; they represent it as a system of restraints, of difficulties, and of dangers, without adequate reward. And now, in concluding, I address, first, those who have not yet set out on the way to Canaan—I intend careless sinners, who continue to this day, without fear or concern, in the broad way that leads to destruction. Has God no claims upon you? Has Christ no right to your regard? Has eternity no demands on your attention? Even in you there is a conscience that will speak if you will give it a hearing, and if not here, yet assuredly hereafter. Be persuaded to avert its overwhelming reproaches, yea, the more overwhelming frown of Him who is greater than conscience, by now making peace with Him through Jesus Christ. Secondly, I address those who have professedly set out on the way to Canaan—I mean those who profess that they have given themselves to Christ, to be saved and to be governed by Him. Remember, my beloved friends, you must "endure to the end," if you would be saved. If a man enter the army, and follow his regiment a few marches, and then desert to the enemy, is he not accounted a traitor and a rebel? Such will your character be, if, having professed to give yourselves to Christ, you forsake Him and return to the world. (*H. Gray, D.D.*) *Stopping short*:—The simple fact, "Terah died in Haran," stands in the Scriptures as a monument, like the pillar of salt which uttered its warning to every passer by, "Remember Lot's wife." It exhibits an old man, after his many years spent in idolatry and ignorance, attempting in a late obedience to Divine commands to remove from his native condition and home, to the land of promise; but wasting in procrastination the time for his journey, and indolently staying upon the road over which he was required to pass,

to gain the end placed before his view; and finding all his efforts and plans to accomplish his purpose, to prove unavailing for his good. He never attained the inheritance for which he set out so late, and which he pursued so carelessly. Has this fact then no practical connection with ourselves? Does it not exhibit a striking illustration of the folly and danger of postponing until old age, our own commanded journey to the land of promise? I. Let us consider THE WORK WHICH GOD REQUIRES SINFUL MAN TO UNDERTAKE. The call of Abraham from his country and home is frequently employed to illustrate the great duty which is required of every sinful man. Like him, every one is commanded in the gospel to attain and exercise a simple controlling faith in the Divine promises; to follow in this spirit of faith the peculiar commands of God the Saviour; to go out, in its reliance upon Him, from a state of selfishness and idolatry, man's natural condition, to seek the better and heavenly country which is revealed in the gospel, and offered in Christ Jesus, to every believing soul. Such an exercise of faith developing itself in full and permanent obedience to the Divine commands, is the work which God requires of all who hear the gospel. But when is this great work to be undertaken? When shall man begin to subdue his rebellious heart into reconciliation to the will of God? May he select his own time for the work? Surely not. The Scriptures never intimate a moment beyond the time in which the command is actually given, as the time for man's obedience. The morrow is not given to man. "Now," "to-day," are the Divine designations of the proper time for man's submission. Whenever God speaks, it is that His will may be done at once. He who rejects and disobeys the commands of God in his youth, is exceedingly unlikely to find the opportunity or the disposition to obey in his subsequent years. II. Let us consider THE COURSE WHICH MEN GENERALLY PURSUE IN REFERENCE TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER. Do they, or do they not, generally obey at once? Do they, with Abraham, arise and go? or do they more commonly with Terah, procrastinate the enterprise until it is too late to accomplish it at all? Some few accept with gratitude the blessed invitations of the Saviour, and unite themselves unto Him, in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten. But what is the course pursued by the great majority of mankind? Do they not altogether drive away the convictions of this early period? They refuse to yield their hearts and characters, to be thus subjected by the Holy Spirit to the service of God. They bargain with their consciences, in order to silence their awakened demands, that at some future period they will attend to the duty required of them. Thus most frequently, they live and die in their chosen idolatry and guilt; always hearing the command, "arise and go," and always determining that they will obey it; but never putting their resolution into effect. Like Terah, they die in Haran; they perish amidst unfulfilled vows and attempts of obedience to God, and under the guilt and burden of actual rebellion against Him. III. Let us trace THE USUAL RESULT OF THIS COURSE OF PROCRASTINATION. It will be but tracing the history and experience of the great proportion of mankind. Twenty years of the sinner's life go by. They are the most important, and in most cases the deciding period of his existence, in reference to his eternal welfare. But their close finds him still unrenewed in his character, and hardening his mind and conscience against the power of truth. In the wonderful forbearance of God, twenty years more are added to these, all of them crowned with privileges, and with invitations to a better land. But the lingering sinner still refuses to arise and go. By this time, he has seen and felt much of the folly of things temporal, and of the emptiness of the heart which depends upon them. But he is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and he is unwilling to make the decided and violent rupture which seems necessary if he would now effect his escape from an impending ruin. With more light in his conscience, he has more dulness and obduracy in his affections; and the work of true piety grows more and more difficult. If twenty years more bring him to the verge of feebleness and death, he is still found more deeply anxious to obtain the hope which he does not possess, and which he finds it more and more impossible to get. By this time, he is mourning over nearly all his joys as departed for ever. Almost every monument of his life seems to be a tomb. "Here lie the remains," is the inscription which he reads upon pleasures, and possessions, and hopes which are gone. And now, old age is looked for to effect that which youth and maturity have failed to accomplish. But here another disappointment comes. Old age also is very different in its character from its anticipated appearance. Man then awakes to the sorrowful conviction that he has been deluded through the whole of his course in life. He sees nothing of that spontaneous preparation for eternity, which he hoped to find in the later years of life. It is now harder, vastly

harder, than it has ever been before, to lay hold of any adequate and abiding hope for a world to come. Lingerer Terah sits down to measure up, in the sad calculation of his own experience, the folly by which he has been so long deceived. The love of the world and the pride of self have grown upon his heart. IV. What now becomes **THE RESULT OF THIS PROCRASTINATION?** Generally one of two things. Either total, hardened, self-defending negligence; or a partial, constrained, and unsatisfying attention to the duties of religion. That is, Terah either positively refuses to obey the Divine command, and remains to die as he has lived, in Chaldea; or else, he unwillingly sets out under the lashes of an awakened conscience, and goes as far as Haran, and dies there, in a new condition indeed, but with the same character. (*S. H. Tyng, D.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. God may make known His mind by the child unto the father; and call it before him (Acts vii. 2). 2. By revelation to a son, God may make parents willing to obey His call. 3. The Spirit giveth honour to parents, as leaders, when they follow the call of grace. 4. God points out by name such as He separates for His Church. 5. Faith puts all believers upon motion, when God calls them even from their native country. 6. Faith in God makes haste to depart from polluted places. 7. Faith intends to go as far as God calleth the soul. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Sarai was barren; she had no child.—Sarai's barrenness*:—1. The subject spoken of, Sarai; she that was to be the mother of the Church, of whom, purposely, the Spirit writeth this which followeth to show forth the power of God. 2. The condition spoken of her—under two expressions. (1) She was barren, *i.e.*, naturally she was so, and that from her youth and first marriage—the fitter object for God to work upon by His power. (2) To her was no child. That is, hitherto she had no child, when she was now taking her journey with her husband and grandfather. God records the trials of His saints, not for their reproach but for His own glory. (*Ibid.*)

CHAPTER XII.

VERS. 1-3. Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country.—*Abraham's action*:—His obeying the call and command of God, wherein four circumstances are very remarkable. 1. The time when it was when God called. 2. The place from whence God called him. 3. The country whither he was called. 4. The reason or end why he was thus said unto by the great God. I. First of the first, to wit, **THE TIME WHEN ABRAHAM WAS CALLED.** It was while he lived in Ur of the Chaldees; for Abraham lived with his father Terah in that place, and in Haran, or Charan, a city of Mesopotamia, till he was seventy-five years old (Gen. xii. 4, and Acts vii. 2, 3, 4). There and then did the God of glory appear to Abraham (Gen. xi. 28). This that blessed pro-martyr Stephen (being filled with the Holy Ghost) intimateth, to convince those superstitious and bloodthirsty Jews (who conceived that religion was confined to Canaan or Jerusalem) that Abraham had the true religion even in Chaldea and in Charan, before ever he saw Canaan or received circumcision, or before any ceremonies were appointed by the ministry of Moses, and before there was either tabernacle or temple. When Abraham dwelt with his father on the other side of Euphrates, and served idols (Josh. xxiv. 2), even then did God call him out of his country, making him to follow His call to obedience, not knowing whither he went (Heb. xi. 8), no, nor much caring, so long as he had God by the Hand, or might follow Him as his Guide step by step. By faith Abraham when called obeyed (Heb. xi. 8). The Greek word imports reverence and obedience. He did not stop his ear to this great Charmer (Psa. lviii. 4, 5), but he listened and hearkened to God's call with an awful respect. Thus Abraham did not dispute, but dispatch God's command; but immediately departed without solicitation or carnal reasonings against it (Gen. xii. 4). His inner and outer man were relatives; so it should be with us. II. The second circumstance is **THE PLACE FROM WHENCE**, which is twofold. 1. Ur. 2. Haran. (1) Parents ought not to hinder their children from good and from obedience to God. Here Terah, the old father, did not rebuke Abraham his son for being too full of fancy, nor charged him (upon his blessing) to abide in his native country, and not to be so fantastical as to follow so

found a call that told him not of the place whither he was to go; he did not say to his son, Wilt thou leave a certainty for an uncertainty, or wilt thou be wiser than all thy forefathers? &c. Let parents learn from hence to further, and not to hinder, their children in the good ways of God; honour is the reward of the former, but dishonour (if no more) of the latter. (2) Man's heart needeth many pulls from God's hand before man can complete his obedience to God. Here God gives Abraham two calls or pulls before he pulled him to the Land of Promise. The first pull bringeth him only from Ur to Haran; there he settleth, and gathereth much goods (Gen. xii. 5). (3) All carnal respects must be subject to the spiritual, and all carnal relations must be bewailed (Deut. xxi. 11, 12), yea, and relinquished (Psa. xlv. 10). (4) Divine vocation and adoption floweth wholly and solely from free grace. Nimrod's Church (as one saith) had almost swallowed up Abraham, while he was young, serving other gods as well as Nabor and Terah, who (as some Rabbins say) got his living by making and selling of images. Yet out of this root so idolatrous, both on father and mother's side, the whole stock of Israel sprang, to be an adopted people to God. Even Abraham, as well as the rest, until God called him to His foot (Isa. xli. 2) from the feet of idols, and from this bell of Babel, were he born at that time. This doth most highly advance the greatness of the free grace of God, thus to call whom He will (Mark iii. 13), and to have mercy on whom He will (Rom. ix. 15, 16). God found even Abraham himself ungodly (Rom. iv. 2, 5); but He did not leave him so. God must make us good, or He will never find us so.

III. THE PLACE WHITHER ABRAHAM WAS CALLED. This was not named. God did not tell it him in his ear, yet showed it him to his eye (Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 14).

1. Wherever Abraham was, his chief care was to be going on still toward the south (Gen. xii. 9), as towards the sun. So should all the children of Abraham travel towards the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. iv. 2), setting forth early as morning seekers (Prov. viii. 17), and making progress in grace (2 Pet. iii. 18), as from glory to glory (2 Cor. iii. 18).

2. His first care in all places where he came was to build an altar to his God; and so it should be ours. We are a kingdom of priests (1 Pet. ii. 5; Rev. i. 6), and we have an altar (Heb. xiii. 10), which is Christ, who sanctifies the sacrifice (Matt. xxiii. 19); we should build this altar in our hearts (Ezek. xxxvi. 26).

3. Abraham built his altars, although the Canaanites were then in the land; and it is a wonder they did not stone him for so doing, which certainly they would have done had not God restrained them. Thus ought all the spiritual seed of Abraham to shine as lamps in the midst of a crooked and cursed generation (Phil. ii. 15; Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 12), holding forth the word of life. We should set up our altars in sight and despite of idolaters, as Abraham, and call them *Jehovah nissi*, the Lord is my banner, as Moses did (Exod. xvii. 15).

4. Abraham was the first man who had God most familiarly appearing to him; and the sight of the Canaanite did not so much discourage him as the sight of his God did encourage him (1 Sam. xxx. 6).

5. We should look upon our all with a pilgrim's eye, and use our all with a pilgrim's mind. It was a mighty work of Abraham's faith to behave himself as a stranger on earth, because he knew himself a citizen of heaven (Heb. xi. 9, 10, &c.); so we (Eph. ii. 19, 20).

IV. THE END WHY GOD CALLED ABRAHAM. It was only to take possession of Canaan, not to enjoy it as a present inheritance; for we find that he was famished twice out of this good Land of Promise. First into Egypt (Gen. xii. 10); and, secondly, into Gerar, the Philistine's country (Gen. xx. 1). Yet did he ever make Canaan his retreating-place, sojourning in it for a hundred years—the remnant of his life. From which learn—

1. The most fruitful land may be made barren for the wickedness of those that dwell in it (Psa. cvii. 34). God can famish our Canaan to us (Zeph. ii. 11).

2. Suppose we be forced into Egypt or Philistia, to seek for that we cannot find in a famished land of promise; yet this is our best retreating-place when God heals our backslidings (Hos. xiv. 4). Alas! we are over-apt to slip out of the land of promise, as Adam was out of paradise, and Abraham out of Canaan; but the Lord keeps the feet of His saints (1 Sam. ii. 9). Obj.: Though Heb. xi. 8 saith, God called Abraham to Canaan to receive an inheritance there; and Acts vii. 5 saith, Yet God gave him no inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on. These two seeming contradictory places are thus reconciled: 1. Abraham did inherit Canaan mystically, as that land was a type of heaven. God may deny literally, yet grant mystically or spiritually. 2. He did inherit it in his posterity (though not in his person) 430 years after the promise (Gal. iii. 17). Thus God kept His promise with him; and so He doth with us, though we see not the performance thereof. This was Abraham's case; yet took he possession of the land because of

his title to it, which was threefold. 1. By way of promise. God made Canaan to belong unto Abraham by making a promise of it to him no less than four times (Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 15; xv. 7; xvii. 8). This promise of God (being a fourfold cord) Abraham accounts his best freehold. Thus it is with all the faithful, as it was with the father of the faithful: such have the spirit of truth to assure them of their interest in Divine promises (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 14). It is an earnest. This makes them exceeding rich, though they see not the actual performance of them in their day. Wealth lieth in good bills and bonds, under God's own hand and seal, all signed in His word, and sealed by His spirit. He therefore accounts heavenly promises far better than earthly performances. As Abraham did only take possession of Canaan, which afterwards he was to inherit, so a Christian takes possession of heaven, with his name written in it (Luke x. 20), and with his heart panting towards it (2 Pet. iii. 12).

2. By way of conquest. Canaan belonged to Abraham in his conquering Chedarlaomer, &c. (Gen. xiv. 4; xv. 17). This great king was the son of Elam, the son of Shem (Gen. x. 22), and, according to Noah's prophecy—Canaan shall be Shem's servant (Gen. ix. 26)—this Chedarlaomer was lord over the Canaanites and over those chief cities which stood in the plains of Jordan. Abraham conquers him in battle; so Canaan became the conqueror's by conquest; he became the heir of Canaan. The history holds forth this mystery: that all Christians, the children of Abraham, are by their new birth born heirs of heaven, the celestial Canaan; they should therefore be valiant for it (Jer. ix. 3).

3. By way of purchase Canaan was Abraham's. Though all the land was his by promise, yet he procures only a burying-place by purchase (Gen. xxiii. 16, &c.), not having a foot of it for his own present possession. This purchased burying-place was an earnest for all the rest; hence all the patriarchs dying after desired to be buried in it (Gen. xlvii. 30; i. 25). A sepulchre of one's own was a sign of firm possession (Isa. xxii. 16). All his children must write after his copy of obedience, which, in its transcendency, hath a threefold excellency. It was an obedience so transcendent as to be—1. Without hesitation. 2. Without reservation. 3. Without limitation. Of these in order—(1) It was obedience without hesitation. He used no disputation in the case; he falls not upon arguing with God in any carnal reasonings against his call and command, saying, I cannot apprehend any urgent occasion why I should forsake my own native country; and may not I justly suspect it no better than a piece of sublime folly to go I know not whither, and to leave a certainty for an uncertainty? Is not one bird in the hand (as saith the proverb) better than two in the bush? He doth not allege, Lord, first satisfy my scruples, and convince my judgment that it is my duty, and then will I follow and obey Thee. No, he doth not dispute, but despatch; he doth not say (as those recusants in the gospel said), Suffer me first to go and bury my father (Matt. viii. 21); or, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go to prove it, &c. (Luke xiv. 18–20). Neither did Abraham dare to do as better men than those aforesaid, even as Moses (Exod. iii. 11; iv., 10–13), or as Jeremy (Jer. i. 6), who both do bring in their carnal reasonings strongly to confute God and His call. It is not a good angel, but the evil one that opens our mouths to make replies upon such a sovereign Master. Our Lord is wiser for us than we can be for ourselves; our fleshly wisdom is enmity against God (Rom. viii. 7).

2. As Abraham's obedience was without hesitation, or any contrary disputes against God's call, so it was without reservation he resigns up himself to the command of God, not by halves, but wholly, without any "ifs" or "ands," as we say. What we do herein must be done with our whole heart, with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength. God gives a whole Christ to us, and shall not we give a whole heart to Him? 3. As Abraham's obedience was without hesitation and reservation, so it was without limitation. It is too, too common with us, as it was with Israel, to limit the Holy One of Israel (Psa. lxxviii. 41), especially in four respects: 1. In respect of time. 2. Of place. 3. Of means. 4. Of manner. Nay, even professors themselves will not own God, unless He appear to them in their own manner; whereas God sheweth Himself in divers manners (Heb. i. 1). Hence have we many famous remarks, as—1. That though blind obedience as to man is abominable, yet as to God it is highly commendable; such as this of Abraham's was. 2. Though this obedience of Abraham was a blind obedience as to his own will, yet was it not so as to God's will; for God's will was the rule of Abraham's obedience. 3. Though Abraham knew not whither he went (Heb. xi. 8), yet he knew well with whom he went, even One with whom he was sure he could not possibly miscarry. 4. Abraham knew not, yet followed, not knowing whither. But we know (from the sure

word of prophecy) whither our way leadeth—to wit, to heaven. It is a shame for us not to follow. Abraham's following God blindfold brought him to the earthly Canaan; but our following God with our eyes opened will bring us to the heavenly country. (C. Ness.) *Abraham: the emigrant*.—The call and migration of the patriarch suggest two thoughts. I. THE RISE OF PERSONAL RELIGION. Piety may vary in its form in different persons and times, but in its spirit it is unchanging. 1. It takes its rise in God. Abram "was called." "Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country," &c. It was not poverty that drove Abram from his native country; it was not persecution; it was not that love of a migratory life which is natural to an Oriental: his journey to Canaan was wholly due to a spiritual inspiration. "God chose Abram" (Neh. ix. 7) to be a child of grace—a justified sinner (Gal. iii. 8). It was God who gave this son of idolaters all his grandeur of soul and his marvellous appreciation of the true and the eternal. The conversion of every believer is similar. Personal religion always takes its rise in God—in His sovereign choice (2 Tim. i. 9), in His Divine power (John vi. 44; Phil. i. 6), and in His wonderful love (Eph. ii. 4, 5). No sinner has ever of his own accord quitted his native land of spiritual darkness and death. 2. It is the fruit of a Divine revelation. Jehovah revealed himself to Abram as the one living and true God, and in summoning him to emigrate to Canaan, made him a magnificent promise. The God of Shem is now the God of Abram. We are not to understand, indeed, that the patriarch's religious knowledge was at first either extensive or minute. But as each successive revelation was made to him, he learned more of the nature of God, and of the sublimity of his own destiny, until at length he was able to rejoice in the anticipation of the coming of Christ (John viii. 56) and in the hope of a glorious immortality (Heb. xi. 10, 13-16). Had the God of Glory not appeared to him, the patriarch would in all likelihood have died a pagan in the land of his fathers. Religion cannot be generated in any heart apart from a Divine revelation of some sort. There must be some knowledge of the truth. 3. It is the product of an earnest faith. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed." The truth that was made known to him would have had no influence upon him had he not believed it. Not reason alone is the basis of personal religion, for reason alone would lead to rationalism. Neither is it feeling alone, for that would develop into mysticism. The man of God is a man of faith. II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL RELIGION. Piety has its fundamental and formative principles, but it has also its developments of these. It has fruits as well as roots. Abram's piety developed in a complete renunciation of his old life; and the new life which he henceforth followed had at least three strongly-marked characteristics. It was—1. A life of implicit trust in God. Abram's first act of faith was followed by a confirmed habit of trustfulness. He struck the roots of his soul deep down into the invisible. 2. A life of conscious strangeness on the earth. Abram was content to be "a stranger and a sojourner" in the holy land. 3. A life which shall merge into a blessed immortality. Abram longed for a fatherland, but not for the land of his earthly forefathers. He might have re-crossed the Euphrates, but he never did so. The home that he learned with increasing eagerness to desire was the dwelling-place of his Father in heaven (Heb. xi. 10, 14-16). How large the personal interest which the believer has in heaven! He shall yet dwell in it as his fatherland. (Charles Jordan, M.A., LL.B.) *The call of Abram*.—I. In the call of Abram we see an OUTLINE OF THE GREAT PROVIDENTIAL SYSTEM UNDER WHICH WE LIVE. II. GREAT LIVES ARE TRAINED BY GREAT PROMISES. The promise to Abram—1. Throws light on the compensations of life. 2. It shows the oneness of God with His people. 3. It shows the influence of the present over the future. III. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE CENTRAL FIGURES IN SOCIETY, men of commanding life, around whom other persons settle into secondary positions. This one man, Abram, holds the promise; all the other persons in the company hold it secondarily. IV. ABRAM SET UP HIS ALTAR ALONG THE LINE OF HIS MARCH. V. The incident in vers. 10-12 shows what the best of men are when they betake themselves to their own devices. As the minister of God, Abram is great and noble; as the architect of his own fortune, he is cowardly, selfish, and false. VI. NATURAL NOBLENESS OUGHT NEVER TO BE UNDERBATED (vers. 18-20). In this matter Pharaoh was a greater, a nobler man than Abram. VII. The whole incident shows that GOD CALLS MEN TO SPECIAL DESTINIES, and that life is true and excellent in itself and in its influences only in so far as it is Divinely inspired and ruled. (J. Parker, D.D.) *Abram's training*.—I. ALL THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM WAS A SPECIAL TRAINING FOR A SPECIAL END. Chosen,

as are all God's instruments, because he was capable of being made that which the Lord purposed to make him, there was that in him which the good Spirit of the Lord formed, through the incidents of his life of wandering, into a character of eminent and single-hearted faithfulness. II. THIS WORK WAS DONE NOT FOR HIS OWN SAKE EXCLUSIVELY. He was to be "a father of many generations." The seed of Abraham was to be kept separate from the heathen world around it, even until from it was produced the "Desire of all nations"; and this character of Abraham was stamped thus deeply upon him, that it might be handed on through him to his children and his children's children after him. III. And so to a WONDERFUL DEGREE IT WAS; marking that Jewish people, amongst all their sins and rebellions, with such a peculiar strength and nobleness of character; and out in all its glory, in successive generations, in judge and seer and prophet and king, as they at all realized the pattern of their great progenitor, and walked the earth as strangers and pilgrims, but walked it with God, the God of Abraham and their God. (*Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.*) *A call from God*:—I. AT SOME TIME IN OUR LIVES A CALL FROM GOD SENDS ITS TRUMPET TONE THROUGH EACH OF OUR SOULS, as it did when Abraham heard it, and he went forth with the future stretching broad and far before him. II. GOD'S CALL TO ABRAHAM WAS: 1. A call to closer communion with Himself. 2. A call which led him to break with his past. 3. A call into loneliness. III. The reason why so many of us, who are good and honourable men, never become men of great use and example and higher thought and true devotion, IS THAT WE DARE NOT BE SINGULAR. We dare not leave our kindred or our set. We will not leave our traditional views and sentiments, and we cannot leave our secret sins. God speaks, and we close our eyes and turn away our heads, and our hearts answer, "I will not come." How long will all this last? Will it last until another solemn voice shall speak to us, and at the call of death we say, "I come"? (*W. Page-Roberts, M.A.*) *Lessons from the life of Abraham*:—I. NOTICE FIRST THE CALL OF ABRAHAM. 1. The call was addressed to him suddenly. 2. It required him to forsake his country and his kindred, while giving him no hope of return. 3. It sent him on a long and difficult journey, to a country lying more than three hundred miles away. Yet Abraham obeyed in willing submission to the command of God. II. NOTICE ABRAHAM'S CONQUEST OVER THE KINGS. This is the first battle recorded in the Word of God. It was after his rescue of Lot that Abraham was met by the mysterious Melchizedek. An awful shade of supernaturalism still rests upon this man, to whom some of the attributes of the Godhead seem to be ascribed, and who is always named with God and with God's Son. There are two lessons deducible from Abraham's conquests. 1. That military skill and experience are often easily vanquished by untaught valour, when that is at once inspired by impulse, guided by wisdom, and connected with a good cause. 2. That Christian duty varies at different times and in different circumstances. III. NOTICE THE COVENANTS WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN ABRAHAM AND GOD. From them we learn—1. God's infinite condescension. 2. Our duty of entering into covenant with God in Christ. From the history of Abraham we see that God's intention was: (1) To secure to Himself one great accession from the idolatrous camp. (2) To send Abraham as a forerunner and a first step into the land which God had selected as His peculiar prosperity. (3) To create a family link of connection between God and a distinct race of people for long ages. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *The call of Abram*:—The life of Abram approaches completeness. In the Scriptures more space is devoted to him than to all that went before him put together. In the narrative before us we have the starting-point of all that was illustrious and good in his life, and, we might almost say, of all God's gracious interpositions for the race. It is also full of valuable instruction, certain interesting points of which it is our present purpose to notice. 1. It reminds us of God's patient concern for the ways and welfare of men. The call of Abram was a summons to leave the land of his birth and early associations, and to go forth, under Divine leadership, to another of which he should be told. The purpose of the call was that, in him, the race might religiously start anew. 2. The narrative reminds us of the discrimination with which God selects and trains the instruments of His merciful purposes. His elections and selections are unexplained and often great mysteries. But never are they without reason. Divine sovereignty does not disregard the fitness of things, nor willingly suffer powers to go to waste. The choice fell upon Abram because he was the right man. He had natural gifts of no common order. That he was able to break away from the powerful force of custom and surrounding opinion, even at the Divine command, evinced indepen-

dence and strength. The ready respect paid him by small and great was a testimony to his commanding powers. Upon the single occasion when valour for the right moved him to go out to battle against certain marauding kings, he displayed military genius which in other times might have made him a great general. It was not, however, for his natural gifts, but for his moral qualities chiefly, that he was selected. He was a man of large faith and prompt obedience. 3. Again, we have here a reminder of the fidelity with which God sustains and cheers those who promptly obey. With a view to such cheer and support it may have been that Abram's first stopping-place was in "the delicious plan of Moreh," the "place of Sichem," of the luxuriant verdure of which travellers speak in the most enthusiastic terms. Says Professor Robinson, "We saw nothing to compare with it in all Palestine." To new converts God often grants special foretastes of their final reward, visions of light and cheer. But delightful as was this sight and rest, it was not all. To Abram, at Sichem, was granted a vision of God Himself. 4. Note, again, the outward expression here shown to be natural to a vigorous faith. Without any distinct command, so far as appears, at Sichem, his first halting-place in Canaan, Abram makes haste to build an altar unto the Lord. This he does again at Bethel. Yet again we find him doing the same at Beersheba and at Hebron. These altars were intended to be channels of worship and memorials of Divine mercies. By means of them he publicly professed his own faith in a strange land, and consecrated his promised possession to the Lord. By such means he also the more effectually guarded his children and household against the ensnaring influence of idolatrous and worldly neighbours. And all this he did with cost. Not only did it consume time and labour, it required courage. Abram was a wanderer among peoples proud, fierce, and vindictive; whose worship was idolatry; and among whom his singularity and the rebuke of his example would both provoke derision and excite hostility. Yet never does he withhold or conceal the expression of his reverent faith. 5. Last of all, we have here a hint of the kind of greatness most gratefully and lastingly remembered. It is four thousand years since Abram lived, and yet his memory not only survives, it is green. By multitudes it is cherished with homage and affection. In a recent public address, the missionary Dr. Jessup told this story of his sainted father. In the latter years of his life he was afflicted with a peculiar kind of paralysis. His memory was cleft in twain. That of secular things was gone. His legal knowledge, his great law library, his court-house, his old associates on the bench of Pennsylvania, and even the names of his own children, were forgotten. But the Bible, the family altar, the church, the missionary work, and his Saviour Jesus Christ, were all fresh in his memory as ever. The worldly had faded; the spiritual was green. So it may be with all the good in the world to come. So it measurably is now. They see worth and beauty only in that which allies to God. In good men's hearts only the good will have everlasting remembrance. It was his simple trust and prompt, steadfast obedience, the "entire self-abnegation with which he surrendered everything to the Divine call," which made him for all after-ages, and in the memories of the good, the hero that he was. By like childlike confidence and cheerful self-surrender we may win like approval with God, if not equal greatness in human sight. (*H. M. Grout, D.D.*) *A call to emigrate*:—Abram's emigration teaches by example precisely the same profound and universal lesson of spiritual life which Jesus taught in words: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." St. Francis of Assisi, and many like him, have read this evangelical call to renounce the world too literally. Nevertheless, if we would choose and pursue the heavenly country to which God is calling us, there must be in the heart of each of us a virtual leaving of father and mother, a forsaking of all that we have, in order to be Christ's followers. Of this we have the first great type in the emigration of Abram. Besides, God cut him off from kindred that He might draw him closer to Himself. If renunciation for God's sake be the condition of strong piety, solitary converse with God is its nurse. Emigration often does a great deal for a man. By throwing him back for aid upon his own resources, it teaches him to help himself, and develops the manhood that is in him. The emigration of a godly man at God's call does still more for him. It forces him to lean much on God, Who becomes his only constant comrade and unfailing helper. It throws him back at each emergency upon the spiritual resources of faith, and trains into full maturity the graces of his religious nature. Inwardly, Abram could hardly have become the spiritual hero he was in later life, if he had not been forced to walk through the long trials of his exile with nothing but the unseen

eternal God for his "shield," and compelled to brood through homeless years over the mighty thoughts which God had uttered to his faith. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*)

The call to religion:—The call to religion is not a call to be better than your fellows, but to be better than yourself. Religion is relative to the individual. (*H. W. Beecher.*)

The Divine summons:—I. THIS CALL INVOLVED HARSHIP. Each step of real advance in the Divine life will involve an altar on which some dear fragment of the self-life has been offered; or a cairn beneath which some cherished idol has been buried. II. BUT THIS CALL WAS EMINENTLY WISE. 1. Wise for Abraham himself. Nothing strengthens us so much as isolation. So long as we are quietly at rest amid favourable and undisturbed surroundings, faith sleeps as an undeveloped sinew within us; a thread, a germ, an idea. But when we are pushed out from all these surroundings, with nothing but God to look to, then faith grows suddenly into a cable, a monarch-oak, a master-principle of life. 2. Wise for the world's sake. It is impossible to move our times, so long as we live beneath their spell; but when once we have risen up, and gone, at the call of God, outside their pale, we are able to react on them with an irresistible power. Archimedes vaunted that he could lift the world, if only he could obtain, outside of it, a pivot on which to rest his lever. Do not be surprised then, if God calls you out to be a people to Himself, that by you He may react with blessed power on the great world of men. III. THIS CALL WAS ACCOMPANIED BY PROMISE. As a shell encloses a kernel, so do the Divine commands hide promises in their heart. If this is the command: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"; this is the promise: "And thou shalt be saved." If this is the command: "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor"; this is the promise: "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven." If this is the command: "Leave father and mother, houses and lands"; this is the promise: "Thou shalt have a hundredfold here, and everlasting life beyond." IV. THIS CALL TEACHES US THE MEANING OF ELECTION. It was not so much with a view to their personal salvation, though that was included; but that they might pass on the holy teachings and oracles with which they were entrusted. V. THIS CALL GIVES THE KEY TO ABRAHAM'S LIFE. 1. He was from first to last a separated man. 2. But it was the separation of faith. Abraham's separation is not like that of those who wish to be saved; but rather that of those who are saved. Not towards the cross, but from it. Not to merit anything, but, because the heart has seen the vision of God, and cannot now content itself with the things that once fascinated and entranced it; so that leaving them behind, it reaches out its hands in eager longing for eternal realities, and thus is led gradually and insensibly out and away from the seen to the unseen, and from the temporal to the eternal. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*)

A call to emigrate:—1. In the selection of men to be the organs or channels of His grace, God's freedom of choice never excludes some natural fitness in the person chosen. When Abram, escorted by sorrowing relatives to the brink of the great "flood," did finally set his whole encampment across the Euphrates and turn his face to the dreaded desert, which stretched, wide and inhospitable, between him and the nearest seats of men, he gave his first evidence of that trust in the unseen Eternal One, leading to unquestioning, heroic obedience, which must even then have formed the basis of his character, and of which his later life was to furnish so many illustrious examples. 2. The emigration of Abram, however, had other ends to serve besides testing his personal fitness to become the father of trustful and loyal souls. (1) For one thing, it was advisable to make a clean break in the continuity of his family history. Only in this way could he become really a fresh point of departure for the human race. Had he remained in Padan-Aram, Abram would have been simply one among his brethren, a sheikh of influence among neighbour sheikhs, a continuator of the Terah name, not the originator of a new epoch. (2) It was of still greater consequence to break him off from contact with the unwholesome influences which were already at work within his own family. To withdraw into a strange land, meant the abandonment of himself to the guidance of God alone. True piety, in its more masculine and self-conscious stages, always involves some such renunciation of natural supports. It does not always require a literal separation from home or friends, but it does require the withdrawal of the heart's deepest dependence from earthly props or ministers, in order to rest in a self-contained and unaided trust upon the Unseen Arm. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*)

Abram the pilgrim:—I. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE LIFE OF FAITH. 1. Natural ties. 2. A desire to be satisfied with the present and visible. 3. Imperfect knowledge of the future. II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LIFE OF FAITH. 1. A firm belief in the testimony of God. 2. A proper estimate of the visible.

3. A worshipping life. 4. To be undismayed at improbabilities. III. THE BLESSINGS OF SUCH A LIFE. 1. More than compensation for every natural loss. 2. Inward happiness in being the means of doing good to others. 3. It leads to a life of spiritual and eternal sight. (*Homilist.*) *The call of Abraham*:—1. God's patience with sinful men is one of His most wonderful attributes. God makes a third trial in the call of Abram. So it often is with individual men. He makes and renews His gracious offers. 2. When the hour comes for some great work of God, He always has the man ready at His call. 3. When God commands, man has nothing to do but to obey. Obedience is the highest test of piety (John xiv. 21, 23). 4. Genuine obedience is founded in faith. 5. The highest attainment of a Christian is a consecrated will. Learn this under the olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane. 6. Every Christian is called of God to go out from the world and be separate. This sometimes involves painful and reluctant sacrifices. Old habits, old appetites, old friends, old associations, old modes of thought and action, may have to be abandoned, and the struggle may be severe. But, "He that loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me" (Matt. x. 37, 38). 7. Goodness is the only true greatness. No king, or noble, or hero of the earth bears such an honourable name as his who is known in the Book of books as "The friend of God!" (*E. P. Rogers, D.D.*) *The Divine call*:—I. A SUMMONS WAS GIVEN TO ABRAHAM FROM THE LORD. 1. It was explicit. 2. Unmistakable. 3. Repeated. 4. Contrary to the carnal inclinations. II. THE CALL WAS SUSTAINED BY A PROMISE—the promise of guidance. The first call was to an indefinite land, the second to *the* land. This explains why there was a temporary residence in Haran. God did not tell him He would give him the land, but only that He would guide him to it. God does not reveal all the riches of His grace at once; that might overpower the soul. (*F. Hastings.*) *Abraham's call*:—I. ABRAHAM THE FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL. 1. A pre-eminent pattern or type of faith. 2. The first in whom the doctrine of justification by faith was clearly and openly displayed. 3. The federal head of all believers, Jewish or Gentile, receiving promises and commands which related less to himself than to his spiritual seed in every age. II. ABRAHAM SETTING OUT ON HIS APPOINTED PILGRIMAGE. 1. His early life. 2. His call. 3. His destination. 4. His obedience. III. OUR SETTING OUT FOR THE BETTER COUNTRY. 1. God speaks to us—by His Word; by His Spirit. 2. His call opens with a warning and reproof, and closes with a blessing. 3. The promise is indefinite. 4. Our walk is to be one of faith; purely so. Conclusion: 1. Let us address the pilgrims. 2. Let us address those who stay among the idolaters. (*T. G. Horton.*) *The call of Abraham*:—I. GOD'S CALL. 1. The call was from the Lord. He put into Abram's mind "good desires," and helped him to bring them to "good effect." 2. The call was a distinct command. Abram was told to do something which was not easy; to give up much that was dear to him. 3. The call was accompanied by many gracious promises. (1) God promised to guide him. (2) God promised him posterity. (3) God promised him renown. (4) Chiefly, God promised to make him a blessing. Thus the call to renounce is accompanied by an assurance that the believer shall receive at God's hands great things. II. ABRAHAM'S FAITH. 1. Abraham did what God told him. 2. Abraham went where God led him. 3. Abraham remembered God at every stage of his journey. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *A new dispensation*:—1. The election and selection of what became the people of God. Step by step we see in the history of the patriarchs this electing and separating process on the part of God. Both are marked by this twofold characteristic: that all is accomplished, not in the ordinary and natural manner, but, as it were, supernaturally; and that all is of grace. 2. We mark a difference in the mode of Divine revelation in the patriarchal as compared with the previous period. Formerly, God had spoken to man, either on earth or from heaven, while now He actually appeared to them, and that specially, as the Angel of Jehovah, or the Angel of the Covenant. 3. The one grand characteristic of the patriarchs was their faith. The lives of the patriarchs prefigure the whole history of Israel and their Divine selection. (*Dr. Ederäheim.*) *Separated from the world*:—It is a remarkable fact, that while the baser metals are diffused through the body of the rocks, gold and silver usually lie in veins; collected together in distinct metallic masses. They are in the rocks but not of them. . . . And as by some power in nature God has separated them from the base and common earths, even so by the power of His grace will He separate His chosen from a reprobate and

rejected world. (*T. Guthrie, D.D.*) *Deaf to God's call*:—Some of us are as dead to the perception of God's gracious call, just because it has been sounding on uninterceptedly, as are the dwellers by a waterfall to its unremitting voice. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *Individual selection*:—The principle of individual selection in the matter of all great ministries is in keeping with the principle which embodies in a single germ the greatest forests. It is enough that God give the one acorn; man must plant it and develop its productiveness. It is enough that God give the one idea; man must receive it into the good soil of his love and hope, and encourage it to tell all the mystery of its purpose. So God calls to Himself, in holy solitude, one man, and puts into the heart of that man His own gracious purpose, and commissions him to expound this purpose to his fellow-men. God never works from the many to the one; He works from one to the many. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Abraham—his call, justification, faith, and infirmity*:—I. HE IS CALLED BY THE LORD; by the immediate interposition of Jehovah. "The God of glory," as Stephen testifies, "appears to him";—there is a visible manifestation of the Divine glory; and the Divine voice is heard. The call is very peremptory—authoritative and commanding; and it is also very painful—hard for flesh and blood to obey. But along with the call, there is a very precious promise, a promise of blessings manifold and marvellous. II. ABRAHAM COMMENCES HIS PILGRIMAGE AMID MANY TRIALS. 1. Sarai is barren. 2. He knows not whither he is going. 3. He breaks many ties of nature, the closest and the dearest. 4. His father is removed by death. 5. On reaching Canaan nothing is as yet given; he is a stranger and a pilgrim, wandering from place to place, from Sichem to Moreh, from Moreh to Bethel, pitching his tent at successive stations, as God, for reasons unknown, appoints his temporary abode (vers. 6-9). 6. And wherever he goes he finds the Canaanites; not congenial society and fellowship, but troops of idolaters; for "the Canaanites were then in the land." 7. As if all this were not enough to try him, even daily bread begins to fail him. "There is a famine in the land" (ver. 10); and what now is Abram to do? He has hitherto been steadfast; he has "builded an altar" wherever he has dwelt, and has "called on the name of the Lord" (vers. 7, 8). He has at all hazards avowed his faith, and sought to glorify his God; but it seems as if, from very necessity, he must at last abandon the fruitless undertaking. He is literally starved out of the land. Why, then, should he not go back to his ancient dwelling-place, and try what good he can do, remaining quietly at home? What wonder can it be, if, in such circumstances, his high principle should seem for once to give way, through Satan's subtlety, and his own evil heart of unbelief? III. In Egypt, accordingly, for a brief space, the picture is reversed, and THE FAIR SCENE IS OVERCLOUDED. This man of God, being a man still, appears in a new light, or rather in the old light, the light of his old nature. He is tempted, and he falls; consulting his own wisdom, instead of simply relying on his God. He falls through unbelief; and his fall is recorded for our learning, that we may take heed lest we fall. In this incident, the temptation, the sin, the danger, and the deliverance, are all such as, in Abram's circumstances, might have befallen us. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *The call of Abraham*:—I. IT WAS MANIFESTLY DIVINE. This call could not have been an illusion, for—1. To obey it, he gave up all that was dear and precious to him in the world. He could not have made such a sacrifice without a sufficient reason. 2. The course of conduct he followed could not have been of human suggestion. Abraham was not driven from his country by adverse circumstances, or attracted by the promise of plenty elsewhere. But he left a condition which would then be considered as prosperous, and cheerfully accepted whatever trials might await him. 3. The history of the Church confirms the fact that the call was Divine. The Christian Church was but a continuation of the Jewish, with added light, and fresh blessings. That Church must have had an origin in the dim past, sufficient to account for the fact of its existence. II. IT DEMANDED GREAT SACRIFICES. Upon the Divine call, Abraham was not immediately rewarded with temporal blessings. Appearances were altogether against his deriving any advantages from obedience. III. IT WAS AN EXAMPLE OF FAITH. The promise was made in general terms, and the good things to come, as far as Abraham was personally concerned, placed at an inaccessible distance. 1. Faith is required to brave the terrors of the unknown. 2. Faith trusts in God. 3. In religious faith there is an element of reason. Faith is not contrary to, only beyond, reason. To follow the promptings of faith is the noblest act of human reason. IV. IT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY PROMISE. The promises made to Abraham may be considered in a twofold light. 1. As they concerned himself, personally, He would have compensation for all the worldly

loss he would have to endure. (1) For the loss of country, God promised that He would make him a great nation. (2) For the loss of his place of birth, God promised to bless him with a higher prosperity. (3) For the loss of family distinction God promised to make his name great. Abraham had to leave his "father's house," but he was destined in the Providence of God to build up a more famous and lasting house. These promises may be considered—2. In his relation to humanity. God said, "Thou shalt be a blessing." This promise implied something grander and nobler than any personal benefits which Abraham could inherit. It was the higher blessing—the larger benefit. Religion means something more than the selfish enjoyment of spiritual good, and he who only considers the interests of his own soul has failed to catch the true spirit of it. Man approaches the nature of God when he becomes a source of blessing to others. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," Abraham was to be a blessing to mankind in the highest sense. As a further expansion of this blessing promised to Abraham—(1) His cause was henceforth to be identified with the cause of God. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (ver. 3). "God promised further, so to take sides with Abraham in the world, as to make common cause with him—share his friendships, and treat his enemies as His own. This is the highest possible pledge. This threatening against hostile people was signally fulfilled in the case of the Egyptians, Edomites, Amalekites, Moabites, Ammonites, and the greater nations—Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Greek, and Roman, which have fallen under the curse of God as here denounced against the enemies of the Church and kingdom of Christ. The Church is God's. Her enemies are His. Her friends are His also, and no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, for He who has all power given unto Him shall be with her faithful servants, even to the end of the world." 3. He was to be the source of the highest blessing to mankind. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (*T. H. Leale.*)

The call of Abram:—I. ABRAM'S GENEALOGICAL CONNECTION. 1. He was of Shemitic stock. 2. The Shemitic stock was the theocratic line. II. ABRAM'S CALL. 1. This call was peremptory. 2. This call was gracious. III. ABRAM'S OBEDIENCE. 1. Prompt. (1) Hesitation destroys the virtue of obedience. (2) Promptness is the glory of true obedience. 2. Thorough. 3. Courageous. IV. ABRAM'S RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES AND CHARACTERISTICS. 1. He was honoured with personal visitations from Jehovah. 2. His faith in the Divine promise was reassured. 3. His piety was real, habitual, and practical. Lessons: 1. The characteristic of God as exemplified in the call of Abraham. Graciousness. 2. The essential condition of realizing the fulness of Divine blessing. Obedience. 3. The universal characteristic of true believers. Worship. (*D. C. Hughes, M.A.*)

The call of Abram:—1. The grace of it. There appears no reason to conclude that he was better than his neighbours. He did not choose the Lord, but the Lord him, and brought him out from amongst the idolaters. 2. Its peremptory tone:—"get thee out." The language very much resembles that of Lot to his sons-in-law, and indicates the great danger of his present situation, and the immediate necessity of escaping, as it were, for his life. Such is the condition of every unconverted sinner, and such the necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come, to the hope set before us in the Gospel. 3. The self-denial required by it. 4. The implicit faith which a compliance with it would call for. Abram was to leave all, and to go—he knew not whither—"unto a land that God would show him." If he had been told it was a land flowing with milk and honey, and that he should be put in possession of it, there had been some food for sense to feed upon: but to go out, "not knowing whither he went," must have been not a little trying to flesh and blood. Nor was this all; that which was promised was not only in general terms, but very distant. God did not tell him He would give him the land, but merely show him it. Nor did he in his life-time obtain the possession of it: he was only a sojourner in it, without so much as a place to set his foot upon. (*A. Fuller.*)

Call and promise:—In all God's teachings the near and the sensible come before the far and the conceivable, the present and the earthly before the eternal and the heavenly. Thus Abram's immediate acts of self-denial are leaving his country, his birthplace, his home. The promise to him is to be made a great nation, be blessed, and have a great name in the new land which the Lord would show him. This is unspeakably enhanced by his being made a blessing to all nations. God pursues this mode of teaching for several important reasons. 1. The sensible and the present are intelligible to those who are taught. The great Teacher begins with the known and leads the mind forward to the unknown. If He had begun with things too high, too deep, or too far for the range of Abram's mental

vision, He would not have come into relation with Abram's mind. It is superfluous to say that He might have enlarged Abram's view in proportion to the grandeur of the conceptions to be revealed. On the same principle He might have made Abram cognisant of all present and all developed truth. On the same principle He might have developed all things in an instant of time, and so have had done with creation and providence at once. 2. The present and the sensible are the types of the future and the conceivable. The land is the type of the better land; the nation of the spiritual nation; the temporal blessing of the eternal blessing; the earthly greatness of name of the heavenly. And let us not suppose that we are arrived at the end of all knowledge. We pique ourselves on our advance in spiritual knowledge beyond the age of Abram. But even we may be in the very infancy of mental development. There may be a land, a nation, a blessing, a great name, of which our present realizations or conceptions are but the types. Any other supposition would be a large abatement from the sweetness of hope's overflowing cup. 3. These things which God now promises are the immediate form of His bounty, the very gifts He begins at the moment to bestow. God has His gift to Abram ready in His hand in a tangible form. He points to it and says, 'This is what thou presently needest; this I give thee with My blessing and favour.' 4. But these are the earnest and the germ of all temporal and eternal blessing. Man is a growing thing, whether as an individual or a race. God graduates His benefits according to the condition and capacity of the recipients. In the first boon of His good-will is the earnest of what He will continue to bestow on those who continue to walk in His ways. And as the present is the womb of the future, so is the external the symbol of the internal, the material the shadow of the spiritual in the order of the Divine blessing. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

The advantage of change.—As Gotthold was examining with delight some double pinks, which at the time were in full blossom, he was told by the gardener that the same plants had in former years borne only single flowers, but that they had been improved and beautified by repeated transplantations, and that in the same manner a change of soil increases the growth, and accelerates the bearing of a young tree. This reminded Gotthold that the same happens to men. Many a man who at home would scarcely have borne even single flowers, when transplanted by Divine Providence abroad, bears double ones; another, who, if rooted in his native soil, would never have been more than a puny twig, is removed to a foreign clime, and there spreads far and wide and bears fruit to the delight of all.

Leaving all to follow God.—"I have been in Africa for seventeen years, and I never met a man yet who would kill me if I folded my hands. What has been wanted, and what I have been endeavouring to ask for the poor Africans, has been the good offices of Christians—ever since Livingstone taught me, during those four months that I was with him. In 1871 I went to him as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. To a reporter and correspondent, such as I, who had only to deal with wars, mass meetings, and political gatherings, sentimental matters were entirely out of my province. But there came for me a long time for reflection. I was out there away from a worldly world. I saw this solitary old man there, and asked myself, 'How on earth does he stop here—is he cracked, or what? What is it that inspires him?' For months after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at the old man carrying out all that was said in the Bible—"Leave all things and follow Me." But little by little his sympathy for others became contagious; my sympathy was aroused; seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business, I was converted by him, although he had not tried to do it. How sad that the good old man should have died so soon! How joyful he would have been if he could have seen what has since happened there!" (*H. M. Stanley.*)

A great promise.—Great lives are trained by great promises. God never calls men for the purpose of making them less than they are, except when they have been dishonouring themselves by sin. His calls are upward; towards fuller life, purer light, sweeter joy. 1. Look at this promise as throwing light upon the compensations of life. Abram is called to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, and, so far, there is nothing but loss. Had the call ended here, the lot of Abram might have been considered hard; but when did God take anything from a man, without giving him manifold more in return? Suppose that the return has not been made immediately manifest, what then? Is to-day the limit of God's working time? Has He no provinces beyond this little world? Does the door of the grave open upon nothing but infinite darkness and eternal silence? Yet, even confining

the judgment within the hour of this life, it is true that God never touches the heart with a trial without intending to bring in upon it some grander gift, some tenderer benediction. 2. Look at this promise as showing the oneness of God with His people: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee." The good man is not alone. Touch him, and you touch God. Help him, and your help is taken as if it were rendered to God Himself. This may give us an idea of the sublime life to which we are called—we live, and move, and have our being in God; we are temples; our life is an expression of Divine influence; in our voice there is an undertone of Divinity. 3. Look at this promise as showing the influence of the present over the future: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This is a principle, rather than an exception of true life. Every man should look upon himself as an instrument of possible blessing to the whole world. One family should be a blessing to all families within its influence. We should not be looking for the least, but for the greatest interpretations of life—not to make our life as little and ineffectual as possible, but to give it fulness, breadth, strength: to which the weary and sorrowful may look with confidence and thankfulness. Christianity never reduces life to a minimum: it develops it, strengthens it in the direction of Jesus Christ's infinite perfectness and beauty. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *God's promises*:—God's promises are the comfort of my life. Without them I could not stand for an hour in the whirl and eddy of things, in the sweep and surge of the nations; but I cannot tell how He will fulfil them, any more than I can tell from just what quarter the first flock of blue birds will come in the spring. Yet I am sure that the spring will come upon the wings of ten thousand birds. (*H. W. Beecher.*) *God's promises mysteriously dated*:—God's promises are dated, but with a mysterious character; and, for want of skill in God's chronology, we are prone to think God forgets us, when, indeed, we forget ourselves in being so bold to set God a time of our own, and in being angry that He comes not just then to us. (*W. Gurnall.*) *God's promises present though not always seen*:—"When the traveller starts by the railway, on a bright summer day," writes Champneys, "his attention is drawn to the friends who stand to bid him good-bye; and as the train moves on more and more rapidly, the mile and half and quarter mile posts seem racing past him, and the objects in the far distance appear rapidly to change their places, and to move off the scene almost as soon as they have been observed upon it. Now the long train, like some vast serpent, hissing as it moves swiftly along, plunges underground. The bright sun is suddenly lost, but the traveller's eye observes, for the first time perhaps, the railway carriage lamp; and though it was there all the while, yet because the sun made its light needless, it was not observed. God's promises are like that railway light. The Christian traveller has them with him always, though when the sun is shining, and prosperity beaming upon him, he does not remark them. But let trouble come, let his course lie through the darkness of sorrow or trial, and the blessed promise shines out, like the railway lamp, to cheer him, and shed its gentle and welcome light most brightly when the gloom is thickest, and the sunshine most entirely left behind." *On promptitude in obeying the Divine call*:—There is an hour in all, ay, even in heathen and sensual minds, when the cry is heard, "Come away hither, seek the far country; strike out on the spiritual and everlasting deep, looking not behind thee, cutting every tie that binds thee to this world, and be led to this, less by the hope of what is before, than by the horror of what is around, and by a simple-minded reliance upon the promise of thy God." In various manners and at divers times does this cry come, and in divers manners is it treated. Some obey, like Abraham, at once, and set out in search of the land before the voice has ceased to vibrate in their ears. Others delay for a while, and say, like Felix, "Go thy way for this time, and when I have a more convenient season I will give thee an answer"—a season which never comes. Others begin the journey with considerable promptitude and with great alacrity, but speedily become offended, turn round, and walk no more with Jesus; like Pliable, the first fit disenchantments them in their childish anticipations, and they retrace their steps. Others are slow but sure in obeying the call of God; they perhaps hang off for a time, they count the cost, they consult, with the town-clerk of Ephesus, and do nothing rashly, till the alarm of their hearts and the tumult of their doors become intolerable, and perhaps, as with Faithful, the man Moses steps in and tells them, that if they do not begone, he will burn their house over their heads, and then they address themselves to their journey. And others do not even enter into momentary parley; do not even at the knock condescend to look over the window, but abruptly, fiercely, and for ever, refuse. The conduct of this last class is simply insane; it is that of

a dying patient who excludes the physician, or of a man whose house is burning and will not permit the engines to play around it. The conduct of those who delay indefinitely the journey is only one shade less absurd, since the Paul once gone seldom returns; and though he were returning, there might be no inclination to hear him. The conduct of those who go forward a little way, and turn back at the first difficulty, is more contemptible still; it is cowardice coupled with folly; it is mean madness. He that deliberates, acts somewhat more wisely; but he too loses time; whereas, since we live in a world where death delays not, where judgment does not linger, nor damnation slumber, the loss of an hour may be the loss of all. Promptitude, valuable in all matters, is of the last importance in the affairs of the soul. Beware of saying, "Serious things to-morrow." This saying once cost a man dear. It was a governor in Greece, against whom a conspiracy was formed. The night for its perpetration had arrived. He was engaged at a feast. A letter was handed in, and he was told to read it instantly, because it contained "serious things." What was his reply? He thrust the letter under his pillow, and grasped again the wine-cup, and cried out—"Serious things to-morrow!" But that to-morrow never came. At midnight was there a cry made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh!" The conspirators entered, disguised in the dress of females, and they killed the governor, with the letter lying unread beneath his pillow. Now let us imitate the manly decision and unfaltering firmness of Abraham. As we would reach Abraham's bosom, let us begin immediately to pursue Abraham's journey. Ledyard said, "To-morrow." Say we, "To-day." (*G. Gilfillan.*) *Abraham's call* :—This was God's first revelation of Himself to Abraham. Up to this time Abraham to all appearance had no knowledge of any God but the deities worshipped by his fathers in Chaldaea. Now, he finds within himself impulses which he cannot resist and which he is conscious he ought not to resist. He believes it to be his duty to adopt a course which may look foolish, and which he can justify only by saying that his conscience bids him. He recognizes, apparently for the first time, that through his conscience there speaks to him a God who is supreme. In dependence on this God he gathered his possessions together and departed. So far, one may be tempted to say, no very unusual faith was required. Many a poor girl has followed a weakly brother or a dissipated father to Australia or the wild west of America; many a lad has gone to the deadly west coast of Africa with no such prospect as Abraham. For Abraham had the double prospect which makes migration desirable. Assure the colonist that he will find land and have strong sons to till and hold and leave it to, and you give him all the motive he requires. These were the promises made to Abraham—a land and a seed. Neither was there at this period much difficulty in believing that both promises would be fulfilled. The land he no doubt expected to find in some unoccupied territory. And as regards the children, he had not yet faced the condition that only through Sarah was this part of the promise to be fulfilled. But the peculiarity in Abraham's abandonment of present certainties for the sake of a future and unseen good is, that it was prompted not by family affection or greed or an adventurous disposition, but by faith in a God whom no one but himself recognized. It was the first step in a life-long adherence to an Invisible, Spiritual Supreme. Under the simple statement "The Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country," there are probably hidden years of questioning and meditation. God's revelation of Himself to Abram in all probability did not take the determinate form of articulate command without having passed through many preliminary stages of surmise and doubt and mental conflict. But once assured that God is calling him, Abraham responds quickly and resolutely. The revelation has come to a mind in which it will not be lost. As one of the few theologians who have paid attention to the method of revelation has said: "A Divine revelation does not dispense with a certain character and certain qualities of mind in the person who is the instrument of it. A man who throws off the chains of authority and association must be a man of extraordinary independence and strength of mind, although he does so in obedience to a Divine revelation; because no miracle, no sign or wonder which accompanies a revelation can by its simple stroke force human nature from the innate hold of custom and the adhesion to and fear of established opinion; can enable it to confront the frowns of men, and take up truth opposed to general prejudice, except there is in the man himself, who is the recipient of the revelation, and a certain strength of mind and independence which concurs with the Divine intention." That Abraham's faith triumphed over exceptional difficulties and enabled him to do what no other motive would have been strong enough to accomplish, there is therefore no call to assert. During his after-life his faith

was severely tried, but the mere abandonment of his country in the hope of gaining a better was the ordinary motive of his day. It was the ground of this hope, the belief in God, which made Abraham's conduct original and fruitful. That sufficient inducement was presented to him is only to say that God is reasonable. There is always sufficient inducement to obey God; because life is reasonable. No man was ever commanded or required to do anything which it was not for his advantage to do. Sin is a mistake. But so weak are we, so liable to be moved by the things present to us and by the desire for immediate gratification, that it never ceases to be wonderful and admirable when a sense of duty enables a man to forego present advantage and to believe that present loss is the needful preliminary of eternal gain. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *Divine direction in everyday affairs*:—So, even a journey may be the outcome of an inspiration! "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may." I feel life to be most solemn when I think that inside of it all there is a Spirit that lays out one's day's work, that points out when the road is on the left and when it is on the right, and that tells one what words will best express one's thought. Thus is God nigh at hand and not afar off. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." And thus, too, are men misunderstood: they are called enthusiasts, and are said to be impulsive; they are not "safe" men; they are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and no proper register of their life can be made. Of course we are to distinguish between inspiration and delusion, and not to think that every noise is thunder. We are not to call a "maggot" a "revelation." What we are to do is this: We have to live and move and have our being in God; to expect His coming and long for it; to be patient and watchful; to keep our heart according to His word; and then we shall know His voice from the voice of a stranger, for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." If God be our supreme consciousness He will reveal His providence without cloud or doubtfulness. I think it can be proved that the men who have done things apparently against all reason have often been acting in the most reasonable manner, and that inspiration has often been mistaken for madness. I feel that all the while you are asking me to give you tests by which you may know what is inspiration, you have little or nothing to do with such tests—you have to be right and then you will sure to do right. Possibly Abram may have got more credit for this journey than he really deserves. It is true that he knew not "whither he went," and by so much this is what is called "a leap in the dark;" but Abram knew two things—1. He knew at whose bidding he was going, and—2. He knew what results were promised to his faith. To get a man to leave his "country, his kindred, and his father's house," you must propose or apply some very strong inducement. Now, it is worth while to take notice that from the very beginning God has never given a merely arbitrary command: He has never treated a man as a potter would treat a handful of clay: the royal and mighty command has always ended in the tenderness of a gracious promise. God has never moved a man merely for the sake of moving him; merely for the sake of showing His power: this we shall see in detail as we move through the wondrous pages, but I call attention to it now as strikingly illustrated in the case of Abram. Some of you yourselves may remember the words "Get thee out," who have forgotten the accumulated and glorious blessing. Let us be just unto the Lord, and remember that He treats us as His sons and not as irresponsible machines. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *And thou shalt be a blessing.*—*A blessing to be diffused*:—When God called Abraham, and, in Abraham, the Jewish nation, He cradled them in blessings. This is the way in which He always begins with a man. If ever, to man or nation, He speaks otherwise, it is because they have made Him do so. I. Many of us account religion rather as a possession to be held, or a privilege to be enjoyed, than as a life which we are to spread, a kingdom we are bound to extend. Consequently our religion has grown too passive. It would be healthier and happier if we were to cast into it more action. II. Wherever Abraham went he shed blessings round him, not only by his prayers and influence, but by the actual charm of his presence. As Abraham was a blessing to the Jews, still more were the Jews a blessing to the world. III. Then came the climax. He who so blesses with His blood, He who did nothing but bless, He was of the seed of Abraham. IV. As joined to the mystical body of Christ, we are Abraham's seed, and one of the promises to which we are admitted is this, "Thou shalt be a blessing." The sense of a positive appointment, of a destiny to do a thing, is the most powerful motive of which the human mind is capable. Whoever desires to be a blessing must be a man of faith, prayer, and love. (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*) *Usefulness*:—I. EVERY GOD-TRUSTING MAN IS A CENTRE OF BLESSING. Because God is at the centre

of his soul. II. A DEVOUT MAN IS A BLESSING TO THOSE WHO CAN RECEIVE HIS INFLUENCE. III. THE MEASURE OF OUR FAITH DETERMINES THE BLESSING WE SHALL TRANSMIT TO OTHERS. IV. TO BE A BLESSING THROUGH THE POWER AND FAVOUR OF GOD, IS THE HIGHEST HONOUR IN THE WORLD. (*F. Hastings.*) *Blest becoming a blessing* :— I. THE ASSURANCE OF DIVINE BLESSING IN CONNECTION WITH THE DIVINE CALL. II. THAT SPIRITUAL BLESSING CAN ONLY BE REALIZED AND ENJOYED IN THE EXERCISE OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE. III. ONE GREAT PURPOSE OF GOD IN ELECTING AND BLESSING US IS, THAT WE MAY BECOME INSTRUMENTS OF BLESSING TO OTHERS. IV. THERE IN AN ORDER AND A MEASURE APPOINTED BY GOD IN BLESSING US, AND MAKING US INSTRUMENTS OF BLESSING. (*G. W. Humphreys, B.A.*) *Man must be good before he can do good* :—Before you can do good you must be made good ; for who will look for water from a drained river, or that sweet grapes should grow upon a withered vine ? (*W. Secker.*) *The blessed of God, a blessing to others* :—I. With regard to THE SPEAKER, it is the Lord Jehovah Himself. He alone can bless His people. I do not say, but the Lord may make use of the smallest instrumentality to bless His children. I do not deny the ministration of angels, though one knows so little about it. I do not undervalue their untiring zeal and great unwearied love. I believe they are always as “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.” Neither do I deny the instrumentality of man ; and God may, and does, bless man to man. But all these things are but the streams—or the channels ; the great source is God Himself. No one can bless the souls of His people but God Himself. Our wants are too many for any but God to supply them ; our sins are too many for any but God to pardon them ; our corruptions are too great for any but God to subdue them. Our waywardness is such, that nothing less than infinite patience could bear with us. And even the desires of the new nature are so great, that all heaven could not satisfy them, but as God fills all heaven with Himself. II. But observe now, secondly, to whom it is THAT THIS PROMISE BELONGS. I am quite ready to believe, and to acknowledge, that it was spoken primarily and especially to Abraham ; but thanks be to God, we have been taught by the blessed Spirit, I trust, to know that there is not a promise in God’s Word but the child of God has it for his inheritance. The Lord has such a people ; and they are dear to Him “as the apple of His eye.” He has chosen them in Christ Jesus before the world was ; they are redeemed by precious blood ; He forms them for His glory ; He moulds them to His image, and “they shall show forth His praise.” No language can describe how precious they are to Him. He sees them in His Son ; beholds them in the Beloved. They are dear to Him ; the holy image in which they are renewed is precious to Him. The fruit of His own workmanship shall never perish, shall never be annihilated, shall never be destroyed. Their lives are precious to Him ; and their deaths are precious. Their services are precious ; the very tears they shed for sin are precious ; the sighs that leave their bosom for sin, are all precious to Him. To them He looks ; with them He dwells ; and they are “His jewels,” and not one of them shall be lost. But yet they are a needy people, and they want His blessing. They want infinite power to sustain them ; they want infinite wisdom to guide them ; they want infinite love to bear their infirmities and weaknesses ; and they want the patience of a God, to endure them to the end. Leave them to themselves, and they are no blessing, and can communicate no blessing to those around them ; nay, leave them to themselves, and they shall be a curse to all around them. But these are they that are here spoken of as the inheritors of the promise—blessed through Abraham, and blessed “with faithful Abraham.” III. Consider, thirdly, the riches—THE WONDERFUL RICHES, THAT ARE TO BE FOUND IN THIS BLESSING. “I will bless thee.” Ah ! what is there not included in this one idea ? What limit is there, what boundary ? What adequate conception can we form of the words—“I will bless thee” ? It is not a mere general promise ; it is a peculiar, personal, individual promise. For while all the members form one body, yet each member stands alone, and wants its own individual blessing ; and each child of God wants his own individual blessing, and he has this individual promise given to him personally, the same as if there were no other upon the face of this earth. But here is another promise concerning them : not only “I will bless thee,” but “I will make thy name great.” This would almost seem as if it must belong exclusively to Abraham. The name of Abraham, you know, was a sort of object of idolatrous worship to the Jew : “We be Abraham’s seed,” said they, “and were never in bondage to any man.” “Think not,” preached John the Baptist, “to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father ; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children

unto Abraham." He brought down their high thoughts, their carnal confidences, their reposing in Abraham, and laid them low; and there was no greater hindrance that He had to contend with than this. The parallelism, I confess, seems to cease here; and yet it is but in look—it is not in reality. I know the world has all mean words and mean names for the child of God. A saint—oh! it is the scorn of the world; it is the very ridicule of the world. "Good man"—"man of piety"—"excellent man!"—that may do; but a saint!—it is a term of ridicule. A saint? what a term of glory! Set apart by God, from before all worlds, for Himself; purchased by "the blood of the everlasting covenant," and sanctified by God the eternal Spirit. See what a name this is; it is indeed "a great name." A Christian—every one has that name now; yet if I look at what a real Christian is, what a name it is! Anointed of the Holy Ghost with that unction that cometh down from Aaron, the true High Priest, our true Aaron, our great Melchisedec, flowing down from His head to the very skirts of His clothing; partaker of that Divine unction that teacheth all things; what a name of glory is His! Compared with it, all earthly names sink just into nothing. Children! dear children! And, a brother of Christ! But let me rather dwell on the third clause—"thou shalt be a blessing." There is something deeply affecting in the thought that an ungodly man is no blessing; he can be no blessing. Oftentimes he is the very opposite of blessing. An ungodly man is an evil, be he where he may. How many a father is a curse to his whole family! How many a mother is a plague-sore to her whole family! How many a child is as a curse to all around! These things are not imaginations; they are truths—awful, solemn truths. But the child of God is a blessing, wherever he is. Wherever he acts as a child of God, in proportion as he bears the image of his Master, and reflects that image, he is a blessing; however feeble his gift, however small his grace, however circumscribed his place, he is a blessing, wherever he is and whatever he does. How shall I set before you the blessing attending holy example? Who can say how great a blessing attends the bold avowal of principles, the bold declaration of truth, the bold manifestation that we are on the Lord's side? (*J. H. Evans, M.A.*) *The smile of God.*—I have seen in an African desert a beautiful patch of green, a luxurious blending of graceful palm, waving grass, rippling spring, pendent fruits, and tropic flowers—an island of verdure, refreshment, and comfort, in the midst of a sea of sand, of dreary brushwood, and of stunted thorn. Hither came both man and beast, hot with travel, scorched with heat, oppressed with hunger, faint with thirst, and found food and drink, shelter and repose. The negroes who dwelt in the surrounding region called the weary tract around "The Torment," because it was hard, dry, difficult, inhospitable. The patch of natural garden-ground in the centre they called by an African word which means a god or a spirit in a good temper, or rather, the smile of God. The smile of God! Verily a good name and a beautiful; a smile that lightens the heart and cheers the lot of every drooping traveller that passes that way. As he gazes with hand-shaded eyes through the haze of the desert heat, and catches a glimpse of the green isle upon the border line, that smile of God begets a smile on his own tired and weary face, and with quickened step and hopeful eye he presses thitherward and rejoices in its cool and grateful shade! It may well be called "The Smile of God!" Just what that green oasis is to the tribes of Ham, the God-trusting, God-fearing man is to his fellow-men, a centre of blessing, a precious possession, nothing other, nothing less than the "Smile of God." It is not enough that you carry your light in a dark lantern, and flash it out on a Sunday, or on some occasion of special feeling, and then withdraw it as suddenly, to leave blinking spectators rather more uncertain as to your moral whereabouts than before; but rather like the electric flame, which is only toned down by the medium in which it burns, your humanity should exhibit the veiled but glowing light of life and love Divine that dwells behind. I remember seeing, on a certain festive occasion, nearly a thousand men marching through the streets of a northern city when the clock in the minster steeple was tolling out the midnight hour. Neither moon nor star appeared in the sombre sky, and the lamps along the streets were but as twinkling beads of light which vainly tried to lighten the gloom of the dull November air. But wherever the procession went, wherever the tramping of their feet was heard, the light, clear, full, and brilliant, lit up the streets and houses, illumined statues, and was flashed back from every window and every gilded sign. Every face shone bright, every form stood clear, and the dull, dark night, right up into the gloom above, glowed and gleamed as with the light of morn. How was this? Every man carried a pitch-pine torch; each flashed its little measure of

light upon the sombre gloom, and altogether they conquered darkness and created day! As a disciple of Christ, it is given to the Christian, not so much to carry a torch as to be a torch. He himself is to be set alight, and is to move in and out through the world's sad shadowland, a peripatetic illumination, showing the beauty of goodness—dispensing the knowledge of God. Yours, O Christian, be it to exhibit all holy virtues, all kindly charities, all manly attributes, all Christly compassions, all godly speech and deed; and remember that if you are to be a true Christian, an Israelite indeed, the friend of God, the disciple of Christ, the heritor of heaven—you are to be—must be—a blessing! It is not enough that you are not a curse, that you do no ill and work no harm. The poisonous upas-tree and the barren fig-tree shall both be cast into the fire. The captured rebel, caught red-handed, and the sentinel asleep at his post, alike are doomed. To cease to do evil is only the lesser half of the Christian's code of law—he must learn to do well. Note, again, that just in proportion as a Christian is a blessing, he has a blessing. Kind words, they say, have kind echoes, but that is not all the truth. The echoes are more musical than the original, because God mingles a benediction in the tone. It is hard to say whether the sea or the land is the greater gainer by the race for giving: the sea into which the silver streams are rolled, or the land on which the jewels of the clouds are scattered, like the largess of a king.

“And the more thou spendest
From thy little store,
With a double bounty,
God will give thee more.”

I have said that the Christian is to be a blessing; that according as he is a blessing he has a blessing; but before all this comes something else. It is said of Abram, “Thou shalt be a blessing”; but there are vital words before that. Hark! “I will bless thee.” That's how it is. Neither Abram nor you can either be a blessing or have a blessing, in the full, clear, and joyous sense, unless it be imparted from above. If this stream of blessing is to rise in your own soul, ripple along your pathway and cool the lips of others in its flow, then all your springs must be in God. He must be all in all—He, the God from whom all blessings flow. (*J. J. Wray.*) *Blessed and blessing*:—Grass-feeding animals while cropping their pastures are scattering and disseminating the seeds of the grasses; and the birds and insects while thrusting their beak or proboscis deep down into the nectaries of the flowers, are gathering and depositing again the fertilizing pollen. *The treasure-house of grace*:—Survey this treasure-house of grace; how rich! how full! The believer may say, This heritage is all my own. Measure, if it be possible, the golden chain which extends from one hand of God in eternity past to the other in eternity to come. Every link is a blessing. Behold the starry canopy. The glittering orbs outshine all beauty, and exceed all number. Such is the firmament of Christ. It is studded with blessings. But millions of worlds are less than the least; and millions of tongues are weak to tell them. Mark how they sparkle in the eye of faith. There are constellations of pardons. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin.” There is the bright shining of adoption into the family of God. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” There is the milky-way of peace, perfect peace, heaven's own peace. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.” There is the morning-star of sin destroyed. “God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you in turning away every one of you from His iniquities.” There is the lustre of Divine righteousness. “This is His name, whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.” There is the light of life, “I give unto them eternal life.” There is all glory. “The glory, which Thou gavest me, I have given them.” There is the possession of all present, and the promise of all future good. “All things are yours,” “things present—things to come.” There is the assurance that nothing shall harm. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” Such is the blaze of blessings, on which the believer calmly gazes. But reader, are they yours? (*Dean Law.*) *The blessed life illustrated in the history of Abraham*:—It would seem the simplest thing in the world to come at once and be blest. Why not? Well, there is a secret mistrust of God. Is not Abraham called upon to give up home, and kindred, and country, and everything? And we tremble. Our ways are not God's ways; and our thoughts are not God's thoughts. What He counts

a blessing we dread rather than desire. We lose the blessed life through fear. Then there is a dulness, an inertness, a spiritual apathy about us. Like a talk about pictures to a blind man, like the pouring forth of a musician's soul to one who is utterly unsympathetic—alas! so does our God make His appeal to us. Sad enough it is that the appeal of God to the world should be unheeded and rejected. The Blessed Life—the Life of Faith—grows out of the knowledge of God; it is as we come to see how really good and loving our God is; how really blessed are His purposes concerning us; how lofty is the calling wherewith He doth call us; how graciously and tenderly He fulfils His purpose; thus it is that we learn to surrender ourselves wholly to Him for His own.

I. The blessed life is a REVELATION FROM GOD. Think of life as it presented itself to Abraham without God. "Here am I in this pleasant and goodly land," he might have said to himself; "a land endeared to me by the memory of my fathers and as the home of my people. Here are my friends; here is my business; my flocks and herds; my fertile pastures; and my faithful servants. Now I will set to work and do the best I can, toiling diligently day by day, and seeking at once to enrich myself and others by my labour. I have a goodly wife, whom my heart loves right well; who is as true to me as I am to her; who is watchful of my interests and eager for my comfort; diligent, thrifty, managing well. Then here have I also the opportunity of doing good. My brother Terah has left an orphan son. I will adopt him, and make him my care, and will seek his welfare; I will do by him as honestly and generously as if he were my own. I will set myself boldly against wrong; and I will set myself resolutely on the side of all that is good, and true and right in the world. So let me live and labour; and when my work is done I will lay me down and rest with my fathers." Yet all this time there lay about this man a larger life—infinite higher, and deeper, and broader: a life opening up a new world, unfolding new capacities; a life blessed and enriched and ennobled by the Presence of God. Think of the soul finding its rest in God; the loneliness of life lost in His presence; the common toil glorified as His service; hope made boundless by His promise; and fear driven away by His abiding and eternal care! So God stood and called Abraham; "Come forth into a land that I will show thee." And Abraham passed out into a life where his relation should be with the world's Redeemer; where his example should stimulate the faithful of all time; to become a man whom all nations should call blessed. Into that fuller and larger life God is ever seeking to lead us by the revelation of Himself: "I will bless thee; . . . thou shalt be a blessing." II. The blessed life is a REVELATION OF GOD. It is quite possible for us to know God without entering into the fulness of the blessed life. Our dwellings limit the amount of heaven that we see by the size of the skylights; a foot square may admit light enough for a day's work, and it may sometimes admit so much as half-an-hour's sunshine. That is different from darkness, and much better. But that, too, is different from stepping out under the great heaven, being arched and domed about by it, and to find the golden sunshine flooding earth with blessedness and flashing in a myriad forms of beauty. "I will bless thee"; that blessing can only be ours when we let God Himself come to us. They who want the gifts of God only, and not Himself, must ever go without the best gift: that which is more than all gifts. The blessed life begins only when He Himself is welcomed, trusted, and loved, and when His will is accepted and rested in. I will—the blessed life begins with the heart-reception of that I and of that will. And I am blest exactly in proportion as that "I will" becomes my will, "I will bless thee." I have my thought and estimate of what is good; and my desires go forth eager for a score of things which seem to make up the true blessedness of life. By these desires my purposes are shaped, and life itself is determined. Yet what do I know? See, here in the doorway of the mother's house is the little child. Like us, it too has its thought of what is good, and has the fullest confidence in its judgment and wisdom. It thinks it knows all the world, and can manage quite well without anybody's help. So away it goes out on to the crowded pavement; on across the perils of the streets; now amidst the roar of the traffic and rush of carriages it stands bewildered and lost. There is but one safety; but one blessedness. It is to put the hand in His, to accept His guidance, to surrender the will to Him, to make His way my way, quite sure that the truest blessing I can find is to let God have His own will and His own way with me in everything. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God. The blessed life is that into which God only can lead us.

III. The blessed life is a REVELATION FOR ME. When we get as far as this do we begin to sigh? "Yes, I know all this is what I ought to be; and

of course it is what I want to be!" But it is such hard work: struggling striving, failing. Stay a moment. Have you not begun the sentence at the wrong end? The first word is I, not thee. Put it in the right order. First, "I"—God comes to thee; make room. "I will"—not what you are, but what God wills is what you have to think of next. "I will bless." There, throw back the shutters, and let the sunshine in. "I will bless—thee." That is the right order: leave that thee until you get the other side of the blessing. When I begin with myself, what blessed life is possible? But when I begin with God, the blessed life is just the commonplace, and the highway wherein I do walk. "I will bless thee." Of course He will; He can do nothing but bless. Was not this fair world once in chaos and darkness: a dreary waste? but, lo! it made room for Him and His Will; and then the stars shone in the heavens, and the dry land appeared, and the grass grew, and the fishes swam, and the beasts roamed, and the birds sang, and at last there was the finished bliss of Paradise, and all was very good. To make room for Him and for His will is always to make room for blessing. Yet neither Paradise nor heaven have such a wondrous manifestation of God's eagerness to bless as that with which He meets us in all the rich provisions of His grace. "I will bless thee." It is not only as we count will. With us to will is oftentimes as idle as to wish. Hemmed in by a thousand hindrances, our lofty will is mocked by the cruel defiance of our circumstances. But when our God saith, "I will," it cannot be broken. Almighty Power doth wait to make that will fulfilled. IV. In all the world there is BUT ONE THING THAT CAN HINDER GOD. It is not in the material upon which He works, nor is it in the conditions in which that material is placed. The only hindrance God can ever know is in my will. When the "I will" of God is met with the "I will" of my heart, then there is no power in heaven or hell that can thwart or hinder. (*Mark Guy Pearse.*) *On being a blessing:*—A young lady was preparing for the dance-hall, and, standing before a large mirror, placed a light crown ornamented with silver stars upon her head. While thus standing, a little fair-haired sister climbed in a chair and put up her tiny fingers to examine this beautiful head-dress, and was accosted thus: "Sister, what are you doing? You should not touch that crown!" Said the little one, "I was looking at that, and thinking of something else." "Pray, tell me what you are thinking about—you, a little child." "I was remembering that my Sabbath-school teacher said, if we save sinners by our influence, we should win stars to our crown in heaven; and when I saw those two stars in your crown, I wished I could save some soul." The elder sister went to the dance, but in solemn meditation; the words of the innocent child found a lodgment in her heart, and she could not enjoy the association of her friends. At a seasonable hour she left the hall and returned to her home; and going to her chamber, where her dear little sister was sleeping, imprinted a kiss upon her soft cheek, and said: "Precious sister, you have won one star for your crown"; and kneeling at the bedside, offered a fervent prayer to God for mercy. *Joy of doing good:*—Well do I remember when I first knew the Lord how restless I felt till I could do something for others. I did not know that I could speak to an assembly, and I was very timid as to conversing upon religious subjects, and therefore I wrote little notes to different persons setting forth the way of salvation, and I dropped these written letters with printed tracts into the post, or slipped them under the doors of houses, or dropped them into areas, praying that those who read them might be aroused as to their sins, and moved to flee from the wrath to come. My heart would have burst if it could not have found some vent. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *The life of faith:*—Now of this character, with so many claims to fame, it is a very notable thing that the New Testament dwells only on one feature, and passes by all those of which we have spoken. One thing, and one thing only, is kept to the front in all the life of this hero: It is his faith. The Hebrew, treasuring as no other people did, and with greater reason than any other people had, the pride of their race, can record of their father Abraham nothing but his faith in God. This lives and shines, eclipses everything else. "Faithful Abraham," this is his title; Abraham believed, this is his achievement; by faith Abraham, this is the secret of his triumph. Take that fact and dwell upon it. You will find in it the secret of the blessed life: that life is great, is true life, only as it is the outcome of our faith in God. We need to hear it until we believe it, that our fitness for service is not in the strength of intellect, not in the vastness of wealth, not in the genius, not in the greatness which the world counts great; God's estimate of us—the only true estimate—is by the measure of our faith. Our worth lies in our faith. He who will set God ever before him, and then, in God's own

strength, will go out and do the will of God, he, and he only, is the man who can come to be amongst God's heroes. Only the man who is very intimate with the Most High will be entrusted with the secrets of God, and commissioned for active service. The blessed life is the life of faith. But does that greatly help us? It sounds all true enough, and we accept it as if its familiarity were the warrant of its orthodoxy. But what is the life of faith? Faith seems such a vague, indefinite, intangible something, a happy phrase by which we conceal our ignorance. Well, whatever it is, it is a gain certainly to have it embodied in real flesh and blood, to find a living man with a wife and a great many servants, some of them troublesome; and children, not always agreeing; and cattle and sheep, for whom it was hard to find food sometimes; and neighbours, who could be very disagreeable; and relations, who were sometimes very selfish; a man, too, who could make mistakes like other people. Certainly it is helpful to have the blessed life lived out in our own very nature, and in our commonplace world. (*Mark Guy Pearse.*)

Abraham's conversion:—The birthplace of Abraham was Ur of the Chaldees, away to the North-East of Palestine, beyond the river Euphrates. It is plain that the family of Abraham, like almost all the rest of the world at that time, was idolatrous, Joshua speaks of it: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods." A legend comes down to us of the story of Abraham's conversion which is very beautiful, and certainly may be true—that as he lay upon the mountain height amidst his flock at night, there rose a star so brilliant and beautiful in the great arch of heaven that Abraham was filled with the glory of it, and said: "This is my god; this will I worship." But, lo! as the still hours of the night passed by, the star sank down and was gone. And he said: "Of what avail is it that I worship my god if it die out in the darkness and I see it no more?" Then above the hills there rose the moon and flooded all the earth with silvery light, and quenched the stars. And Abraham hailed it, saying: "Thou art fairer and greater than the star, thou art my god, for thou art worthier." But lo, it too hastened away and sank in darkness. And Abraham cried: "If my gods forsake me, then am I as others that do err!" Soon rose the sun, in radiant splendour. It scattered the darkness and his doubts. And he said: "Thou, thou art my god, greater than moon and star. I will worship thee." But at even the sun sank, and like the moon and star, it too was gone. Then was Abraham alone; but as he gazed into heaven there came the thought of One behind the star, the moon, the sun—the Maker of them all. And Abraham cried: "O my people, I am clear of these things, I turn my face to Him who hath made the heavens and the earth; He only is my God. (*Ibid.*)

Diffusers of happiness:—Some men move through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasures on every side through the air to every one, far and near, who can listen. Some men fill the air with their presence and sweetness, as orchards, in October days, fill the air with the perfume of ripe fruit. Some women cling to their own houses like the honeysuckle over the door, yet, like it, fill all the region with the subtle fragrance of their goodness. How great a bounty and a blessing is it so to hold the royal gifts of the soul that they shall be music to some, and fragrance to others, and life to all! It would be no unworthy thing to live for, to make the power which we have within us the breath of other men's joy: to fill the atmosphere which they must stand in with a brightness which they cannot create for themselves. (*H. W. Ecccher.*)

Family life:—St. Paul finds the key to the constitution and the order of the human home in the spiritual sphere. Christian philosophy is inevitably transcendental—that is, it believes that earthly things are made after heavenly patterns, and that the "things seen and temporal" can only be fully understood by letting the light fall on them from the things which are not seen and eternal. It was the redemption of the home when Christ's redeeming love to the world was made the pattern of its love. That home is the highest in which love reigns most perfectly. I. THE HOME IS THE INSTRUMENT OF A DOUBLE EDUCATION. Its function is to develop the Divine image in parent and in child. II. AS THE FIRST STEP TO THE FULFILMENT OF HIS PURPOSE IN RESTORING MAN TO HIS OWN IMAGE, GOD SET "THE SOLITARY IN FAMILIES." He laid the foundation of the home as the fundamental human institution, the foundation of all true order, the spring of all true development in human society. Out of the home State and Church were to grow; by the home they were both to be established. And so God took the dual head of the first human home, the father and mother, and made them as gods to their children, and He sent them there to study the pain and the burden of the godhead

as well as the power and the joy. This was the only way by which man could gain the knowledge of the mind and heart of God. (*J. Baldwin Brown, B.A.*) *The influence of Christianity on the purity and happiness of families*:—If it shall be seen that Christianity has done that for the world which no other system of philosophy or religion has ever effected—if its influence has been so mighty as, wherever it has come, to have civilized the savage—to have raised men in the scale of being, till they have become the first amongst nations; if in every instance, when it has had its proper influence, it has exalted the individual above his race, transforming the most vicious into a model of virtue—then we have a new class of arguments in its favour, scarcely less conclusive than those more direct evidences which we first mentioned. An unprejudiced observer cannot deny that all this is true. It is a matter of too much notoriety to be controverted. The Christian nations have, at this moment, such a superiority over all others. I have to place before you, to-night, a single instance of the operation of this mighty agency, in its influence on the purity and happiness of families. I propose to show you in what manner Christianity prevents, or rectifies, the evils of domestic life, and contributes to the happiness of families. It does this in two ways. I. By the influence of its laws on the community. II. By the operation of its principles on the minds of individuals. I. Let us view THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN LAWS ON A COMMUNITY. 1. The laws of all those nations which are called Christian are, to a considerable degree, founded on the Christian code. 2. The laws which regulate the marriage contract have an important influence on human happiness. There are three points which we shall notice as applicable to our subject. (1) Marriage, according to the Christian religion, is a union between a single pair: the husband being permitted to have but one wife, and the wife but one husband. (2) The Christian law makes marriage between two parties binding for life. (3) But Christianity provides relief for the greatest injury which a husband or a wife can suffer by making adultery a dissolution of the marriage tie. 3. On the happiness of woman, Christianity has a most special influence. In temporal things she is more indebted to it than man. Her exact place in the social scale is defined in the Scriptures. Christianity, by investing her with equal religious privileges, has forbidden her husband to treat her as a being of an inferior order. “There is neither male or female, but all are one in Christ Jesus.” II. I have to show you how it contributes to the happiness of families BY THE OPERATION OF ITS PRINCIPLES ON THE MINDS OF INDIVIDUALS. 1. The first moral principle of Christianity is love. He only is a real Christian in whom this is predominant. His religion teaches him that his love must be all-pervading and quenchless. His God is represented as love. His Saviour is love incarnate. the embodiment and manifestation of Divine love to our world. On this perfect model the Christian’s character must be formed. The whole system of Christian ethics is only a development of the same principles. The gospel, throughout, inculcates the most perfect courtesy and politeness: not that false and hollow code which consists of polished manners and a specious hypocrisy; but that real courtesy which seeks the happiness of others. That which the man of high life professes to be, the Christian really is. He is humble, and the servant of all. He esteems others more highly than himself. Self-denial is a duty which he has practised, as long as he has been a Christian. 2. The principles and precepts of Christianity are not merely general things which apply to the mass of mankind; but they are adapted to particular cases, and especially to domestic duties. 3. Now, such being the operation of Christianity on the character, the residence of one Christian person in a family must have an important influence on the happiness of the whole. The Christian religion qualifies alike for every station. To have learned the lesson of the gospel gives dignity and lustre to the humblest duties. 4. If such be the happy influence shed on a family by one Christian member, how much greater will it be when the head of the family is a Christian. The character and example of the master must have a great influence on the household. Besides, his will is the law by which all things are regulated and controlled. The character of the whole, will, to a considerable degree, reflect the colour of his. 5. How happy must that family be, all the members of which act on the principles of Christianity. In concluding this discourse, I would offer the following practical remarks for your consideration. I. Recollect that what you have heard this evening is only a small and very subordinate part of the evidence in favour of the truth of Christianity. That evidence is large and conclusive, as I noticed at the commencement of this lecture. He who is in doubt should examine the whole with serious attention and candour, for his own sake: for it cannot be concealed that his everlasting happiness depends on the

question. II. Do not fall into the common mistake of misjudging Christianity by the conduct of Christians. Religion is not chargeable with the fault of its disciples. Whatever the actions of Christians may be, the rule which is given for the direction of their life is perfect. The question at issue is, not what men are, but what Christianity. III. AS A MATTER OF DOMESTIC POLICY, YOU SHOULD ADOPT CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES. Nothing is so conducive to the happiness of families: it is therefore a point of wisdom to introduce Christian regulations. IV. If the beneficial influence of Christianity on domestic life tends to prove its Divine origin, THIS ARGUMENT SHOULD PERSUADE YOU TO RECEIVE IT AS A REVELATION FROM HEAVEN. If it be a revelation from heaven it is worthy of all acceptance. Not confined in its influence to the narrow circle of domestic life, nor to the present world, its sublime scheme extends beyond the visible universe, and grasps eternity. It interposes between man and God, and saves the sinner from hell. (*S. Spink.*)

Ver. 4. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.—*Abraham's obedience.*—I. AT FIRST, ABRAHAM'S OBEDIENCE WAS ONLY PARTIAL (Gen. xi. 31). It becomes us to be very careful as to whom we take with us in our pilgrimage. We may make a fair start from our Ur; but if we take Terah with us, we shall not go far. Let us all beware of that fatal spirit of compromise, which tempts us to tarry where beloved ones bid us to stay. II. ABRAHAM'S OBEDIENCE WAS RENDERED POSSIBLE BY HIS FAITH (Gen. xii. 4, 5). III. ABRAHAM'S OBEDIENCE WAS FINALLY VERY COMPLETE. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *An example of faith:*—I. THE DIVINE VOICE OF COMMAND AND PROMISE. God's servants have to be separated from home and kindred, and all surroundings. The command to Abram was no mere arbitrary test of obedience. God could not have done what He meant with him, unless He had got him by himself. So Isaiah (Isa. li. 2) puts his finger on the essential when he says, "I called him alone." God's communications are made to solitary souls, and His voice to us always summons us to forsake friends and companions, and to go apart with God. No man gets speech of God in a crowd. The vagueness of the command is significant. Abram did not know "whither he went." He is not told that Canaan is the land till he has reached Canaan. A true obedience is content to have orders enough for present duty. Ships are sometimes sent out with sealed instructions, to be opened when they reach latitude and longitude so-and-so. That is how we are all sent out. Our knowledge goes no further ahead than is needful to guide our next step. If we "go out" as He bids us, He will show us what to do next. Observe the promise. Our space forbids our touching on its importance as a further step in the narrowing of the channel in which salvation was to flow. But we may notice that it needed a soul raised above the merely temporal to care much for such promises. They would have been but thin diet for earthly appetites. II. THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH. We have here a wonderful example of prompt, unquestioning obedience to a bare word. We do not know how the Divine command was conveyed to Abram. The patriarch knew that he was following a Divine command, and not his own purpose; but there seems to have been no appeal to sense to authenticate the inward voice. He stands, then, on a high level, setting the example of faith as unconditional acceptance of, and obedience to, God's bare word. III. THE LIFE IN THE LAND. The first characteristic of it is its continual wandering. This is the feature which the Epistle to the Hebrews marks as significant. There was no reason but his own choice why Abram should continue to journey, and prefer pitching his tent now under the terebinth tree of Moreh, now by Hebron, instead of entering some of the cities of the land. He dwelt in tents because he looked for the city. The clear vision of the future end detached him, as it will always detach men, from close participation in the present. It is not because we are mortal, and death is near at the farthest, that the Christian is to sit loose to this world, but because he lives by the hope of the inheritance. He must choose to be a pilgrim, and keep himself apart in feeling and aims from this present. The great lesson from the wandering life of Abram is, "Set your affection on things above." Cultivate the sense of belonging to another polity than that in the midst of which you dwell. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *Abraham's faith:*—Abraham obeyed. The obedience of faith (Heb. xi. 8). Consider how his faith operated. 1. IT SUPPLIED NEEDFUL ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER. 1. Courage. Men were gregarious. Dwelt together for mutual aid and protection. He became bold to go forth alone. 2. Disinterestedness. Might have grown rich on the verdant plains of Mesopotamia. Gave up all at God's bidding. 3. Great activity. At seventy-five years of age he gave up a life of comparative ease, and at a time when men are usually

thinking of rest, he went out to found a nation, in a country that he knew not of.

II. IT OVERCAME SURROUNDING ATTRACTIONS. 1. The love of country. This, strong in all men, specially so in an Oriental. The memories of the past and sepulchres of his people endeared the place. 2. The ties of kindred. Though he took Sarai and Lot with him, many were left behind, to be seen no more. He went out, "not knowing whither he went," and to dwell among a strange people speaking an unknown tongue. When Englishmen emigrate, they know the land, the people, and the language. III. IT ROSE SUPERIOR TO PROSPECTIVE DANGERS. 1. An unprecedented journey. Ancient migrations were usually made along the shores of rivers. Pasturage and water for the flocks required this. Abram's path lay across a desert. 2. An unknown destination. To an inhabited land where opposition might be expected. IV. IT LEANED CONSTANTLY ON GOD. His halting places were marked by the altars he reared. He walked not by sight; or the desert, the famine, and the Canaanite, might have hindered and discouraged him; but by faith. Learn—I. The obedience of faith is the most perfect and acceptable obedience. II. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (*J. C. Gray.*) *Abraham's journey:*—Great journey, suggestive of much! It reminds us of the "Pilgrim Fathers" and their memorable expedition; but they, unlike Abraham, knew something of the country to which they were going. It reminds us of the noble travellers, Ledyard and Park; the former saying, when asked when he should be ready to set off for the interior of Africa, "To-morrow"; and the latter leaving again the peaceful banks of the Tweed for the sandy deserts which had nearly overwhelmed him before; but they, too, knew where they were bound, and besides were certain of renown, if not of safety, and both expected to return. A truer parallel to this wondrous journey of Abraham is found in the case of the dying Christian, who, full of faith and hope, calmly and cheerfully takes his plunge into the darkness of the future world. But he does this, partly at least, in obedience to necessity, whereas Abraham, who might have stayed at home, went in willing submission to the command of God. (*G. Gilfillan.*) *The blessed life illustrated in the history of Abraham:*—Let us notice how Abraham's circumstances helped his faith. "Get thee out of thy country." He was to go away from his possessions, away from the land which he loved and ruled as a chief, "unto a land that I will show thee." He is to find his possession in God. He looses his hold upon those things about him that he may grasp the hand of God, and find what God can give him. See further, his faith was helped by the departure from his kindred. Why from his kindred? We have often thought of the hardness, almost the harshness, of the call. It is strange that we have never thought about the mercy of this command. The troubles of Abraham's life came from the kindred that did go with him: Sarai, brave and faithful as she was, yet once or twice was rather a hindrance than a help to Abraham; and as for the ungrateful and worldly Lot, Abraham had to face many perils for his sake. Remember, too, that the kindred whom he left behind were idolaters; and the bitterest foes a man can have are those of his own household, specially in the matter of religion. Abraham, fearless as he was, yet like many a man of high courage, was so peaceable that he preferred a compromise to strife. His safety was away from his kindred, alone with God. And, turning to ourselves, how little do we know what friendships and early associations may help or hinder the life of God within us. There was yet a further aid to faith: "And from thy father's house." Abraham was to leave his father's house, that henceforth he might live in a tent, and that tent was no less than a very sacrament. It was the outward and visible sign of the inward and invisible grace. It set forth God's command, and it expressed Abraham's obedience. By it he said: I am a pilgrim here, on a journey, seeking a country which God hath promised to give me. Thus the tent, with all its surroundings, was in itself the reminder of the promise, and the prompting of his faith. Let us look back upon the incident once more, and turn to think of its relation to our own lives. The one great purpose of the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is to do for us what God did for Abraham. The New Testament idea of the Christian's life is throughout that of a resurrection. The Cross of Christ is our threefold death: death to sin, death to self, death to the world. The life we now live is a life begotten in us by the Holy Ghost, who raised up Jesus from the dead; a new life with new faculties, and new aims and new relations. Born of God, our relationship is to God; our affections are set on things above; our home is in God; citizens of the Heavenly City, we are eager for its honours, and jealous for its glory. The Cross of Christ is to do for me all that God commanded Abraham; and I have not rightly found its meaning until it is to me a power so to use

the world that in it everywhere I find the presence of God, and by it I am made more fit for His service and more like unto Him, blessed and made a blessing. So is it that by the surrounding of our daily life our God is seeking to lead us into the blessed life. "So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him." And as he goes, leaving father's house and kindred and country, shall we turn away and complain that the terms are so hard; that unless one be much more brave and resolute than most men it is vain to seek this good; that humanity so coarse as ours is incapable of any such sacrifice, and that our innate selfishness cannot endure the strain? Nay, verily; love loses all thought of sacrifice, and turns it all to joy. So Abraham departed—not driven, not trembling, but lured and won by the God of glory who had appeared to him with the gracious promise: "I will bless thee; . . . and thou shalt be a blessing." (*Mark Guy Pearse.*)

Ver. 5. They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came.—*Right beginnings*:—This is one of the most comforting verses in the Bible. It is so simple and yet so sure. It tells us that the end is certain if the beginning is right. I. The text is WRITTEN FROM HEAVEN'S SIDE OF THE QUESTION. It is the history—put in short—of all the saints who ever went to glory. They took a long journey, and at last they got safely home. The rest—how it was, why it was, all that makes up the interval—is the grace of God. II. THERE WERE DIFFICULTIES BY THE WAY: why are we not told of them? Because from the mountain top the way by which we have travelled looks level and easy. Things that were great at the time seem so small from that height that we do not care to see them. III. WHAT IS IT DEALLY TO SET OUT? It is to recognize and answer God's call. The great secret of life is to have a strong aim. All through his life Abraham had one single object in view. It was Canaan. The record of each antediluvian patriarch was, "He lived so many years, and he died." That is one side of the picture, but there is another: "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came." (*J. Vaughan, M.A.*) *The obedience of faith*:—I. IT WAS PROMPT. II. IT WAS CONSIDERATE OF THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS. III. IT WAS MAINTAINED IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES. 1. He was a wanderer in the land which God had promised to give him. 2. He was beset by enemies. "The Canaanite was then in the land." 3. The Divine promise opened up for him no splendid prospect in this world. IV. IT RESPECTED THE OUTWARD FORMS OF PIETY. 1. It was unworldly. The action of Abraham in building an altar amounted to the taking possession of the land for God. Thus the believer holds the gifts of Providence as the steward of them, and not as their possessor. 2. It satisfied a pious instinct which meets some of the difficulties of devotion. It is difficult for man to realize the invisible without the aid of the visible. Hence the pious in all ages have built places in which to worship God. This arises from no desire to limit God in space; but in order that men might feel that He is present everywhere, they must feel that He is specially present somewhere. God meets man by coming down to his necessity. 3. It was a public profession of his faith. Abraham was not one of those who hid the righteousness of God in his heart. He made it known to all around him by outward acts of devotion. Such conduct glorifies God, and gives religion the advantage that is derived from the corporate life of those who profess it. 4. It was an acknowledgment of the claims of God. By building an altar and calling upon the name of the Lord, Abraham confessed that all claims were on the side of God, and not on that of man. He confessed that sin requires expiation, and that all true help and reward must come to man from above. The only religion possible to man is that of penitence and faith. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The journey of Abram into the land of Canaan*:—1. Observe here the gradual revelation and accomplishment of Abram's destiny. And this is the history of every one of us: gradually and slowly our destiny opens to us. Our Redeemer and Master teaches us not to be over anxious for the morrow, for we cannot discern its duties; all that belongs to us is to do the duty that lies before us to-day, and we may be sure of this, that when we have done the duty that is close before us we shall understand and see clearly the duties that lie beyond. 2. Observe again the number of the ties that were rent asunder when Abram left for Canaan. We must learn to live alone, not with regard to external things, but in our inward spirits. Let us not be anxious to hear the hum of applauding voices round us, but be content to travel in silence the way which our Master travelled before. 3. Observe again the twofold nature of the promise given by God to Abram; it was partly temporal, partly spiritual. The temporal promise was that he should have a numerous posterity, and that they

should inherit Canaan; and the spiritual promise was that he should be blessed (ver. 2). Now this record was of great importance to Moses, who gave it to the people of Israel. He was about to take Israel away from Egypt, and therefore he had to make them understand that the land they were going to was their own land, from which they were unlawfully kept out. In proof of this he could refer to this promise of God to Abram. Observe once more the manner of Abram's journey through Canaan. As he went along he erected altars to commemorate the mercies of God and to remind his posterity that this was really their own land. Here we have that strange feeling of human nature, the utter impossibility of realizing the invisible except through the visible. (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*) *Effectual calling—illustrated by the call of Abram*:—I. EFFECTUAL CALLING IS ILLUSTRATED IN THE CALL OF ABRAM. 1. Abram's call was the result of the sovereign grace of God. 2. Abram's call was divinely applied and enforced. 3. Abram's call was personal, and it grew more personal as it proceeded. 4. This call to Abram was a call for separation. 5. Abram was obedient to the call. 6. It must have required in Abram's case much faith to be so obedient. 7. Abram's obedience was based on a very great promise. 8. Abram may be held up as an example to us in obeying the Divine call, because he went at once. 9. Abram did his work very thoroughly. He set out for Canaan, and to Canaan he came. 10. The difference between the Lord's effectual call, and those common calls which so many receive. Perhaps some of us who are professors have been called not by the grace of God, but by the eloquence of a speaker, or by the excitement of a revival meeting. Beware, I pray you, of that river whose source lies not at the foot of the throne of God. Take care of that salvation which does not take its rise in the work of God the Holy Ghost, for only that which comes from Him will lead to Him. The work which does not spring from eternal love will never land us in eternal life. II. If our text may very well illustrate effectual calling, so may it PICTURE FINAL PERSEVERANCE. "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and to the land of Canaan they came." That is true of every child of God who is really converted and receives the faith of God's elect. God has purposed it. He purposes that the many sons should all be brought to glory by the Captain of their salvation; and hath He said it and shall He not do it? The way shall not weary us: He shall give us shoes of iron and brass, and as our days so shall our strength be. The roughness of the road shall not cast us down; He will bear us as upon eagles' wings; He will give His angels charge over us, lest we dash our foot against a stone. In conclusion—Think of these three things: 1. We have set forth for the land of Canaan; we know where we are going. Think much of your haven of rest. Study that precious Scripture which reveals the new Jerusalem. 2. In the next place, we know why we are going. We are going to Canaan because God has called us to go. He gives us strength to go, puts the life-force within us that makes us tend upward towards the eternal dwelling-place, the happy harbour of the saints. 3. And we know that we are going; that is another mercy. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *The Christian's journey to Canaan*:—There can be no impropriety in applying the passage before us to Christian pilgrims going forth from the city of destruction, through the wilderness, to the heavenly Canaan. It gives us a short and comprehensive view of it, which will be interesting, and I trust profitable, for us to consider. I. IN ITS COMMENCEMENT. "And they went forth." This is descriptive of the period when the sinner, having felt in some measure the importance of Divine things, is resolved to give himself up to God, and, acting under His guidance and direction, leave the broad road of destruction, and enter into the way of life eternal. 1. The scenes they have to abandon. From what do they go forth? (1) From the world to God. They are to be separated from it. In it, but not of it. (2) They go forth from a state of nature to a state of grace—from that spiritual darkness in which the mind of every unconverted man is enveloped, to that heavenly light which is imparted by the Spirit—from all that is degrading, and that tends to debase the soul, to the highest honours and dignities that can ennoble our nature. (3) They go forth from all vulgar prejudices against religion, and mistaken notions which in ignorance they have formed, and rejoice to come to the true light, that their deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. (4) They go forth from the practice of sin to the pursuit of holiness. (5) They go forth from self to Christ, renouncing all human merit, and pleading the all-sufficient atonement of Him who is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, and bled on Calvary. 2. The principles on which they act. Abram went not of his own accord, but as he was directed by the Almighty. It is so here. Believers are influenced by a Divine power, in going forth and seeking a better country. If left

to themselves, they would still remain satisfied while at a distance from God. But He influences them by His Spirit; He shows them the vileness of sin, the deceitfulness of the human heart, and gives them another spirit, by which they are enabled to follow Him fully and serve Him joyfully. They go forth in God's strength—they go forth relying on His power. They now act from conviction: they are assured that nothing can supply the place of religion. They go forth as the result of deliberation: they have weighed both worlds, and the future preponderates. They are led to form their estimate by faith, and not by feeble sense. This was the principle on which Moses acted (Heb. xi. 24-26). 3. The opposition they have to overcome. It is not an easy thing to break forth from the world, and pursue the Christian course. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Our course must be marked by firmness and decision, so that we shall neither be laughed nor threatened out of our religion. II. *IN ITS PROGRESS.* "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan." When the pilgrim leaves the Egypt of a natural state, he enters on a journey, and his way lies through a wilderness. His course is of a most peculiar nature, and is diametrically opposed to the course of this world. The way in which he goes is divine—marked out by God; it is the right way—the way of truth, and peace, and pleasure. But there are three things in particular we may mention about it:—1. It is identified with all that is important. For what do they go forth? Oh! it is not to secure the fleeting, transitory pleasures of a vain world—it is not to obtain worldly aggrandizement. They go forth for an object infinitely superior to every other pursued by mankind. 2. It is connected with much that is trying. We have alluded to the opposition the heavenly pilgrim meets with at the commencement of his journey. Let it be remembered that his way runs through a desert, filled with thorns and briars, and not a garden of roses. There is no going to Canaan but through the wilderness—"a dangerous and tiresome place." The way to the kingdom is by the cross, and it is through much tribulation we must enter into the joy of our Lord. There are privations to be endured, trials to be encountered, sorrows to disturb us in our Christian course; but still we must go forth. 3. It is associated with pleasures that are divine. God has not left us without provision in the wilderness. "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." There remaineth a rest—yes, and it is not only future, but present. "We which have believed do enter into rest." You rest in His grace, His love, His righteousness, His bosom, His Spirit, His promises. III. *IS ITS TERMINATION.* "And into the land of Canaan they came." The end crowns all. And what a consummation is here! He who delivers His people from the world, and leads them through the wilderness, will land them safe on Canaan's shore. This termination is a joyful one—it is an honourable one—it is a peaceful one. Let us here—1. Draw a comparison between the land of Canaan and heaven. There are many points of resemblance. (1) It was a promised country. So is heaven. (2) It was a land of plenty—"a land flowing with milk and honey." In heaven there is everything that can possibly contribute to the joy and happiness of His people. (3) It was a land of peace. So is heaven. There is nothing to annoy and disturb there. (4) Jordan must be crossed before Canaan could be entered. So it is here—"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." We must die to live with God above. We must die to go home. We fall to rise—we die to live again. 2. Show the superiority of the one to the other. The earthly Canaan was only a temporary possession; but the heavenly Canaan is to be enjoyed for ever. The one excels the other, inasmuch as the antitype surpasses the type. (*E. Temple.*) *Half-and-half Christians:*—Compare this singular expression with chapter xi. 31, where we have Terah's emigration from Ur described in the same terms, with the all-important difference in the end, "they came" not into Canaan, but "unto Haran, and dwelt there." Many begin the course; one finishes it. Terah's journeying was only in search of pasture and an abode. So he dropped his wider scheme when the narrower served his purpose. It was an easy matter to go from Ur to Haran. Both were on the same bank of the Euphrates. But to cross the broad, deep, rapid river was a different thing, and meant an irrevocable cutting loose from the past life. Only the man of faith did that. There are plenty of half-and-half Christians, who go along merrily from Ur to Haran; but when they see the wide stream in front, and realize how completely the other side is separated from all that is familiar, they take another thought, and conclude they have come far enough, and Haran will serve their turn. Again, the phrase teaches us the certain issue of patient pilgrimage and persistent purpose. There is no mystery in getting to the journey's end. "One

foot up, and the other foot down," continued long enough, will bring to the goal of the longest march. It looks a very weary journey, and we wonder if we shall ever get thither. But the magic of "one step at a time" does it. The Guide is also the upholder of our way. (*H. C. Trumbull.*) *They went forth*:—1. Energetic action! Men are not saved while they are asleep. No riding to heaven on feather beds. "They went forth to the land of Canaan." 2. Intelligent perception! They knew what they were doing. They did not go to work in a blundering manner, not understanding their drift. We must know Christ if we would be found in Him. Men are not to be saved through the blindness of an ignorant superstition. "They went forth to the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan they came." 3. Firm resolution! They could put up with rebuffs, but they would not put off from their resolves. They meant Canaan, and Canaan they would get. He that would be saved, must take heaven by violence. "To the land of Canaan they came." 4. Perfect perseverance! "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Not a spurt and a rest, but constant running wins the race. All these thoughts cluster around the one idea of final perseverance, which the text brings out. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

Ver. 6. The Canaanite was then in the land.—*The Canaanite in the land*:—I. **THE CANAANITE IS IN THE LAND.** 1. The present world, through which we are travelling, is in the hands of the enemies of God. 2. Yet this very earth is to be, one day, the possession of the saints. 3. Meanwhile, our position in it, as pilgrims, is one of privation and peril. (1) We have spiritual foes, unseen, but ever watching against our souls. (2) We find the Canaanite in ourselves, in our fleshly infirmities, natural appetites, and carnal propensities and cravings, not yet wholly subdued. II. **OUR DUTY OF ALLEGIANCE TO GOD IN THE LAND OF OUR SOJOURN.** 1. Like Abraham, we must be inoffensive to the Canaanite in the land, biding our time. 2. We are not to refrain from common acts of courtesy and civility in intercourse with worldly men. 3. Yet we must so keep aloof from them, as to preserve the purity of our pilgrim separation. 4. We must openly worship in the midst of the enemy's country. 5. In this spirit we are to pursue our pilgrimage. Conclusion: 1. This is not our rest. 2. Let us not covet worldly possessions. 3. Let our hearts be fixed on the final recompense of reward. 4. A word to the Canaanite. Are you content to stay in the land which you cannot long or finally possess? (*T. G. Horton.*) *State of the population of Canaan in Abraham's time*:—When Abraham was brought by the guidance of God into the land of Canaan, he found himself in the midst of a population which could not be regarded as wholly alien. Nor do the inhabitants appear to have been of a character which would repel all intercourse. They had already abandoned, at least to a certain extent, their original pastoral and nomadic habits, and we find them gathered into cities, leaving the open country principally to the occupation of friendly strangers such as Abraham. Their civilization was, however, but little developed; for good and for evil they seem to have retained much of their primitive character. Where kings are mentioned, they approach more nearly to the patriarchal heads of tribes than to the barbarous despots of later days. We come across no traces of the fearful moral corruption that afterwards made "the land spue out" its inhabitants, except, indeed, in the wealthy and luxurious cities of the plain. There the degeneracy that was afterwards to bring the Divine judgments upon all the nations of Canaan had rapidly run its fatal course. But the rest of the land was still comparatively uncorrupted. Later on we find the numerous cities of the land, excluding such as were still held by the warlike and savage aborigines, loosely grouped into four main divisions. There are the Amorites, or Highlanders, a fierce people—apparently the furthest removed from the Canaanites proper—that dwelt in the mountains, from the Scorpion Range, south of the Dead Sea, to the hills of Judah. The Hittites are their neighbours, dwelling in the valleys, lovers of refinement at an early period, and living in well-ordered communities possessing national assemblies. The fertile lowlands by the course of the Jordan, and along the coast of the Mediterranean, are held by the Canaanites, who, as possessors of the choicest of the land and by far the best known by foreigners, often gave their name to the whole of the population of the country. These also were much more addicted to commerce than to war, in this resembling the fourth main division, the Hivites of the midland region, whose principal city seems to have been the flourishing, wealthy, but timorous Gibeon. (*A. S. Wilkins.*) *Abraham a witness for God*.—I. **UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES DID ABRAHAM BEAR HIS WITNESS FOR GOD?** 1. He did it as a stranger in a foreign land. It is emphatically said of

Abraham, that when he came "unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh," "the Canaanite was then in the land." When he first came among them, he came as a man who was utterly unknown. There was nothing whatever to introduce him, nothing whatever to give him authority and influence among them. He was a mere stranger, whose history, whose life, whose conduct was altogether strange. 2. But not only so: he was surrounded by wicked men. Abraham, then, bare his witness for God under the most unfavourable circumstances. He bare his witness where he was a stranger, where all that were around him were opposed to God, and enemies of that faith which he professed and that practice which he displayed. Let no man after this fancy that he will find an excuse in not witnessing for God by the difficulties of the circumstances in which he is placed. II. OF WHAT DID HE BEAR WITNESS? 1. In the first place, he bare witness to the paramount importance of godliness. His chief thought was to testify that he was the servant of God; and the first thing he did after he pitched his tent was this—to erect an altar, and to call upon the name of the Lord. Oh! brethren, this was a testimony that "godliness is profitable to all things," that it has "the promise of the life that now is" as well as "of that which is to come." It was as much as to say, "All my prosperity and all my success, all that I have gained and all that I have achieved, is absolutely nothing unless I am a servant of Almighty God." 2. Again: he was a witness to the love, the power, and the providence of God. He was a witness to these things in that he openly addressed himself to God. 3. Moreover, Abraham bare witness to His faithfulness. When was it that he erected his altar, and called upon the name of the Lord? Just when he had received His promise. God said unto Abraham, "I will give thee this land"; and Abraham "builded an altar unto the Lord." He showed that he depended upon God's promise. 4. But Abraham did more than merely witness to these general truths. Much indeed it was to witness to the importance of godliness; much to witness to a wondering and a hating world the love, the power, and the providence of God; much to bear witness to the faithfulness of His promise; but Abraham did more—he was a "preacher of righteousness." He "rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and he saw it, and was glad;" and the great fundamental truths that lie at the very foundation of the scheme of man's redemption, were by his altar and by his prayer preached and proclaimed unto mankind. It is the duty, brethren, of every child of God to bear witness to the same truths; and exactly in proportion to any influence or authority we possess does the duty become more imperative, and the obligation upon us the more binding. III. TO WHOM DID ABRAHAM BEAR WITNESS? 1. In the first place, he bare witness to the world around. He did not go amongst ungodly men, and hear the Master whom he served profaned, and think that he would keep his sentiments for another time; he bore his witness openly, boldly, undauntedly, in the face of day. And this is just the course that all of us, if we are sincere in our profession, are bound to pursue. No man will give us credit for sincerity unless we do so. 2. Not only, however, did Abraham testify to the world around him, but he testified especially to the members of his own household. His own household partook most of the influence of that genial piety. Their ears it was that listened oftentimes to the accents of his fervent prayers; their hearts gathered in the mild and holy effects of that blessed teaching, which taught them to look down the line of time for a sacrifice and atonement for their guilt. (*II. Hughes, M.A.*) *Shechem*—Abram's first halting place in Canaan:—The first place in Canaan where Abraham halted with his family and his household was at Shechem, near a celebrated oak-tree. As we might have expected, the first recorded encampment of the patriarch is not without significance. Shechem is situated in the very centre of Palestine; it is in the Bible even called the "navel of the land," and was the natural place of assembly for all the tribes of the country; the oak was, in the time of the Judges, still famous under the name of "oak of sorcerers," and near it was a rich temple of the idol Baal-Berith; but the region in and around Shechem was even at that time still partly occupied by the heathens. Only by remembering these facts, our text will appear in its full and deep meaning. Abraham proceeded at once to the central town of the land intended as the future habitation of his descendants; a town obviously too important by its position to be left in the hands of the enemies; and there that promise of the land was for the first time made (ver. 7). The place of the ancient tree, which so long witnessed superstitious and cruel rites, was hallowed by a Divine vision, and converted into a sacred spot; and at the side of the idolatrous temple rose an altar dedicated to the God of heaven and earth. Thus the facts related obtain a prospective and didactic force for which we have prepared the reader by some of the

preceding remarks. Shechem, perhaps one of the oldest towns of Palestine, and in early times inhabited by the Hivites, is situated in a narrow but beautiful valley, between 1,200 to 1,600 feet wide, seven miles south of Samaria, not far from the confines of the ancient provinces of Ephraim and Manasseh, and in the range of the mountains of Ephraim, at the foot both of Mount Ebal and Gerizim, which enclose it north and south, which were themselves famous by early altars and sanctuaries, and were of the highest religious interest by the blessing and the curse proclaimed on them for the observance or the neglect of the Law. The town was not only important in the history of the patriarchs, but in the theocratical and political history of the Israelites; it was a city of refuge and a Levitical town; here Joshua delivered his last solemn address to all the tribes of Israel; it was, in the time of the Judges, the principal town of Abimelech's kingdom; here Rehoboam was proclaimed king, and promulgated to the delegates of the people his insulting policy; and when the ten tribes declared their independence of his despotic rule, it became the residence of the new empire. It was not unimportant in the time of the captivity, and became after its expiration the celebrated centre of the Samaritan worship, whose temple was only destroyed by John Hyrcanus (b.c. 129). In the first century of the Christian era it lay in ruins; but on its ancient site, or in its immediate vicinity, a new, though smaller town, Neapolis, was built, probably by Flavius Vespasianus; it was the birth-place of Justin Martyr, and the seat of Christian bishops; although captured by the Moslems and the Crusaders, it suffered but little or temporarily; after several vicissitudes, which could not annihilate its prosperity, it fell finally into the hands of the Turks in A.D. 1242. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Ver. 7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.—*The land of promise*:—1. The first feature which eminently marked out the land for the residence of God's chosen nation is this: it unites, as no other does, the two indispensable conditions of central position and yet of isolation. To lie in the midst of the nations, at the focus and gathering-place of those mighty and cultured empires, whose rivalries ruled the politics, as their example led the civilization of antiquity, yet at the same time be shut off from such contact with them as must of necessity prove injurious, seemed to be opposite requirements, very hard to be reconciled. To a curious extent they are reconciled in the land of promise. 2. Another characteristic which qualified Palestine to be a training-ground for the Hebrews was this: that it combined to an unusual degree high agricultural fertility with exposure to sudden and severe disasters. In most years it could sustain a dense population of cultivators, supposing them to be industrious and frugal, without any excessive or grinding toil. Enough, not always for export, but for home consumption at least, its well-watered valleys and vine-clad hills could furnish in ordinary seasons. For comfortable sustenance, therefore, though not for wealth or luxury, such a nation of peasants was sufficiently provided within its own borders. It could dwell apart, yet experience no want. At the same time, the people were kept in close dependence for the fruits of harvest upon the bounty of Providence. 3. To these advantages for its special design, this perhaps ought to be added: that hardly any regions offer so few temptations to corrupt the simplicity of their inhabitants, or better facilities for the defence of their liberties. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*) **There builded he an altar unto the Lord.**—*Worship*:—

I. THIS ALTAR WAS REARED ENTIRELY IN HONOUR OF GOD. No self-glorying in it. II. ABRAHAM'S ACT EXPRESSED HIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE FACT OF DIVINE GUIDANCE IN HIS PAST LIFE. He found it a joy to be under the leadership of God, and he built this altar to express his gratitude. III. ABRAHAM'S ALTAR EXPRESSED HIS DEPENDENCE ON THE MERCY THAT COMES THROUGH A PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE. IV. THIS ALTAR WAS VALUABLE IN GOD'S SIGHT, BECAUSE IT EXPRESSED ABRAHAM'S READINESS TO CONSECRATE HIMSELF ENTIRELY TO GOD. V. THE RAISED ALTAR EXPRESSED THE PATRIARCH'S FAITH IN THE FULFILMENT OF THE DIVINE PROMISES. (*F. Hastings.*) *The altar at Sichem*:—1. The first thing Abraham does on his arrival is to acknowledge God. He recognizes Him as the One who has protected him. 2. We see in this erection of the altar an acknowledgment of God in time of prosperity. 3. That altar signified a grateful heart. 4. The altar was a token of Abram's faith. 5. This altar was not the product of a spasmodic exertion, or something to meet a sudden emergency. It was the result of a fixed purpose, a fixed state of mind, a character. 6. Again, this altar suggests to us that "local worship" is important. God is not always to be thought of as the broad blaze of light, but rather like the pointed rays. It is when the rays are brought to a focus that the heat and fire

are manifested. God is everywhere, but is in this place and that in a special sense. We need to localize God. There are spots specially holy. The closet, the family altar, the church—how sacred! 7. Finding this spirit in Abraham, we are not surprised that God manifested Himself to him. As we advance in holiness, we advance toward God, and communion is more easy. (*I. Simmons, D.D.*) *Outward signs of piety*:—Abram set up his altar along the line of his march. Blessed are they whose way is known by marks of worship. The altar is the highest seal of ownership. God will not lightly forsake His temple. This setting up of the altar shows that our spiritual life ought to be attested by outward sign and profession. Abram had the promise in his heart, yet he did not live a merely contemplative life; he was not lost in religious musings and prophesying—he built his altar and set up his testimony in the midst of his people, and made them sharers of a common worship. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Vers. 8, 9. *He removed from thence.*—*Lessons*:—1. Faith moves a man from place to place in the world, upon God's word or intimation. 2. The bad entertainment of believers in the world maketh them remove their stages. 3. In the wanderings of believers, God sends abroad the discoveries of His will to several places. 4. Faith maketh souls dwell in tents here below, and be still movable for heaven. 5. Faith causeth souls to adhere unto and make profession of the true religion of God in all places; faith is never ashamed of God, truth, worship, or way. 6. Believing souls cannot be without communion with God in offering to Him and hearing from Him. 7. Supplication to God and speaking in His name are special ways of worship suiting believers (ver. 8). 8. Faith maketh saints true sojourners below, to be still taking up their stakes at God's beck. 9. To all points, east and west and south, God orders the motions of the saints to leave some savour of His truth everywhere (ver. 9). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Mountain devotions*:—In a meeting to pray for the president's recovery, one of his class-mates rose and said, "Twenty-six years ago to-night, and at this very hour, our class were on the top of Graylock to spend the night of the fourth of July. As we were about to lie down to sleep, Garfield took out his pocket Testament and said, 'I am in the habit of reading a chapter every night at this time with my mother. Shall I read aloud?' All assented; and when he had read, he asked the oldest member of the class to pray. And there, in the night, on the mountain top, we prayed with him for whom we have now assembled to pray." (*Dr. Prime.*)

Vers. 10-20. *Abram went down into Egypt.*—*Abram in Egypt: the temptations and trials of a life of faith*:—The life of faith has many temptations and trials. I. THEY MAY ARISE FROM TEMPORAL CALAMITIES. Famine. 1. They direct the whole care and attention of the mind to themselves. 2. They may suggest doubt in the Divine providence. 3. They serve to give us an exaggerated estimate of past trials. II. THEY MAY ARISE FROM THE DIFFICULTY OF APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION TO THE MORAL PROBLEMS OF LIFE. 1. We may be tempted to have recourse to false prudence and expediency. 2. We are exposed to the sin of tempting Providence. 3. We may be tempted to preserve one good at the expense of another. 4. They may tempt us to hesitate concerning what is right. III. THEY ARE MADE THE MEANS OF IMPRESSING VALUABLE MORAL LESSONS. Abram would learn many lessons from his bitter experience in Egypt. 1. That man cannot by his own strength and wisdom maintain and direct his own life. 2. That adverse circumstances may be made to work for good. 3. That a good man may fail in his chief virtue. IV. GOD IS ABLE TO DELIVER FROM THEM ALL. When a man has the habitual intention of pleasing God, and when his faith is real and heart sincere, the lapses of his infirmity are graciously pardoned. God makes for him a way of escape, and grants the comfort of fresh blessings and an improved faith. But—1. God often delivers His people in a manner humiliating to themselves. 2. God delivers them by a way by which His own name is glorified in the sight of men. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Abraham in Egypt*:—This is our first introduction to Egypt in the Bible. Let us ask what religious lessons it is intended to teach us; what was the relation of Egypt to the chosen people and the religious history of mankind? It is, in one word, the introduction of the chosen people to the world—to the world, not in the bad sense in which we often use the word, but in its most general sense, both good and bad. Egypt was to Abraham—to the Jewish people—to the whole course of the Old Testament, what the world, with all its interests, and pursuits, and enjoyments, is

to us. It was the parent of civilization, of art, of learning, of royal power, of vast armies. The very names which we still use for the paper on which we write, for the sciences of medicine and chemistry, are derived from the natural products and from the old religion of Egypt. Hither came Abraham, as the extremest goal of his long travels, from Chaldea southwards; here Joseph ruled, as viceroy; here Jacob and his descendants settled, as in their second home, for several generations; here Moses became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." From the customs, the laws, and arts of the Egyptians, many of the customs, laws, and arts of the Israelites were borrowed. Here, in the last days of the Bible history, the Holy Family found a refuge. On these scenes for a moment, even though in unconscious infancy, alone of any Gentile country, the eyes of our Redeemer rested. From the philosophy which flourished at Alexandria came the first philosophy of the Christian Church. This, then, is one main lesson which the Bible teaches us by the stress laid on Egypt. It tells us that we may lawfully use the world and its enjoyments; that the world is acknowledged by true religion, as well as by our own natural instincts, to be a beautiful, a glorious, and, in this respect, a good and useful world. Power, and learning, and civilization, and art, may all minister now, as they did then, to the advancement of the welfare of man and the glory of God.

2. But, secondly, the meeting of Abraham and Pharaoh—the contact of Egypt with the Bible—remind us forcibly that there is something better and higher even than the most glorious, or the most luxurious, or the most powerful, or the most interesting sights and scenes of the world, even at its highest pitch, here or elsewhere. Whose name or history is now best remembered? Is it that of Pharaoh, or of the old Egyptian nation? No. It is the name of the shepherd, as he must have seemed, who came to seek his fortunes here as a stranger and sojourner. Much or little as we, or our friends at home, rich or poor, may know or care about Egypt, we all know and care about Abraham. It is his visit, and the visit of his descendants, that gives to Egypt its most universal interest. So it is with the world at large, of which, as I have said, in those old days Egypt was the likeness. Who is it that, when years are gone by, we remember with the purest gratitude and pleasure? Not the learned, or the clever, or the rich, or the powerful, that we may have known in our passage through life; but those who, like Abraham, have had the force of character to prefer the future to the present—the good of others to their own pleasure. (*Dean Stanley.*)

Abram in Egypt.—I. THAT LIFE CAN BE TOO DEARLY PURCHASED. 1. When truth is sacrificed for its safety. 2. When the purity of others is exposed to danger. 3. When injustice is done to others. 4. When every other thought becomes subordinate to this. II. THAT THE DIVINE IS THE ONLY STANDARD WHICH DETERMINES THE VALUE OF LIFE. 1. We shall then realize that its existence depends on God. 2. That the strength of life is in God. 3. That its true prosperity is from God. 4. That through God it can be restored to Canaan. (*Homilist.*)

Carnal policy.—I. THE NATURE OF THE CARNAL POLICY OF ABRAHAM. "A lie which is part a truth is ever the worst of lies"; so a truth which is part a lie is a very dangerous one. II. THE FAILURE OF ABRAHAM'S CARNAL POLICY. (*F. Hastings.*)

Faith in weakness and conflict.—1. Here is faith in conflict with natural disappointment. "There was a famine in the land, and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there." 2. Faith is here in conflict with, and is overcome by, fear and affection. "He said unto Sarai his wife, Behold, I know that thou art a fair woman," &c. 3. Faith is here seen in conflict with a false expediency. "Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister," &c. (*The Preacher's Monthly.*)

Abraham in Egypt.—I. ABRAHAM'S CONDUCT. 1. His trouble. Famine. 2. He has recourse to Egypt. The granary of the world at that time. 3. His danger and device. 4. His dishonour. II. LESSONS. 1. What a lesson on the weakness and treachery of the human heart! 2. We are taught to expect trouble in our Christian life. 3. We see here the temptation to a false and worldly policy. 4. We see the evils of trimming and temporizing. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*)

The blessed life illustrated in the history of Abraham.—I. HERE IS A MYSTERY. "The famine was grievous in the land"—so it begins. And yet Abraham was in the land to which God had called him, and where God had promised to bless him. What does it mean—"the famine was grievous in the land"? That it should be counted a mystery shows how blind we are, and how shallow and selfish are our thoughts of God's holy religion. Hardship, difficulty, even famine is accepted readily enough by many men whose aims are to be reached by such endurance. The athlete in his training, the soldier in his calling, the man of science in his search for truth, the student in his work, all accept such sturdily self-denial as the

condition of success. What science, and art, and love of travel can stimulate other men to endure, cannot our holy religion and the vision of God inspire us to accept and rejoice in? Or the benefactor sends the boy to sea, forth to wild storms, the boy that his mother screened, and for whom she made endless sacrifices—now amidst this rough set, tossed on angry waves, exposed to dangers on every hand. Shall they not pity him? But what shall they say now, as the surgeon bends in some work of mercy which the angels might envy—brave, skilful, unerring? Or what now, as the captain takes his place, alert and wise, rendering splendid service to a host of people? There was a famine in the land—why? Because God hath forgotten Abraham? No. Because God hath said, “I will bless thee; . . . and thou shalt be a blessing”; and because here, as everywhere else, hardship and stern discipline have their place and their work to do. God hath spoken it, and He knows full well how to keep His own promise. Think of the captain to whom we should say, “Sir, do you know what to do in a storm?” “No,” says the captain. “I do not; I am thankful to say that I have been always kept in the harbour in very smooth water.” What think you of a doctor to whom one should say, “Do you know what to do in case of fever, or in a serious accident?” “No,” he replies, “I do not; I have happily never been permitted to deal with anything worse than an occasional chilblain, or a sick headache!” I should prefer another captain, another doctor, and should wonder how they got their names. O soul! dost thou know what God can be to one in trouble? “Ah!” thou sayest, “until then I never knew what God was; how tender and gracious, how mighty to uphold, how good to deliver!” II. HERE IS A GREAT COMPENSATION. “And the Canaanite was then in the land”; “And there was a famine in the land”; “And the Lord appeared unto Abram.” Did visions of a goodly land “flowing with milk and honey” fill the mind of Abraham? a land where annoyance should cease, and life should be a leisurely enjoyment; where everything should fit exactly into one’s desires? If so, his was a bitter disappointment. What was the use of parting with a pleasant place like Haran for a land like this? And as for leaving a respectable set of people like our friends there, to live amidst the Canaanites—it was really a great mistake. Even faithful Sarai, thinking of the fertile slopes of Haran and the kindred, might sometimes sigh and say in her heart, “Was it worth while to come so far and to give up so much for this?” If land, and cattle and flocks and gain be all, he has made a bad bargain. But had not the God of Glory appeared to him, saying, “I will bless thee; . . . thou shalt be a blessing”? It was because God was more to him than flocks and herds that Abraham is here; and because God is more to him than all else he will dwell here still. The sweet promise rang in his soul. That satisfied him and silenced his doubts. If thus God is going to keep His promise, by Canaanite and famine, it is all right. Abraham has not to teach God how to be as good as His word; and with Him he has all things. “And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.” Lot saw the Canaanite and the famine, and thought it was a poor place. Abraham saw God. O blessed land, thrice blessed, where my God doth appear to me and speak so comfortably! By this everything was settled and determined. Which was counted best and dearest—the gift, or the Giver? God, or the land? Life will always be a mystery and a distraction if God be not ever first and only first. My sure possession is in God. That is the Blessed Life. III. HERE IS A FALL. “And Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there.” Certainly Abraham had no business to be in Egypt. Egypt is ever the type of the world that knows not God, out of which God calls His Son. And the one incident which is recorded of Abraham there, as well as that which is not recorded, makes us feel that he is out of his place. Alas! here there is no room for an altar; and no opportunity for communion with God. Here is wanting the record that Abraham pitched his tent and builded his altar. Here it is not written that Abraham called upon the name of the Lord. He could scarcely be alone! This silence is full of meaning. Abraham without his altar is Abraham shorn of his strength, weak as are others. Learn that many a man loses the blessed life in seeking to better his position. Never was there more need for strong words upon this matter than to-day, when changes are so easily made, and when unrest is in the very atmosphere. How many go down to Egypt in these times! there is a famine in the country. How many hundreds are there in London of whom it is true! I have known many a man in the country, doing comfortably enough by hard work—a very pillar of the Church, the centre of an influence that was felt throughout the place, helpful to

the neighbours and rich towards God—a life full of brightness and peace. Then, with the hope of making money, he came to London—a stranger. He found nothing to do in religious service; chiefly, I believe, because he did not look for it. And day after day he sank deeper and deeper in the clay, until he could not get out of it, trying very hard to keep a little religion alive; and that is the hardest thing in the world. Pride and greed and querulousness plagued him, and plagued those about him. Set the verses over against each other: "He builded an altar, and called on the name of the Lord, and there was a famine in the land"; "And Abram had sheep and oxen and he-asses, and men-servants and maid-servants, and she-asses and camels"—but no altar. Which was better: the famine with his God—the wealth without? Let us learn another lesson: That our safety is only in God. If any position could keep one from falling, Abraham might claim it—he to whom the God of Glory had appeared, to whom were spoken such "exceeding great and precious promises," in whom such sublime purposes awaited fulfilment, a man of such brave and triumphant faith. But that availed him nothing without his God. Our safety lies only in communion with God. No attainment leaves us independent. The old Puritans had a saying that a Christian was like a wine-glass without a foot; though it be full it must still be held, or it will speedily be emptied. If our communion with God be disturbed, then is everything imperilled. If circumstances render that impossible, then is all lost. Our God alone is our "Refuge and Strength." IV. THE RESTORATION. Abram returned unto the altar that he had builded at the first, and called upon the name of the Lord. The man of God makes but a poor worldling. He is spoiled for it. Of all people in Egypt, none is so unhappy as Abraham without his God. So true is it, in all conditions and of all variety of character, "Thou hast made me, O God, for Thyself; and my heart cannot rest until it rest in Thee!" (*M. G. Pearse.*) *Abram in Egypt*:—1. The famine itself, being in the land of promise, must be a trial to him. Had he been of the spirit of the unbelieving spies in the time of Moses, he would have said, "Would God we had stayed at Haran, if not at Ur! Surely this is a land that eateth up the inhabitants." But thus far Abram sinned not. 2. The beauty of Sarai was another trial to him; and here he fell into the sin of dissimulation, or at least of equivocation. This was one of the first faults in Abram's life; and the worst of it is, it was repeated, as we shall see hereafter. It is remarkable that there is only one faultless character on record; and more so that in several instances of persons who have been distinguished for some one excellency, their principal failure has been in that particular. Such things would almost seem designed of God to stain the pride of all flesh, and to check all dependence upon the most eminent or confirmed habits of godliness. 3. Yet from all these trials, and from the difficulties into which he brought himself by his own misconduct, the Lord mercifully delivered him. (*A. Fuller.*) *Afflictions from God*:—1. Affliction to affliction, trial to trial, doth God knit sometimes for His believing saints. 2. Where His saints come, God sends sometimes heavy judgments, though not for their sakes. 3. A fruitful land is quickly made barren at the word of an angry God. 4. In midst of famine God opens a way for His believing saints to avoid the stroke. 5. Believers will turn no way but God's for their security and sustenance. 6. Saints desire but to sojourn in the world; for a little space to live here. 7. Grievous, prevailing judgments in a place are sometimes a call to God's servants to remove (ver. 10). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The lessons Abraham learned in Egypt*:—1. Abram must have received a new impression regarding God's truth. It would seem that as yet he had no very clear idea of God's holiness. He had the idea of God which Mohammedans entertain, and past which they seem unable to get. He conceived of God as the Supreme Ruler; he had a firm belief in the unity of God and probably a hatred of idolatry and a profound contempt for idolaters. He believed that this Supreme God could always and easily accomplish His will, and that the voice that inwardly guided him was the voice of God. His own character had not yet been deepened and dignified by prolonged intercourse with God and by close observation of His actual ways; and so as yet he knows little of what constitutes the true glory of God. What he so painfully learned we must all learn, that God does not need lying for the attainment of His ends, and that double-dealing is always short-sighted and the proper precursor of shame. 2. But whether Abram fully learned this lesson or not, there can be little doubt that at this time he did receive fresh and abiding impressions of God's faithfulness and sufficiency. In Abram's first response to God's call he exhibited a remarkable independence and strength of character. This qualification

for playing a great part in human affairs he undoubtedly had. But he had also the defects of his qualities. A weaker man would have shrunk from going into Egypt, and would have preferred to see his flocks dwindle rather than to take so venturesome a step. No such hesitations could trammel Abram's movements. He felt himself equal to all occasions. He left Egypt in a much more healthy state of mind, practically convinced of his own inability to work his way to the happiness God had promised him, and equally convinced of God's faithfulness and power to bring him through all the embarrassments and disasters into which his own folly and sin might bring him. His own confidence and management had placed God's promise in a position of extreme hazard; and without the intervention of God Abram saw that he could neither recover the mother of the promised seed nor return to the Land of Promise. He returned to Canaan humbled and very little disposed to feel confident in his own powers of managing in emergencies; but quite assured that God might at all times be relied on. He was convinced that God was not depending upon him, but he upon God. He saw that God did not trust to his cleverness and craft, no, nor even to his willingness to do and endure God's will, but that He was trusting in Himself, and that by His faithfulness to His own promise, by His watchfulness and providence, He would bring Abram through all the entanglements caused by his own poor ideas of the best way to work out God's ends and attain to His blessing. (*M. Dods, D.D.*)

A famine in the Land of Promise:—A famine? A famine in the Land of Promise? Yes, as afterwards, so then; the rains that usually fall in the latter part of the year had failed; the crops had become burnt up with the sun's heat before the harvest; and the herbage, which should have carpeted the uplands with pasture for the flocks, was scanty, or altogether absent. If a similar calamity were to befall us now, we could still draw sufficient supplies for our support from abroad. But Abraham had no such resource. A stranger in a strange land; surrounded by suspicious and hostile peoples; weighted with the responsibility of vast flocks and herds—it was no trivial matter to stand face to face with the sudden devastation of famine. Did it prove that he had made a mistake in coming to Canaan? Happily the promise which had lately come to him forbade his entertaining the thought. And this may have been one principal reason why it was given. It came, not only as a reward for the past, but as a preparation for the future; so that the man of God might not be tempted beyond what he was able to bear. Our Saviour has His eye on the future, and sees from afar the enemy which is gathering its forces to attack us, or is laying its plans to beguile and entrap our feet. His heart is not more careless of us than, under similar circumstances, it was of Peter, in the darkening hour of his trial, when He prayed for him that his faith might not fail, and washed his feet with an inexpressible solemnity. And thus it often happens that a time of special trial is ushered in by the shining forth of the Divine presence, and the declaration of some unprecedented promise. Happy are they who gird themselves with these Divine preparations, and so pass unharmed through circumstances which otherwise would crush them with their inevitable pressure. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*)

A lie lasting:—A little newsboy, to sell his paper, told a lie. The matter came up in Sabbath school. "Would you tell a lie for three cents?" asked the teacher of one of the boys. "No, ma'am," answered Dick, very decidedly. "For a dollar?" "No, ma'am." "For a thousand dollars?" Dick was staggered; a thousand dollars looked big. Oh, would it not buy lots of things! While he was thinking, another boy behind him roared out, "No, ma'am!" "Why not?" asked the teacher. "Because, when the thousand dollars is all gone, and all the things they have got with them are gone too, the lie is there all the same," answered the boy.

Christian character:—Seaweed plants, which live near the surface of the water, are green, whereas those in lower beds of the sea assume deeper shades of rich olive, and down in the depths still below, far removed from worldly glare, and where no human eye can penetrate, these flowers of ocean are clothed with hues of splendour. Abram's surface qualities do not look so very attractive, mingling as they do with human defect. But the deeper down we gaze into the moral depths of his being, the fairer are the flowers blooming there. Gazing into the clear tranquil depths of Abram's spirit, far removed from worldly glare or natural discernment, we behold richly-coloured graces and virtues. (*W. Adamson.*)

Lessons:—1. Approach to danger hastens on temptation upon God's own eminent ones. 2. Places of refuge may prove places of danger and distress to God's own. 3. Fear may overtake believers and weaken faith in times of danger. 4. Fear may put saints upon carnal consultations for their security. 5. Beauty is a shrewd snare for them that have it, and them that

love it (ver. 11). 6. Lust is baited with beauty to the violation of nearest bonds, even between husband and wife. 7. Raging lust is cruel even to destroy any that hinders it. 8. Lust spares its darling, and favours it, only to abuse it (ver. 12). 9. Believers may be so tempted as to make lies their refuge, and dissemble. 10. Self-good and security may put the faithful upon bad shifts to compass it, so here; but as a way-mark to avoid it (ver. 13). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The sombre tints of life*:—Every life has dark tracts and long stretches of sombre tint, and no representation is true to fact which dips its pencil only in light, and flings no shadows on the canvas. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *The holy tempter*:—Satan makes choice of such as have a great name for holiness to do his work; there is none like a live bird to draw other birds into the net. Abraham tempts his wife to lie—"Say thou art my sister." The old prophet leads the man of God out of his way. (*W. Gurnall.*) *Abram in Egypt*:—No doubt Sarai was Abram's step-sister; their father was the same, not their mother. Allowing the fullest consideration to this point, still Abram's character falls very deeply. "O that he had died when he built the altar!" we may be inclined to exclaim. Have there not been times in our own history when we have uttered the same exclamation? Had we been caught up into heaven in some ecstatic mood of devotion, we should have been saved from this sin and from that. Why were we spared, when God must have foreseen that our very next act was to be one of dishonour? Spared to sin! There are two practical points of great importance:—I. AVOID EQUIVOCATION. It is not enough to tell the truth, we must tell the whole truth. There are men whose life seems to be one long experiment of trying how near they can go to the boundary line without becoming positive liars. There is a very minute particle of truth in what they say; and to that particle they trust for acquittal should their integrity be impugned. Few of us surely are liars—deliberate, scheming, confirmed liars; but how many of us are innocent of equivocation, of fine-spun attempts to give a word two different meanings, of saying a little and keeping back much, of saying sister when we ought to say wife? II. TRUST GOD WITH THE PARTICULAR AS WELL AS WITH THE GENERAL. Abram had undoubtedly great faith. Abram could trust God for the end, but he took part of the process into his own keeping. So difficult is it to let God govern little things as well as great—to take care of one's home as well as one's heaven. Could God not have taken care of Sarai? Did He not, in fact, after all, take care of her and deliver her? But we cannot give up our own little foolish ingenuities; we stand amazed before our own shallow profundities, and think how grand they are. More than this, we shelter ourselves behind such words as "prudence," "due care," and "proper precaution." Where is the perfect faith which God requires, and never fails to honour? What a humiliation for Abram, to stand before Pharaoh, and to be rebuked for a mean and childish artifice! And, on the other hand, how honourable to human nature to act as Pharaoh acted! One thing, however, is to be borne in mind, and that is, that religion is never the cause of any man doing a mean thing. Do not blame Christianity because professing Christians act dishonourably; they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ; they crucify the Son of God afresh! (*The Pulpit Analyst.*) *Faith's infirmity*:—I. THE FAILURE OF ABRAM'S FAITH. Doubtless the Lord intended by this famine in the Land of Promise to subject the faith of His servant to a serious test. We do not read that the patriarch asked counsel of "Jehovah who appeared unto him," and his neglect to do so was probably the point at which he went wrong. Unhappily he still "looked at the things which are seen," and lost for a season his perfect confidence in the guardian care of God. II. THE WORLDLY DEVICE WHICH HE ADOPTED. 1. To call his wife his sister was deceitful; it was a mean equivocation—that sort of half-truth which is the most dastardly and sometimes the most dangerous of lies. 2. Abram's policy was cowardly; it was adopted as a means of selfishly insuring his own life against those in Egypt who might account murder a less heinous crime than adultery; when he ought instead to have bravely trusted, as heretofore, in the Divine presence and protection. 3. And his device was cruel; it involved elements of serious wrong to Sarai, for it constituted her a partner in the falsehood, and exposed her honour to serious perils while it also laid a snare in the way of the Egyptians. But the cunning device was a failure. III. THE PUNISHMENT WHICH OVERTOOK HIM. When Sarai was removed from him into the royal harem, Abram must have suffered the torture of an accusing conscience, as well as intense anxiety on account of the danger to his wife, the future mother of the promised seed. IV. GOD'S GRACIOUS INTERVENTION ON HIS BEHALF. Abram has sinned; but he is a man of God still, and the

Lord "will not deal with him after his sin." *Lessons*: 1. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. ii. 22). The best of men are but men at the best. 2. Eminent saints sometimes lamentably fail even in their most marked excellences of character. As here with Abram, so it was afterwards with Moses, with David, with Peter. 3. Honesty is the best policy. 4. Holy Scripture recognizes personal beauty as a good gift of God, although one not unattended with danger. None of the sacred writers countenance a gloomy monachism. 5. The simple candour of this narrative in not concealing the faults of its hero is an attestation of its truthfulness. 6. "Morality is not religion; but unless religion is grafted on morality, religion is worth nothing" (F. W. Robertson). 7. How gentle and forbearing the Lord is with the moral infirmities of His people! He "blots out their transgressions for His own sake, and will not remember their sins." (Charles Jerdan, M.A., LL.B.)

Abram's sinful evasion:—The transgression of Abram was the saying that Sarah was his sister when she was his wife, and the saying was not distinctly false, but rather an evasion, for she was his half-sister. Now we do not say that every evasion is wrong. For example, when an impertinent question is asked respecting family circumstances or religious feelings it is not necessary that we should tell all. There are cases, therefore, in which we may tell the truth, though not the whole truth. It was even so with our Redeemer; for when asked by the Pharisees how He made Himself the Son of God, He would give them no answer. But it will be observed that Abram's evasion was nothing of this kind, it was a deception. It was not keeping back part of the truth when the questioner has no right to ask; it was false expediency. It was a right expediency in Samuel when he permitted Israel to have a king, and the law of Christian expediency is to select the imperfect when the perfect cannot be had. It will be observed however that the expediency of Abram was altogether different. It was not the selection of the imperfect because the perfect could not be had, but it was the choice between telling the truth and saving his life; and Abram chose the falsehood that he might save his life—that is, he used an expediency which had nothing to do with Christian expediency. Of two blessings let the temporal blessing be the higher, and the spiritual blessing the lesser; still they are not commensurate. Man must not stop to ask himself which is best, right or wrong; he must do right. It was on this principle that the blessed martyrs of old died for the truth; it was but an evasion that was asked of them, but they felt that there was no comparison between the right and the wrong in the matter. "I have a life, you may take that: I have a soul, you cannot destroy that." It was thus they felt and acted. There is but one apology that can be offered for Abram—the low standard of the age in which he lived; it must be remembered that he was not a Christian. (F. W. Robertson, M.A.)

Lessons:—1. Sometimes what unbelief feareth, cometh to pass in the very time and place expected. 2. Unclean hearts love to gaze where lust may be satisfied. 3. Eminency of beauty God can give in old age (ver. 14). 4. The greatest beauty may bring the greatest danger. 5. High places make men bold sometimes to commit high sins. 6. Courts of wicked kings are usually schools of uncleanness. 7. God suffers chastest souls sometimes to be tempted in such places. 8. It is a grievous temptation to be under the power of a lustful king (ver. 15). (G. Hughes, B.D.)

Lessons:—1. God's help useth not to be far off from the extremities of His servants. 2. Great plagues are near to great sins. 3. God is the only Protector of the innocence and chastity of His saints. 4. God will reprove and punish the proudest of kings and princes for His people (Psa. cv. 12). 5. God's plagues are the speedy and terrible remedy against lust. 6. Partners in sin must be so in judgment. 7. The saving of His from sin is more dear to God than the lives of the wicked (ver. 17). (*Ibid.*)

Lessons:—1. God's plagues may put wicked hearts upon speedy inquiry into their evils. 2. God's heavy strokes may force oppressors to call for oppressed to relieve them. 3. Wicked hearts will charge others to be the cause of their afflictions rather than themselves. 4. Sinful concealments in saints, are justly reprobable by the wicked (ver. 18). 5. Equivocation and ambiguous speaking to deceive is chargeable as evil by nature itself. 6. The infirmities of saints which may be occasion of sin unto the wicked are to be reprov'd. 7. Adultery is odious to the principles of corrupted nature (ver. 19). 8. Judgment wrings the prey out of the hand of the wicked. 9. Judgment makes wicked men give every one their own. 10. God can make the mightiest enemies command good for, and be a guard to, His saints, and all they have (ver. 20). (*Ibid.*)

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 1-4. Abram went up out of Egypt.—*The believer learning from his great enemy*:—It is an old saying that "It is lawful to learn from an enemy." The patriarch had sojourned in the world's kingdom, and had learned those solemn lessons which, as it too often happens, only a bitter experience can teach. He returned a sadder, but a wiser man. The believer who has fallen into the world's snares, or comes dangerously near to them, learns—I. THAT IT IS NOT SAFE TO LEAVE THE PATHS MARKED OUT BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE. 1. While we are in the path of Providence, we may expect Divine direction. 2. When we leave the paths of Providence, we are thrown upon the resources of our own wisdom and strength, and can only expect failure. 3. Every step we take from the paths of Providence only increases the difficulty of returning. II. THAT THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD INVOLVES DEEP SPIRITUAL LOSS. In Abraham's case—I. The delicacy of the moral principle was injured. 2. There was actual spiritual loss. III. THAT THE SOUL'S SAFETY IS BEST SECURED BY REVISITING, IN LOVING MEMORY, THE SCENES WHERE GOD WAS FIRST FELT AND KNOWN. 1. He is aided by remembering the strength and fervour of his early faith and love. 2. Memory may become a means of grace. It is well for us to look backwards, as well as forwards by the anticipations of hope. What God has done for us in the past is a pledge of what He will do in the future, if we continue faithful to His grace. We may use memory to encourage hope. IV. THERE MUST BE A FRESH CONSECRATION TO GOD. Abram went at once to Bethel, where at the beginning he had pitched his tent, and built an altar to God. There he "called on the name of the Lord." This implies a fresh consecration of himself, and points out the method by which we may recover our spiritual loss. Such a fresh consecration is necessary, for there are no other channels of spiritual blessing, but those by which it first flowed to us. There is no new way of restoration. We must come back to Him who first gave us our faith and made reconciliation. This renewed consecration of ourselves to God involves—I. The acknowledgment of our sin. It was sin that made, at first, our reconciliation with God necessary, and fresh sin renews the obligation to seek His face. 2. The conviction that propitiation is necessary to obtain the favour of God. 3. The open profession of our faith. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Abram's return, &c.*:—I. THE RETURN OF ABRAM. 1. Forgiven. 2. Favoured. II. THE REQUEST OF ABRAM. 1. Forbearing. 2. Foregoing. III. THE REWARD OF ABRAM. 1. Forgetting the earthly inheritance. 2. Foreshadowing the heavenly inheritance. (*W. Adamson.*) *Abraham and Lot*:—I. THE PERFECTNESS OF GOD'S RESTORING GRACE. 1. God brought him back to Bethel. 2. The effect on Abraham. We find him no longer self-seeking and self-dependent. He asks counsel of God; he defers to others; is meek under provocation; and leaves himself wholly to God. II. A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF A PIOUS RICH MAN. You will observe two things about Abraham as a rich man. 1. His conduct in relation to God. 2. His conduct toward Lot. 1. In regard to God, he worshipped Him in every place (vers. 4 and 18). This involves more than at first sight appears. Abraham was living in the midst of idolaters. To worship God was a bold act. It was also a public act. It was one which involved much expense. 2. In regard to Lot. His conduct displays disinterestedness, love to his nephew, and firm faith in God. From this narrative we may learn two subordinate truths—I. The children of God may come to acquire much worldly property. 2. The saints of God may possess property. III. THE FOLLY OF SELF-SEEKING. We see this in the case of Lot. (*T. G. Horton.*) *Lessons*:—1. God's saints delay not to follow God's providence, opening a way to them from the place of trial. 2. God knoweth how to deliver His fully, that nothing of theirs shall be wanting (ver. 2). 3. Weight of riches in the world is sometimes God's portion given to His. 4. Not possession of wealth, but inordinate affection and abuse of it, is the sin (ver. 2). 5. Riches cannot hinder believers from going after God where He calleth them. 6. Saints breathe after their first communion with God, after distractions from it (ver. 3). 7. No place contents a gracious heart but where God may be enjoyed. 8. The name of the Lord is that which draweth the hearts of saints from all enjoyments, to delight in it, publish it, and call upon it (ver. 4). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Practical repentance*:—By retracing his steps and returning to the altar at Bethel, he seems to acknowledge that he should have remained there through the famine in dependence on God. Whoever has attempted a similar practical repentance, visible to his own household and affecting their place of abode or daily occupations, will know how

to estimate the candour and courage of Abram. To own that some distinctly marked portion of our life, upon which we entered with great confidence in our own wisdom and capacity, has come to nothing and has betrayed us into reprehensible conduct, is mortifying indeed. To admit that we have erred and to repair our error by returning to our old way and practice, is what few of us have the courage to do. If we have entered on some branch of business or gone into some attractive speculation, or if we have altered our demeanour towards some friend, and if we are finding that we are thereby tempted to doubleness, to equivocation, to injustice, our only hope lies in a candid and straightforward repentance, in a manly and open return to the state of things that existed in happier days and which we should never have abandoned. Sometimes we are aware that a blight began to fall on our spiritual life from a particular date, and we can easily and distinctly trace an unhealthy habit of spirit to a well-marked passage in our outward career; but we shrink from the sacrifice and shame involved in a thoroughgoing restoration of the old state of things. We are always so ready to fancy we have done enough, if we get one heart-felt word of confession uttered; so ready, if we merely turn our faces towards God, to think our restoration complete. Let us make a point of getting through mere beginnings of repentance, mere intention to recover God's favour and a sound condition of life, and let us return and return till we bow at God's very altar again, and know that His hand is laid upon us in blessing as at the first. (*M. Dods, D.D.*)

Ver. 2. Abram was very rich.—*Wealth in both worlds*:—I. Abram, whilst "very rich," was **TRULY GODLY**. II. Whilst "very rich," Abram was **VERY GODLY**. III. Abram, whilst "very rich," highly valued "A GOOD NAME." IV. Abram, whilst "very rich," TAUGHT HIS CHILDREN TO TRUST, not in uncertain riches, but IN THE LIVING GOD who gave them richly all things to enjoy. V. Whilst "very rich," he was **VERY GENEROUS**. VI. Whilst "very rich" Abram did not forget that his riches were **NOT HIS OWN**. VII. Whilst "very rich" in earthly possessions, HE SET NOT HIS HEART UPON THEM. **Conclusion**: 1. It is a very noticeable and suggestive fact, that the thought of the earthly riches of Abram has a very limited place in the minds of men. 2. Rich or poor in this world, we all need to be poor in spirit. 3. Rich or poor, we may have "durable riches" through Jesus Christ. (*Joseph Elliot.*) *Riches to be made useful to others*:—Wherefore doth the Lord make your cup run over, but that other men's lips might taste the liquor? The showers that fall upon the highest mountains should glide into the lowest valleys. (*T. Secker.*) *What can wealth do?*—The following story is told of Jacob Ridgeway, a wealthy citizen of Philadelphia, who died many years ago, leaving a fortune of five or six million dollars. "Mr. Ridgeway," said a young man with whom the millionaire was conversing, "you are more to be envied than any gentleman I know." "Why so?" responded Mr. Ridgeway; "I am not aware of any cause for which I should be particularly envied." "What, sir!" exclaimed the young man in astonishment. "Why you are a millionaire! Think of the thousands your income brings every month!" "Well, what of that?" replied Mr. Ridgeway. "All I get out of it is my victuals and clothes, and I can't eat more than one man's allowance, and wear more than a suit at a time. Pray can't you do as much?" "Ah, but," said the youth, "think of the hundreds of fine houses you own, and the rentals they bring you." "What better am I off for that?" replied the rich man. "I can only live in one house at a time; as for the money I receive for rents, why I can't eat it or wear it; I can only use it to buy other houses for other people to live in; they are the beneficiaries, not I." "But you can buy splendid furniture, and costly pictures, and fine carriages and horses—in fact, anything you desire." "And after I have bought them," responded Mr. Ridgeway, "what then? I can only look at the furniture and pictures, and the poorest man, who is not blind, can do the same. I can ride no easier in a fine carriage than you can in an omnibus for five cents, without the trouble of attending to drivers, footmen, and ostlers; and as to anything I desire, I can tell you, young man, that the less we desire in this world, the happier we shall be. All my wealth can't buy a single day more of life—cannot buy back my youth—cannot procure me power to keep afar off the hour of death; and then, what will all avail, when in a few short years at most, I lie down in the grave and leave it all for ever? Young man, you have no cause to envy me."

Ver. 4. Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first.—

Abram's journey to the place of the altar:—I. HIS LOVE TO THE LAND OF PROMISE, WHICH ALL THE ATTRACTIVE OF EGYPT COULD NOT EXTINGUISH OR OVERPOWER. II. HIS VENERATION FOR THE PLACE WHERE GOD FIRST APPEARED TO HIM. There may be in the journey of life many inviting scenes, many fertile spots, but there is no place like the place of the altar. From this spot nothing that Egypt and the intermediate countries could offer was able to divert Abram. He came back prosperous, but his heart was unchanged. Time is apt to wear out the sense of mercies. Many in their travels leave religion behind them. III. HIS CONCERN WHEREVER HE WAS TO ERECT HIS ALTAR. Wherever we go we must take our religion with us. 1. As a public profession. 2. As keeping up family religion. Wherever he had a tent God had an altar. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The place of the altar*:—1. It commemorated Divine communications (xii. 7, 8). 2. It expressed a practical faith. He took possession of the land, not by issuing a decree, &c., but by thus acknowledging God. 3. It attested an unchanging piety. He had grown rich (xiii. 2) but did not forget God (Deut. vi. 10-12). 4. It denoted a wise householder's forethought. At the first he built the altar near the tent (xii. 8). Now he pitched his tent near the altar. Man's home and God's house should be contiguous. 5. But these old altars are obsolete. It was intended for sacrifice. "Henceforth," &c., comp. Heb. x. 26, and Heb. ix. 11-14. This sacrifice final. No altar now needed. As the altar was a place of meeting, so the word is now applied to Christian sanctuaries, which are—(1) places of sacred communion; (2) of Divine worship; (3) of Christian fellowship; (4) of neighbourly gathering. (*J. C. Gray.*)

Vers. 5-9. There was a strife between the herdmen.—*Strife between brethren*:—I. AS TO THE CAUSES OF IT. 1. Worldly prosperity. 2. The mean ambition of ignoble souls associated with us. 3. The want of the obliging nature. II. AS TO THE EVILS OF IT. 1. It destroys the sacred feeling of kinship. 2. It exposes true religion to contempt. 3. It brings spiritual loss to individuals. III. AS TO THE REMEDIES OF IT. 1. The recognition of the obligations of brotherhood. 2. The yielding temper. 3. Confidence in the promise of God, that we shall suffer no real loss by obedience to His command. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Abram and Lot*:—I. THE CONTENTION. 1. Unseemly. 2. Untimely. 3. Unnecessary. II. THE CONSOLATION. 1. Unbounded. 2. Undoubted. 3. Unearthly. (*W. Adamson.*) I. THE CHURLISHNESS OF THE HERDSMEN. II. THE SELFISHNESS OF LOT. III. THE UNSELFISHNESS OF ABRAHAM. IV. THE GRACIOUSNESS OF GOD. (*Ibid.*) *Lesson links*:—1. Wealth means—(1) Strife. (2) Sorrow. (3) Separation. 2. Abram manifests—(1) Faith. (2) Forbearance. (3) Forgetfulness of self. 3. Worldly love means—(1) Stupidity. (2) Suffering. (3) Sinfulness. 4. God manifests to Abraham—(1) Favour. (2) Fulness. (3) Faithfulness. (*Ibid.*) *Lessons*:—1. Walking with saints in their hardest ways usually brings God's outward blessings on them. 2. Great families and possessions God can give His saints in the land of their pilgrimage (ver. 5). 3. Great straits may befall the saints of God in their greatest abundance. 4. Much wealth may prove an occasion of dividing the very saints (ver. 6). 5. Great riches among the best may prove causes of great contentions. 6. Bad servants may be incendiaries to put good masters to strife. 7. The large territories of the wicked may straiten the godly in earthly places. 8. Wicked enemies of the Church are apt to watch all opportunities to destroy the saints by their own divisions (ver. 7). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. Gracious hearts hasten to quench any flame of contention rising in the Church. 2. Grace will make the greater move to the less for avoiding strife among saints. 3. Grace will make men beg for peace and to abolish strife in the Churches. 4. Gracious masters are solicitous to avoid contentions raised by ungracious servants. 5. Grace will put masters upon healing their servants faults. So Abram. 6. Strife is unseemly between brethren in the flesh, in religion and condition (ver. 8). 7. Grace is willing to part with its own, and all too, in some cases, to brethren. 8. Grace will make God's servants part in place, to keep one in affection. 9. Grace is self-denying to remove strife from the family of God. 10. Grace is content with anything below, so it may honour God, and keep peace with the saints (ver. 9). (*Ibid.*) *Quarrels about money*:—Thus early did wealth produce quarrelling among relatives. The men who had shared one another's fortunes while comparatively poor, no sooner become wealthy than they have to separate. Abram prevented quarrel by separation. "Let us," he says, "come to an understanding. And rather than be separate in heart, let us be separate in habitation." It is always a sorrowful time in family history when it comes to this, that those who have had a common purse and have not been careful

to know what exactly is theirs and what belongs to the other members of the family, have at last to make a division and to be as precise and documentary as if dealing with strangers. It is always painful to be compelled to own that law can be more trusted than love, and that legal forms are a surer barrier against quarrelling than brotherly kindness. It is a confession we are sometimes compelled to make, but never without a mixture of regret and shame. (*M. Dods, D.D.*)

Religion without the blessed life:—In this story of the blessed life nothing can be more striking and instructive than the contrast which it presents between the career of Lot and that of Abraham. See at the outset how differently the two men come before us. "Now the Lord had said unto Abraham"—or, as Stephen declares: "The God of glory appeared unto Abraham." Thus God had come into this man's life, its centre and strength. "And Lot also, which went with Abram"—this is the man whose religion is second-hand—he goes with the man who goes with God. Nothing is easier than for many of us to do as Lot did. The age is one in which respectability and social position rather like a little religion. Nothing can quench the fire of our selfishness but the clear shining of the Sun of Heaven upon our hearts. The God of glory appeared unto Abraham—that thrust the world back into its right place; that kindled the desires and ambitions of the man; that loosed him from the tyranny of the seen, the narrow prison of the present, and set him at liberty for God. The fadeless glory of that vision ennobled and elevated all the life. But Lot only went with Abraham. Never do you read that he built an altar unto the Lord that appeared to him. The religion of Lot is a religion without the vision of God. For us all the great question is this: What can we do to make the blessed life our own? This is the only answer: Tarry waiting upon God until there be a heart communion with Him. Let us follow the story. And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. That sojourn in Egypt was damaging to Abraham; but it was fatal to Lot. He had seen a land that had kindled his greed; the possibility of his growing rich had seized him and mastered him. That which attracted him in Sodom was that it was like the land of Egypt, well-watered everywhere. The heathenism of Egypt had prepared him for the grosser wickedness of Sodom. His wife and daughters had seen the glitter and gaiety of a company that made the quiet of Abraham's encampment seem very dull. And worst of all, they had seen a good man without his altar and his God; why then need they be so particular? So when the opportunity came, Lot was quite prepared to avail himself of it. "And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle." Lot saw what it pleased him to see. Let us see what the love of gain, which was the ruin of Lot, did for him. 1. It put out the eyes of his generosity. The love of money always does. Abraham gave Lot the choice, and he took it, of course. "Really uncle Abraham is so unworldly and easy-going about these things that he does not think of them at all. Besides, he is so very well off that it cannot make any difference to him; but I am only beginning, and it is very important that I should have a good start." Generosity—is it not scouted from the market-place? "Business is business, my dear sir; a bargain is a bargain, you know. Generosity is all very well in its place, of course; but this is not its place." Where then is its place? Does any man really believe that he can occasionally put out the eyes of his love—be hard, pitiless, grasping—and then put them in again? He is hardening his heart, toughening it, and narrowing it, and tying it with a double knot every day, like a Judas' leather purse. 2. Again, the love of gain blinded Lot to the very meaning of life. The greatness of Abraham lay in this one thing, that he suffered God to show him the path of life. Each had land, but by the very method of procuring it the one gave up that which abideth, and the other secured it. The one man set the land first, and lost all. The other found all in God. Lot came out of Sodom stripped of his goods, and the man himself more empty and blind than when he had gone into it. This is the great lesson of this Book—that whilst we think of making a living, God is thinking of what our living makes us. That the man is more than all gain. This is the idea of life which runs through the New Testament—it is faith, the service of God, the utter surrender of all to Him. This alone can make life worth living. Choose anything, everything else; live for it, grasp it—and what then but die? Surely we do not need to cry aloud to the Lord for the anointing that we may see aright. 3. And yet further: the god of this world blinded Lot to the true good, whilst it cheated him with the promise of goods. Lot lifted up his eyes and saw the land of Sodom. That bounded his vision. But Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw a promise that stretched through all the ages, and through all lands, a stream of

blessing. To Abraham the words were: "To thee and to thy seed"; "I will bless thee; . . . thou shalt be a blessing." The faith of all those after years has found an inspiration and a triumph in the example of faithful Abraham. But, alas! how sharp, how dreadful is the contrast as we turn to Lot. He comes forth from Sodom without a soul having any faith in him. "He seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law." The only good in life is doing good. That which alone makes life blessed is not what we get from others for ourselves, but in what others get from us. Lot thought he could make the best of both worlds, and he failed alike in each. For Abraham there were not two worlds, but one only: as for every man of God: that is where the will of God is done as it is done in heaven. (*M. G. Pearse.*)

Lot's separation from Abram:—I. THE CAUSES OF THE SEPARATION. These were two classes: those which operated on man's part, and those which lay in the Divine plan of Abram's career. 1. On man's part. The narrative mentions the wealth of uncle and nephew as the ground of their parting (ver. 6). 2. On God's part. Lot might be detached from his uncle, and Abram might be set wholly free from family complications, and might stand forth as the sole inheritor of the promises (ver. 14). II. TRAITS OF CHARACTER WHICH ABRAM DISPLAYED IN THE SEPARATION. 1. Great peaceableness (ver. 8). Abram, whatever he may have thought, restrained himself, and did not utter one single word of reproach. He is willing to lay a costly sacrifice on the altar of peace. 2. Large-hearted generosity (ver. 9). 3. Heavenly wisdom. Although Abram, by the Divine blessing, was "very rich," he had not come into the land of Canaan to be a prosperous flock-master, and thus we find him acting here as one who knew that the Lord would provide, all the while that He was fulfilling His own purposes towards him. "Either hand for Abraham—either the right hand or the left: what cared the pilgrim of the Invisible for fertile lands or rugged sands?"

III. ABRAM'S REWARD IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SEPARATION. It was a trial to the patriarch to be left alone; but God's voice came to him to comfort him for the loss of his nephew, and to reward him for his beautiful generosity (vers. 14-18). The promise of the seed which had been given him in Haran (chap. xii. 2, 3), and that of the land which had been added at Shechem (ver. 7), are now confirmed and extended. LESSONS: 1. The changes of life, and especially such as are in the direction of increasing worldly prosperity, are a decisive test of character. 2. We need a faith and a piety which are practical, which are content to tread the common earth, and regulate the details of business and social life; and that is the kind of religion which God approves. 3. "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (Rom. xii. 18). 4. It is dangerous for a man to cut himself off from religious privileges, and, for the sake of material gain alone, to expose himself and his children to the risk of moral contamination. 5. A Christian may sometimes do wrong by insisting on his rights; but he will always profit, sooner or later, by every sacrifice which he makes for the sake of peace (Matt. v. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 8). (*Charles Jerdan, M.A., LL.B.*)

The separation between Abram and Lot:—Observe the causes which rendered necessary this separation. I. PROSPERITY. The enlargement of a man's possessions is very often the contracting of his heart. We learn from this the great doctrine of compensation; for almost every blessing must be paid a certain price. If a man would be the champion of the truth, he must give up the friendship of the world. Be sure of this, there is no rich and prosperous man we look at who has not paid his price—it may be in loss of domestic peace, in anxiety, or in enfeebled health; be assured that every earthly blessing is bought dearly. II. THE QUARRELLING AMONG THE SERVANTS; and this quarrel arose partly from disobligingness of disposition. Here we find the Christian community resembling the Jewish. There is a constant strife now among servants as to whose duty it is to do certain things, arising from the same indisposition to oblige one another. Then observe how by degrees Lot and Abram are drawn into the quarrel, and how again we find human nature the same in all ages. The bitterness between child and child, between husband and wife, are often to be referred back to the bitterness between domestic servants. Again, the scandal of this disagreement passed on through the land; the Canaanite and the Perizzite heard of it. Here is a lesson both for Christian masters and servants. Our very doors and walls are not sufficient to guard domestic secrecy; if there has been a scandal in a place, that scandal is sure to be heard. (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*) *Separated from Lot:*—1. Who was Lot? One of those men who take right steps, not because prompted by obedience to God, but because their friends are taking them. The Pliable of the earliest Pilgrim's Progress. 2. The necessity of separation. We must be prepared to die

to the world with its censure or praise; to the flesh, with its ambitions and schemes; to the delights of a friendship which is insidiously lowering the temperature of the spirit: to the self-life, in all its myriad subtle and overt manifestations; and even, if it be God's will, to the joys and consolations of religion. All this is impossible to us of ourselves. But if we will surrender ourselves to God, willing that He should work in and for us that which we cannot do for ourselves, we shall find that He will gradually and effectually, and as tenderly as possible, begin to disentwine the clinging tendrils of the poisoning weed, and bring us into heart-union with Himself. 3. How the separation was brought about. Quarrels between servants. (1) Abraham's proposal was very wise. (2) Very magnanimous. (3) Based on faith. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *Separation rather than strife*:—I. THE DISPUTANTS. 1. They were related to each other. 2. They were professors of the same religious faith. 3. They differed in the relative amount of their power. II. ABRAM'S CONDUCT. 1. It was just. 2. It was statesmanlike. 3. It was magnanimous. (*Homilist.*) *Abram and Lot*:—I. THE CAUSE OF THE SEPARATION OF ABRAM AND LOT. 1. The indirect cause: an over-abundance of wealth. 2. The direct cause (vers. 6, 7). (1) This strife must have been serious. (2) This strife is not unexpected. (a) The Canaanites and Perizzites owned and occupied most of the land, and thus made the pasturage for the flocks of Abram and Lot comparatively very limited. (3) This strife is a sample of an occurrence by no means infrequent, not only among herdsmen, but among those professing better things. (4) The strife among the servants did not alienate the masters. II. THE SPIRIT OF THE SEPARATION. 1. On the part of Abram this separation was one of generosity. 2. This separation was executed in the interests of peace. III. THE RESULTS OF THIS SEPARATION. 1. To Lot seemingly advantageous to worldly prosperity, but spiritually a loss. 2. To Abram seemingly disadvantageous, but most blessed in its ultimate issues. Lessons: 1. The separation of friends is not an unmitigated evil; it may be an occasion of good. 2. Whether, when compelled to separate, or when permitted to have fellowship one with another, the grace of God should teach us to be generous, courteous, and consistent. (*D. C. Hughes, M.A.*) *Quarrelsome servants*:—1. Effect of increase of substance. The keeping a cause of perplexity. Not room in the land. If poverty has its cares, so has wealth. 2. The herdsmen jealous for their respective masters. Such carefulness commendable. Not very common. 3. They would have done well to have seen their masters before they quarrelled. Prevention better than cure. 4. Their strife might have led to serious consequences. The Canaanite, &c., were in the land. They might have taken advantage of this strife. It might have extended to their masters, and resulted in a family disruption. (*J. C. Gray.*) *A quarrel in the kitchen*:—Things got mixed. The cattle ran together so that sometimes the herdsmen could not tell which was which; the count was always wrong at night; and the noise got louder and louder as the herdsmen became fretful and suspicious. It was a quarrel in the kitchen, as we should say nowadays. The masters seemed to get along fairly well with each other, but the servants were at open war. Small credit to the masters, perhaps! They had everything nice; the lentil soup and the smoking kid were punctually set before them, and mayhap the wine-flagon was not wanting. But noise travels upward. It gets somehow from the kitchen into the parlour. It was so in this case. Abram heard of the vulgar quarrel and was the first to speak. He spake as became an elder and a millionaire: "Lot," said he, "you must see to it that my peace be not broken; you must lay the lash on the backs of these rough men of yours and keep them in check; I will not stand any noise; the lips that speak above a whisper shall be shut by a strong hand; you and your men must all mind what you are at, or I will scourge you all to within an inch of your lives." And when the lordly voice ceased there was great fear amongst those who had heard its solemn thunder! Now it so happens that the exact contrary of this is true. Abram was older than Lot, and richer than Lot, and yet he took no high airs upon him, but spoke with the meekness of great strength and ripe wisdom. His words would make a beautiful motto to-day for the kitchen, for the parlour, for the factory, for the Church. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Untimely contention*:—It was untimely contention when Monarchists and Republicans in France disputed with each other, while the German armies were hemming them in on all sides. It was untimely contention when Luther and Zwingli disputed together, while the Roman hosts were assailing the newly-erected structure of the Reformation. It was untimely contention when Liberals and Conservatives disputed amongst themselves, while the Russian hordes were advancing on Constantinople, and intriguing with Afghanistan. It was untimely contention between Judah and

Israel, when the Syrian and Assyrian powers were watching for an opportunity of attack and conquest. It was untimely contention between French and English Canadians, when Indians were on the alert to lay waste homes and settlements with fire and sword. And so it was untimely contention between the servants of Lot and Abraham, when surrounded by heathen tribes. (*W. Adamson.*) *Beginning the peace*:—To one who made the first overtures towards a successful reconciliation, his ante-opponent remarked, "I began the quarrel and you began the peace, therefore you are the nobler man." *Strife foolish before the world*:—The unseasonableness of the strife betwixt Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's is aggravated by the near neighbourhood of the heathens to them. "And there was a strife" (saith the text) "between Abram's herdmen and the herdmen of Lot's cattle; and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled in the land." Now to fall out whilst these idolaters looked on, this would be town-talk presently, and put themselves and their religion both to shame; and it may for our parts be very well asked, Who have been in our land all the while the people of God have been scuffling? Even those that have curiously observed every uncomely behaviour amongst us, and told all the world of it; such as have wit and malice enough to make use of it for their wicked purposes. They stand at tiptoes to be at work, only we are not yet quite laid up and disabled by the soreness of these our wounds, which we have given ourselves, from withstanding their fury. They hope it will come to that; and then they will cure us of our own wounds by giving one, if they can, that shall go deep enough to the heart of our life, gospel and all. Let us then consider where we are, and among whom. Are we not in our enemies' quarters? so that if we fall out, what do we else but kindle a fire for them to warm their hands by? It is an ill time for mariners to be fighting, when an enemy is boring a hole in the bottom of the ship: the sea of their rage will weaken our bank fast enough, we need not cut it for them. (*J. Spencer.*) *Avoiding a quarrel*:—Saul was anxious to pick a quarrel with David, but in vain. We all know who came off best in the end. Gotthold quaintly says, "It is not disgraceful to step aside when a great stone is rolling down the hill up which you are climbing, and let it rush past." He who provokes a quarrel sets the stone rolling, and he who steps aside to avoid it does not disgrace himself by so doing. (*Ibid.*) *Christian contention*:—Fontaigne says that religious contention is the devil's harvest. And this is true, where the contention is unseemly, untimely, and unnecessary. But all religious contention is not the devil's harvest. To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints is not doing Satan's work; but the contrary. 1. To contend against the pirate seeking to plunder the English merchantman is not doing the pirate's work. To contend against the adversary who is eagerly endeavouring to sow tares in my wheat field is not doing the adversary's work. To contend against the wolf, which, arrayed in sheep's clothing, is seeking to enter in to the sheep-fold where the lambs are bleating safely, is not doing the wolf's work. 2. When Noah, the preacher of righteousness, contended against his ungodly contemporaries, he was doing God's work. When Jeremiah, the melancholy seer of Jerusalem's overthrow, contended against the hireling shepherds of Jehoiakim's reign, he was doing God's work. When Paul withstood Peter at Antioch on the theme of circumcision, when John contended against prating Diotrefes, when Athanasius maintained the truth against Pelagius, when Cranmer and Luther struggled in conflict with the papal priests and princes, they were doing God's work. 3. Only the contention must be conducted in method and manner, by mean and medium, with precept and principle, strictly Christian. There is, however, a happy contention. Lord Bacon says it is when Churches and Christians contend, as the vine and olive, which of them shall bring forth the sweetest fruit to God's glory; not as the briar and thistle, which of them shall bear the sharpest thorns. (*Ibid.*) *How to prevent quarrels*:—In most quarrels there is a fault on both sides. A quarrel may be compared to a spark, which cannot be produced without a flint as well as a steel; either of them may hammer on wood for ever, no fire will follow. Two things, well considered, would prevent many quarrels; first, to have it well ascertained whether we are not disputing about terms, rather than things; and secondly, to examine whether that on which we differ is worth contending about. (*C. Colton.*) *Avoid quarrels*:—Francis I. of France was in counsel with his generals, as to the way they should take to lead the army to the invasion of Italy. Amaril, a fool, who, unseen, had heard their propositions, sprang up and advised them rather "to consider which way they should bring the army back out of Italy again; for it is easy to engage in quarrels, but hard to be disengaged from them." *Contending about trifles*:—In the year 1005 some soldiers of the Commonwealth of

Modena ran away with a bucket from a public well belonging to the State of Bologna. The implement might be worth a shilling; but it produced a quarrel which worked into a long and bloody war. Henry, the king of Sardinia, for the Emperor Henry the second, assisted the Modenese to keep possession of the bucket; and, in one of the battles, was made prisoner. His father, the emperor, offered a chain of gold that would encircle Bologna, which is seven miles in compass; but in vain. After twenty years' imprisonment, his father being dead, he pined away and died. His monument is still extant in the church of the Dominicans. The fatal bucket is still exhibited in the tower of the Cathedral of Modena enclosed in an iron cage.

Ver. 9. **Is not the whole land before thee?**—*The goodly land in prospect*:—In many respects the earthly Canaan was typical of the heavenly. The heavenly Canaan is—I. A LAND OF PROMISE (1 John ii. 25; Rev. xxi. 7; xxii. 14). II. A LAND OF LIFE (1 John iii. 15; Rev. xxi. 4). III. A LAND OF LIGHT (Rev. xxii. 5). IV. A LAND OF PLENTY (Rev. vii. 16; xxii. 2). V. A LAND OF FELICITY AND JOY. This joy will be complete; perfect, full, everlasting (Psa. xvi. 11; Isa. xxxv. 10). Application: 1. Have I a title clear to heaven? 2. The way to eternal life open to all. 3. Jesus Christ is the way, the living way, the only way. 4. As human life is so uncertain, all should strive at once to make a full preparation, and seek to get that meekness requisite for the inheritance of the saints in light. (*H. Dingley.*) *Abram's proposal to Lot*:—I. THIS PROPOSAL SHOWS THAT A GOOD MAN LOVES PEACE RATHER THAN WEALTH. 1. Because strife hardens the heart. 2. Because strife destroys a man's happiness. 3. Because strife hinders one's spiritual progress. II. THAT A GOOD MAN HAS CONFIDENCE IN THE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE. 1. Abraham had confidence in God's wisdom. 2. He had confidence in God's love. III. THAT A GOOD MAN HAS HIGHER INTERESTS THAN WORLDLY PROSPERITY. (*Homilist.*) *A peaceable spirit*:—I. HOW DESIRABLE A THING IT IS TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH OTHERS. We are commanded to live at peace. Contention undermines the welfare of all. II. THERE ARE ALWAYS SOME MEANS OF MAINTAINING PEACE. Unselfish yielding of rightful claims. A friendly separation need be no schism. (*F. Hastings.*) *Magnanimity of Abraham*:—1. How different he might have acted. The whole land was his. He was most powerful and wealthy. He might have decided without consulting Lot, and simply have announced his decision. How many would have stood on their dignity, and vindicated their rights. 2. See what he did. Took his nephew to a rising ground, whence the whole land might be seen. Offered him the first choice. Was willing to abide by Lot's decision, and take what he left. 3. This was the result of a peaceful spirit and a firm faith in God. (*J. C. Gray.*) *The excellence of a peaceable disposition, exemplified in the conduct of Abraham towards Lot*:—I. WE PROPOSE TO CONSIDER THE FACTS RECORDED. The conduct of these two good men, on the occasion to which the text refers, had certainly many shades of difference. In the one, the religious principle was in lively and adapted operation, it governed the passions, and its effects engage our approbation; in the other, that principle seems to have lain dormant, while feelings of jealousy or ambition appear for a time to have controlled the heart; their fruit however was disappointment and sorrow. We feel no difficulty in knowing which to condemn and which to censure; but if the conduct of Abraham be deemed so worthy of admiration, let us imitate; if the conduct of Lot be deemed improper, let us avoid following his example. Such should be our aim and our practice in reading the excellences or the defects of men. II. LET US DEDUCE SOME PRACTICAL INFERENCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF PERSONAL APPLICATION. 1. We may learn how honourable and happy it is to be a promoter of peace. 2. Let us cultivate the dispositions necessary to be exercised in preserving or promoting peace; particularly that meekness which is careful not to take offence, and which is as mindful not to give offence. 3. We may learn the danger of judging merely from appearances, and of preferring what is great or splendid in circumstances, to those situations in life which are friendly to religious improvement. This Lot does not seem sufficiently to have regarded. 4. We may ascertain with what confidence we may commit our temporal interests to the care and goodness of providence, while we are walking in the path of holy obedience. If true religion guide us, it will be found that her ways are pleasantness and peace. Those who honour God He will honour. (*Essex Remembrancer.*) *Abraham's disinterestedness*:—Many good reasons might have been given by Abraham for claiming the first right of choice for himself. For one thing, he was the older man, and naturally might have expected that Lot would defer to him. For another

thing, he might have reminded Lot that it was not he who had accompanied Lot, but Lot who had accompanied him, when together they had left their Chaldean home, and might have insisted that, simply on that ground, it was Lot's place to yield the preference to him. But no! he gave up all such claims of priority, and in a manner at once chivalrous and disinterested said, "Is not the whole land before thee?" Now, when we ask how Abraham came to act in this way, we see at once that his conduct was the outgrowth of his faith in God. For observe, in this very connection, indeed in the very middle of this history, it is said, "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land." Now these were idolatrous and selfish tribes. They were at that very moment filling up the measure of their iniquity on account of which the land was taken from them and given to Abraham. It would never do, therefore, for the worshippers of the true God to quarrel before them. That would only give them occasion to blaspheme Jehovah's name, and so bring His worship into contempt. Therefore, out of regard to the honour of the Lord, Abraham was ready to sacrifice his worldly interest rather than do anything which would tend to compromise the religion he professed. Moreover, the Lord had promised to provide for him. Ever since he had left the far land of Ur, he had looked upon himself as the ward of God, and he was quite sure that God would take care of him. So, without either hesitation or misgiving, he made this proposal to his nephew, and as a proof that he had not miscalculated, we are told in the concluding verses of the chapter that God appeared unto him, renewed the promise of the land of Canaan, and guided him to the plain of Mamre, near to that city of Hebron which to-day bears in its name El-Khulil—the friend—the memorial of his connection with its neighbourhood. But now, rising from this old history and looking over the face of modern society, what "envying, strifes, wraths, back-bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults," might be prevented in households, neighbourhoods, churches, nations, by acting on the principles which animated Abraham here? There, for instance, are two men in the same business, and there is not enough for both; but the one happens to have more capital than the other, and so he commences to undersell him by putting down his prices to a figure that is absolutely dishonest, and then, when he has closed his neighbour up, and secured all the trade for himself, he begins to reimburse himself at his leisure. In the good old days of the fathers, the maxim used to be, "Live and let live," but now, in the selfishness of competition, men trample each other down, and virtually say, "Die, that I may live." Or look at it in another sphere: there are two railway companies, each connecting the same great centres of commerce with each other. There is enough probably for both, if they were only to be mutually considerate. But so far from that, each wishes to have the larger share; and so they run each other down and down, until shareholders are ruined, and employes are ground to the lowest farthing; and then! such scenes as were lately witnessed in the land come to alarm and appall. Nor is this evil confined to commerce. To the disgrace of our Christianity, there is the same suicidal rivalry among churches. Is it so, that neither business can thrive nor churches be advanced without selfishness that tramples others down? What is your faith in God worth if you can believe that? (*W. M. Taylor, D.D.*)

Abram's generosity:—Abram met the danger as promptly and resolutely as the brave Hollanders, in days gone by, threw up their dykes against the encroaching sea. But how did he meet it? We might expect him to say, "Why this strife? Rebuke thy servants—they must yield to mine—I am the elder—and to me the land is promised." Would this have stopped the strife? It ought, certainly; all the right and authority were on his side, but the assertion of right does not always win the side that is in the wrong, and Abram chose a surer dyke to stop the threatening torrent. Did what he did say stop it? Yes, but not in the way we might have hoped. If Lot had said, "Nay, dear uncle, I cannot forestall thee—choose thou first,"—that would have been a complete victory. But when we yield up a right for the sake of peace, we must not expect to be met with corresponding generosity; we must be prepared to be taken at our word, as Abram was. (*E. Stock.*)

Magnanimity:—An instance of the practical effectiveness of Mr. Sherman's preaching is narrated thus. In one of his Monday evening lectures to teachers, the subject was the parting of Abraham and Lot: in the course of which he spoke of the magnanimity of Abraham, and as a contrast to it, said that he had just visited a family belonging to the congregation that was rent by discord about the ownership of an old iron bedstead. It happened that amongst his hearers was a man who had not been in Surrey chapel for years. He was greatly amused by the illustration.

As he left the chapel, he called on an old friend, and told him that he was at the very time arranging the distribution of some property left by a relative, amongst which there was an old bedstead, which had been matter of dispute; but the effect of the address upon him was such that the bedstead difficulty was soon amicably settled. (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*) *Of such as have been great lovers and promoters of peace.*—There are no greater instances of the folly and wicked disposition of mankind, than that their favourites have been clad in steel; the destroyers of cities, the suckers of human blood, and such as have imprinted the deepest fears upon the face of the universe, are the men it has crowned with laurels, and flattered with the misbecoming titles of heroes and gods: while the sons of peace are remitted to the cold entertainment of their own virtues. Still there have ever been some who have found so many heavenly beauties in the face of peace, that they have been contented to love that sweet virgin for her own sake, and to court her without the consideration of any additional dowry. 1. The inhabitants of the island of Borneo, not far from the Molluccas, live in such detestation of war, and are so great lovers of peace, that they hold their king in no other veneration than that of a god, so long as he studies to preserve them in peace; but if he discover inclinations to war, they never rest till he is fallen in battle under the arms of his enemies. So soon as he is slain they set upon the enemy with all imaginable fierceness, as men that fight for their liberty, and such a king as will be a greater lover of peace. Nor was there ever any king known amongst them that was the persuader and author of a war, but he was deserted by them, and suffered to fall under the sword of the enemy. 2. At Tez, in Africa, they have neither lawyers nor advocates; but if there be any controversies amongst them, both parties, plaintiff and defendant, come to their Alfakins, or chief judge, and at once, without any further appeals or pitiful delays, the cause is heard and ended. 3. It is said of the sister of Edward III., the wife of David king of Scots, that she was familiarly called “Jane Make-peace,” both for her zeal and success therein. 4. The Lord Treasurer Burleigh used to say that “he overcame envy and evil will more by patience and peaceableness, than by pertinacy and stubbornness”; and he so managed his private affairs, that he never sued any man, nor did any man ever sue him, but he lived and died universally respected and beloved. 5. It is recorded of Servius Sulpitius, an heathen lawyer, that “he respected equity and peace in all that he did, and always sought rather to settle differences than to multiply suits of law.” 6. Numa Pompilius instituted the priests or heralds called “Feciales,” whose office was to preserve peace between the Romans and neighbouring nations; and if any quarrel arose, they were to pacify them by reason, and not suffer them to come to violence till all hope of peace was past; and if these feciales did not consent to the wars neither king nor people had it in their power to undertake them. *The folly of strife.*—An old writer tells of two brothers who went out to take a walk in the night, and one of them looked up to the sky and said, “I wish I had a pasture-field as large as the night heaven.” And the other brother looked up into the sky and said, “I wish I had as many oxen as there are stars in the sky.” “Well,” said the first, “how would you feed so many oxen?” Said the second, “I would turn them into your pasture.” “What! whether I would or not.” “Yes, whether you would or not.” And there at once arose a quarrel, and when the quarrel ended, one had slain the other. Not less foolish have been many of the quarrels of modern times. One of the six things God hates is he that soweth discord among brethren. *Strife among brethren.*—I read a story the other day of an elder of a Scotch kirk, who at the elders’ meeting had angrily disputed with his minister, until he almost broke his heart. The night after he had a dream, which so impressed him, that his wife said to him in the morning, “Ye look very sad, Jan; what is the matter wi’ ye?” “And well I am,” said he, “for I have dreamed that I had hard words with our minister, and he went home and died, and soon after I died too; and I dreamed that I went up to heaven, and when I got to the gate, out came the minister, and put out his hands to welcome me, saying, ‘Come along, Jan, there’s nae strife up here, I’m so glad to see ye.’” So the elder went down to the minister’s house to beg his pardon, and found in very truth that he was dead. He was so smitten by the blow, that within two weeks he followed his pastor to the skies; and I should not wonder but what his minister did meet him, and say, “Come along, Jan, there’s nae strife up here.” Brethren, why should there be strife below? Let us love each other, and by the fact that we are co-heirs of that blessed inheritance, let us dwell together as partakers of a common life, and soon to be partakers of a common heaven. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

Vers. 10-12. **Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan.**—*Abraham and Lot*:—The lesson to be gained from the history of Abraham and Lot is obviously this: that nothing but a clear apprehension of things unseen, a simple trust in God's promises, and the greatness of mind thence arising, can make us act above the world—indifferent, or almost so, to its comforts, enjoyments, and friendships; or, in other words, that its goods corrupt the common run of religious men who possess them. I. ABRAHAM AND LOT HAD GIVEN UP THIS WORLD AT THE WORD OF GOD, BUT A MORE DIFFICULT TRIAL REMAINED. Though never easy, yet it is easier to set our hearts on religion or to take some one decided step, which throws us out of our line of life and in a manner forces upon us what we should naturally shrink from, than to possess in good measure the goods of this world and yet love God supremely. The wealth which Lot had hitherto enjoyed had been given him as a pledge of God's favour, and had its chief value as coming from Him. But surely he forgot this, and esteemed it for its own sake, when he allowed himself to be attracted by the riches and beauty of a guilty and devoted country. II. GOD IS SO MERCIFUL THAT HE SUFFERS NOT HIS FAVOURED SERVANTS TO WANDER FROM HIM WITHOUT REPEATED WARNINGS. Lot had chosen the habitation of sinners; still he was not left to himself. A calamity was sent to warn and chasten him: he and his property fell into the hands of the five kings. This was an opportunity of breaking off his connection with the people of Sodom, but he did not take it as such. III. THE GAIN OF THIS WORLD IS BUT TRANSITORY; FAITH REAPS A LATE BUT LASTING RECOMPENSE. (*J. H. Newman, D.D.*) *A worldly choice and its consequences*:—That Lot was a good man in the ground of his character there is no reason to doubt. But good men have their besetting sins. Lot's was worldliness, and it cost him dear. I. CONSIDER SOME FEATURES OF THE CHOICE WHICH LOT MADE. 1. Worldly advantage was the chief element in determining his place in life. The volcanic fires, slumbering beneath, made the plain of Sodom so fertile that its riches had become proverbial; and the Jordan, which has now so short a course to the Dead Sea, then wandered through the plain, like the rivers of Eden. Lot's eye regarded neither the dangers sleeping beneath nor the light of God above, but only the corn and wine and verdant pastures. 2. Lot's choice betrayed a want of generosity. Abraham gave to Lot the selection of place, and had Lot been capable of appreciating his generosity he would have declined to avail himself of the offer. But he grasped at it eagerly and took the richest side. Such men are the most unsatisfactory of friends, paining us constantly by their selfishness, and failing us in the hour of need. 3. Lot's choice showed disregard of religious privileges. The sins of the men of Sodom were of a peculiarly gross and inhuman kind; had Lot's religion been warm and bright he would not have ventured among them. He may have excused himself to his conscience by saying that he was going to do good, but when he left Sodom he could not count a single convert. II. CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES OF LOT'S CHOICE. 1. As he made worldly advantage his chief aim, he failed in gaining it. Twice he lost his entire possessions; he left Sodom poorer than he entered it. He was stripped of the labours of years, and dared not even look behind on the ruin of his hopes. 2. As Lot failed in generosity to Abraham, he was repeatedly brought under the weightiest obligations to him. He took an unfair advantage of Abraham, but ere many years had passed he owed all he had—family, property, liberty—to Abraham's courageous interposition. 3. Lot's disregard of spiritual privileges brought on him a bitter entail of sin and shame. His own religious character suffered from his sojourn in Sodom. This alone can account for the grievous termination of his history. His life remains as a warning against the spirit of worldliness. Both worlds frequently slip from the grasp in the miserable attempt to gain the false glitter of the present. (*J. Ker, D.D.*) *Lot's choice*:—I. THERE ARE DECISIVE MOMENTS IN ALL LIVES. There are hours when character is fixed as by some powerful mordant, and thenceforth the writing is indelible. There are minutes in which destiny is determined, as one may step to this side or to that of the sharp crest of a hill. These are the times in which we make the choices on which our future lives depend. It is such a time in the life of the still youthful Lot that we are to consider. Such times come surely to us all,—not once alone, perhaps, though perhaps only once,—from the decisions of which henceforth we do not swerve. More often a few such opportunities come to a life, and they come chiefly in its youth. II. CHOICE IS BOTH THE EXPRESSION OF CHARACTER AND ITS DETERMINATION. So Lot shows what was in him, as Abram reveals his character in the choice. 1. Abram looks to the Lord, and Lot looks to the land. It is the contrast of the prayerful with the worldly spirit. 2. Abram showed himself

to be a man of peace. Lot let the quarrelling go on;—who knows but he may profit by it in the end? 3. Abram was generous beyond the demands of ordinary liberality. He gave up the rights of his seniority, of family headship; chose to give up his choice, and let the younger man take what seemed to him best. And Lot took it—thinking only of his own interests. 4. Abram was the faithful friend. The friend of God is always the friend of man as well. Prosperity in this case, as in so many others, tested their friendship and fidelity more than adversity. Poverty and loneliness might bring them close together. While Abram was growing very rich, and Lot, the junior partner, was catching the overflow and coming to the possibility of self-support, he would by no means leave his advantage. But now that he has come to independence and can get no more out of his association with his older friend, but rather lose by it, he is quite ready to sever the connection. III. THE FOLLY OF A WORLDLY CHOICE. The man who leaves out God, God's purpose for us and God's calling, is never wise and never comes to true success. The man who makes his decisions on the mere ground of worldly advantage is never sure and never safe. The example we are studying is striking in this regard. It is shown, whether you consider it as a mere natural succession of causes and effects or as a matter of supernatural awards. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. The principles taught, and the example set, by the Lord Jesus Christ do not seem at first sight to be well adapted to present success. The unpractical character of other-worldliness is often contemptuously set over against the evils of this-worldliness. But it is a great mistake. The principles of Christ are exactly adapted to this world and to this life, not to a shallow and disappointing success, but to the real attainment of all which in this world is best and most enduring. Every Abram who gives up all to follow God, God takes in hand and guides more safely than he could have gone alone. (G. M. Boynton.) *Abram and Lot*:—I. This story shows HOW RICHES ENGENDER STRIFE. Oftener a cause of jealousy and estrangement than of increased attachment and magnanimity. II. This story shows ON WHAT FRIVOLOUS GROUNDS MEN BECOME ESTRANGED. For the sake of some small advantage they fling away the hearts whose love is more precious than gold; or they make them suffer from their ill-humour and their peevishness, until it can be borne no longer. A friendship that has been tested by years of experience and the strongest proofs of affection, is sometimes quenched by the merest trifle. III. This story shows HOW A GOOD MAN AVOIDS IMPENDING STRIFE. Not by standing stiffly upon his rights, but by timely concession. IV. This story shows THE SPIRITUAL PERILS OF SELFISHNESS. V. This story also shows THE REWARD OF PIETY (vers. 14–17). God gave Abram for a perpetual possession the land on which he gazed from the eminence of Bethel. He gave him His own friendship in the place of Lot's, for whose departure he sorrowed. He made him also, then a childless old man, hopeless of any posterity to bear his name, and who had hoped, perhaps, that Lot would be to him in place of a son—God made him, in anticipation, the father of a great multitude that could not be numbered. Thus his reward for his integrity and piety was exceeding great. Choosing God and the land where God was found, he derived from this world and its life the best it affords. It is ever so. He who chooses God for his portion, has also the best of His gifts. (A. H. Currier.) *A worldly choice*:—I. IT WAS DETERMINED BY EXTERNAL ADVANTAGES. 1. External advantages are not the chief end of life. 2. External advantages are not the true happiness of life. 3. External advantages, when considered by themselves, tend to corrupt the soul. II. IT WAS UNGENEROUS. III. IT SHOWED TOO LITTLE REGARD FOR SPIRITUAL INTERESTS. (T. H. Leale.) *The character of Lot*:—I. BEFORE HE TOOK UP HIS ABODE AT SODOM. It appears that he was influenced by the same grace to leave his idolatrous country, and to share with Abraham the difficulties of a pilgrim's life, that he might follow the guidance and join in the worship of the true God. We, therefore, find him a fellow-traveller with Abraham (Gen. xii. 4), and the Lord blessed him with an abundant increase of His substance. But how seldom does increasing wealth produce increasing happiness! He separates from Abraham; and what a wretched change does he make! "He pitched his tent toward Sodom." By what motive was he influenced? Let us beware of the love of money, which is the root of all evil: "They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare." II. DURING HIS RESIDENCE IN SODOM. Preserved from the general contagion. A bold reprobator of abominations. But one circumstance in this history is very remarkable. The very end for which Lot was induced to fix his residence at Sodom, was entirely defeated. Alas! how can we expect to prosper, when the love of gain is our principle? The Lord will, in mercy, disappoint His children, and bring them into trials to preserve

them from apostacy. Behold Lot a stranger to comfort in Sodom. Grieved with observing the conduct of the wicked, as well as hated and persecuted by them! And what would avail him the fruitfulness of the soil? III. AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM SODOM. He who was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, fell into the most abominable wickedness indeed. This proves two things—1. When we do stand, it is by the power of God alone: to Him therefore we must ascribe all the excellence and perseverance of His people. Even Paul, in his most advanced state, is nothing: "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 2. When we are not upheld by Him, no place is secure; and any temptation, how small soever, is enough to overcome us. What other expedient, then, is left us, but, (1) To be humbled under a sense of our great depravity and abominable corruptions. Instead of censuring the conduct of Lot, let us look into our own hearts, and we shall find abundant cause for humiliation. We are encouraged, however, (2) To apply to the blood of sprinkling for its cleansing influence, and that we may appear before God with joy and confidence; having "washed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." But still it behoves us, (3) To watch and pray; remembering the dangers to which we are exposed, and that all our security from day to day must be in the power of God: "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto Thy statutes continually." (*Essex Remembrancer.*)

Lot's choice:—I. HIS CHOICE. II. HIS MOTIVE. 1. Not the expectation of better religious advantages. 2. Not the hope of benefiting others. 3. Evidently to advance his worldly interests. III. WHAT HE GAINED. A home in Sodom. IV. WHAT HE LOST. 1. The helpful influence of Christian fellowship. 2. Moral tone in character—evidently on the down-grade. 3. His happiness. 4. His property; first in war, then by fire. 5. All of his adherents, and part of his own family, in the final destruction of Sodom. (*The Homiletic Review.*)

Abram's generosity and Lot's selfishness:—I. THE GENEROUS OFFER. 1. Abram was a peace-maker. 2. Abram was unselfish. 3. Abram was patient. II. THE SELFISH CHOICE. 1. Lot was self-seeking. 2. Lot was worldly-minded. 3. Lot was hasty in his choice. III. THE LARGE BLESSING. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*)

Lot's unwise choice:—1. Good men may be too hasty and solicitous for worldly advantage—as Lot. 2. The lust of the eye, covetous desire may misguide gracious souls sometimes in their choice. 3. Pleasant fruitful possessions on earth are apt to take up too much the care of the saints. 4. The pleasantest habitations are not always the best: if God grow angry. 5. God spares not to destroy the choicest places where sin abounds (ver. 10). 6. Good men may be too selfish. He offers not Abram the choice. 7. God's own left to their choice, may choose and possess the worst portion. 8. Brethren may be parted by choice of distinct portions, when ordered by God to higher ends (ver. 11). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Lessons:—1. Grace makes a soul sit down contented with its promised portion. So did Abram. 2. The promised portion with all its inconveniences, is better than the most pleasant with sin. 3. Good souls may sometimes sit down with content in large and pleasant places without God. 4. Saints sometimes may meet with an hell, where they look for a paradise; so did Lot. 5. It is a soul blemish, for God's servants to covet fruitful places, though never so sinful (ver. 12). 6. Fruitful places are apt to have the foulest sinners. 7. The excess and height of sin is in obstinate opposition to Jehovah. 8. Jehovah will make known such to be sinners to the purpose and brand them, as here Sodom is notorious to all ages (ver. 13). (*Ibid.*)

Christian worldliness:—In the expression "Christian worldliness" there may be considered by some to be a formal contradiction in terms. But it is the plain epitaph written over the historical grave of one of the best known and worst reputed characters in the Scriptures. 1. To begin with, LET US ACCEPT THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THIS KINSMAN OF ABRAM WAS AN OLD TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN. A "righteous man" dwelling in Sodom is so palpably out of place in our conception of propriety that he needs the word offered in extenuation, namely, that, day after day, he vexed his righteous soul with the unlawful deeds he beheld around him. We must never forget that the question of his piety as an orthodox believer in God is settled for us (2 Pet. ii. 7, 8). But now, with all this generous notion of him, it must be calmly acknowledged that Lot was a very poor Christian. 2. In the second place, find an instant explanation of the failure; LOT WAS A MERCENARY CHRISTIAN. The very earliest inquiry is, How did he come to be in Sodom at all? We must remember that Lot did not go to Sodom directly, nor even at once. Men do not ever plunge into evil; they glide, they slide, or they drift. Lot only pitched his tent "towards" Sodom. He went close enough to hear how prices were ranging from day to day; he had a market for all he had to barter;

there was gossip among his neighbours; oh, it was a good, nice place, not so very wicked, and always so lively! This is the way of the world, and that is the way of worldly believers now in the New Testament church. They make compromises with a very easy conscience. They do not go straight into wrong; they "pitch their tents towards" it. "Men fall," said Guizot, "on the side toward which they lean."

3. Observe, in the third place, THAT LOT WAS SOON EVIDENCED AS A BACKSLIDING CHRISTIAN. How do we know this? We notice that wherever Abram went in that wandering life of his, he set up an altar the first thing he did, and a regular service of worship made him known as a follower of Jehovah. A careful search will fail to reveal that Lot ever did anything to cause remark in this direction. The story of the life of that group of sons and sons-in-law is just downward, downward, as they grew depraved more and more in tastes, capabilities, and principles. First, they "walked in the counsel of the ungodly"; next, they were found to "stand in the way of sinners"; then they began to "sit in the seat of the scornful." And the one great commonplace lesson for us to learn is this: even a believer who neglects his religious duty is moving forward in sin.

4. But pass on; for we need, in the fourth place, to look at LOT AS A SERIOUSLY UNHAPPY CHRISTIAN. He "vexed his righteous soul" there from day to day, in seeing and hearing the unlawful deeds of those indescribably vicious people; he detested their "filthy conversation." Now, I know you will give me full sympathy when I say I am really glad this patriarch had a miserable time. I wish it had been worse. It is the only evidence we get of his sincerity as a child of God.

5. Once more; you are ready, in the fifth place, to find in this man LOT A MOST INEFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN. When you discover how worldly a man has become, you are not at all surprised to see that his religious usefulness is destroyed. So slight was the influence of this patriarch over those who knew him best, that even when he had received a visit from the angels sent from God in heaven, and came forth trembling and frightened to tell them that the city was soon to be destroyed, they jeered at him for a coward, and laughed at him for a fool. It was clear to them that the less he said about his interviews with God, the safer it would be for his credit; they thought he was joking.

6. It is somewhat cheering now, in the sixth place, to look upon Lot as a TRULY SAVED CHRISTIAN. And yet we are forced to go over into the New Testament passage to get our proof; read again the text of Peter. This shows, not only that Lot was saved, but that his salvation, so graciously achieved, was of so narrow a sort that it could be given as one of the extreme examples of Divine mercy towards the undeserving; and that it must be taken in connection with the fact that all the inhabitants of the wicked city, out of which he was so hurriedly rushed, were "turned into ashes." Furthermore, this passage shows that, while "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly," He knows how also "to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." One thing is absolutely clear; he never could have been saved in Sodom. The turning-point in his career was reached when Sodom was set on fire.

(C. S. Robinson, D.D.) *The importance of a choice*:—We have seldom the choice put before us so dramatically and sharply; but it is as really presented to each. There is the shameless cynicism of the men who avowedly only ask the question, "Will it pay?" But there are subtler forms which affect us all. It is the standing temptation of Americans and Englishmen alike to apply a money standard to everything, to adopt courses of action of which the only recommendation is that they promote getting on in the world. Men who call themselves Christians select schools for their children, or professions for their boys, or marriages for their daughters, down in Sodom, because it will give them a lift in life which they would not get up in the starved pastures at Bethel, with nobody but Abram and his like to associate with. If the earnestness with which men pursue an end is to be taken as any measure of its importance in their eyes, it certainly does not look much as if modern average Christians did believe that it was of more moment to be united to God, and to be growing like Him, than to secure a good big share of earthly possessions. Tried by the test of conduct, their faith in getting on is a great deal deeper than their faith in getting up. But if our religion does not make us put the world beneath our feet, and count all things but loss that we may win Christ, we had better ask ourselves whether our religion is any better than Lot's, which was second-hand, and was much more imitation of Abram than obedience to God. Lot teaches us that material good may tempt and conquer, even after it has been overcome. His early life had been heroic; in his young enthusiasm, he had thrown in his portion with Abram in his great venture. He had not been thinking of his flocks when he left Haran. Probably, as I have just said, he was a good deal gal-

vanized into imitation; but still, he had chosen the better part. But now he has tired of a pilgrim's life. There are men who cut down the thorns, and have the seed sown; but thorns are tenacious of life, and quick growing, and so they spread over the field and choke the seed. It is easier to take some one bold step, than to keep true through life to its spirit. Youth contemns, but too often middle-age worships, worldly success. The world tightens its grasp as we grow older, and Lot and Demas teach us that it is hard to keep for a lifetime on the heights. Faith, strong and ever renewed by communion, can do it; nothing else can. Lot's history teaches what comes of setting the world first, and God's kingdom second. For one thing, the association with it is sure to get closer. Lot began with choosing the plain; then he crept a little nearer, and pitched his tent "towards" Sodom; next time we hear of him he is living in the city, and mixed up inextricably with its people. The first false step leads on to connections unforeseen, from which the man would have shrunk in horror, if he had been told he would make them. Once on the incline, time and gravity will settle how far down we go. (*A. MacLaren, D.D.*)

Abraham and Lot:—1. Mark, on the one hand, the self-sacrifice manifested by Abraham, and, on the other, the selfishness by which Lot was characterized. 2. But, as another point of contrast, notice how Abraham took a long look forward, while Lot chose simply for the immediate future. "He that believeth shall not make haste." "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." 3. Note, finally, the contrast in the after career of the two men. From this point on, there is evident a gradual process of deterioration in Lot. "Toward Sodom" soon became "in Sodom." In Sodom soon developed into matrimonial alliances between the members of his family and the Sodomites. Then last of all, and worst of all, his own moral nature was hardened; the womanhood of his daughters was dishonoured; and the closing incidents of his life were such that we gladly draw a veil over their enormity, and sigh to think that, after so fair a morning, his sun went down behind so dark a cloud. But while Lot deteriorated, Abraham advanced. That which marked Lot's point of departure from the right course was a milestone that indicated new progress in Abraham. The decision which he made over this dispute was another step in that upward ladder of self-conquest on the topmost round of which he stood when he laid Isaac upon the altar. It was an important decision for both, yet it was all over a very ordinary and every-day occurrence. We are continually having to make similar decisions in our common lives, and always we are tested by them. It is a very solemn question how we have stood such tests; and if we want to stand them as Abraham did, we must be partakers of Abraham's faith; for that faith, as we have seen, animated the patriarch, not only in such great things as the leaving of his country and the sacrifice of his son, but also the actions of his life in his intercourse with his fellow-men. (*W. M. Taylor, D.D.*)

Lot's choice:—I. A CHOICE WITHOUT CONSULTING GOD. II. A CHOICE WHICH DEPRIVED HIM OF A GOOD MAN'S COMPANY. Every worldly-minded man forfeits—1. The sympathy of good men. 2. The assistance of the good. III. A CHOICE ANTAGONISTIC TO THE GOOD MORAL TRAINING OF HIS FAMILY. Moral culture ought to be of greater importance in our estimation than wealth. 1. Because it is of higher value. 2. Because it elevates the man. 3. Because its beneficial results are more certain. IV. A CHOICE WHICH EXPOSED HIM TO MANY DANGERS. 1. The danger of his sympathy with the good being narrowed. 2. The danger of looking upon sin in a false light. 3. The danger of losing his own soul. (*Honillist.*)

Lot:—I. THE EVIL WHICH FOLLOWS AN ILL-ADVISED STEP. 1. That there are constantly before us opportunities of selection. 2. That that is not the most advantageous which at first sight appears so. 3. That any course entered upon without consulting the guiding of Providence is likely to lead us astray. II. THE NATURAL TENDENCY OF AN UNRENEWED HEART. Looking to what is pleasant. III. THE MERCY OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE. Lot brought trouble on himself, but God did not desert him. IV. THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF PIETY WITH SIN. (*Ibid.*)

Avarice:—Avarice has ruined more men than prodigality. (*Colton.*) **Avarice hindered in mercy:**—It is sometimes of God's mercy that men in the eager pursuit of worldly aggrandisement are baffled; for they are very like a train going down an inclined plane—putting on the brake is not pleasant, but it keeps the car on the track. (*H. W. Beecher.*)

Lessons from Lot:—I. THE EVILS WHICH MAY FOLLOW FROM ONE WRONG STEP IN LIFE. There are certain matters in relation to which our determinations must have special importance. 1. The choice of a place of residence. 2. The choice of a trade or profession. "What is likely to be the moral and spiritual effect of this pursuit on me?" 3. The choice of a life-partner. II. THE STEALTHY INSIDIOUS-

NESS OF SIN. There is a wide difference between the happy household that used to join with Abram's in sacrifice at the Bethel altar and that which we read of in Sodom on the night before the destruction of that city. That divergence was not caused by any single volcanic upheaval of passion, but by gradual defection. We have the key to it in the question addressed by Lot to the angel, when, asking to be allowed to flee into Zoar, he said, "Is it not a little one?" Depend upon it, that was not the first time Lot reasoned in such a way. Most likely he did so on the very occasion of this first fatal choice. He saw Sodom in the plain, but he said within himself, "I need not go into the city, I can always keep myself secluded," and promising this to himself he pitched toward Sodom. But after a time he became accustomed to the men of the place. He saw many advantages in the protection of their walls, as compared with his defenceless nomad life. Thus the temptation to go into the city, which he would at first have repelled from him with scorn, was entertained, and concerning it also the old argument was used—"No doubt the city is wicked, but I need not mingle with the inhabitants, and when I come to balance the matter I must not let a little thing like that prejudice blind me to my own interests"; and in this way he went into Sodom. In a similar manner he came to allow intermarriages between the families of the city and his own. All this illustrates the deceitfulness of sin. No one ever became very wicked all at once. The descent of the road that leadeth to destruction is made in single steps, and these not on a clear and well-marked staircase, but on an incline which seems to be but little out of the horizontal line. Be on your guard against the first temptation, and whenever an evil pleads with you, saying, "Am I not a little one?"

III. THE NECESSITY OF WATCHFULNESS AGAINST SIN THROUGHOUT ONE'S EARTHLY LIFE. Every time of life has its peculiar dangers. There are, as medical men will attest, certain critical ages at which the bodily constitution seems to pass through a severe ordeal, so that it either yields in death, or comes out unharmed; and what the issue shall be depends, under God, very much on what the person's daily habits have been. If he have been what is called a fast, free liver, there is little likelihood that he will weather the storm; but if he have been moderate in all things, there is the greater probability that he will round the cape. Now it is similar in spiritual life. There are seasons of greater danger than others to the best interests of the soul. Youth is a perilous season, but the noon and afternoon of life are beset with dangers as great as its morning, and our only safety lies in perpetual vigilance. It is pitiful to think how often character deteriorates in later life. You cannot read of Noah without reflecting that the glorious reputation of a long career may be thrown into shadow at the last by a besetting sin. You cannot study the life of David without remarking how the purity of his character is eclipsed by the darkness of a sin which was that, not of a youth, but of a man past the meridian of his age. Ye men of middle life, and you who are verging toward old age, be on your guard. Remember Lot! and beware of allowing your conscience to be blunted with iniquity. Above all, beware of that seductive sin which is the parent of so many more—intemperance. (*W. M. Taylor, D.D.*)

Lot's loss:—Lot lost—1. The society of his best friend. 2. His intense hatred toward wickedness. 3. A due regard for the spiritual welfare of his family. 4. Religious influence over men. 5. His property. 6. Influence over his own children. 7. His children. 8. His wife. 9. His good name. (*John A. Ewalt.*)

Lot's lot:—A rough shell may hold a pearl, remarks Dean Law. There may be silver amongst much dross. Life may exist within the stem when leaves are seared and branches dry. The spring may yet be deep, while waters trickle scantily. A spark may live beneath much rubbish. So many heirs of glory live ingloriously. Heaven is their purchased rest, but their footsteps seem to be downward. In their hearts there is incorruptible seed, but sorry weeds are intermixed. They are translated into the kingdom of grace, but still the flesh is weak. (*W. Adamson.*)

Godless gain:—1. A godly man in a rural village in Suffolk, where for generations the people had been highly favoured with a succession of earnest "winners of souls" to Christ, tempted by the offer of higher wages and greater scope in London, left his home and took up his residence in an ungodly neighbourhood in the East End. But the higher wages and greater scope were very quickly outweighed by the corruption of his children, &c. 2. Even religious men, says Robertson, sometimes settle in a foreign country, notoriously licentious, merely that they may increase their wealth. But very soon they find to their cost that God has terrible modes of retribution. In the choice of homes, of friends, and in alliances, he who selects according to the desires of the flesh lays up in store for himself many troubles and anxieties. Such was Lot's experience. 3. How frequently, remarks Blunt, have

men found that their greatest disquietudes and troubles have been the fruits of their own selfish selections. Often that "vale of Siddim" which they have most anxiously coveted, has been the wellspring from whence has flowed the bitter waters of sorrow and distress. Far better, if God tries us by putting a blank paper into our hands, to fill in our free choice, humbly to refer the choice back to Him. (*Ibid.*) *A commendable choice* :—Mahomet, the false prophet, on viewing the pleasurable and delicious situation of Damascus, would not enter the city, but turned away from it with this exclamation : "There is but one paradise for man; and I am determined to have mine in the other world." *Mutatis mutandis*—"making the necessary changes" of our position—how becoming for a Christian is such language in time of temptation. (*Bishop Horne.*) *The great mistake of Lot's life* :—He is the type of that very large class of men who have but one rule for determining them at the turning points of life. He was swayed solely by the consideration of worldly advantage. He has nothing deep, nothing high in him. He recognizes no duty to Abram, no gratitude, no modesty; he has no perception of spiritual relations, no sense that God should have something to say in the partition of the land. Lot may be acquitted of a good deal which at first sight one is prompted to lay to his charge, but he cannot be acquitted of showing an eagerness to better himself, regardless of all considerations but the promise of wealth afforded by the fertility of the Jordan valley. He saw a quick though dangerous road to wealth. There seemed a certainty of success in his earthly calling, a risk only of moral disaster. He shut his eyes to the risk that he might grasp the wealth; and so doing, ruined both himself and his family. The situation is one which is ceaselessly repeated. To men in business or in the cultivation of literature or art, or in one of the professions, there are presented opportunities of attaining a better position by cultivating the friendship or identifying oneself with the practice of men whose society is not in itself desirable. We fancy perhaps that to refuse the companionship of any class of men is pharisaic; that we have no business to condemn the attitude towards the Church, or the morality, or the style of living adopted by any class of men among us. This is the mere cant of liberalism. We do not condemn persons who suffer from smallpox, but a smallpox hospital would be about the last place we should choose for a residence. Or possibly we imagine we shall be able to carry some better influences into the society we enter. A vain imagination; the motive for choosing the society has already sapped our power for good. Many of the errors of worldly men only reveal their most disastrous consequences in the second generation. Like some virulent diseases they have a period of incubation. Lot's family grew up in a very different atmosphere from that which had nourished his own youth in Abram's tents. An adult and robust Englishman can withstand the climate of India; but his children who are born in it cannot. And the position in society which has been gained in middle life by the carefully and hardly trained child of a God-fearing household, may not very visibly damage his own character, but may yet be absolutely fatal to the morality of his children. Lot may have persuaded himself he chose the dangerous prosperity of Sodom mainly for the sake of his children; but in point of fact he had better have seen them die of starvation in the most barren and parched desolation. And the parent who disregards conscience and chooses wealth or position, fancying that thus he benefits his children, will find to his life-long sorrow that he has entangled them in unimagined temptations. But the man who makes Lot's choice not only does a great injury to his children, but cuts himself off from all that is best in life. We are safe to say that after leaving Abram's tents Lot never again enjoyed unconstrainedly happy days. The men born and brought up in Sodom were possibly happy after their kind and in their fashion; but Lot was not. His soul was daily vexed. You cannot forget the thoughts you once had, the friendships you once delighted in, the hopes that shed brightness through all your life. You cannot blot out the ideal that once you cherished as the most animating element of your life. Every day there will be that rising in your mind which is in the sharpest contrast to the thoughts of those with whom you are associated. You will despise them for their shallow, worldly ideas and ways; but you will despise yourself still more, being conscious that what they are through ignorance and upbringing, you are in virtue of your own foolish and mean choice. There is that in you which rebels against the superficial and external measure by which they judge things, and yet you have deliberately chosen these as your associates, and can only think with heart-broken regret of the high thoughts that once visited you and the hopes you have now no means of fulfilling. (*M. Dods, D.D.*) *Lot the self-seeker* :—I. LOT'S EARLY YEARS were spent in Ur of Chaldaea, north-east of

DAMASCUS. His father, Haran, died while he was yet a youth of tender years, and he was placed in the family of his uncle Abraham, who appears ever to have acted towards him the part of an affectionate father; while Sarah, the wife of Abraham, is supposed to have been the sister of Lot. To have been the foster-son and companion of so royal a man as Abraham was a privilege which ought to have left a stamp of distinction on the young man that no after-years could efface. II. Let us look at LOT'S CHOICE in its nature and results, and learn the character and end of the self-seeker; remembering, meanwhile, the representative character of Lot, and gathering lessons of wisdom from the ashes of his ruined hopes. 1. First, then, there was in that choice, as there ever is in the conduct of the self-seeker, a disregard of delicate moral obligations and the interests of others involved. 2. But in this choice of Lot was also a disregard of his own highest interests. He seems not to have paused to consider the effect of his decision upon his own character and future well-being. The material good in that tempting scene blinded his eyes to every other good, and to the dangers of the choice. It is related in ancient history that the inhabitants of Oenœ, a town upon a dry island in the vicinity of Athens, bestowed much labour to draw into it a river to water it and make it more fruitful. But when the work was completed and the passages were all opened, the water came rushing in so furiously that it overflowed the whole island and drowned all the people. So, in the accomplishment of their ambitious ends, men do not pause to consider contingent results: and when the channels of desire are fully open and the long-looked-for tide of prosperity rises, lo! its streams come rushing in with a fearful, fatal force, whelming the soul in ruin and destruction. 3. Lot may have flattered himself that he had made a capital choice; let us see what it involved. (1) Separation from a devoted friend and benefactor. He might have remained in such proximity to Abraham as to have shared his companionship and counsel. It is a critical day for a young man when he severs his connection with the friends of his early years. (2) He not only separated himself far from Abraham, but became the companion of the wicked Sodomites. (*G. H. Payne, D.D.*) *Pitching our tents towards Sodom:*—Alypius, a friend of St. Augustine, had a great horror of the bloody combats of gladiators, one of the favourite amusements of that age. Being urged by his companions to be a spectator of these brutal sports, he obstinately refused, and they drew him to the amphitheatre against his will. All took their seats, and the games began. Alypius resolutely shut his eyes that he might not witness the horrible spectacle. "Would to God," said Augustine, "he had also stopped his ears!" Hearing a piercing cry, curiosity got the better of him, and he incautiously opened his eyes to see what had happened. One of the gladiators had received a dreadful wound; but no sooner had Alypius discovered the bloody stream issuing from the wretch's side, than his finer sensibilities were blunted, and he joined in the shouts and exclamations of the noisy mob about him. From that moment he was a changed man—changed for the worse; not only attending such sports himself, but urging others to do likewise. Very trifling circumstances show the bent and bias of our minds. A feather, floating on the breeze, may indicate the direction of the wind which is to determine the fate of a squadron, and involve the downfall of an empire. Something closely allied to this may be observed in the moral world. Traits of character, and prevailing tendencies of mind and heart, are distinctly marked by actions which, in themselves, are the merest trifles. When the sacred penman tells us that after Lot's unwise separation from Abraham he "pitched his tent toward Sodom," we discover much more in the simple statement than appears on the surface. It would be simply absurd to pass a sweeping censure upon the world, and its pursuits and pleasures; for these, within lawful limits, are well and right. No one in his senses, however, will deny that there is such a sin as worldliness, and it is one which all consistent Christians will strive to keep clear of. Worldliness, be it remembered, is determined by the spirit of our lives, rather than by the objects which occupy us. There may be much apparent conformity to the world, without any real violation of the Divine law or neglect of duty. The Lord Mayor of London, who, while presiding over the festivities of Guildhall, withdrew long enough from the scene of gaiety and splendour that he might attend family worship in his own house, was an example of a good man living in the world without yielding to evil influences or forgetting his higher obligations to God. Our daily papers often contain advertisements like this: "Wanted, a boy to attend bar!" It might as well read, "Wanted, a boy to be ruined, body and soul." Let the bright, earnest lad, standing on the threshold of life, shun such tempting offers as this! Even the innocent pleasures of the world, if found amongst evil associations,

are not as the waters of the Nile, leaving, when they are gone, the germs of fertility and beauty to bud and blossom, and causing the heart to rejoice; but like those unwholesome streams, polluted by the washings of poisonous minerals, depositing the seeds of disease and death for all who taste them. It may be a question of life, or death, with us—the life, or death, of the soul—whether, in any of these ways, we have pitched our tent toward Sodom. (*J. N. Norton, D.D.*) *Lot's choice*:—The well-watered plain of Jordan is a great prize for any man, and Lot has made sure of it. His estate is large, and is favoured by the sun and the clouds. Is there, then, any drawback? Read: "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." A great estate, but bad neighbours! Material glory, but moral shame! Noble landscapes, but mean men! But Lot did just what men are doing to-day. He made choice of a home, without making any inquiry as to the religious state of the neighbourhood. Men do not care how poor the Church is, if the farm be good. They will give up the most inspiring ministry in the world for ten feet more garden, or a paddock to feed an ass in. They will tell you that the house is roomy, the garden is large, the air is balmy, the district is genteel, and if you ask them what religious teaching they will have there, they tell you they really do not know, but must inquire! They will take away six children into a moral desert for the sake of a garden to play in: they will leave Paul or Apollos for six feet of greenhouse! Others again fix their tent where they can get the best food for the heart's life; and they sacrifice a summer-house that they may now and again get a peep of heaven. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Self-choice*:—Lot chose for himself. He took things into his own hands, and put himself at the head of his own affairs. What became of his management we shall see presently. He asked no blessing; will the feast choke him? He sought no advice; will his wisdom mock him and torment him bitterly? He snatched at good luck; will he fall into a pit which he did not see? O my soul, make no model of this fool for thine own guidance. Perhaps his honour is but for a moment. Commit thy way unto the Lord, and choose nothing for thyself. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths. Oh rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Seek not high things for thyself, nor take thy life into thine own keeping. O my soul, I charge thee live in the secret of Christ's love. Walk in the way of the Lord: seek Him always with eager heart, and whether the road be long or short, rugged or plain, it will lead thee into the city where the angels are, and the First-born, and the loved ones who left thee long ago. (*Ibid.*) *Riches or heaven?*—Mrs. Jameson gives a very pretty apologue relating to St. John, which is sometimes included in a series of subjects from his life. Two young men, who had sold all their possessions to follow him, afterwards repented. He, perceiving their thoughts, sent them to gather pebbles and faggots, and on their return changed these into money and ingots of gold, saying to them, "Take back your riches, and enjoy them on earth, as you regret having exchanged them for heaven!" This story is represented on one of the windows of the cathedral at Bourges. The two young men stand before St. John, with a heap of gold on one side and a heap of stones and faggots on the other.

Ver. 13. But the men of Sodom were wicked.—*The ministry of nature*:—We here behold the wickedness of man in strange conjunction (ver 10) and contrast with the beauty of nature. I. HUMAN DEPRAVITY AS DISCOVERED BY THE LIGHT OF NATURE. 1. The wealth of nature, and the poverty of man. 2. The cleanliness of nature, and the filthiness of man. 3. The order of nature, and the lawlessness of man. 4. The generosity of nature contrasted with the selfishness of man. 5. The joy of nature contrasted with the misery of man. II. THE INABILITY OF NATURE TO RESTORE MAN TO PIETY AND HAPPINESS. Consider—1. Those nations which dwell amid specially fair or splendid scenery. We have a striking illustration of the moral inefficiency of natural scenery in the text. The land is "as the garden of the Lord." But the people? South speaks of sinners: "Who first turn grace, and then nature itself, out of doors." This is descriptive of the inhabitants of this beautiful land. Again, we have an example in the Canaanites. And have we not examples in modern times of the inefficacy of nature to exalt man? The magnificent South Sea Islands and their inhabitants. Everywhere the glory of nature is stained with the scarlet of human sin, and nature can do nothing to purge that stain away. Or, consider—2. Those individuals who live in special communion with nature. The sailor, the shepherd, the peasant—are these remarkable for refinement of taste or morals? We think not. But it may be said that these are only

door-keepers of the Palace Beautiful; well then, what of the High Priests, who draw near the inmost shrines of nature? The poet, the painter, the philosopher—what of these? Are these exceptionally good? We think the common verdict would be against them. No. The great and glorious globe is impotent to regenerate. It charms the eye, feasts the imagination, but it has no power to reach the deep places of our nature and fill us with purity and strength. Nature may make a good man better, but it cannot make a bad man good. III. THE NEED AND PRECIOUSNESS OF THE GOSPEL. The lovers of nature remain corrupt and workers of iniquity, but the gospel changes the hearts and lives of those who accept it. 1. There is a lesson here for those who wish to substitute science for the Scriptures. Science, we are told, is to refine, moralize, spiritualize the people. Much of this is delusive. Scientific and philosophic knowledge has no power of itself to create right and truly religious feeling. 2. Another lesson is here for those who wish to open museums and picture-galleries on Sunday. Contemplating marbles and pictures, do men gain the whiteness of the one or the beauty of the other? Let the moral statistics of Paris and Rome answer. 3. A final lesson is here for those who seek to substitute the temple of nature for the temple of grace. (*W. L. Watkinson.*) *Flee from unholy company*:—Darest thou come where such ill scents are to be taken as may soon infect thy soul? Of all trades, it would not do well for the collier and the fuller to live together. What one cleanseth the other will blacken and defile. The Spirit of God hath not washed thee clean, that thou shouldst run where thou wilt be made foul. (*W. Gurnall.*) *Shunning evil*:—It is related of William S. Stockton, the father of Frank Stockton, that he would cross to the sunny side of the street on a hot summer's day so as to avoid the shadow of the Arch Street Theatre, such was his intense hatred of it. (*H. O. Mackey.*) *Evil to be shunned*:—Sir Peter Lely once said he never looked at a bad picture if he could help it, as he found it "tainted his own pencil." (*Ibid.*) *Wicked companions*:—The impious lives of the wicked are as contagious as the most dreadful plague that infects the air. When the doves of Christ lie among such pots, their yellow feathers are sullied. You may observe that in the oven the fine bread frequently hangs upon the coarse, but the coarse very seldom adheres to the fine. If you mix an equal portion of sour vinegar and sweet wine together, you will find that the vinegar will sooner sour the wine than the wine sweeten the vinegar. That is a sound body that continues healthful in a pest-house. It is a far greater wonder to see a saint maintain his purity among sinners than it is to behold a sinner becoming pure among saints. Christians are not always like fish, which retain their freshness in a salt sea; or, like the rose, which preserves its sweetness among the most noisome weeds; or, like the fire, which burns the hottest when the season is coldest. A good man was once heard to lament "that, as often as he went into the company of the wicked, he returned less a man from them than he was before he joined with them." The Lord's people, by keeping evil company, are like persons who are much exposed to the sun, insensibly tanned. (*T. Secker.*) *Danger of contamination*:—Sophronius, a wise teacher, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright. "Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day when he forbade her, in company with her brother, to visit the volatile Lucinda, "you must think us very childish if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it." The father took in silence a dead coal from the hearth, and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child; take it." Eulalia did so, and behold her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened, and, as it chanced, her white dress also. "You cannot be too careful in handling coals," said Eulalia, in vexation. "Yes, truly," said the father. "You see, my child, that coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the vicious." (*From the German.*)

VERG. 14-18. *All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*—*The saints' comfort in solitude*:—I. THE DIVINE VOICE IS MORE DISTINCTLY HEARD. 1. We need this consolation to confirm our faith. 2. We require a renewed sense of the Divine approval. 3. We require comfort for the evils we have suffered on account of religion. II. THE DIVINE PROMISES ARE MORE CLEARLY APPREHENDED. 1. We are more free to survey the greatness of our inheritance. 2. We have an enhanced idea of the plentifulness of the Divine resources. III. WE ARE LED ON TO PERCEIVE THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LIFE. 1. Our senses deceive us. 2. Our youthful hopes deceive us. Let us learn, then, that "there is nothing sure but

heaven." IV. THE SPIRIT OF DEVOTION IS STRENGTHENED. 1. When God speaks to the soul, our sense of reverence is deepened. 2. When God speaks, our sense of duty is deepened. (*T. H. Leale.*) *God's promise to Abraham*:—I. GOD ALWAYS COMES NEAR TO HIS SEPARATED ONES. II. GOD WILL DO BETTER FOR THOSE WHO TRUST HIM, THAN THEY COULD DO FOR THEMSELVES. III. GOD BIDS US APPROPRIATE HIS GIFTS (ver. 17). (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *Abraham's reward*:—1. Saints who hang loose, and are indifferent for the world, have the best appearance of God. 2. God is not forgetful to comfort His, who are willing to bear injuries from men for His sake. 3. God hath a speech to make His own to understand His mind. So God said to Abram. 4. When creature-comforts leave God's servants, usually He comes Himself to them. 5. God singles out souls to whom He speaks comfortably in His promises; a stranger intermeddled not with their joy. 6. Sensible demonstrations God sometimes affords of future mercies unto His. 7. Large bounds God hath allowed for the typical inheritance of His Church here, which note larger in the heavenly Canaan. 8. God's demonstration of mercies sometimes precedes His donation and infers it (ver. 14). 9. God is free and full in allotting the inheritance of His Church. 10. Jehovah hath what He giveth, therefore He giveth surely; He cannot deceive. 11. God's promise to Abram is fulfilled to his seed, through many generations. 12. God hath His ever in making covenant with His people according to His will; which it concerneth God's covenanted ones to know (ver. 15). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Earth taken with meekness*:—There is nothing lost by meekness and yielding. Abraham yields over his right of choice: Lot taketh it. And, behold, Lot is crossed in that which he chose, Abraham blessed in that which was left him. As heaven is taken by violence, so is earth with meekness. And God (the true Proprietary) loves no tenants better, nor grants larger leases to any, than the meek. (*J. Trapp.*) *The Christian's wealth consists in God's promises*:—Men use to reckon their wealth, not by what ready money they have only, but by the good bonds and leases they can produce. A great part of a Christian's estate lies in bonds and bills of God's hands. (*Ibid.*) *God's promise unchangeable*:—In commercial crises, manhood is at a greater discount than funds are. Suppose a man had said to me last spring, "If there comes a pinch in your affairs, draw on me for ten thousand dollars." The man said so last spring, but I should not dare to draw on him this autumn. I should say, "Times have changed; he would not abide by it." But God's promises are from everlasting to everlasting; and He always stands up to them. There never was a run on heaven which was not promptly met. No creature in all the world, or in lying, audacious hell, shall ever say that he drew a draft on heaven and that God dishonoured it. (*H. W. Beecher.*) *I will make thy seed as the dust*.—*God's word of promise to Abram*:—1. Promise to promise, seed to land, God adds to His covenanted friend Abram, for his good. 2. God's word of promise calleth things that are not, as if they were. that is, puts into being what is not. 3. God's word of promise putting into being is irreversible. He speaketh and doth it. 4. Innumerable issues, as the dust, sand, and stars, can God raise out of dead bodies (Heb. xi. 22). 5. Children are God's gift, when and to whom He pleaseth (Psa. cxxvii.) 6. Man's reach of understanding is too shallow to compass the works of God's promise (ver. 16). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Walk through the land*.—*Lessons*:—1. Double demonstrations of mercies, and double promises, will God give for the support of the faith of His servants. 2. God enjoins experience sometimes for the help of faith in His promises. 3. God would have His saints reach the utmost dimensions of His promises (Eph. iii. 19). 4. God sheweth good things to His people which He purposeth to bestow on their succeeding generations. 5. God's promise to the head is performed in the seed. 6. Free promise should provoke souls to get experience of the good things to come. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Ver. 18. Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.—*Mamre*:—Mamre is the first village that comes before us distinctly in any authentic history. If Ararat was the cradle of the races of our world, Mamre was the cradle of the Church. I. MAMRE WAS A CHURCH AMONG THE TREES. II. IT WAS A REFUGE FOR FAITH. Abraham and the patriarchs were emigrants; they left for the honour of God. The East is full of traditions concerning Abraham and his hatred to idolatry, and how he forsook the worship of the fire and the sun. He had come from the neighbourhood where the Babel society was founded—faith, not in God, but in bricks—it had all ended in confusion, but the sacred memories of Mamre, where Abraham reared an

altar to the Lord, these linger and send out their influence still. A high faithfulness ruled the life of Mamre, the life of domestic piety—the first story given us of the life of faith, where Abraham raised an altar and called upon the name of the Lord. III. The village of Mamre was the village of sacred promise. What night was that, when among its moorlands the Lord appeared unto Abraham in a vision and consecrated those heights by the glowing promises which we still recognize as true? In that little mountain hamlet was given the promise of the Messiah's reign. IV. Mamre: what guests came thither? Here was that great entertainment made, "where," says quaint Thomas Fuller, "the covert of the tree was the dining-room, probably the ground the board, Abraham the caterer, and Sarah the cook; a welcome their cheer; angels, and Christ in the notion of an angel, their guests." V. At Mamre are the oldest authentic graves of this earth—among them the grave of Abraham, the friend of God. (*E. Parton Hood.*) *Abram's altar*:—Abram's altar was intended—1. As a public profession of religion in the midst of enemies. 2. As a constant memorial of God's presence. 3. As a tribute of gratitude for His mercies. 4. As expressing a sense of obligation to His love, and a desire to enjoy His presence. 5. As a sign of his determination to be fully dedicated to God. (*T.H. Leale.*) *Lessons*:—1. Faith gives immediate obedience unto God's advice. 2. Grace will untent souls anywhere, to go where God will have them. 3. God sometimes scatters brethren in the Church to carry saving knowledge to strangers; so here with Abram's motions. 4. God sometimes makes the places of His Church's habitation memorable. 5. The faithful cannot sit down quietly in any place without God. 6. God's promise draweth out the saints' worship of, and sacrifice to, Him. 7. Saints' worship is such as is instituted by God only, a single altar. 8. God's faithful ones desire to instruct others in the worship of God, so Abram to Mamre. 9. Jehovah terminates all his saints' worship and obedience. It is all to Jehovah (ver. 18). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Hebron*:—From Bethel, Abraham travelled southward till he pitched his tents in the oak-grove of Mamre, at Hebron, situated in a cool and elevated region, and commanding a fertile region; about twenty-two Roman miles south of Jerusalem, and belonging to the later territory of Judah. Hebron was one of the oldest towns of Palestine; it was built seven years before Tanis in Egypt; and was early the residence of a heathen king. However, it was, by Joshua, appointed as one of the cities of refuge, and assigned to the Levites; it thus assumed the character of a holy town where vows were taken and performed; and David chose it as his abode when he was king of Judah, during seven years and a half. These circumstances suffice to explain the interest evinced for Hebron in the history of the patriarchs; Abraham resided here when the angels made him the happy announcement of the birth of a son; here he acquired the first territorial property in Canaan; and here was the burial-place of himself, of Isaac, and of Jacob, of Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah. The town was, therefore, appropriately distinguished by the erection of an altar (ver. 18). Later, it was fortified by Rehoboam among many other cities; it is still mentioned after the exile; it then belonged to the Idumeans, who were, however, expelled from it by Judas Maccabæus; in the Roman war, it was captured and burnt by the enemies, without, however, being destroyed. In the period of the Crusades, after having, for a time, suffered from heavy attacks, it was made the seat of the bishopric of St. Abraham (in 1167), but returned already in 1187 into the possession of the Moslems, who have ever since retained it, though it was several times assailed and plundered by rebellious pachas or lawless chiefs. In the fifteenth century, it was distinguished by a magnificent hospital and general charity for the distribution of bread and other necessities to strangers. The present Hebron is a large village rather than a town; it counts among its inhabitants about a hundred Jewish families, living together in a separate quarter; as, in fact, Jews, though often ill-treated, oppressed, and insulted, seem always to have lived in the town, with few interruptions; but it is not unimportant in its commerce, though it is chiefly celebrated for its glass-works, which form the principal articles of export. It is surrounded by elevations, containing the highest peaks in the range of the mountains of Judah. Its blooming vicinity, with its vineyards and orchards, its wells, its rich pastures and numerous flocks and herds, is one of the proofs that the care of the agriculturist may still convert Palestine's desolation into smiling prosperity. The tombs of the patriarchs and of their wives, situated at the eastern end of Hebron on the slope of a ravine, attracted continually the visits of travellers; over the cave of Machpelah, called Al Magr by the Arabians, and surrounded by a high and strong wall, a mosque was erected which the Moslems regard as one of the four holiest

sanctuaries of the world, from which Christians are excluded, and which stratagem only has enabled a few Europeans to enter. The town itself was, from that structure, called the Castle of Abraham, and received, therefore, from the Mohammedans the name of *Bet El-Khatil*, that is, the house of the "Friend of God," which is the honorary title given to Abram by the Arabians. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 1-12. These made war.—*The first war on record*.—I. As to its MOTIVES.

1. Ambition. 2. Plunder. 3. The desire to recover lost sovereignty. II. As to the CONDITIONS of its SUCCESS. From the failure of human foresight, and the endless complications of events, it may happen that the battle is not always to the strong; still there are general conditions of success. Some of these may be seen in the instance before us. 1. By depriving the enemy of all friendly help. 2. By favourable physical conditions. 3. By moral causes. III. As to its RESULTS. 1. That men often suffer who take no part in the quarrel. 2. That the vanquished do not always benefit by the discipline of adversity. (*T. H. Leale.*)

Hints for teaching.—I. See here an example and contrast of UNLAWFUL and LAWFUL WAR. Chedorlaomer and Abram both went to war; but the former did so from pride, covetousness, and hatred to his neighbours; the latter from love to his neighbour, pity for the innocent captives, affection for his kindred, and zeal for right. The outward act was the same, but the motives as different as light and darkness. But could not God have delivered Lot and the other captives without Abram's interference? Certainly; but God commonly works by means, not by miracle; and this was the means He chose, to humble the pride of the oppressor, to deliver the injured, to exercise the faith and courage and energy of Abram and his servants, and to put honour on Abram. War is always a dreadful thing; it must also be a most wicked thing, except only when the great law of love to our neighbour requires it (1 Kings viii. 44; Judg. vi. 12, 14, 16; Rom. xiii. 4). II. MELCHIZEDEK is one of the most remarkable OLD TESTAMENT TYPES OF CHRIST (see Psa. cx. 4; Zech. vi. 11-13; Heb. vi. 20, vii. 1-3). By this I understand, not that Melchizedek personally, during his lifetime, was a type of Christ to Abram or his contemporaries; but that the history of Melchizedek's interview with Abram is so recorded, by Divine inspiration, as to supply an image of Christ. The type lies not in the man, but in the Scripture record. St. Paul expresses this by saying he was "made like unto the Son of God," i.e., made in the history a figure of Him. In his names and title, "King of righteousness" and "King of peace" (Isa. ix. 6; xi. 4; xxxiii. 1, 17). (*The Congregational Pulpit.*)

War.—I. THE MARAUDING CHIEFTAINS. 1. Their names suggestive of character. Heads of savage and wandering tribes; having their head-quarters in the plain of Shinar and neighbourhood. 2. Cause of this recorded war not given. Probably to be referred exclusively to the cause stated (James iv. 1). Doubtless plunder and tribute the chief objects sought. 3. Falling upon the kings of the plain, most probably by surprise, they were victorious. Levied tribute and returned. 4. Tribute paid during twelve years; declined in the thirteenth year. By this time the kings of the plain thought they were strong enough to resist; had probably organized resistance. 5. Chedorlaomer and his confederates march to enforce payment, taking and plundering various cities on their way (vers. 5-7). 6. Battle of the Vale of Siddim. The kings of the plain hemmed in and destroyed. The nature of the ground facilitating their overthrow. II. THE CAPTURE OF LOT. 1. He was in Sodom when it was taken (vers. 11, 12). He now suffers the penalty of his folly. "He that soweth to the wind shall reap the whirlwind." 2. Perils arising from worldly choice and ungodly companions. Young people often suffer through their companions. Lot lost the property for the increase of which he was so anxious. He trusted more to the strong walls and untried friends in Sodom than in the living God. "This their way is their folly." 3. A hopeless captivity and poverty are now before him. From what quarter could he expect deliverance? III. THE BRAVERY OF ABRAM. 1. He hears the news. 2. Summons his confederates. This an alliance for mutual protection and defence. 3. Collects and arms his trained servants. These, with the retainers of his friends, make a numerous band. 4.

Marches in pursuit of Chedorlaomer. Might have abandoned Lot to his fate. Hurries through the country and overtakes the spoilers and their captives at Dan. 5. The night attack. Surprise of Lot. Abram to the rescue. The forces divide, that the enemies' camp may be attacked from various sides at once. Consternation and rout of the confederate kings of the east, and the rescue of Lot. 6. The kings not only routed, but pursued and slain. A guarantee of freedom in the future from molestation. LEARN—I. Evils of war; desolation carried through a great country and into many cities and homes. The innocent perish with the guilty. II. Results of thoughtless choice of home and friends. III. Friend in need is a friend indeed. Abram prosperous does not abandon Lot in adversity. IV. Jesus, the great conqueror, delivers our captive souls. (J. C. Gray.) *The battle of the kings—Melchizedek*:—I. IN ITS LITERAL ASPECTS, WE SHALL CONSIDER THE OCCASION OF ABRAHAM'S CONFLICT; HIS SPIRIT AND CONDUCT IN IT; AND HIS BEHAVIOUR AFTER IT. 1. The occasion. It was necessary that depredators should be kept in check, and the plan adopted by Abraham was the only one possible in that age. Abraham was not actuated by love of conquest or desire of gain, still less by a spirit of revenge. He merely sought to deliver those who had unjustly been made captives, and to recover stolen property. His functions, as warrior, were essentially those of our modern police. It seems impossible to find fault with his conduct in entering on such an expedition; and thus far it would be easy to show the allowability and even the duty of engaging in defensive war. You will also see how piety and faith do not unfit a man for the active duties of life; or even for bold and heroic enterprises, when these come in the way of duty. Religion does not unman us. It does not make us effeminate, or cowards. Rather, it ennobles and strengthens our whole nature. 2. Abraham's conduct in the fight. It was distinguished by generosity, valour, prudence, righteousness, and faith. It is not hard to account for his victory. 3. His behaviour after it. We see this in his conduct toward Melchizedek; and in his conduct toward the king of Sodom. He presented to God a tithe of all the spoils, which at once displayed his piety, and rebuked the idolatry of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain. From motives of piety, we may explain his conduct to the king of Sodom. He refused any reward for his services. This he did, in order to evince the purity of his motives; also in order to avoid undue fellowship with idolaters. This behaviour was the more necessary because of the false position in which Lot had placed himself. And here we see the folly of mingling closely with the ungodly. Lot could not rebuke the Sodomites, for why had he come to live among them? Neither did he gain anything, but lost much, by preferring their country on account of its wealth and fertility. II. APPLY IT TO OUR SPIRITUAL HISTORY. 1. The believer is called to fight against many foes. This is not a fiction, but a reality; nor is this a despicable, but a most important species of conflict. Our enemies are spiritual spoliators. 2. Let us consider the spiritual Melchizedek, and our relation to him. 3. See in this history how far God notices the wars and commotions of the world. Only so far as they stand connected with the history and welfare of His people. We should do well to cultivate the same spirit; and judge of all events by the light of the Word of God. And then we shall be better able to comprehend the real importance of mundane changes and events; while we learn to be patient and hopeful under all adverse circumstances, for we know that God will take care of us; and the path of duty will be the path of safety. (*The Congregational Pulpit*.) *War*:—Prince Eugene, speaking of war, said, "The thirst of renown sometimes insinuates itself into our councils, under the garb of national honour. It dwells on imaginary insults; it suggests harsh and abusive language; the people go on from one thing to another, till they put an end to the lives of half a million of men. A military man becomes so sick of bloody scenes in war, that in peace he is averse to recommence them. I wish that the first minister, who is called to decide on peace and war, had only seen actual service." (J. Parker, D.D.) *The Salt Sea*.—*The Dead Sea* a special memento of the doom that awaits the wicked:—Near the south-east corner of Palestine is a body of water more remarkable in some respects than any other on the earth. Though the Jordan is annually pouring a vast quantity of fresh water into this remarkable lake, its own water is intensely salt, exceeding in saltiness that of the ocean; and so great is its specific gravity that "one floats easily on its surface, as if reclining on a couch." He who bathes in it can, as Mr. Stephens affirms, lie on the water and read or even sleep; but when he comes out, his body will smart and burn, and he will find himself partially incrustated with salt. This mysterious lake has no visible outlet, and yet, strange to say, it never overflows.

By means of evaporation it preserves nearly the same level throughout the year. No vessels are seen on its bosom, no fish are found darting through its saline waters, and neither grass nor flowers nor green trees are found in its immediate vicinity. A silence like that of the tomb broods over it, and its entire aspect is dreary, dismal, and desolate in the extreme. In view of these facts, it is not strange that what in our text Moses calls "the Salt Sea" should in modern times be denominated the Dead Sea; for, perhaps, no better emblem of death and desolation could be found on the face of the globe. But has this mysterious sea always existed? Has the gloom and desolation that now marks the spot always reigned there? Ah, no! The spot now occupied by the Salt Sea was once a part of the fertile valley of the Jordan; and the tramp of armed men was once heard where now an almost unbroken silence prevails. What has produced this marvellous change? What throe of nature, what mighty power, has transformed the Vale of Siddim into a salt, sluggish, unnavigated lake, having naught but its history to render it attractive? The answer is found in Gen. xix. 24, 25. So filthy and unutterably loathsome had the doings of the Sodomites and their neighbours become, that God saw fit not only to put an end to their vile career, but to make the very spot they occupied, the very cities they dwelt in, a visible and abiding monument of His abhorrence of sin, and of what all who persist in sin have to expect. He saw fit to convert a fertile and populous valley into a scene of desolation and ruin; to bury beneath the waters of the Dead Sea a tract of earth which its inhabitants had so awfully defiled. God's object in all this was, to "make them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." And to render the lesson more effectual, He chose to set up, on the spot once occupied by those cities, a striking remembrance of their wickedness, and of the vengeance that overtook them. As a tombstone reminds us of our mortality, or as a rainbow reminds us of a deluged world, so should the Dead Sea, whether actually seen or only thought of, prove an impressive memento of "the wrath to come." Hear its warning voice, ye worldlings and sensualists, and become wise! else a desolation will soon overtake you that is far gloomier and more terrible than that which now broods over the buried cities of the plain. (*T. Williston.*)

They rebelled.—*Lessons*:—1. Ambition delays no time: when it hath power to revenge any affronts against it. From the time considered with the assailants. 2. Usually unjust rebellions are followed with severe destructions, and that speedily. 3. Ambition labours to get confederates and engage them with itself for its own ends. 4. Usurping ambition when it is powerful is very cruel, smiting, killing. 5. Ambitious oppressors spare not nations in their power. They destroy nations not a few. Such is the rant of the Assyrian (*Isa. xxxvii.*). 6. Usurping tyrants pursue after blood when they have once tasted it. 7. God's over-ruling providence maketh wicked men execute vengeance upon each other for their wickedness. 8. Ambitious usurpers destroy all that is in their way to their unjust ends (*vers. 5, 6, 7.*) (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Kiriathaim.—*Kiriathaim*:—We have here some of the most ancient houses of which the world can boast. As Porter remarks, they are just such dwellings as a race of giants would build. The walls and roofs, but especially the ponderous gates, doors, and bars, are in every way characteristic of a period when architecture was in its infancy, when giants were masons, and when strength and security were the grand requisites. The heavy stone slabs of the roofs resting on the massive walls make the structure as firm as if built of solid masonry, and the black basalt used is almost as hard as iron. There can scarcely be a doubt that these are the cities erected and inhabited by the Rephaim—that on these masses of masonry, which Ritter remarks now stand as constant witnesses of the conquest of Bashan by Jehovah, Abram gazed—and that amid these secure strongholds Chedorlaomer and his Elamite warriors roamed ere they attacked the kings in the Vale of Siddim. Yet how dreary now! (*W. Adamson.*) **Horites.**—*Horites*:—1. These received their name from dwelling in caves. Strabo says that the life of these cave-dwellers was nomadic. They are governed by tyrants, wear skins, and carry spears and shields which are covered with raw hides. They anoint their bodies with a mixture of blood and milk, drink an infusion of buckthorn, and travel and tend their flocks by night. 2. It is interesting to know that the excavated dwellings of the Horites are still found in hundreds in the sandstone cliffs and mountains of Edom, and especially in Petra. Some of them, Wilson says, have windows as well as doors. In front of others are receptacles for water. They are all approachable by a common way. The region is now a habitation of dragons—literally, as Irby says, swarming with lizards and scorpions, &c. 3. Mount Hor, upon which Aaron

died, is a striking summit. Mangles remarks that an artist who would study rock scenery in all its wildest and most extravagant forms, and in colours, which, to no one who has not seen them, would scarcely appear to be in nature, would find himself rewarded should he resort to Mount Hor for that purpose. (*Ibid.*) *Mountain flight*:—1. When the South African chief, Sekukuni, who had ravaged the borders of the white man's land, was assailed by the English soldiers, he and his followers fled to a mountain, and hid themselves in the caves and recesses. 2. History relates how it was usual for the Vaudois, when attacked by the Papal troops, to remove their families and goods for security to the Alpine heights and caverns, where they could make a firm stand against their merciless foes. 3. The Archbishop of Tyre relates that when Baldwin IV., one of the Crusade kings of Jerusalem, ravaged the fruitful valley of Bacar, the inhabitants fled to the mountains, whither his troops could not easily follow them. 4. D'Arvieux says that in his time, when the Arabs attacked the rebel peasants of the Holy Land in the plain of Gonin, they fled towards the hills, and there, hiding themselves, were secure from attack or pursuit. 5. This explains the statement here that the defeated Sodomites, who escaped from the field of battle, betook themselves to a mountain. And it is supposed that among the fugitives thus secure from the Elamite attack was the king of Sodom. 6. It is worthy of notice that in the solemn war on Mount Olives the Lord employs this figure in connection with the Roman armies: "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Luke xxi. 21). See also Rev. vi. 15. (*Ibid.*) *Lessons*:—1. Sinners' advantages may prove contrary, to be disadvantages to them. 2. Pits may take those who intend them for others (Psa. ix.). 3. God makes sinners fly and die, and be dispersed by sinners. 4. Pits and mountains are chosen to perish in by flesh, rather than the sword of their enemies. 5. Ambitious wars make havoc and lay waste, by killing, plundering, and starving all that be in their way (Jer. 11). 6. Wars in the world sometimes prove very prejudicial to the innocent Church of God. 7. Ambitious conquerors spare neither good nor bad. All they have is spoiled. 8. It is bad sitting down for the saints among the tents of the wicked. He that chooseth their pleasures, shall feel their pains. (G. Hughes, B.D.)

Vers. 13-16. When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants.—Abram as a warrior:—I. **IN THE CAUSE OF MAN.** 1. The sacredness of natural affection. 2. The noble generosity which forgets the faults of friends or kindred in their distress. 3. The heroism which sacrifices self for the benefit of others. II. **IN THE CAUSE OF GOD.** 1. His engaging in war cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that he had a Divine warrant for his conduct. (1) As a private individual he would not have the right to wage war. (2) His chance of success, to all human appearance, was small. 2. He wages war as the ruler and proprietor, by Divine right, of the land. (T. H. Leale.) *The blessed life illustrated in the history of Abraham*:—And now what think you Abraham shall do? Away in Hebron he dwells hidden in his pavilion from the strife of men, kept in perfect peace, untroubled amidst his flocks and herds, wrapped in communion with God. As the messenger arrives and inquires for him, do they go forth to find him at the altar and in prayer? Do they tell him the latest news—all about "Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar?" Think of the holy man, waving them away with his hand, indignant at the interruption. "What is all that to me? Do you know that I am seeking a country out of sight, and that I am but a pilgrim here? It is not for me, called with so high a calling, to trouble myself with such things, or indeed to heed them. Leave me to my altar and to my God." And he turns again to pray. If he had done so the blessed life would not have been his. Many a man has tried to overcome this world by running away from it, but has never succeeded. The life that loses all interest in this world, in its politics, in its business, and thousand interests, is not the blessed life. You may baptize this selfish indifference with any sentimental name you please—call it, if you will, heavenly-mindedness: but it remains as ugly as ever. So long as I am in this world, so long ought its concerns to concern me, and its interests to interest me. Selfish isolation will not make me any more of an angel, only less of a man. The blessed life, the life of communion with God and surrender to Him, does not give me a pair of wings to fly away from the world; it does much better than that, it teaches me how to put the world under my feet and keep it there. Turn the message round a little, and there is another aspect of it worth dwelling upon: "Lot is taken,

Abram's brother's son." What shall he say? "What have I to do with Lot? we have dissolved partnership. He has gone his way, and I have gone mine; and we have no further dealings together. He cannot complain, for I do him no wrong; he made his choice, and I had to accept what was not good enough for him. He knew the people that he was going amongst, and has only himself to blame. If I were in trouble he certainly would not go far to help me." Abraham could not have said so: depend upon it we cannot either, if our life is the life of surrender to God and communion with Him. Very significant is the first word: "And when Abram heard that his brother"—Do you think it is a misprint? I think not. He was only a nephew in prosperity, but in trouble he is a brother. That is the blessed life, when every man is in true relation to us; but sorrow makes men very much nearer and more to us. Many an earnest man misses the blessed life just at this point. You think you can quite justify the indignation you feel. Your position and natural feeling require that there should be an explanation or apology before you can render any help. So the opportunity is lost; and who, think you, is the loser, he whom I might have helped, or I? I who might have been a blessing shall be unblest. But turn the incident round again, and let another light fall upon it. However much concerned about Lot, and however eager to help him, what can Abraham do? The case was really a desperate one. The mightiest monarchs probably in the world had combined their forces and conquered all the nations that dwelt in their course. There was one thing that he could do: perhaps only one,—things are never so desperate but that we can pray about them,—and that Abraham did pray comes out later in the chapter: "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God." As to fighting in relation to the blessed life, I do not know that I need say more than this: that when God bids us fight and promises to go with us, then let us go forth as bravely as Abraham, but till then let us try to "live peaceably with all men." But the great thing for us to heed is this, our faith must be after the pattern and spirit of Abraham's. There must be the same indignation against wrong. Cold-blooded indifference, that goes on its way never seeing the misery of men and women, never heeding the want of our poor humanity, is simply devilish; and not much better is the sentimentality that cannot bear to see what others have to endure. Abraham was not a man of war, he was a man of peace: a man perhaps almost too ready for compromise. But his brother suffers—then Abraham cannot be quiet: all his soul is stirred within him. Nor does his indignation waste itself only in pity. He goes forth for his deliverance, with all the help he can get; he is away to help this brother of his as much as in him lies. (*M. G. Pearse.*) *The victorious warrior*:—In this chapter Abram appears in a new character. He had encouraged Lot to separate from him for the sake of peace, and now we find him taking up arms at the head of a confederacy of Amorite chiefs, and contending against Elam, then the ruling power in that part of Asia. When Lot went to live in the Jordan valley, the kings of the Pentapolis acknowledged the suzerainty of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and paid him an annual tribute. At length, however, they had rebelled, and Chedorlaomer, with three tributary kings, after sweeping down upon the surrounding tribes, defeated the allied army in the Valley of Siddim. The foreign host then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah, "took Lot and his goods" (ver. 12), and withdrew up the Jordan valley, laden with booty and captives. I. ABRAM'S RESCUE OF LOT (vers. 13-16). In this Abram showed—1. A magnanimous and generous spirit. He did not say to himself, "Serve him right; my ungrateful nephew has made his bed, and I shall allow him to lie upon it." His natural affection and family spirit, together with the grace of God reigning in his heart, would not permit him to cherish any secret satisfaction in connection with Lot's punishment. 2. Martial prowess. In the sudden arming of his household, the gathering of his Amorite allies, the rapid march to the springs of the Jordan, the skilful tactics adopted in the attack, and the pursuit of the flying foe as far as Damascus, Abram discovered not only great gallantry, but also brilliant generalship. He employed the same tactics which Gideon used long afterwards to surprise the Midianites (Judges vii. 16), which Saul adopted against the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi. 11), and which have commended themselves to the greatest generals in all ages. What a contrast is presented here between the patriarch's distrustful timidity in Egypt (chap. xii. 12, 13), and the heroism which he displayed in the rescue of his kinsman! It was "by faith" that Abram fought to recover Lot, and "in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence." II. ABRAM'S MEETING WITH THE KING OF SODOM (vers. 17, 21-24). 1. Abram's personal disinterestedness and independence (vers. 22, 23). Abram was not "seeking his own" when he went forth to rescue Lot, and he will

accept nothing for having done his duty. The Lord whom he serves has made him heir of the whole land, and he cannot receive any portion of his inheritance from man, least of all from the representative of the filthy Sodomites. 2. His considerateness of the claims of others (ver. 24). He is generous, but he does not forget to be just. His own young men shall have only what of the spoil they have used as rations—a portion which, of course, could not be returned; but his allies, Aner, Eschcol, and Mamre, are entitled to their fair share of the plunder, and this cannot in equity be taken from them, except with their consent. III. ANNAH'S INTERVIEW WITH MELCHIZEDEK (vers. 18-20). How marked the contrast between the patriarch's attitude towards the King of Sodom and his conduct to this King of Salem! He saw in the former the chief representative of the wicked heathen Pentapolis, but he recognized in the latter "the priest of the Most High God" (ver. 19). So, while he maintained a dignified reserve in his interview with the King of Sodom, and refused to receive any benefit at his hands, he accepted refreshment for both body and spirit from Melchizedek. In his dealings with Melchizedek two traits in Abraham's character are brought out. 1. His recognition of the communion of saints. The patriarch discerned in this royal priest—although he was a stranger, and perhaps a Hamite—a faith and piety closely akin with his own. These two eminent personages met on the basis of a common worship, involving a common confession of monotheism. 2. His profound humility as a man of faith. "He that had the promises" (Heb. vii. 6) felt himself honoured in being blessed by this Canaanite pontiff, and in offering his tithes to God through him. LESSONS: 1. Trust in God enables its possessor to be helpful to his fellow-men, while it also keeps him exalted above all who are not like-minded with himself. We may well covet earnestly the wonder-working faith which Abram manifested in this great achievement. 2. We must beware lest the Jew beat us in noble behaviour. He can be great! He can forgive vile injuries! 3. Abram, in declining to retain any of the spoil for himself, acted under the guidance of a great principle, and not of the custom of the times, reminding us thereby that moral principle, rather than the example of others, ought to be our rule of action. 4. It casts a dark light upon the character of Lot that he should have allowed himself to return to Sodom after his rescue by Abraham, instead of seeing that he had suffered a punishment which was not only fully deserved, but also plainly premonitory. 5. "The sight of some men disfigures us. We feel after being with them that we can never be mean again. Abram had seen Melchizedek, and the King of Sodom dwindled into a common man. Abram had eaten the holy sacrament, and after that all gifts were poor." (*Charles Jerdan, M.A., LL.B.*) Refreshment between the battles:—I. HERE IS THE UNSELFISH AND SUCCESSFUL INTERPOSITION OF A SEPARATED MAN, ON BEHALF OF OTHERS. II. THE TIME OF A GREAT SUCCESS IS OFTEN THE SIGNAL FOR A GREAT TEMPTATION. III. THE PREVENTIENT GRACE OF GOD. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) Abraham's conquest:—There are two lessons implied in Abraham's conquest. 1. One is, that military skill and experience are often easily vanquished by untaught valour, when that is at once inspired by impulse, guided by wisdom, and connected with a good cause. The history of earth contains the record of no battles so glorious as those of Morgarten, Bannockburn, Drumclog, the taking of the Bastille, and the Three Days of Paris in 1830. On such occasions, war assumes a grander aspect, is freed from its conventional and hireling character, unfrocked of its tame uniform, and catches the wild light of liberty and the free breeze of the mountains. 2. Another lesson we gather from Abraham's conquest is, that Christian duty varies at different times and in different circumstances. Sometimes it is the Christian's part to stay at home; and at other times to go far hence among the heathen. Sometimes it is his duty to sit under his family oak and attend to his family exercises; and at another time, like Abraham, to choose some post of peril, and do some good deed of daring. (*G. Gilfillan.*) Lessons:—1. Providence, usually in the deepest distress of His servants, sends speediest means for their help. 2. God letteth some escape in public calamities, that may seek succour, for others who are oppressed. 3. God's escaped ones out of death and dangers, should haste to give tidings for help to others. 4. It is most proper that the sufferings of the Church in one place should be declared to the Church elsewhere for its relief. 5. The line of His Church, truth, and religion, God hath kept under a proper name. 6. It is fit that such as sit at ease in their own habitations should hear of the Church's troubles. 7. God can bring heathens eminently to confederate with His Church and people in affection and religion. 8. Confederates in truth are affected with the evils that betide their parties, especially in

the Church of God (ver. 13). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. Tidings of the Church's miseries should make deep impression upon its members. 2. God's servants are not slow in hearing of the miseries of the Church and helping it. 3. Brethren's captivity by oppressors should affect and move to their rescue. 4. It becomes righteous heads of families to have their servants instructed in righteousness, and trained to righteous undertakings. 5. Righteous leaders called of God may array and muster forces against oppressors. 6. Small force of men, and great faith in God, may do mighty things. 7. Leaders affected with the oppression of the Church will haste to follow the oppressors. 8. Difficulties of march in such cases do not deter believers from the pursuit (ver. 14). (*Ibid.*) *Abram's conduct*:—He did not sit in his tent and say, "He left me for his own pleasure, and now he must take the consequences of his selfishness: he thought he could do without me, now let him try." If Abram had said this there would have been a good deal of excuse for him. It would have been most human. We at all events could not have complained with any consistency, for this is exactly what we said when our friend offended us; but, to be sure, we are Christians, and Abram was only a Hebrew: and Hebrews are mean, greedy, crafty, villainous! I find we must beware, though, lest the Jew beat us in noble behaviour! He can be great! He can forgive vile injuries! How much greater should he be who has seen Christ slain and has named himself after the name of the Son of God! How noble his temper, how forgiving his spirit, how hopeful his charity! (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Abraham in the path of daily duty*:—In all this we have another illustration of the strength of Abraham's faith. It kept him equally removed from ascetic seclusion on the one hand, and worldly conformity on the other. He did not scruple to work with ungodly allies when he was himself clearly in the path of duty. Lot was a prisoner. There was no question in his mind that he should do his utmost to deliver his kinsman; and though he could hope for success in that only by joining himself for the time with the Canaanitish sheiks, and seeming to be on the side of the King of Sodom, yet he did not hesitate to take that course and leave the issue with God. Herein he has left us an example which is not without its significance; for there are movements, some political and some moral, in our city and in our land, in which we can hope to succeed only by accepting the alliance of men with whom in the highest parts of our nature we have no sympathy whatever; and there are many among us who stand aloof because they do not wish to be brought into contact with such characters. What is it but a widespread feeling of this sort which has given the regulation of municipal affairs among us into the hands of men who have in many cases neither the confidence nor the respect of the Christian portion of the community? But for Christians to stand aloof in these circumstances and let things take their course is the merest cowardice. Say not to me that you are seeking thereby to keep yourselves pure. Do your duty, and leave the consequences to God. Believe me, He will not let you suffer from that which you undertake out of a regard to His glory and the welfare of your fellow-men. So, again, there are many enterprises of benevolence in which the deliverance of our fellow-men from the misery of disease or poverty cannot be accomplished by us, unless we consent to work with persons of whose characters we cannot in all respects approve. What then? Must we refuse to sit at a benevolent board because Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre are there also? As well might we decline to lend a hand in the extinguishing of a destructive fire, because we saw one of the greatest roughts of the neighbourhood holding the hose! No! no! So long as we are in the world we shall have to meet the men of the world; we shall have to work with them, too, in benevolent matters, if at least we would set free the Lots whom tyrannous evils have taken captive; and they who hold back from the fear of contamination are signally deficient in that faith for which Abraham was so remarkable. But notice, again, that this old patriarch would not allow the presence of the ungodly to keep him from showing honour to God in the person of His priest. When Melchizedek came forth to meet him, Abraham did not treat him with coldness, because he happened at the moment to be in company with the King of Sodom. On the contrary, he showed him special honour, was not ashamed to receive his benediction, and gave him, without asking any one's leave, a tithe of the spoils. Now there was true courage! Abraham was not ashamed of his religion, and, when the occasion offered, he was ready to make it known. He did not hide his flag, but let it flutter openly in the breeze. And what a lesson is there in all this for us! It is hard enough for many of us to confess Christ in the midst of a company of His friends, and multitudes are altogether ashamed of Him in the presence of His enemies. If a stranger

happens to be our guest, and we know that he ridicules religion, we omit family worship for that evening. If a friend not remarkable for spirituality calls upon us on the Lord's day, and the time comes for us to go to the sanctuary, we are afraid to say anything about it, and we remain at home with him. If, in our business hours, a brother comes and speaks to us about spiritual things, in a style that might be as refreshing to us as the bread and wine of Melchizedek were to Abraham, we see a smile of contempt on the countenance of our worldly customer, and we plead that we are too much engaged at present to give him any more of our time. And if one waits upon us in the name of Christ, and asks our pecuniary help for his cause, we have no tithes to give him, and too frequently consider him as an intruder. Why is this? Ah, friends! let us be honest and confess it frankly, it is because we do not really believe that our chief business is with God, or that our strongest obligations are to Him. But still farther here, observe how Abraham would not consent to be laid under any debt of any sort whatever to the King of Sodom. He could take refreshment and a blessing from the hand of Melchizedek, but he would receive nothing from Bera. Why this distinction? The only answer we can give is because of the different characters of the two men. With Melchizedek he was safe; but how did he know that Bera would not claim from him some return which he could not conscientiously make? Therefore he would fetter himself with no entanglement. (*W. M. Taylor, D.D.*) *To the rescue!*—In the last century, when absence of trains and existence of bad roads isolated English towns and villages from each other, and from London, the separation of friends became a serious matter. A young maiden persuaded her relatives to allow her to leave the remote western hamlet home and to visit friends of the family in the metropolis. After a time tidings came that the maiden had been carried off, and was supposed to be concealed in the hall of a northern baronet. Distressed at the tidings, and full of love for their sister, the two brothers considered how her rescue was to be achieved. Ascertaining the whereabouts of the hall, they decided to explore its buildings in disguise, so as to learn the precise apartment in which their sister was lodged, and then, under cover of night, to secure her freedom. *A brother in battle*:—Timoleon the Corinthian was a noble pattern of fraternal love. Being in battle with the Argives, and seeing his brother fall by the wounds he had received, he instantly leaped over his dead body, and with his shield protected it from insult and plunder; and though severely wounded in the generous enterprise, he would not on any account retreat to a place of safety, till he had seen the corpse carried off the field by his friends.

Ver. 17. Return from the slaughter.—I. **THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN.** Abram returning from the subjugation of the kings, accompanied with Lot, whom he had rescued, and laden with spoils of war. 1. The aged chieftain, Abram, 83 years of age; hale, vigorous, victorious. Not always that man's return from the late enterprises of life is triumphant. 2. His retainers. His 318 servants (some, perhaps, left behind). How proud would these be of their leader. 3. Lot. Grateful that he had been rescued from captivity. 4. Other rescued captives. Their joy and thankfulness. 5. The first recorded war ended in the triumph of right. 6. The victory secured by a servant of God with limited resources. Prophetic of the greater war in which the great Seed of Abraham rescued, from a more cruel bondage, a greater number, who come off more than conquerors through Him who loved them. 7. His welcome home. The king of Sodom goes forth to meet him. The joy of those who have friends and property restored. II. **THE HIGH PRIEST'S BLESSING.** 1. The approbation of the holy, the most valuable of all human praise. The praise of some is humiliating to the receiver. Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you. To please God, and hear His "well done," the best end to seek. 2. Melchizedek, a priest of God, would approve success less than character. 3. He was hospitable, and provided refreshment for weary men. A good man's obligation to one who, for others, had fought a battle in the right. His sympathy with the emancipated. His respect for the deliverer. 4. He was faithful; and reminded Abram of the most high God, who possessed all things. Men, in their successes especially, have often need to be reminded of this; and that it is God who giveth the victory. 5. Such a reminder may do a thoughtless man good, and can do a good man no harm. Abram humbly received the reminder. III. **THE DIVISION OF THE SPOIL.** Many would have fought over it, and, if so well able as Abram, would have kept all they could. 1. He gave one-tenth of all to God. Did homage thus to Divine claims and principles in the person of Melchizedek.

2. Declined to take anything as his own share. Would not have it ever said that any man had made him rich. Though none could have said it justly. 3. Would not impose his rule upon others. Stipulated for the right of other men. Had the power to dictate, but left them to their own free choice. Would not have them coerced by his example, but claimed a portion for them. LEARN—I. To love peace, and only enter upon righteous conflicts. II. So to fight life's battle as to return victorious and with honest satisfaction. III. Cheerfully to recognize the successes of others. IV. To be more anxious about the right and true than about the profit. V. To rejoice in the Captain of our salvation, who has conquered for us, and who has rescued us from present captivity and future death. (*J. C. Gray.*) LESSONS:—1. Conquerors usually want not observance and congratulations from the world. 2. The powers of the earth are sometimes forced to acknowledge the prowess of God's saints. 3. Humanity persuades men to the acknowledgment of God to any, whom God makes helpful to them. 4. The killing of the slayer, and breaking the yoke of the oppressor is cause of congratulation to the oppressed. 5. Nature will not be slow to meet and congratulate its deliverers. 6. Deliverance may make men go far to acknowledge God's servants, who before would scarce vouchsafe to go out of doors for them. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*)

Vers. 18-20. Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine.—*The narrative of Melchizedek*.—I. CONSIDER THE HISTORICAL FACTS OF THIS NARRATIVE. 1. Melchizedek makes his appearance at the close of the first war recorded in the annals of the human race. Abraham was on his journey home from the rescue of Lot, and had reached a place called the King's Dale, when his meeting with the priest took place. 2. Who was Melchizedek? There is an old tradition of the Jews to the effect that he was Shem, the son of Noah, Shem being his personal name, Melchizedek his official designation. This, however, is improbable, since (1) it is unlikely that Moses, who has hitherto spoken of Shem by his proper name, should here veil his identity under a different one; (2) it seems unlikely that Abraham and Shem could have been co-residents in the same land without intercourse; (3) it is unlikely that a man whose pedigree was distinctly known should have been selected as a typical instance of a man whose pedigree was altogether unknown. We are therefore limited to the conclusion that he was a Canaanitish prince, who retained the uncorrupted faith of his forefathers. 3. What was the secret of his peculiar greatness? His names suggest an explanation. He must have been eminently righteous to have earned such titles as "King of Righteousness" and "King of Peace." He stood alone in his office, as priest of the Most High God. He was known by undeniable tokens as the man whom God had consecrated to be His priest. II. CONSIDER THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS NARRATIVE OF MELCHIZEDEK. 1. He was a symbol of the mystery connected with the Saviour's person. 2. He shadowed forth important truths in relation to Christ as our Priest. His priesthood was distinguished for its antiquity, its catholicity, its independence. 3. Melchizedek was the prefiguration of Christ as the King of His people. 4. The story seems to be a typical picture of Christ exercising His ministry of benediction. (*C. Stanford, D.D.*) *Abram and Melchizedek*.—The priesthood of Melchizedek was not based upon his birth, for he was not in any priestly line. It was not based upon the performance of any written laws of sacrifice; we know nothing of his burnt-offerings. But higher than any priest by birth, he was a priest of the Most High God, because of his character, his righteousness. It was a spiritual, rather than a mere legal service which he rendered. His office work and his character were a unit in their inspiring motive and in their results. "True priesthood is life, and true life is priesthood." There is something almost weird in this meeting of Abram and Melchizedek. It was at the close of the first recorded war in history, in which the patriarch had become a hero. For the first time in human affairs this was the celebration of a victory. It had been the first conflict between the Church and the world. "Melchizedek is the setting sun of the primitive revelation which sheds its last rays on the patriarchs, from whom the true light of the world is to arise. The sun sets, that when the preparatory time of Israel have passed away, it may rise again in Jesus Christ the antitype." No sooner had he appeared and spoken, than he disappeared again into obscurity and silence. No priest had preceded him; and he left no successor,—a lonely example of the eternal glory, greater than Abram whom he blessed. Such being the men and their meeting, we observe two of the practical lessons. I. THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S NOBILITY. Melchizedek was the "king of righteousness" before he was king

of Salem ; and this king of righteousness blessed righteous Abram. The patriarch was called the Friend of God, and history knows him as the "father of the faithful." But his trust in God was more than a profession ; it was his life. His daily conduct was the tree bearing the fruit of a perfect faith ; not that he was perfect, but he strove to become such. Every deed was an act of his living faith. It was no strange event when the king of Sodom prostrated himself at Abram's feet. And if all of God's children were like Abram, the world would pay still greater honour to the Church of the living God. The saints are the world's nobility.

II. THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S BLESSING. No benediction was too great for Abram, as the patriarch bowed before "the priest of the Most High God," and received through the sacred lips the blessings from "the possessor of heaven and earth." (*D. O. Mears.*) *The true priest for mankind* :—I. THE TRUE PRIEST IS DIVINELY APPOINTED. 1. Called of God. 2. Separated from the rest of mankind. II. THE TRUE PRIEST IS ONE WITH THE RACE HE REPRESENTS. 1. The dignity of human nature. 2. The destiny of human nature. III. THE TRUE PRIEST HAS THE POWER TO BLESS. 1. To pronounce blessings on men. 2. To bless God on their behalf. 3. To declare God's benefits towards men. IV. THE TRUE PRIEST IS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN. 1. He receives gifts from God for men. 2. He receives gifts from men for God. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Melchizedek a type of Christ* :—I. HE WAS A ROYAL PRIEST. II. HIS GENEALOGY IS MYSTERIOUS. III. HE WAS PERPETUALLY A PRIEST. IV. HE WAS AN UNIVERSAL PRIEST. V. HE WAS A PRIEST OF THE HIGHEST TYPE. As compared with the priesthood of Aaron, that of Melchizedek was superior—1. In time ; 2. In dignity ; 3. In duration. VI. HIS PRIESTHOOD HAS THE HIGHEST CONFIRMATION. Divine oath. (*Ibid.*) *Melchizedek* :—I. MELCHIZEDEK WAS A PRIEST. II. THIS PRIESTHOOD CAME OF GOD, AND WAS RATIFIED BY AN OATH. III. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ALSO CATHOLIC. IV. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS SUPERIOR TO ALL HUMAN ORDERS OF PRIESTS. V. THIS PRIESTHOOD PARTOOK OF THE MYSTERY OF ETERNITY. VI. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ROYAL. VII. THIS PRIESTHOOD RECEIVES TITHES OF ALL. (*F. B. Meyer, B. A.*) *Jesus meeting His warriors* :—Let us consider Abraham as the type and picture of all the faithful. I. We mention, then, what you must all know right well by experience—you who are God's people—THAT THE BELIEVER IS OFTEN ENGAGED IN WARFARE. 1. This warfare will be both within and without—within with the innumerable natural corruptions which remain, with the temptations of Satan, with the suggestions of his own wicked heart ; and without, he will frequently be engaged in warfare, wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, &c." The peculiar case of Abram leads me to remark that sometimes the believer will be engaged in warfare, not so much on his own account as on the account of erring brethren, who, having gone into ill company, are by and by carried away captive. 2. Observe that this war is one against powerful odds. The four kings mentioned in this chapter were all great sovereigns. 3. Carefully notice, that as it is a battle of fearful odds, it is one which is carried on in faith. Abram did not venture to this fight with confidence in his own strength, or reliance upon his own bow, but he went in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Faith was Abram's continual comfort. The Christian is to carry on his warfare in faith. You will be vanquished, indeed, if you attempt it by any other method. 4. In this great battle, carried on by faith, Abram had a right given him from God, and the promise of God's presence virtually in that right. What business had Chedorlaomer to come unto Canaan ? Had not Jehovah said to Abram, "All this land will I give unto thee ?" Therefore he and his confederate monarchs were neither more nor less than intruders. It is true they would have laughed at the very idea of Abram's claiming the whole land of Canaan, but that claim was nevertheless valid in the court of heaven, and the patriarch by right divine was heir of all the land. Christian, you are, by virtue of a covenant made with you to drive out every sin, as an intruder. 5. Yet more, the Christian is engaged in a conflict in which he walks by faith and leans upon God ; but yet it is a conflict in which he uses all means, calls in all lawful assistance, and exerts himself with all vigour and speed. 6. Abram marching on thus with activity, and using discretion, by attacking his enemies at night rather than by day, did not cease until he had gained a complete victory over them. II. While engaged in such earnest spiritual contention, the believer may expect to see his Lord. When Shadrach, Meshech, and Abed-nego, were fighting Christ's battles in the fiery furnace, then the Son of Man appeared unto them. He understands that warriors require strengthening meat, and that especially when they are under stern conflict they need extraordinary comforts that their souls may be stayed and

refreshed. 1. Why does Jesus Christ, as set forth here under the type of Melchizedek, appear unto His children in times of conflict? (1) He comes to them first, because they are weary. In every conflict which the child of God has to wage, it is not the private person who goeth to the warfare, it virtually is Christ fighting—Christ contending. It is a member of Christ's body labouring against Christ's enemy for the glory of the Head. Christ the Head has an intense feeling of sympathy with every member, no matter how humble. (2) The King of Peace met the returning warrior for another reason. Abram was probably flushed with victory, and this is a very dangerous feeling to any child of God. (3) Yet again, was not this visit bestowed because Abram was about to be tried in a yet more subtle manner than he had been before? It is easier to fight Chedorlaomer, than to resist the king of Sodom. Joshua down in the plain never grew weary when he was fighting the Amalekites, but Moses on the mountain felt his hands grow heavy. Why? Because the more spiritual the exercise, the more aptness is there in us to grow weary in it; and so the more spiritual the temptation the more likelihood of our becoming a prey to it, and the more strength do we need to overcome it. 2. In what character did He meet Abram? As one possessed of a royal priesthood. 3. What did He do for him? Brought him bread and wine. Christ's flesh and blood our spiritual sustenance. 4. What Melchizedek said to Abram. (1) He blessed him. (2) He blessed God. III. When a wrestling believer is favoured with a sight of the great Melchizedek, voluntarily and yet necessarily he makes a new DEDICATION of himself to God. You see Abram does not appear to delay a moment, but he gives to Melchizedek a tithe of all, by which he seemed to say, "I own the authority of my superior liege lord, to all that I am, and all that I have." (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Melchizedek, and his typical character*:—Persons who study the phenomena or aspects of the heavens inform us, that sometimes a great comet or a beautiful meteor has appeared most unexpectedly in the skies. Some of these heavenly visitants engage only the notice of astronomers; but a few are so exceedingly grand and lovely, that they attract every eye. Now these lights in the heavens suddenly arise, shine awhile in glory, and then disappear for ever. But some are so remarkable, and so amazingly beautiful, that they live in the memory as "a joy for ever." Now such appears to me to be the meteoric or comet-like vision of Melchizedek in the bright sky of the ancient Church, as he starts before our view in the sacred writings. Melchizedek glances suddenly on the sight here, as a brilliant meteor or a glorious comet. We gaze on the starry light shining so brightly in the firmament of the early Church; but, like its brother in the heavens, as we gaze in admiration it is gone! I. THE HISTORY OF MELCHIZEDEK. 1. War was the occasion of introducing this royal priest, in its successful issues in the deliverance of Lot. 2. But who was Melchizedek? The question has been agitated often, and very strangely answered, though I believe its true solution can clearly be found in the holy writings. The best opinion is, that Melchizedek is a real historic personage; that his name was not found in the regular lists of the priesthood; that as king as well as priest, he shadowed the glorious offices of Christ; and the Lord set him forth in Scripture as the living type and image of our blessed Redeemer, as our great and only High Priest, our Divine King and Saviour. Melchizedek was a ray of heavenly light in the early morning of the Church, which led the intelligent eye to the sundown and glory of the Sun of Righteousness. He was as the finger-post or pillar, with the broad arrow, on the king's high road; the royal statue in the court, which pointed to the heavenly King on His throne. As a prince on earth, he shone in the light also of a priest divine, directing faith in prophetic grandeur to the glory of the Great Prince of heaven, descending on earth to feed and bless His people, conquerors through His might, as our High Priest at the sacramental banquet of His love, signifying His dying work and mediation on the Cross, as our true sacrifice, and typical of His imperishable glory and majesty in the heavens, where Christ ever liveth to intercede for and satisfy, and bless us for ever. II. CONSIDER HOW MELCHIZEDEK WAS A LIVING TYPE OF OUR LORD IN HIS OFFICES. 1. He typified Christ in His illustrious person. His origin and end are veiled in mystery for our instruction in the Sacred Writings, that our curiosity may be checked where God's wisdom gives all the light we need. As he was "king of Salem," signifying peace, and "king of righteousness," as his compound Hebrew name, Melchizedek, means, he was a noble figure of Christ, the true "Prince of Peace," who brought peace by the blood of His cross between God and man, and brought in everlasting righteousness, as the joyful fruit of His passion, sufferings, and blessed mediation. 2. He typified Christ, especially in His sacerdotal character. Melchizedek was a

priest as well as a king: a royal priest, and not of Abraham's or Aaron's line. In this he especially resembled the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is our one and only royal High Priest: His office is unchangeable; He never can die; He ever liveth to intercede for us in the heavens; and He hath His true type, therefore, not in Aaron, but in Melchizedek, as both King and Priest. Besides this, Melchizedek blessed Abram; and the latter gave him tithes of all, as a sign of his inferiority, and of the Jewish priesthood; as the apostle says, "Levi paid tithes to the king of Salem in the loins of Abraham." The sum or heads of this most able argument of St. Paul must be clear to any reflecting mind, that Christ was constituted by the Father a royal Priest, whose Divine office was singular; it had its typical origin not in Levi, but in Melchizedek; that Christ has no successor in His Divine work; and that He is our only Intercessor before God above.

III. TWO PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS MUST NOW CONCLUDE THIS SUBJECT. 1. Consider how important in its bearings is the great truth, that Christ Jesus the Lord is our Royal High Priest in God's presence for us. We had imperative need of such a Redeemer on earth, and such a Mediator in heaven. In His nature God and man are united. He only reconciles man to God; Christ only joins heaven and earth. He is the world's great peace-offering; He is the King of righteousness and peace for His beloved people. 2. Consider whether your soul has ever been awakened to see the spiritual glory of Christ, and the inestimable value of His love. A moral film must be removed from the eye of the soul to see spiritual things, and the full glory of Christ. Live not in a dreamy state as professing Christians, but awake and arise to your true position as redeemed by Christ, to glorify Him both in body and soul. (*J. G. Augley, M.A.*)

Melchizedek:—Melchizedek is mentioned by three inspired writers, Moses, David, and Paul. The places where he is spoken of are Gen. xiv. 18-20; Psa. cx., and Hebrews v., vi., vii. The first notice is purely historic; the second purely prophetic; the third explains and shows the fulfilment of the former two in the person of Christ. 1. The first resemblance is found in the names or titles of the mysterious ancient. He is called Melchizedek, which means King of Righteousness. He is said to have been the king of Salem, that is King of Peace. It matters not where this Salem was. The import is the same. Now Jesus Christ is the Lord our righteousness; He is the righteousness of God for our complete justification; He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; He is also our Peace; yea, He is the Prince of Peace; He came and preached peace to them that are afar off. He was the great Sin-Bearer. He is the great Peacemaker. The peace He gives passes all understanding. 2. Then Melchizedek was a man. It is not necessary to disprove or even to state the wild and foolish opinions which have been sent forth respecting this person. He was a man. He was taken from among men. So was Jesus Christ a man, truly and properly a man. He is often so called by inspired men, by Himself, by His Father. He must needs be a man, that He might fully sympathize with His people, and that He might have somewhat to offer. 3. But Melchizedek was not only a man; he was also a great man. He was the priest of the Most High God. Melchizedek was greater than Abraham. The proofs are two: (1) Melchizedek received tithes from him; (2) Melchizedek pronounced an authoritative blessing upon him; and yet with the exception of Melchizedek sacred history tells us of no one greater than Abraham. So the man Christ Jesus was great—truly great—greater than Abraham. Hear Him: "Before Abraham was I am." Interpret this as you may, it establishes Christ's superiority over Abraham. The fact was that the Son of God was the author of Abraham's existence (John i. 3; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2). 4. Moreover, Melchizedek was not of the tribe of Levi, nor of the order of Aaron. No Jew ever claimed that Melchizedek was a Levite, or learned or derived anything from Aaron. Nor was Jesus Christ of the order of Aaron, nor of the tribe of Levi. 5. Nor is this all. For Melchizedek was the first and the last of his order. Aaron had no predecessor, but he had many successors. But Melchizedek had neither predecessor nor successor. His order was wholly independent of all others. It was just so with Christ Jesus. Christ has an unchangeable, an intransmissible priesthood. His priesthood is according to the power of an endless life. Thus we have an explanation of those phrases used of Melchizedek: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." The law of the Levitical priesthood was minute and exact as to both the parents. A defect here was fatal. But Melchizedek's parents are not named in the genealogical tables of the Levites. Neither did they contain the names of any of Christ's ancestors. The priests of the order of Aaron could not act before a certain age,

nor were they to officiate after a certain age—all which must be ascertained by the tables of lineage. But these tables tell us not (neither do any records) when Melchizedek began or closed his sacred functions. Neither do they mention the name, or birth, or time of Christ's entering on His Priesthood. Thus was Christ's Priesthood set forth to us as personal and perpetual—truly a glorious Priesthood. In it let us trust. In it let us exult for ever. (*W. S. Plumer, D.D.*) *The patriarch and the priest-king*.—I. THE PRIEST-KING. 1. The person himself. 2. His position. 3. Melchizedek's prophetic blessing. II. THE PATRIARCH. 1. Abram recognizes in Melchizedek a person worthy of special respect and honour. 2. Note the religious spirit in which Abram viewed his success. CONCLUSION: From Abram's conduct we may learn—1. Humility. 2. Thankfulness. 3. Stedfastness of religious purpose. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *Melchizedek*.—The sacred historian having here met with what I may call a lily among thorns, stops, as it were, to describe it. Let us stop with him, and observe the description. 1. He was doubtless a very holy man; and if a Canaanite by descent, it furnishes a proof among many others, that the curse on Canaan did not shut the door of faith upon his individual descendants. There never was an age or country in which he that feared God, and worked righteousness, was not accepted. 2. He was a personage in whom was united the kingly and priestly offices, and as such was a type of the Messiah, and greater than Abram himself. This singular dignity conferred upon a descendant of Canaan shows that God delights, on various occasions, to put more abundant honour upon the part that lacketh. 3. He was what he was, considered as a priest, not by inheritance, but by an immediate Divine constitution. (*A. Fuller.*) *Melchizedek*.—Behold Melchizedek! In wise purpose his descent is hid far beyond our sight. So, too, clouds and darkness mantle the first rise of Jesus. He is, by eternal generation, the co-eternal Son of the co-eternal Father. But who can grasp such mystery? He who begets precedes not the begotten. He who is begotten is not second to the parent-cause. This truth is a boundless ocean. Let us meekly stand on the shore and marvel. We read, and are assured, that Jesus, by eternal birth, is God of God, and very God of very God. But while we cannot dive into the depths, we bathe our souls in the refreshment of the surface. For hence it follows, that He is sufficient to deal with God, and to satisfy God, and thus to save His people to the uttermost. We see not Melchizedek's cradle. But we distinctly see him man on earth. Eye-witnesses, who heard Jesus and handled Him, give testimony, that He, too, has tabernacled in our clay, and thus was qualified to shed His life-blood as our ransom. In Melchizedek we find neither first nor latest hours. No search can tell when he began or ceased to be. Here is Jesus. His age is one everlasting day. From eternity past to eternity to come, His being rolls in one unbroken stream. Before time was, His name is, "I am that I am." When time shall have run its course, His name is still, "I am that I am." Melchizedek. How mighty is this name? He that utters it, says, King of Righteousness. Who can claim that title, in its full purport, but Jesus: what is His person, what His work, but the glory of righteousness? Since Adam fell, earth has seen no righteousness apart from Him. But His kingdom is first righteousness, then peace (Rom. xiv. 17). There is a throne in it righteously erected to dispense righteousness. All the statutes—decrees—ordinances—every precept—every reward—every penalty—is a sunbeam of righteousness. Each subject is bright in royal robes of purity—each wears a crown of righteousness (2 Tim. iv. 8). Each delights in righteousness, as his new-born nature. Melchizedek was a local monarch. His city was graced with the name of Salem, which is Peace. The war, which stalked through the land, troubled not these tranquil citizens. Here again we have the sweet emblem of Jesus' blissful reign. His kingdom is one atmosphere of peace—one haven of unruffled calm. Heaven is at peace with the inhabitants. Sin had rebelled. It had aroused most holy wrath. It had armed each attribute of God with anger. It had unsheathed the sword of vengeance. It had pointed the arrows of destruction against our world of transgression. But Jesus cleanses His flock from every stain of evil. He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Melchizedek is called to the most hallowed functions. He is the consecrated priest of the Most High God. As king, he sat above men. As priest, he stands before God. This holy office exhibits Jesus. He spurns no office which can serve the Church. The entrance of sin calls for expiation. No sinner can approach a sin-hating God without a sin-removing plea. This expiation can only be by the death of an appeasing victim. The victim can only die by a sacrificing hand. Hence we need

a priest to celebrate the blood-stained rite. And all which is needed we have in Jesus. Cry out and shout, O happy believer, your "Christ is All." An altar is upraised. The altar is Christ. No other can suffice. He alone can bear the victim, which bears His people's sins. A lamb is led forth. The lamb is Christ. None other has blood of merit co-equal with man's guilt. Jesus, therefore, God in essence, Man in person, extends Himself upon the accursed tree. But who is the priest who dares approach a superhuman altar? Who has a hand to touch a victim-God? The very sight would shiver man into annihilation. Therefore Jesus is the priest. The incense of His intercession ever rises, Father, bless them; and they are blessed. Father, smile on them; and it is light around. With extended hand He takes their very offering of prayer, and praise, and service. He perfumes all with the rich fragrance of His merits. He makes all worthy in His own worthiness, and thus our nothingness gains great reward. Melchizedek meets Abraham with bread and wine. The weary warrior is way-worn and faint. Refreshment is provided. The Lord is very tender of His people's need. Awful is the curse on the Ammonites and the Moabites, because they met not Israel with bread and water in the way, when they came forth out of Egypt (Deut. xxiii. 4). Here again, we see our great High Priest. With God-like bounty He presents every supply which wasted strength, and sinking spirit, and failing heart require. (*Dean Law.*) *Another collection:*—Thus exclaimed a member of the parish the other day, "How often they come! It is give, give, all the time!" The same person might have added, "Another bill! It is pay, pay the grocer and the baker, and the coalman, all the time!" Isn't it curious that people recognize the duty of paying a debt to their fellow-men so much more readily than they do paying a debt to God! These collections in church—what are they if they are not, in a most important sense, the payment of debts? We are only stewards of the Lord's bounty. Nothing we have is really our own. We are just using it for a time for Him. We have consecrated everything to Him, and we should regard these appeals in church for money as opportunities to pay back something we owe.

Vers. 21-24. *I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich.*—*The believer's superiority to the world:*—This superiority to the world may be manifested in various ways—as in the case of Abram. I. BY REFUSING TO INSIST UPON LAWFUL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES. 1. When it brings them into dangerous association with the world. 2. When they might appear to countenance sin. II. BY REFUSING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE WORLD AS THE SOURCE OF TRUE GREATNESS. Two thoughts supported Abram in this spirit of noble independence. 1. He was chosen of God. 2. He was heir to the promises. III. BY SHOWING THAT HE STANDS ON A DIFFERENT FOOTING, AND HAS BETTER HOPES THAN THE CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD. Ready to give up his own rights, he will not prevent others from asserting theirs. He allows his young men to take their subsidence, and the allies their portion. But he himself stands upon a higher plane, and has a wider horizon. He can afford to think lightly of every earthly good. So the believer, though in the world, is not of it. (*T. H. Leale.*) *A noble refusal:*—I. Abraham wished to AVOID PLACING HIMSELF UNDER GREAT OBLIGATION TO A WORLDLY MAN. II. Abraham doubtless wished to AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF TOO INTIMATE A FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE WHO WAS AN UNBRIGHTeous MAN. III. Abraham probably wished to SHOW THAT THE SERVANT OF THE MOST HIGH CAN DO GOOD WITHOUT HOPE OF WORLDLY REWARD. IV. Abraham showed by his refusal, THAT IT IS NOT A DESIRABLE THING TO GAIN BY THE MISFORTUNES OF OTHERS. V. It may be that Abraham wished to SHOW THAT GOD AND A SPIRIT OF CONTENTEDNESS WERE A GOOD MAN'S TRUE RICHES. (*F. Hastings.*) *Abraham's answer to the king of Sodom:*—Abram knew full well that the man who affected generosity in relinquishing what was not his own, would go on to boast of it, and to reflect on him as though he shone in borrowed plumes. No, says the patriarch, "I will not take, from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, that which is thine, save that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of Aner, Eschol, and Mamre," his allies. In this answer of Abram we may observe, besides the above, several particulars. 1. The character under which he had sworn to God: "Jehovah, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth." The first of these names was that by which God was made known to Abram, and still more to his posterity. The last was that which had been just given to him by Melchizedek, and which appears to have made a strong impression on Abram's mind. By uniting them together, he in a manner acknowledged Melchizedek's God to be his God; and while reproving the king of Sodom, expressed his love to

him as to a brother. 2. His having decided the matter before the king of Sodom met him, as it seems he had, implies something highly dishonourable in the character of that prince. He must have been well known to Abram as a vain, boasting, unprincipled man, or he would not have resolved in so solemn a manner to preserve himself clear from the very shadow of an obligation to him. And considering the polite and respectful manner in which it was common for this patriarch to conduct himself towards his neighbours, there must have been something highly offensive in this case to draw from him so cutting and dismaying an intimation. It is not unlikely that he had thrown out some malignant insinuations against Lot, and his old wealthy uncle, on the score of their religion. If so, Abram would feel happy in an opportunity of doing good against evil, and thus of heaping coals of fire upon his head. The reason why he would not be under the shadow of an obligation, or anything which may be construed an obligation to him, was not so much a regard to his own honour, but the honour of Him in whose name he had sworn. Abram's God has blessed him, and promised to bless him more, and make him a blessing. Let it not be said by his enemies, that with all his blessedness, it is of our substance that he is what he is. No, Abram can trust in "the possessor of heaven and earth" to provide for him, without being beholden to the king of Sodom. 3. His excepting the portion of the young men who were in league with him, shows a just sense of propriety. In giving up our own right, we are not at liberty to give away that which pertains to others connected with us. Upon the whole, this singular undertaking would raise Abram much in the estimation of the Canaanites, and might possibly procure a little more respect to Lot. It had been better in the latter, however, if he had taken this opportunity to have changed his dwelling-place. (*A. Fuller.*) *Lessons*:—1. Grace denieth not civil returns to ingenuous carriages of men. 2. It becometh the children of grace to bind themselves by oath from evil. 3. Such oaths must be made to the true God only. It is part of His worship (*Isa. lxxv. 15*). 4. The being, power, height, and sufficiency of God, are enough to take of His servants from all engagements to men (*ver. 22*). 5. God's sanctified ones having enough in and from God, abhor to take from worldly men to His dishonour. 6. God's servants undertake no war for spoil but righteousness to redeem the oppressed. 7. Neither thread nor shoe-latchet advantage will righteous souls take from the wicked upon their successes. 8. It is the believing magnanimity of the heirs of promise, not to be enriched by the world, though by right they may claim it (*ver. 23*). 9. Vows to God must not imply unjust things to men. 10. Liberality of some eminent saints must not prejudice the right of other men to give that away (*ver. 24*). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Disinterestedness*:—Canada has become a kingdom in fifty years. Its large cities were then little hamlets, and its mighty forests then covered its virgin soil. Near its lakes a gallant soldier had retired and settled; and around him had gathered a few brave hunters. They were surrounded by Indian tribes, who, partly from respect and awe, refrained from attacking this happy settlement. One of the white men, eager to find a wider field, left the hamlet, and took his family to the hunting-ground and village of one of these tribes. Another tribe sacked the Indian village, carried off the leading chief, his wives and flocks; and at the same time took away the white man's family and property. When tidings reached the gallant head of the white settlement, he armed his servants, pursued after the retreating Indians, surprised them in their sleep, and brought back the captured white and red men. On arriving at the Indian wigwams again, the grateful Indian chief urged his deliverer to take the rescued cattle. The white leader, animated by those noble motives which blossom so sweetly where Divine grace reigns, and anxious to show the "red man" what Christianity does for the white man, refused to take one hoof or horse: "Give only to those who volunteered to join me in the rescue; as for myself and friends, we are content with your deliverance and safe return home." (*W. Adamson.*)

CHAPTER XV.

VER. 1. Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.—*God the shield of the righteous*:—I. THE RIGHTEOUS REQUIRE A SHIELD. II. IN

WHAT RESPECTS GOD IS THEIR SHIELD. 1. He is the shield of their substance. 2. He is the shield of their bodies. 3. He is the shield of their souls. III. THE PECULIAR EXCELLENCE OF THIS SHIELD. 1. It is omnipotent. 2. It is a perpetual shield. 3. A universal shield. 4. The only shield. IV. APPLICATION. 1. Let saints cleave to the Lord, and thus avail themselves of this invaluable shield. Faith and prayer encircle us with God's protecting and preserving power. 2. Be grateful for it. How we ought to exult in it, and give God constant and hearty thanks for it. 3. How awful is the condition of the sinner. Not only without this shield, but in opposition to God, and exposed to His Divine power and wrath. (*J. Burns, D.D.*) *An interest in God the most effectual antidote to fear*.—I. THE PERSON ADDRESSED. Abram. 1. A man of genuine faith. 2. Of importunate prayer. 3. Of cordial hospitality. 4. Of uniform obedience. II. THE ADMONITORY PROHIBITION URGED. 1. There is a fear of persecution. 2. There is a fear of poverty. 3. There is the fear of pain. III. THE ENCOURAGING ASSURANCE ANNEXED. 1. God defends the persons of His people. 2. He protects their substance. 3. God is the reward of His people. From this subject we learn—1. The security and safety of God's people. God is their shield; they live in a world of enemies. 2. Their tranquillity and happiness. 3. The fearless confidence with which they should be inspired. What can they fear, while God is their shield and their exceeding great reward? shall they fear tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (*Sketches of Sermons.*) *God the protector of His people*.—I. CONSIDER THE DOCTRINE OF THE TEXT. 1. God is the defence of His people. He shields them from danger—(1) By His providence. (2) By His grace. 2. God is the portion of His people. He gives them Himself. II. CONSIDER THE INFERENCES DEDUCIBLE FROM THE TEXT. 1. Fear not the enemies which surround you. 2. Fear not the dangers which threaten you. 3. Fear not the toils you may have to undergo. 4. Fear not the sacrifices you may have to make. Let fear be replaced by a confidence coming from God. (*J. King.*) *Abraham's shield and reward*.—I. GOD IS OUR SHIELD. God is your shield, and therefore, you are safe. Christian, what is your fear? 1. There is Satan: and he is a cruel and powerful foe. True; but God is greater than he. 2. There are men: the ungodly and the false, who seek to injure us in mind, character, friendships, position, property. Do not be terrified by your adversaries. Commit your cause and way to God (see *Psa. cxx., cxxi.*). 3. There are the sorrows and afflictions of life. II. "AND EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD." We are called to endure much, and to give up much, for the kingdom of heaven's sake. We are not promised the compensation of pecuniary wealth, or honour, and praise among men. But God is Himself our reward. This is partly realized here; but is mainly reserved for hereafter. 1. God is our secret solace in this life. 2. He is our eternal reward. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Jesus the shield*.—"I am thy shield." These are the words that Jesus speaks to all His people. No one can do so much for our protection as He can. And so the subject we have now to consider is, Jesus the shield of His people. He is the best shield. We may speak of three reasons why this is the best shield. I. It is so, in the first place, because it is so LARGE. The shields which the warriors had in old times were not large enough to cover the whole body. If a soldier held up his shield so as to cover his head, he would leave the lower part of his body uncovered. If he tried to protect that part of his body, then he must leave his head uncovered. And even if the shield had been large enough to cover his body from head to foot, still it would only protect him on one side at a time. While he was holding the shield in front of him, he might be wounded from behind. While any part of the body is left unprotected, we never can tell how soon danger and death may come through that very part. We read about a celebrated Grecian warrior in old times, whose name was Achilles. It was said of him that his body was protected all over from head to foot, so that there was no place in which it was possible for him to be wounded except in one of his heels. Now we should think that, under such circumstances, a man would be pretty safe. And yet the story says that, while engaged in fighting one day, Achilles was wounded by a poisoned arrow in that very place, and died of the wound in his heel. But, when Jesus becomes our shield, He is the best shield, because He can cover us all over. He can protect, at the same time, both head and heart, and hands and feet, and body and soul, and home and family, and all that belongs to us. And when we see how wonderfully Jesus can make use of anything that He pleases, in order to protect the lives, and property, and happiness of His people, we see how well He may say to any one, as He did to Abraham: "I am thy shield."

In the winter of 1873, there was a terrible explosion of a steam boiler in the city of Pittsburgh. A number of persons were killed, and many more wounded. But there was one life preserved in a very singular way, as if on purpose to show how God can make use of anything He pleases, in order to shield His people from harm. This singular circumstance occurred to the wife of one of the men who was working in the mill where the explosion took place. She was in her own house, busy with her usual household duties, when she heard the noise of the explosion. All at once, she felt an unusual desire to pray. In a moment, she fell on her knees and began to pray. While she was thus engaged, a large piece of the boiler which had just exploded, weighing about two hundred pounds, came crashing through the room, and passed directly by the place where her head would have been if she had not been kneeling down in prayer. That prayer saved her life. Surely, He may well be called the best shield, who can protect the lives of His people in such strange ways as this! One winter night, many years ago, the inhabitants of the town of Sleswick, in Denmark, were thrown into great alarm. A hostile army was marching down upon them, and the people were greatly afraid of the soldiers. In a large cottage on the outskirts of the town lived an aged grandmother with her widowed daughter and grandson. This grandmother was a good Christian woman. Before going to bed that night, she prayed earnestly that God would, in the language of an old hymn, "build a wall of defence about them." Her grandson asked her why she offered a prayer like that, for she certainly could not expect God to do any such thing. She told him she did not mean a real, literal stone wall, but that He would be their shield, and protect them. At midnight, the soldiers were heard coming, tramp, tramp, tramping into the town. They filled most of the houses in the town. But no one came to the widow's cottage. When the morning dawned, the reason of this was plainly seen. The snow had drifted, and made a wall in front of the widow's cottage, so that it was almost hidden, and no one could get near it. "There, my son," said the grandmother, "don't you see how God has made a wall about us, and shielded us from danger?" II. This is the best shield, because it is so safe. In old times, when a soldier was engaged in fighting, if his enemy raised his sword to strike, he would lift up his shield to turn aside the blow. And so, when an arrow was shot at him, or a spear thrust at him, he would try to ward them off with his shield. But, if his shield were made of paper, or pasteboard, or light wood, or tin, or even if it were covered with a thin sheet of brass or iron, it would not be safe. A heavy blow from a sword, or spear, or arrow, would go through it. And so, since the invention of gunpowder, shields are not used any more, because they cannot be made light enough for a soldier to carry, and yet solid enough to prevent a rifle ball from going through. Indeed, it is impossible to make a shield now of any kind that cannot be penetrated. Why, even when we cover the sides of our ships of war with plates of solid iron, four and five inches thick, they are not safe: they are not impenetrable. A cannon-ball can be sent with such force as to go crashing through them. But, when Jesus becomes our shield, we are entirely safe. He is a shield that nothing can penetrate, or get through (see Isa. liv. 17; Psa. xci. 4). A minister, whose name was Stewart, was appointed to preach in a wild, mountainous part of Ireland, in which were many Roman Catholics. Some of these men were very bitter in their feelings towards the Protestants. One night, this good minister was preaching in the house of a farmer, when a very violent Romanist, who was present, interrupted him several times. After the meeting broke up, with a dreadful oath he swore he would kill the minister before he crossed the mountain the next day, as he understood he was going over in the morning to preach in another place. In the morning, the minister rose early to get a good start on his journey. The farmer's wife begged him not to go, on account of the man who had threatened to kill him. He said: "No, I must go. The Lord is my shield, and He can take care of me." After lifting up his heart in prayer, he started. He had passed over the top of the mountain, and was descending on the other side, when he saw two men standing in the road. As he came near them, they seemed to be much excited. "What's the matter, my friends?" he asked. They pointed to a man who was lying by the side of the road, and said, "About fifteen minutes before you appeared in sight, that man came to this place. We were digging turf in the field. We saw him stagger and fall. We ran to his assistance; but when we came up to him he was dead." The minister looked at him, and said: "Last night that man swore a dreadful oath that he would kill me before I crossed this mountain. Poor fellow! he had come here, I suppose, to carry out his oath." "Well," said the men, "he

will kill no one now." This good minister trusted to the best shield, and we see how safe it kept him. Many years ago, a gentleman in England, who lived in the country, kept a fine, large mastiff dog, whose name was Hero. He was chained up during the day, but let loose at night to guard the place. It happened once that several sheep belonging to a neighbouring farm had been killed on different nights. The owner of them charged Hero with being the cause of their death. One night another sheep was killed, and it was plain that Hero had killed it. Under these circumstances, the gentleman felt that, sorry as he was to part with his dog, he could not keep him any longer. So he said to his servant, in the presence of the dog: "John, get a piece of stout rope, and hang Hero behind the barn where he can't be seen from the house." Strange as it may seem, the dog must have understood what was said; for he rose at once, leaped over a stone fence, ran off, and disappeared from that neighbourhood. Seven years afterwards, this gentleman had some business in the north of England, on the borders of Scotland. At the close of a winter's day, he put up for the night at an inn by the wayside. He dismounted, and went to the stable to see that his horse was properly taken care of. Here he was followed by a large mastiff dog, who tried in various ways to engage his attention. When he sat down in the hall, the dog came and sat by his side. He began to think there was something strange in the dog's manner. He patted him on the head, and spoke kindly to him. Encouraged by this, the dog put his paw on the gentleman's knee, and looked up earnestly into his face, as much as to say: "Don't you know me?" After looking at the dog for awhile, he exclaimed: "Why, Hero, is this you?" Then the poor creature danced, and capered about, and licked his old master's hands, and tried in every way to show how glad he was to see him once more. After this, the dog remained by his side. On going to bed at night, Hero followed him to his room. When he was about to undress, the dog seized the skirt of his coat, and drew his master towards the door of a closet that opened into that room. The door was fastened, but, after a great deal of trouble, he contrived to get it open, when, to his surprise and horror, he found the dead body of a murdered man there. He saw in a moment what sort of a place he was in, and what he might expect that night. He made preparations to defend himself as well as he could. He had a pair of double-barrelled pistols with him, and he saw that they were loaded, and primed, and ready for use. Then he fastened his door, and piled up all that was movable in the room against the door. Then he sat down to wait for the murderers, for he was sure they would come. Towards midnight, he heard steps in the entry. Then the handle of his door was tried. Finding it fastened, they knocked. "Who's there?" he asked. "Open the door," was the answer. "What do you want?" "We want to come in." "You can't come in." "We must come in." "Then get in the best way you can, and I'll shoot the first man that enters." They sent for an axe to break through the door. While waiting for the axe, the gentleman heard a carriage drive by. He opened the window and called for help. The carriage stopped. Four men jumped out of it. By their help, the gentleman was relieved from his danger. The men who kept the house were caught and tried. It was found that they had killed a number of persons in that way. Some of them were hung, and the rest put in prison. Of course Hero was taken back to his old home, and treated as such a faithful creature deserved to be. And when he died, his master had him buried, and a monument erected over him which told of his faithfulness. And surely the God who can protect His people in such strange ways may well say: "I am thy shield." III. This is the best shield, because it is so READY. In the days when shields were used, a soldier was not able to keep his shield all the time in a position to defend himself. But it is different with the best shield. Jesus, our shield, has an arm that is never weary. By day and by night, at home and abroad, He is our shield; and He is always ready to protect and keep us. There is a story told of William, Prince of Orange, known as William the Silent, which illustrates this part of our subject very well. He lived about three hundred years ago. He was the governor of Holland. That is a little country, but its people have always been very brave. Philip II., who was then King of Spain, was one of the most powerful kings in the world at that time. He was trying to conquer Holland, and to make the Dutch, who lived there, give up their Protestant religion and become Roman Catholics. He sent an army into this country to conquer it; but, led on by their noble Prince, the Dutch people struggled like heroes for their liberty and their religion. When the King of Spain found that he could not conquer the Prince of Orange in battle, he tried to get rid of him in

another way. He offered a large sum of money to any one who would kill him. There are always bad men to be found who will do as wicked a thing as this for money. Some Spanish soldiers, who wanted to get this reward, made up their minds to try to kill the prince. One dark night, they managed to pass by the sentinels, and were going directly towards the tent in which the prince was sleeping. They were near the tent. Their daggers were drawn. They were treading very cautiously, so as not to be heard. But the prince had a faithful little dog, that always slept at the foot of his master's bed. He heard the tread of the murderers, although they were coming so carefully. He jumped up and began to bark. This wakened his master. He sprang up in bed, seized his pistol, and cried: "Halt! who comes there?" When the murderers found that the prince was awake, they turned and fled. And thus that little dog saved his master's life. The prince was asleep, and could not protect himself. But He who says, "I am thy shield," was there to protect him. He is the best shield, because He is always ready. A dear little English boy, named Bennie, lay sleeping in the shady verandah of his Indian home. The nurse who had been trusted with him had neglected her charge, and left him while he was asleep. A great fierce tiger, prowling in search of prey, finding the village very quiet, had ventured in among the dwellings. The English gentlemen were all absent; the natives were in the rice-fields, and the ladies were taking their rest during the heat of the day. The tiger crept noiselessly past the quiet house, until he saw the sleeping child. Then, with one bound, he sprang upon him, grasped the flowing white robe of the child in his teeth, and darted off with it to his native jungle. Having secured his prize, he laid it down; and, as the kitten often plays with a captive mouse before devouring it, so the tiger began sporting with the child. He walked round and round him; laid first one paw and then another gently on his plump little limbs, and looked into the boy's beautiful face, as if his savage heart was almost melted by its sweetness. There was a brave little heart in Bennie, for he did not seem to be at all alarmed by his strange companion. He was well-used to Nero, the large black house-dog; the ponies were his chief favourites; and he felt inclined to look on the tiger as if he were only Nero's brother. And when the tiger glared at him with his great fiery eyeballs, or when the sight of his dreadful teeth made his heart beat for a moment, he only returned the gaze, saying in baby-language: "I'm not afraid of you, for I've got a father! You can't hurt Bennie—Bennie's got a mamma!" Oh, if we could only have the same trust in our heavenly Father, how well it would be for us! All this time, while her darling boy was in such dreadful danger, his mother was sleeping. The faithless nurse returned by-and-by, to find the child gone. In her fright, she flew from house to house in search of him. But the Eye that never sleeps was watching that dear child. The best shield was stretched over him. An aged native had heard the tiger give a low, peculiar growl, from which he knew that he had seized some prey. Taking his gun, he followed in his trail till he came near him. Then he hid himself carefully behind the bushes. He saw the terrible creature playing with the child, and dreaded every moment to see him tear it to pieces. He watched his opportunity to fire, fearful lest the ball intended for the tiger should hit the child. The proper moment came. He took his aim, and fired. The tiger leaped, gave a howl of pain, ran a few steps, and fell dead by the side of the now frightened child. It was He who said, "I am thy shield," who watched over and protected that little one in such an hour of fearful danger. This is the best shield, for three reasons. In the first, because it is so large; in the second, because it is so safe; and in the third place, because it is so ready. Let us be sure that we make Jesus our friend. Then, wherever we go and wherever we stay, we shall be safe, because we shall have this best shield for our protection. Remember that Jesus has said, "I am thy shield." (R. Newton, D.D.) *The terriblest of God the good man's security*:—When the good man sees God wasting the mountains and the hills, and drying up the rivers, he does not say, "I must worship Him, or He will destroy me"; he says, "The beneficent side of that power is all mine; because of that power I am safe; the very lightning is my guardian, and in the whirlwind I hear a pledge of benediction." The good man is delivered from the fear of power; power has become to him an assurance of rest; he says, "My Father has infinite resources of judgment, and every one of them is to my trusting heart a signal of unsearchable riches of mercy." (J. Parker, D.D.) *God our shield*:—There are two main things that man needs in this world: he needs protection and the fulfilment of his desires and labours, a negative and a positive. a shield and a reward, something to protect him while in the battle, something to

reward him when it is over. This promise is silently keyed to the note of struggle as underlying life, the conception of life that the wise have always taken. Life is not mere continuance or development; it is not a harmony, but a struggle. It continues, it develops, it may reach a harmony, but these are not now its main aspects. It is this element of struggle that separates us from other creations. A tree grows, a brute develops what was lodged within it; but man chooses, and choice by its nature involves struggle. It is through choice and its conflicts that man makes his world, himself, and his destiny; for in the last analysis character is choice ultimated. The animals live on in their vast variety and generations without changing the surface of the earth, or varying the sequences wrought into their being; but man transforms the earth, and works out for himself diverse histories and destinies. It is this nobler view of man, as choosing and struggling, that makes it needful he should have protection in the world. If he were only an animal he might be left to nature, for nature is adequate to the needs of all within her category; but transcending, and therefore lacking full adjustment to nature, he needs care and help beyond what she can render. He finds himself here set to do battle, life based and turning on struggle; but nature offers him no shield fit to protect him, nor can nature reward him when the struggle is over. She has no gifts that he much cares for, she can weave no crown that endures, and her hand is too short to reach his brow. There is a better philosophy, back here in the beginnings of history, the beginnings also of true, full life. Abram is the first man who had a full religious equipment. He had open relations to God; he had gained the secret of worship; he had a clear sense of duty, and a governing principle, namely, faith or trust in God. It starts out of and is based on this promise of God to be his shield and reward. His sense of God put his life before him in all its terrible reality; it is not going to be an easy matter to live it. Mighty covenants are to be made; how shall he have strength to keep them? He is to become the head of a separate nation; how can he endure the isolation necessary to the beginning? He is to undergo heavy trials and disappointments; how shall he bear them? He is promised a country for his own, but he is to wander a citizen of the desert all his days, and die in a land not yet possessed; how can he still believe with a faith that mounts up to righteousness? Only through this heralding promise: "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." When you are in trouble I will protect you. When you fail of earthly rewards I will be your reward. But Abram's life, in its essential features, was not exceptional. I do not know that it was harder to live than yours or mine. I do not know that his duties were more imperative, his doubts more perplexing, his disappointments and checks severer than those encountered by us all to-day. He needed and we need two things to carry us through, protection and fulfilment of desires, shield and reward. Let us now look at the first of these two things with something more of detail. 1. We need protection against the forces of nature. In certain aspects nature is kind to us and helps us; she strives to repair any injury she may do to us; she is often submissive and serves us with docility. But in other respects she is cruel and unsparing, and her general aspect is that of a power over us rather than under us. I confess that I should be filled with an unspeakable dread if I were forced to feel that I was wholly shut up in nature. We are constantly brought face to face with its overpowering and destroying forces, and we find them relentless. We may outwit or outmaster them up to a certain point, but beyond that we are swept helpless along their fixed and fatal current. But how does God become a shield against them? Only by the assurance that we belong to Himself rather than to nature. When that assurance is received, I put myself into His larger order; I join the stronger power and link myself to its fortunes. It makes a great difference practically, which side we take. If the material world includes me, then I have no shield against its relentless forces, its less than brute indiscrimination, its sure finiteness or impersonal and shifting continuance. Then I am no more than one of its grains of dust, and must at last meet the fate of a grain of dust. But if spirit has an existence of its own, if there is a spiritual order with God at its head and with freedom for its method, then I belong to that order, there is my destiny, there is my daily life. My faith in that order and its Head is my shield when the forces of nature assault me and its finiteness threatens to destroy me. 2. We need a shield against the inevitable evils of existence. Sooner or later there comes a time to every one of us when we are made to feel not only that we are weaker than nature, but that there is an element of real or apparent evil in our lot. There dawns on us a sense of mortality peculiarly real. The tables are turned with us. Heretofore life, the world, the body—all have been for us; now they are against

us, they are failing us; the shadow of our doom begins to creep upon us. How real this experience is every thoughtful person of years well knows. It has in it, I verily believe, more bitterness than death itself. It is the secret of the sadness of age. And there is every reason why this experience should be sad. It is necessarily so until we can meet it with some larger truth and fact. Along with this decadence of powers comes a greater evil—an apprehension of finiteness. In our years of wholeness and strength there is no such apprehension. Life carries with it a mighty affirmation of continuance, but when life weakens it begins to doubt itself. But the idea of coming to an end is intolerable; it does not suit our nature or feelings; it throws us into confusion; we become a puzzle to ourselves; we cannot get our life into any order or find for it any sufficient motive or end, and so it turns into a horrible jest, unless we can ground ourselves on some other conception. But the sense of finiteness presses on us with increasing force; it seems to outmaster the infinite, and even to assert its mastery in the process at work within us. It is here that we need a shield to interpose against the horrible suggestions of this last battle of life. And it is just here that God offers Himself as such a shield—God Himself in all the personality of His being—the I Am—Existence. The name itself is an argument; existence is in question, and here is Existence itself saying to a mortal man, "I am your shield." Between ourselves longing for life, and this devouring sense of finiteness, stands God—a shield. "I made you," He says, "but you shall not perish because I put you into a perishing body. Because I made you you cannot perish. Because I am the ever-living God you shall live also." 3. God is a shield against the calamities of life. It is rarely that one gets far on in life without seeing many times when it is too hard to be borne. For vast multitudes life is unutterably sad and bitter, for many others it is dull and insipid, for others one long disappointment, for none is it its own reward. It will always wear this aspect to the sensitive and the thoughtful unless some other element or power is brought in. Man cannot well face life without some shield between. He may fight ever so bravely, but the spears of life will be too many and too sharp for him. And no shield will thoroughly defend him but God. The lowest, by its very condition, demands the highest; the weakest calls out for the strongest—none but the strongest can succour the weakest; the saddest can be comforted only by the most blessed; the finite can get deliverance from its binding and torturing condition only in the eternal one. 4. God is a shield against ourselves. It is, in a certain sense, true of us all that we are our own worst enemies. It is the last and worst result of selfishness that it leaves one alone with self, out of all external relations, sealed up within self-built enclosures. A very fair and seemly life may end in this way. If self be the central thought, it ends in nothing but self, and when this comes about we find that self is a poor companion. One of the main uses of God, so to speak, is to give us another consciousness than that of self—a God-consciousness. It was this that Christ made the world's salvation, not breaking the Roman yoke, not instituting a new government or a new religion, not revealing any formal law or secret of material prosperity, or any theory of education or reform, but simply making plain a fact, assuring the world that God is, and that He is the Father, and breathing a consciousness of it into men, opening it up to the world's view, and writing it upon its heart as in letters of His own blood; thus He brought in a God-consciousness, in place of a world-consciousness and a self-consciousness, this only, but who shall measure its redeeming power! And there is no more gracious, shield-like interposing of God than when He comes in between us and self as a delivering presence. It is the joy of friendship that we are conscious of our friend, and that he draws us away from ourselves. It is the joy of the home that each one is conscious of the other; home-life reaches its perfection when parents and children not only love, but pass on to the highest form of love—a steady and all-informing consciousness of one another. It shadows forth the largest form of the truth, God dwelling, not amongst but in men, a shield against themselves. (*T. T. Munger.*) *The shield:*—How few duly consider the tremendous dangers to which they are exposed by sin! Flight there is none, for God is everywhere. Resistance there is none, for God has all power. Self is ruin, because self is sin; and sin the cause of the ire. But against all this righteous anger, there is a shield most righteously provided in Christ Jesus. But God's abhorrence of evil is not our only adversary. There is the evil one, red with the blood of myriads of our race. He lays an ambush at every turn. Now a shower of darts pelts pitilessly. Now the weight of incessant batterings descends. Now a sudden arrow flies swiftly in the dark; and suddenly we fall, ere danger is suspected. He never slumbers, never is weary, never relents, never abandons hope. He deals

his blows alike at childhood's weakness, youth's inexperience, manhood's strength, and the totterings of age. He watches to ensnare the morning thought. He departs not with the shades of night. By his legions he is everywhere, at all times. He enters the palace, the hut, the fortress, the camp, the fleet. He infects every chamber of every dwelling, every pew of every sanctuary. He is busy with the busy. He hurries about with the active. He sits by each bed of sickness, and whispers into each dying ear. As the spirit quits the tenement of clay, he still draws his bow with unrelenting rage. And where can we find this shelter, but in Jesus? He interposes the might of His intercession: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." His prayers are our victory. Jesus shields us, too, by giving the shield of faith. He is the author and finisher of this grace. Against this all the fiery darts of the wicked are powerless. They touch it, only to be quenched. The sprinkling of His blood is also an impregnable security. Satan sees this and trembles. It is mail which he cannot pierce. This is the one experience of the Church of the first-born. They are all sorely pressed, but they are more than conquerors, for they overcome by the blood of the Lamb. Thus the evil one touches not the shielded ones of Jesus. The pleasures, too, the luxuries, the honours of high station beat down their countless victims. None can withstand them in human strength. And none can be vanquished, who have the Lord for their breastplate. Moses was tried by their most seductive craft. He might have sat next to the king in royal state. But he "endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." And being dead, he tells us, how to drive back this wily troop of fascinations. Man's frown and persecution's threat give deadly wounds. All this fury affrighted Daniel and the captive youths. The tyrant's wrath, the burning fiery furnace, the den of raging beasts gaped menacingly on them. But they fled to the Lord. He was their Shield, and they were unharmed in spirit, and in body. Moreover, the Zion-ward path is in the face of batteries, from which hosts of cares and anxieties pour down their envenomed darts. "This God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide even unto death." The soul is surely cased in peace, when it is folded in the arms of Jesus. (*Dean Larc.*)

God a shield:—Luther was once asked, "Where would you find safety if the Elector of Saxony were to desert you?" He replied, "Under the shield of heaven." God has engaged to preserve His loving, trusting, and obedient people "from all evil"; therefore, as we abide under His protection, we may be "safe from fear of evil." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" A good man once had a poisoned cup given him to drink; but the cup fell, its contents were spilled, and the wicked design was frustrated. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." *The shield of providence:*—What a shield God is to His people, and how effectually He can preserve us from all enemies, evils or dangers. When Protestant Holland was almost conquered by Spain, in answer to prayer, God caused the Romish foe to be driven back by the flooding of the country. Lady Huntingdon accepted an invitation to Brussels in 1786, where it was represented she might do much good. On her journey to London she was, however, so detained, that she received letters from the Continent warning her that on her arrival it was intended to put her to death as a heretic and a successful opponent of Romish ignorance and superstition. The Popish nobleman who had invited her dropped down dead on the very day her ladyship had started for London. She ever regarded her delay, &c., as a gracious interposition of Providence in her behalf.

And thy exceeding great reward:—*How God is His people's great reward:*—I. THAT NOTHING DESIDE GOD CAN BE THE SAINTS' REWARD. 1. Nothing on earth can be their reward. The glistening of the world dazzles men's eyes; but, like the apples of Sodom, it doth not so much delight as delude. 2. Heaven itself is not a saint's reward: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?" (Psa. lxxiii. 25). II. How is GOD HIS PEOPLE'S REWARD? In bestowing Himself upon them. The great blessing of the covenant is, "I am thy God." But how doth God give Himself to His people? Is not His essence incommunicable? True, the saint cannot partake of God's very essence; the riches of the Deity are too great to be received in specie. But the saints shall have all in God, that may be for their comfort: they shall partake so much of God's likeness, His love, His influence, and irradiations of His glory (1 John iii. 2; John xvii. 26, 22), as doth astonish and fill the vessels of mercy, that they run over with joy. III. How GOD COMES TO BE HIS PEOPLE'S REWARD. Through Jesus Christ; His blood, being "the blood of God," hath merited this glorious reward for them (Acts xx. 28). IV. WHEREIN THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF

THIS REWARD CONSISTS. 1. God is "a satisfying reward." "I am God Almighty" (Gen. xvii. 1); the word for Almighty signifies "Him that hath sufficiency." God is a whole ocean of blessedness; which while the soul is bathing in, it cries out in a Divine ecstasy, "I have enough." Here is fulness, but no surfeit; "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psa. xvii. 15). 2. God is "a suitable reward." The soul, being spiritual, must have something homogeneal and suitable to make it happy; and that is God. Light is not more suitable to the eye, nor melody to the ear, than God is to the soul. 3. God is "a pleasant reward." He is the quintessence of delight, all beauty and love. To be feeding upon the thoughts of God is delicious: "My meditation of Him shall be sweet" (Psa. civ. 34). 4. God is "a transcendent reward." The painter, going to take the picture of Helena, not being able to draw her beauty to the life, drew her face covered with a veil. So, when we speak of God's excellences, we must draw a veil. He is so supereminent a reward, as that we cannot set Him forth in all His orieny and magnificence. 5. God is "an infinite reward." And being infinite, these two things follow: (1) This reward cannot come to us by way of merit. Can we merit God? Can finite creatures merit an infinite reward? (2) God being an infinite reward, there can be no defect or scantiness in it. "There is no want in that which is infinite." Some may ask, "Is God sufficient for every individual saint?" Yes; if the sun, which is but a finite creature, disperseth its light to the universe, then much more God, who is infinite, distributes glory to the whole number of the elect. 6. God is "an honourable reward." Honour is the height of men's ambition. Alas! worldly honour is but a "pleasing fancy." Honour hath oft a speedy burial: but to enjoy God is the head of honour. 7. God is "an everlasting reward." Mortality is the disgrace of all earthly things. They are in their fruition surfeiting, and in their duration dying; they are like the metal that glass is made of, which, when it shines brightest, is nearest melting: but God is an eternal reward. Eternity cannot be measured by years, jubilees, ages, nor the most slow motion of the eighth sphere. Eternity makes glory weighty: "This God is our God for ever and ever" (Psa. xlviii. 14). **INFORMATION.** 1. Hence it is evident, that it is lawful to look to the future reward. God is our reward; is it not lawful to look to Him? 2. If God be such an exceeding great reward, then it is not in vain to engage in His service. 3. See the egregious folly of such as refuse God. "Israel would none of Me" (Psa. lxxxi. 11). Is it usual to refuse rewards? 4. If God be such an immense reward, then see how little cause the saints have to fear death. Are men afraid to receive rewards? There is no way to live but by dying. **EXHORTATION.** 1. Believe this reward. Look not upon it as a platonical idea or fancy. Sensualists question this reward, because they do not see it: they may as well question the verity of their souls, because, being spirits, they cannot be seen. Where should our faith rest, but upon a Divine testimony? 2. If God be such an exceeding great reward, let us endeavour that He may be our reward. "God, even our own God, shall bless us" (Psa. lxxvii. 6). He who can pronounce this Shibboleth, "my God," is the happiest man alive. 3. Live every day in the contemplation of this reward. Be in the altitudes. Think what God hath "prepared for them that love Him!" O that our thoughts could ascend! 4. This may content God's people: though they have but little oil in the cruse, and their estates are almost boiled away to nothing, their great reward is yet to come. Though your pension be but small, your portion is large. If God be yours by deed of gift, this may rock your hearts quiet. 5. If God be so great a reward, let such as have an interest in Him be cheerful. God loves a sanguine complexion: cheerfulness credits religion. 6. If God be an exceeding great reward, let such as have hope in Him long for possession. Though it should not be irksome to us to stay here to do service, yet we should have a holy "longing" till the portion comes into our hand. This is a temper becoming a Christian—content to live, desirous to die (Phil. i. 23-25). 7. Let such as have God for their exceeding great reward, be living organs of God's praise. "Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee" (Psa. cxviii. 28). **CONSOLATION.** Will God Himself be His people's reward? This may be as bezoar-stone, to revive and comfort them. 1. In cases of losses. They have lost their livings and promotions for conscience' sake; but as long as God lives, their reward is not lost (Heb. x. 34). 2. It is comfort in case of persecution. The saints' reward will abundantly compensate all their sufferings. **TERROR TO THE WICKED.** Here is a Gorgon's head to affright them. They shall have a reward, but vastly different from the godly. All the plagues in the Bible are their reward: "Destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity" (Prov. x. 29). God is their rewarder, but not their reward. "The wages of sin is death"

(Rom. vi. 23). They who did the devil's work, will trample to receive their wages. (T. Watson, M.A.) *God the reward of His people*:—Dionysius caused musicians to play before him, and promised them a good reward. When they came for their reward, he told them they had already had it in their hopes of it. God does not disappoint His servants. Christ says, "My reward is with Me." (J. Parker, D.D.)

Vers. 2, 3. **To me Thou hast given no seed.**—*Abram's fear*:—God had given Abram everything but a child, and therefore it seemed to him that all this flow of God's love was running into a pool where it could only stand still. And Abram told God his fear in plain words. How true it is that we can say things in the dark that we dare not say in the light! For a long time Abram wanted to say this, but the light was too strong: he knew he would stammer and blush in the day-time, so he hid the fear in his heart. But now it is eveningtide! The shadows are about, and the stars are coming! O sweet eventide, what words we have spoken in its dewy quietness—words that would have been out of place in the glare of open day. How the voice has become low, and the heart has told what was deepest and tenderest, sending it out as a dove that would find another soul to rest in! It was so that Abram talked to God in the vision that came at star-time. He said, "I have no child; all my goods are in the hands of a steward, a true enough servant, but still not a son; what is to become of all these tokens of Thy love?" and whilst he was talking the stars came out more and more, all of them—millions of silvery eyes, throng upon throng, glowing overhead, sparkling over the distant hills, glittering in the east, throbbing like hearts on the western horizon, the singing Pleiades, the mighty Arcturus and his sons, Venus and Mars, and the Milky Way (names unknown then), there they were, angels talking in light, servants watching the King's city. It was in that the Lord said to Abram, "Look up"; and Abram looked; and God said, "Count them"; and Abram said, "My Lord, who can count that host?" And the Lord said, "So shall thy seed be." (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 5, 6. **And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness.**—*Abram's faith*:—These two verses lie close together on one page of the Bible. They are part of a brief event in one human life. Yet, as we read them, they seem to separate from each other, and to stand very far apart. The fifth verse is altogether of the past. It shows us the tent of the patriarch gleaming white in the clear starlight of the Eastern night. We learn with Abraham to look up and believe and be at rest. The sixth verse suggests thoughts of the nearer present. From the hour when St. Paul first cited this fact of Abraham's faith and his justification by faith, this verse has been taken out of the older story and bedded in our modern controversies. I. In these verses lies the union of two things that God has joined together and that man is ever trying to separate—LIFE AND LIGHT. God revealed Himself to us, not by words that told of a Father, but by a life that showed a Father; not by a treatise on Fatherhood, but by the manifestation of a Son. And so He ever joins the light of precept with the life of practice. II. We read that Abraham believed God—NOT THEN FOR THE FIRST TIME, NOT THEN ONLY. He had heard God's voice before, and at its bidding had gone out to be an exile and pilgrim all his days. His faith was no intellectual assent to a demonstrated proposition; it was the trust of the heart in the voice of God. It was the belief, not that solves difficulties, but that rises above them. III. **WIT WAS ABRAHAM'S FAITH COUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS?** Because, as all sin lies folded in one thought of distrust, so in one thought of trust lies all possible righteousness—its patience, its hope, its heroism, its endurance, its saintliness; and therefore He who sees the end from the beginning reckons it as righteousness. In the faith of Abraham lay all the righteous endurance, all the active service, of his believing life. This simple trust of Abraham made the practical motive power of his life, as it should make that of ours. (*Bp. Magee.*) *God's covenant and Abram's faith*:—I. **WHAT WAS THE COVENANT, AND TO WHOM WAS IT REALLY MADE?** 1. As we commonly use the term it means an agreement between two equal parties who bind themselves to do, or not to do, certain things. In the realm of Redemption it cannot be so, because God and man are not equals and cannot make mutual agreements. God's covenant begins and ends with Himself. It comes to us only through His mercy and grace. The power to fulfil its conditions, on man's part, comes through the same grace

received into the heart by faith. 2. To whom was this promise made? "To Abraham and his seed, which is Christ." II. WHAT WAS, AND IS, ACCEPTABLE FAITH? We see at a glance that the covenant asked almost nothing of its recipient as he left his home and entered Canaan. He had done nothing, that we can see, which would in the least entitle him to hear so "large a promise, so divine." To be sure, we read that he would bring up his children well, but this hardly constitutes a valid reason why he should be selected to become heir of the world and the father of the faithful. We have the exact announcement here: "He believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." It need not have been counted, if it had been real and intrinsic righteousness. It would have stood out in its own merits. In a word, it was the obedience of faith—the obedience springing out of, and kept alive by, faith. So far as sight went, there was nothing to justify his acceptance of the amazing promise that his seed should be as the dust and the stars for number, and that he should be the father of a nation which should fill and bless the earth. And although Christ is fully revealed to us, the steps from the life of nature into that of grace are essentially steps into an uncertainty. Only by faith do we know what we shall find when we accept salvation. We make a venture. We put the foot out for a step, and the only confidence we have that we shall not fall is the confidence of faith. Like Abraham we are called to go out into a country that shall be showed us after we have started for it. And how often must we leave kindred and friends behind us, like Christian in the dream of John Bunyan, and set our faces away from all that charms us, and cry aloud: "Life! life!" nor tarry in all the plain? (*E. N. Packard.*) *The covenant with Abram.*—I. GOD'S BEST GIFT TO MAN IS HIMSELF (ver. 1). Hitherto God had promised to confer blessings upon Abram. Not till now had He promised to bestow Himself. Abram knew that God was better than His gifts. If He would confer Himself, no good can be lacking. So, taking God at His word, Abram's struggling faith comes to victory. II. GOD GRANTS TO THE BELIEVING SOUL FREE INTERCOURSE WITH HIMSELF. As yet, whenever God had spoken, Abram had kept silence. Now his lips are opened. III. GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO MAN IN A WAY ADAPTED TO HIS PRESENT NEED. Abram had said, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit the land?" God heeded this request, and gave him a token adapted to his age and country. That was four thousand years ago, and in a barbarous age. To expect now such, or any sensuous phenomenon at the meeting-place of God and man, would be to roll back the stream of time and expect the nineteenth century after Christ to be as gross in its spiritual conceptions as the nineteenth century before him. Still, the fact that God regarded Abram's request, and in a manner suited to His comprehension condescended to bind Himself by covenant to His promises of grace, is a lesson of perpetual hope. God's ear is never closed to His children's cry. IV. GOD'S REVELATIONS TO MAN ARE PROGRESSIVE. There are seven or eight recorded instances of God's communing with Abram (see Gen. xii. 1-3, xii. 7, xiii., xv., xvii., xxi.). As God dealt with Abram He deals with us. The blessing faith asks for and receives to-day is the type of a richer one to-morrow. To Abram, childless, wandering in a strange land, the highest imagined good was a son and a home. These God promised. But how much greater the blessing when it was revealed that God in him was to reknit the broken bond between Himself and a fallen race, and through his seed to provide a Saviour for an apostate world! Faith, wherever it enters, makes the soul expansive. To-day it wants and obtains; and by that very obtaining its wants are heightened still, and these when gratified yet more enlarge the soul, and urge it on to ask and expect yet ampler blessings. Nor is there ever fear that man's increased capacity or desire will exceed God's ability to grant. The depths of His power and love are unfathomable. V. THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH GOD'S BLESSINGS FLOW TO MAN IS FAITH. Notice the process by which Abram's faith resulted, not only in an imputed, but also in an actual righteousness. He hears the call of God, and comes to the decisive act of trusting Him. He then rises to the successive steps of walking with God, covenanting with Him, communing and interceding with Him, and at length withholding from Him nothing which he regards most dear. From this example of Abram several lessons respecting faith are taught. We learn that—1. The sinner's first duty is to believe what God has spoken. Had Abram disbelieved God, every act born of that disbelief would have been an act of sin. The only right thing he could do was to believe God and accept His proffered favour. So is it now. To have confidence in God, to repose in Him, to fall into the arms of His promised grace, is the only first right act a sinner can perform. Hence the Scriptures emphasize the truth that salvation comes from believing. 2. The foundation of

faith is God's promise. God had told Abram what He would do. Abram's faith consisted in believing that God would do just as He had said. 3. Obedience is an essential element in faith. Because Abram believed God he obeyed Him. "It is," says Selden, "an unhappy division that is made between faith and works. Though in my interest I may divide them, just as in the candle I know there is both light and heat, yet put out the candle and they are both gone; one remains not without the other. So is it betwixt faith and works." 4. Faith is the soul's simplest act, and also its mightiest energy. To Abram, weak and sinful, what so simple as to trust, like a little child, in his heavenly Father? Yet thus he became mightier than a conqueror. 5. Faith's highest conquests are not at first. (*P. B. Davis.*) *God's covenant with Abram*:—I. ABRAM HAD EXPOSED HIMSELF TO DANGEROUS REPRISALS BY HIS VICTORY OVER THE CONFEDERATE EASTERN RAIDERS. In the reaction following the excitement of battle, dread and despondency seem to have shadowed his soul. Therefore the assurance with which this chapter opens came to him. It was new, and came in a new form. He is cast into a state of spiritual ecstasy, and a mighty "word" sounds, audible to his inward ear. The form which it takes—"I am thy shield"—suggests the thought that God shapes His revelation according to the moment's need. The unwarlike Abram might well dread the return of the marauders in force, to avenge their defeat. Therefore God speaks to his fears and present want. Abram had just exercised singular generosity in absolutely refusing to enrich himself from the spoil. God reveals Himself as his "exceeding great reward." He gives Himself as recompense for all sacrifices. II. MARK THE TRIUMPHANT FAITH WHICH SPRINGS TO MEET THE DIVINE PROMISE. The first effect of that great assurance is to deepen Abram's consciousness of the strange contradiction to it apparently given by his childlessness. It is not distrust that answers the promise with a question, but it is eagerness to accept the assurance and ingenious utterance of difficulties in the hope of their removal. God is too wise a Father not to know the difference between the tones of confidence and unbelief, however alike they may sound; and He is too patient to be angry if we cannot take in all His promise at once. He breaks it into bits not too large for our lips, as He does here. The frequent reiterations of the same promises in Abram's life are not vain. They are a specimen of the unwearied repetition of our lessons, "Here a little, there a little," which our teacher gives his slow scholars. So, once more, Abram gets the promise of posterity in still more glorious form. Before, it was likened to the dust of the earth; now it is as the innumerable stars shining in the clear eastern heaven. As he gazes up into the solemn depths, the immensity and peace of the steadfast sky seems to help him to rise above the narrow limits and changefulness of earth, and a great trust floods his soul. Belief as credence is mainly an affair of the head, but belief as trust is the act of the will and the affections. The object of faith is set in sunlight clearness by these words—the first in which Scripture speaks of faith. Abram leaned on "the Lord." It was not the promise, but the promiser, that was truly the object of Abram's trust. III. MARK THE FULL-ORBED GOSPEL TRUTH AS TO THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH WHICH IS IMBEDDED IN THIS RECORD OF EARLY REVELATION. "He counted it to him for righteousness." A geologist would be astonished if he came on remains in some of the primary strata which indicated the existence, in these remote epochs, of species supposed to be of much more recent date. So here we are startled at finding the peculiarly New Testament teaching away back in this dim distance. No wonder that Paul fastened on this verse, which so remarkably breaks the flow of the narrative, as proof that his great principle of justification by faith was really the one only law by which, in all ages, men had found acceptance with God. Long before law or circumcision, faith had been counted for righteousness. The whole Mosaic system was a parenthesis; and even in it, whoever had been accepted had been so because of his trust, not because of his works. The whole of the subsequent Divine dealings with Israel rested on this act of faith, and on the relation to God into which, through it, Abram entered. He was not a perfectly righteous man, as some passages of his life show; but he rose here to the height of loving and yearning trust in God, and God took that trust in lieu of perfect conformity to His will. IV. CONSIDER THE COVENANT WHICH IS THE CONSEQUENCE OF ABRAM'S FAITH, AND THE PROOF OF HIS ACCEPTANCE. It is important to observe that the whole remainder of this chapter is regarded by the writer as the result of Abram's believing God. The way in which verse 7 and the rest are bolted on, as it were, to verse 6, clearly shows this. The nearer lesson from this fact is that all the Old Testament revelation from this point onward, rests on the foundation of faith. The further lesson, for all times, is that faith is ever

rewarded by more intimate and loving manifestations of God's friendship, and by fuller disclosures of His purposes. The covenant is not only God's binding Himself anew by solemn acts to fulfil His promises already made, but it is His entering into far sweeter and nearer alliance with Abram than even He had hitherto had. That name, "the friend of God," by which he is still known over all the Muhammadan world, contains the very essence of the covenant. (*A. MacLaren, D.D.*)

The covenant with Abram:—I. ABRAM'S APPREHENSION, AND GOD'S ASSURANCE. 1. The Divine words, "Fear not," suggest that Abram was now filled with apprehension. 2. There was strong ground for such apprehension. 3. In this opportune moment of apprehension, God's gracious voice of assurance was heard in vision by Abram.

(1) Encouraging words. "Do not fear!" (2) The ground of the encouragement. "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." (a) As his "shield," an all-sufficient protection. (b) As his "exceeding great reward," better than all spoils of war or earthly good. (c) A present help in every time of need is our covenant God.

II. ABRAM'S QUESTIONING AND GOD'S ANSWER. 1. This question was natural. 2. This question was timely. 3. It has been quaintly said: "The pious complaint of human weakness before God must be distinguished from impious murmurs against God." 4. God's answer. (1) Positive. (2) All-assuring.

III. ABRAM'S FAITH, AND GOD'S ATTESTATION. 1. This act of faith seems to have risen to a sublimer height, and to have been more spiritually-appropriating, than any previous act had been. 2. God's special attestation of this act of faith is peculiarly significant (Rom. iv. 18-25).

3. The solemn ratifying rite. 4. Abram's deep sleep, and accompanying revelation from God. Lessons: 1. The assurance of God's grace should quiet all our fears, and give abiding strength to our faith in His promises. 2. Let us imitate Abram's sublime faith when (Rom. iv. 20).

3. Unbelief dishonours God; faith glorifies Him. (*D. C. Hughes, M.A.*) *The covenant with Abram*:—I. ABRAM QUESTIONING.

He never doubted God. But his faith was tried. His question in ver. 2 is a prayer for more light, as afterwards, in ver. 8, he asks for some token from God to assure him. II. ABRAM BELIEVING. He believed that nothing was impossible with God, and that God's promise must be true. This faith, then, was simply trusting God's word. III. ABRAM ASSURED. Abram watched. Abram waited. Then deep sleep fell on him. God's time often comes when His servant's weakness is most felt.

1. God unveils to Abram a glimpse of the future. 2. God allows Abram to see a symbol of the Divine Presence. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) Lessons:—1. God's infinite condescension. Will God in very deed become a contracting party with man? Shall only the breadth of a sacrifice separate the Most High God from a sinful creature such as even Abraham was? And yet so it was.

2. Let us see here again a type and emblem of the greater covenant between the Father and the Son, the covenant of grace. 3. And we ought, in fine, to enter into covenant, as Abraham did, with God. In every act of firm belief in God and Christ there is implied the idea of covenant obligation. We bind ourselves to be God's for ever; and He promises, not to us by ourselves (as is supposed in a personal covenant), but to us as in Christ, all those blessings, present and future, which are implied in Him. (*G. Gilfillan.*)

The word "count" used in two senses:—At the last general election some millions of votes had to be counted. And the proceedings on that occasion illustrated the fact that the verb "to count" is used in two senses. The clerk counts the voting-papers he takes out of the ballot-box; but presently he comes to one which has been filled up by the voter irregularly, and, throwing it aside, he exclaims, "That will not count," or "I can't count that."

He does not mean that there is any physical difficulty in adding that one vote to the number he has arrived at. He means that it must not be reckoned. The same distinction may be seen in the Bible. When David says of God's precious thoughts, "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand" (Psa. cxxxix. 18), the word "count" is used in the ordinary sense of numbering; and the same Hebrew word is sometimes translated "number," as in David's "numbering" of the people.

But when the Psalmist complains, "We are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (Psa. xliv. 22), he means not "numbered," but "regarded," or "reckoned"; and the Hebrew word used is elsewhere rendered "reckoned," or "imputed," as in Psa. xxxii. 2, "Unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."

So also in the Greek of the New Testament; and teachers should particularly note, in studying this lesson, that in the Authorised Version of Rom. iv. the words "count" (which occurs twice), "reckon" (which occurs three times), and "impute" (which occurs six times), all stand for one Greek word, which is used eleven times in that chapter, and always means "count" in the second sense. In the Revised Version this is put right, and

in no chapter is the revision more valuable. It renders the word by "reckon" in every case, and every reader feels the immensely increased strength of St. Paul's argument. Now these two senses of the word "count" both appear in Gen. xv., in the fifth and sixth verses. (In the fifth verse the English words "tell" and "numbered" are the same in the Hebrew, and are, of course, equivalent to "count" and "counted"). And in both cases the use of the expression is very significant. (*E. Stock.*) *Faith takes the righteous character of its object:*—Just as the hand of a dyer that has been working with crimson will be crimson; just as the hand that has been holding fragrant perfumes will be perfumed; so my faith, which is only the hand by which I lay hold on precious things, will take the tincture and fragrance of what it grasps. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *Faith in Christ our Righteousness:*—Like as, in winter, we no sooner go from the fire but we are cold, nor out of light but we enter into darkness, even so we no sooner be parted from Jesus Christ, who is our Righteousness and our Life, but straight we are in sin and death; forasmuch as He is our Life that quickeneth us, the Sun that giveth us light, and the Fire that warmeth, comforteth, and refresheth all His members. (*J. Spencer.*) *He believed in God:*—For the first time is that sacred emotion recorded which forms the centre of religion; which confides in things promised but unseen; which conquers every doubt by reliance and resignation; which discovers, through the mists of the present, the sunshine of the future; and which recognizes in the discordant strife of the world the traces of the eternal mind that leads it to an unceasing harmony. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*) *And He counted it to him for righteousness:*—1. From this confessedly weighty sentence we learn, implicitly, that Abram had no righteousness. And here the universal fact of man's depravity comes out into incidental notice as a thing usually taken for granted in the words of God. 2. Righteousness is here imputed to Abram. Hence mercy and grace are extended to him; mercy taking effect in the pardon of his sin, and grace in bestowing the rewards of righteousness. 3. That in him which is counted for righteousness is faith in Jehovah promising mercy. In the absence of righteousness this is the only thing in the sinner that can be counted for righteousness. (1) It is not of the nature of righteousness. If it were actual righteousness, it could not be counted as such. But believing God, who promises blessing to the undeserving, is essentially different from obeying God, who guarantees blessing to the deserving. Hence it has a negative fitness to be counted for what it is not. (2) It is trust in Him who engages to bless in a holy and lawful way. Hence it is that in the sinner which brings him into conformity with the law through another, who undertakes to satisfy its demands, and secure its rewards for him. Thus it is the only thing in the sinner which, while it is not righteousness, has yet a claim to be counted for such, because it brings him into union with one who is just and having salvation. It is not material what the Almighty and All-gracious promises in the first instance to him that believes in Him, whether it be a land, or a seed, or any other blessing. All other blessing, temporal or eternal, will flow out of that express one in a perpetual course of development, as the believer advances in experience, in compass of intellect, and capacity of enjoyment. Hence it is that a land involves a better land, a seed a nobler seed, a temporal an eternal good. The patriarchs were children to us in the comprehension of the love of God; we are children to those who will hereafter experience still grander manifestations of what God has prepared for them that love Him. The shield and exceeding great reward await a yet inconceivable enlargement of meaning. (*Professor J. G. Murphy.*) *The rationale of faith in God:*—I. FAITH IN GOD SUPPOSES A DIVINE REVELATION. 1. We must have a revelation of a personal God. 2. That revelation must exhibit God in loving relations to man. (1) As able to protect him from all evil. (2) As a sufficient portion. II. THE ACT OF FAITH RESTS UPON A DIVINE PROMISE. 1. Faith is the present realization of some good which we hope for. 2. Without a Divine promise, faith becomes mere adventure. III. THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES IN FAITH WHICH GOD IS READY TO MEET. 1. Such difficulties are part of our trial in this present state. 2. Such difficulties need not overtask our faith. IV. FAITH IN GOD IS MAN'S ONLY RIGHTeousNESS. 1. Man has no righteousness of and from himself. 2. Man cannot attain righteousness by obedience to the works of the law. 3. Man can only possess righteousness by the gracious act of God. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The firmness of Abraham's faith:*—I. GOD SPOKE TO ABRAHAM ABOUT HIS FEAR. II. GOD SPOKE TO ABRAHAM ABOUT HIS CHILDLESSNESS. III. ABRAHAM BELIEVED BEFORE HE UNDERWENT THE JEWISH RITE OF CIRCUMCISION. IV. ABRAHAM BELIEVED

IN FACE OF STRONG NATURAL IMPROBABILITIES. V. HIS FAITH WAS DESTINED TO BE SEVERELY TRIED. VI. HIS FAITH WAS COUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *Justification by faith illustrated by Abram's righteousness:—*I. HOW WAS ABRAM JUSTIFIED? 1. He was not justified by his works. 2. This justification came to Abram not by obedience to the ceremonial law, any more than by conformity to the moral law. 3. The faith which justified Abram was still an imperfect faith, although it perfectly justified him. (1) Imperfect beforehand. Prevarication as to wife. (2) Imperfect afterwards. Taking Hagar in order to effect Divine purpose. 4. So far, then, all is clear: Abram was not justified by works, nor by ceremonies, nor partly by works and partly by faith, nor by the perfection of his faith—he is counted righteous simply because of his faith in the Divine promise. I must confess that, looking more closely into it, this text is too deep for me, and therefore I decline, at this present moment, to enter into the controversy which rages around it; but one thing is clear to me, that if faith be, as we are told, counted to us for righteousness, it is not because faith in itself has merit which may make it a fitting substitute for a perfect obedience to the law of God, nor can it be viewed as a substitute for such obedience. For all good acts are a duty: to trust God is our duty, and he that hath believed to his utmost hath done no more than it was his duty to have done. He who should believe without imperfection, if this were possible, would even then have only given to God a part of the obedience due; and if he should have failed in love, or reverence, or aught beside, his faith, as a virtue and a work, could not stand him in any stead. In fact, according to the great principle of the New Testament, even faith, as a work, does not justify the soul. We are not saved by works at all or in any sense, but alone by grace, and the way in which faith saves us is not by itself as a work, but in some other way directly opposite thereto. II. Let us pass on to consider THE PROMISE UPON WHICH HIS FAITH RELIED when Abram was justified. 1. Abram's faith, like ours, rested upon a promise received direct from God. "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Had this promise been spoken by any other, it would have been a subject of ridicule to the patriarch; but, taking it as from the lip of God, he accepts it, and relies upon it. Now, if you and I have true faith, we accept the promise, "He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved," as being altogether Divine. 2. Abram's faith was faith in a promise concerning the seed. He saw Christ by the eye of faith, and then he saw the multitude that should believe in Him, the seed of the father of the faithful. The faith which justifies the soul concerns itself about Christ, and not concerning mere abstract truths. 3. Abram had faith in a promise which it seemed impossible could ever be fulfilled. The faith which justifies us must be of the same kind. It seems impossible that I should ever be saved; I cannot save myself; I see absolute death written upon the best hopes that spring of my holiest resolutions; "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing"; but yet for all this I believe that through the life of Jesus I shall live, and inherit the promised blessing. 4. This justifying faith was faith which dealt with a wonderful promise, vast and sublime. I do not hear him saying, "It is too good to be true." No; God hath said it—and nothing is too good for God to do. The greater the grace of the promise, the more likely it is to have come from Him, for good and perfect gifts come from the Father of Lights. Canst thou believe that heaven is thine, with all its ecstasies of joy, eternity with its infinity of bliss, God with all His attributes of glory? Oh! this is the faith that justifies, far-reaching, wide-grasping faith, that diminishes not the word of promise, but accepts it as it stands. 5. Once more, Abram showed faith in the promise as made to himself. Out of his own bowels a seed should come, and it was in him and in his seed that the whole world should be blessed. I can believe all the promises in regard to other people. I find faith in regard to my dear friend to be a very easy matter, but oh! when it comes to close grips, and to laying hold for yourself, here is the difficulty. III. In the third place, let us notice THE ATTENDANTS OF ABRAM'S JUSTIFICATION. 1. With your Bibles open, kindly observe that, after it is written his faith was counted to him for righteousness, it is recorded that the Lord said to him, "I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." When the soul is graciously enabled to perceive its complete justification by faith, then it more distinctly discerns its calling. Now, the believer perceives his privileged separation, and discerns why he was convinced of sin, why he was led away from self-righteousness and the pleasures

of this world, to live the life of faith; now he sees his high calling and the prize of it, and from the one blessing of justification he argues the blessedness of all the inheritance to which he is called. 2. Abram, after being justified by faith, was led more distinctly to behold the power of sacrifice. By God's command he killed three bullocks, three goats, three sheep, with turtle doves and pigeons, being all the creatures ordained for sacrifice. 3. Perhaps even more important was the next lesson which Abram had to learn. He was led to behold the covenant. I suppose that these pieces of the bullock, the lamb, the ram, and the goat, were so placed that Abram stood in the midst with a part on this side and a part on that. So he stood as a worshipper all through the day, and towards nightfall, when a horror of great darkness came over him, he fell into a deep sleep. Who would not feel a horror passing over him as he sees the great sacrifice for sin, and sees himself involved therein? Can God forget a covenant with such sanctions? Can such a federal bond so solemnly sealed be ever broken? Impossible. Man is sometimes faithful to his oath, but God is always so; and when that oath is confirmed for the strengthening of our faith by the blood of the Only-begotten, to doubt is treason and blasphemy. God help us, being justified, to have faith in the covenant which is sealed and ratified with blood. 4. Immediately after, God made to Abram (and here the analogy still holds) a discovery, that all the blessing that was promised, though it was surely his, would not come without an interval of trouble. You are a justified man, but you are not freed from trouble. Your sins were laid on Christ, but you still have Christ's cross to carry. The Lord has exempted you from the curse, but He has not exempted you from the chastisement. Learn that you enter on the children's discipline on the very day in which you enter upon their accepted condition. 5. To close the whole, the Lord gave to Abram an assurance of ultimate success. He would bring his seed into the promised land, and the people who had oppressed them He would judge. So let it come as a sweet revelation to every believing man this morning, that at the end he shall triumph, and that those evils which now oppress him shall be cast beneath his feet. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Faith counted for righteousness*:—The expression "counted for righteousness" does not signify, "considered as a righteous act"; but it means, "accepted for righteousness." Righteousness, such as would satisfy God's holy law, he had not; but faith he had: and God takes this faith as a substitute for righteousness, and reckons it to him as righteousness. I. This faith was an entire surrender of himself to God, and renouncing of his own will and wisdom. 2. It was an implicit confidence in the Divine faithfulness and veracity. 3. It looked to God's promise; and that promise contained, in germ, the whole doctrine of the gospel. 4. This faith showed itself in holy obedience. I. WE ARE BY NATURE, AND IN OURSELVES, UNGRACIOUS. II. WE ARE NOT ABLE TO SAVE OURSELVES BY WORKS. III. TO BE MADE RIGHTEOUS MEANS TO BE SET PERFECTLY RIGHT WITH GOD'S LAW. IV. THIS CAN BE DONE FOR US ONLY BY FAITH. In other words, our salvation must be of grace; it must be accomplished for us by God; and we must acquiesce in His method, and surrender ourselves to His power. V. FAITH, IN RESTING UPON GOD'S WORD, RESTS UPON A STATEMENT, A DOCTRINE, AND A PROMISE. The statement is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died, rose again, and now sitteth at God's right hand. The doctrine is that His death was an express and all-sufficient atonement for our sins; so that God now, looking at it, can be just and the justifier of the ungodly. The promise is that all sin shall be remitted, and all righteousness imputed to him who truly repents and shelters in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. VI. YET FAITH HAS A PRACTICAL RESULT. He who thus believes is saved. He is inspired with love to God; he is renewed in the Divine likeness, and made a partaker of the Holy Ghost; and therefore he must delight to keep God's commandments and do His will. Application: 1. To the ungodly. Seek justification, and so flee from the wrath to come. 2. To those seeking to be righteous. Will you study God's method of righteousness, which is by faith, and at once fall in with it? 3. To believers. Cultivate more faith, and rest confident of never perishing, but having eternal life. Beware of relapsing into the spirit of merit-mongering and legalism. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Abraham's faith counted for righteousness*:—To establish the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, it is not necessary to maintain that the faith of Abram means Christ in whom he believed. Nor can this be maintained; for it is manifestly the same thing, in the account of the Apostle Paul, as believing, which is very distinct from the object believed in. The truth appears to be this: It is faith, or believing, that is counted for righteousness; not, however, as a righteous act, or on account of any inherent virtue contained in it,

but in respect of Christ, on whose righteousness it terminates. That we may form a clear idea, both of the text and the doctrine, let the following particulars be considered:—1. Though Abram believed God when he left Ur of the Chaldees, yet his faith in that instance is not mentioned in connection with his justification; nor does the apostle, either in his Epistle to the Romans or in that to the Galatians, argue that doctrine from it, or hold it up as an example of justifying faith. I do not mean to suggest that Abram was then in an unjustified state; but that the instance of his faith which was thought proper by the Holy Spirit to be selected as the model for believing for justification, was not this, nor any other of the kind; but those only in which there was an immediate respect had to the person of the Messiah. “By Him, all that believe (that is, in Him) are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.” It is through faith in His blood that they obtain remission of sins—He is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. 2. This distinction, so clearly perceivable both in the Old and New Testament, sufficiently decides in what sense faith is considered as justifying. Whatever other properties the magnet may possess, it is as pointing invariably to the north that it guides the mariner: so whatever other properties faith may possess, it is as pointing to Christ, and bringing us into union with Him, that it justifies. 3. The phrase, “counted it for righteousness,” does not mean that God thought it to be what it was, which would have been merely an act of injustice; but His graciously reckoning it what in itself it was not; viz., a ground for the bestowment of covenant blessings. 4. Though faith is not our justifying righteousness, yet it is a necessary concomitant, and mean of justification; and being the grace which above all others honours Christ, it is that which above all others God delights to honour. Hence it is that justification is ascribed to it, rather than to the righteousness of Christ without it. Our Saviour might have said to Bartimeus, “Go thy way, I have made thee whole.” This would have been truth, but not the whole of truth which it was His design to convey. The necessity of faith in order to healing would not have appeared from this mode of speaking, nor had any honour been done, or encouragement been given to it: but by His saying, “Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole,” each of these ideas is conveyed. Christ would omit mentioning His own honour, and knowing that faith having an immediate respect to Him, amply provided for it. (*A. Fuller.*) *Power of faith*:—He who walks by sight only, walks in a blind alley. He who does not know the freedom and joy of reverent, loving speculation, wastes his life in the gloomy cell of the mouldiest of prisons. Even in matters that are not distinctly religious, faith will be found to be the inspiration and strength of the most useful life. It is faith that does the great work in the world. It is faith that sends men in search of unknown coasts. It is faith that re-trims the lamp of inquiry, when sight is weary of the flame. It is faith that unfastens the cable and gives men the liberty of the seas. It is faith that inspires the greatest works in civilization. So we cannot get rid of religion unless we first get rid of faith, and when we get rid of faith we give up our birthright and go into slavery for ever. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Firm religious belief*:—Sir Humphrey Davy used to remark, “I envy not quality of the mind or intellect in others; nor genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and, I believe, most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness; creates new hopes when all hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity; makes an instrument of torture and of shame the ladder of ascent to paradise; and, far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions and plains and amaranths, the gardens of the blest, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation, and despair. *Abram believed*:—This is the first time the word “believed” occurs in the Bible. How wonderful this chapter is in the matter of first uses of words! It seems to be a chapter of beginnings! Believed—what a history opens in this one word! The moment Abram believed, he was truly born again. We may see here some of the great meanings of the word. Paul says of Abram that “against hope he believed in hope,” and “that he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.” Here, then, we may study the word at the fountain head. “Believed” means supported, sustained, strengthened; Abram nourished and nurtured himself in God; Abram hid his life and his future in this promise, as a child might hide or nestle in

a mother's breast. That is faith. He took the promise as a fulfilment; the word was to him a fact. Thus he was called out of himself, out of his own trust, out of his own resources, and his life was fostered upon God—he by-lived, lived-by, believed, God! It was surely a perilous moment. Appearances were against the promise. Doubt might well have said, How can this thing be? But Abram "staggered not." God's love was set before him like an open door, and Abram went in and became a child at home. Henceforward the stars had new meanings to him, as, long before, the rainbow had to Noah. Abram drew himself upward by the stars. Every night they spoke to him of his posterity and his greatness. They were henceforward not stars only but promises, and oaths, and blessings. Thus dust is turned into flesh; bread into sacramental food; and stars become revelations and prophecies. This act of believing in the Lord was accounted unto Abram for righteousness. From the first, God has always made much of faith. In no instance has it been treated as a mere matter of course, but rather as a precious thing that called for approbation and blessing. Faith was counted unto Abram for character; it added something positive to his being; he became more than merely harmless; he became noble, dignified, righteous. To believe, is not simply to assent; it is to take the thing promised as if it were actually given; and this action on the part of man is followed by an exactly corresponding action on the part of God, for he takes the faith as righteousness, the act of belief as an act of piety, a mental act as a positive heroism. What Abram did, we ourselves have to do. He rested on the word of God; he did not wait until the child was born, and then say, "Now I believe"; that would not have been faith, it would have been sight. It is thus that I must believe God; I must throw my whole soul upon Him, and drive all doubt, all fear, from my heart, and take the promise as a fact. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *And he believed in the Lord*:—Scarcely any event of the Old Testament is more frequently celebrated than this, and made the subject of more lengthy comment. Abraham believed God; and it was counted unto him for righteousness. It is a story as beautiful as it is blessed, if we can but tell it as it should be told. Let us listen, longing that Abraham's faith may be ours. "After these things the word of the Lord came upon Abram in a vision, saying"—So it ever begins. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Do not let us begin to think of Abraham's advantage in the vision. We have the Word of God as he never had it, or could have it. Above all, we have the Word made flesh, the Only-Begotten, full of truth and grace. A thousand precious promises ever wait to welcome us, and pledge to us the blessing of our God. And it is from the Word that faith springs. "Fear not, Abram." Abram was fearing and fretting. And well he might. "I am thy shield, come in under My presence, I will screen thee, and I will be thy portion, thy reward exceeding great." Thus God draws His mournful child to Himself that He may comfort him. I am. What God is, is our blessedness. To know Him is rest; to know Him is to rejoice. "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?" Give thee indeed, Abraham! Surely thou art forgetting how much He has given thee. Has He not given thee already more than enough? Wealth does but leave me poor indeed; lands and fame yield no comfort if He be not mine! O blessed longing, O holy discontent, to find no rest, no satisfaction, except in Christ! No complaint is so welcome to our God as that which comes from a longing for Christ. Then comes the promise of a son distinct and assured. And not spoken only, but God led him forth and bade him look into the heavens. "And Abraham believed in the Lord." Unbelief has plenty of ground for the sole of its foot, and might very well have said: My Lord, that is impossible. Unbelief might have whispered again: "I do not see how it can be?" Unbelief makes much of that: "I do not see how it can be." But what of that? Are there not ten thousand things which I have not sense enough to understand, but which I am glad to be sure of for all that! Of all follies the supreme folly is unbelief. Abraham listened, and God spake. Abraham looked, and all about him was the pledge and measure of this promise: "And Abraham believed in the Lord." If God had said it should be, why of course it must be—must be. There is no room for doubt. For thee and me there is a vision brighter than that Syrian sky and the glory of the heavens. We see Jesus. To be like Him—is our high calling, and the glorious promise of God. What shall we say? Shall we look at ourselves, at our failings, at our folly? Shall we go through the list of our hindrances and difficulties? Shall we begin to argue about the possibility of it all? Or shall we boldly take hold of the Almighty power of God and rest in the assurance of the word that cannot be broken? "The servant shall be as his Lord." See further.

The impossibility was God's possibility. The relation of Abraham to the Messiah was not of nature, but by a new creation, a resurrection. So then for us here is the great secret of the blessed life: It is an utter and absolute surrender of ourselves to God for the fulfilment of His purposes; and then an abiding confidence in Him that He will assuredly fulfil the word "wherein He hath caused us to hope." (*M. G. Pearse.*) *Look now toward heaven*:—You may be hemmed in on every side; but you are not hemmed in overhead. If you cannot see a great way before you, or on either hand, you can see far enough straight up. When you question what God can do, look above, and see what God has done. This looking at obstacles, fixing our eyes on the hills or the bogs, on the lions or the bad men in our pathway, is discouraging business. It makes us believe that there is no way out of our difficulties. But to look up into the clear sky, and to see the moon and the stars in their marvellous beauty, inspires us to the feeling that there are no difficulties out of which their Maker cannot find the way for us. What is it that has discouraged you? Is it your empty purse; or the business outlook of the times; or the rumours of impending war; or the misdoing or the lack of your wayward boy; or the suspicious looks of those who used to trust you; or the sense of your own poor health; or a fresh conviction of your lack of mental power? Whatever it is that has made you anxious, "look now toward heaven": there is nothing discouraging in that direction. If the Lord who made the heavens, and keeps the moon and the stars in their places, has given you a promise, you may be sure that He can make that promise good. (*H. C. Trumbull.*) *So shall thy seed be*:—That the Lord assumed any visible form is not likely, and it would lessen the sweetness, solitude, and sublimity of the incident. No! Abraham stands there alone, like a grey granite rock glimmering in the light of stars. Behind him are his tents, where every eye is closed in slumber. Around stretches the wide solitary plain, with the hills of Hebron in the distance. Above is the illimitable firmament, not, as in this climate, spotted here and there with patches and streaks, and points of splendour, but hanging down like a roof of solid and compacted gold; the points, and streaks, and patches being those of the darkness, and serving to relieve the intensity, and to measure the depth of the surrounding glory. In the clear air of the Eastern night, the breeze of midnight blowing and increasing the transparency, as well as the coolness of the atmosphere, the stars look myriads and millions, the Pleiades appear, not as to us, "a nest of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid," but a hundred distinct particles of glowing light; Orion seems not to us a giant half seen through wisps of mist, but like Nebuchadnezzar's golden image in the plain of Dura, blazing equally from every limb; constellations unknown to, or dimly seen in our latitudes, here sparkle like gems of various colours, red, blue, purple, and green; and although only a section of the Great Bear looms above the northern horizon, the southern man is not conscious of the mutilation, and sees instead—oh! rapturous object to the Christian heart, although Abraham is not yet aware of the import of the solemn symbol—the Cross of the South, with its unequal and tremulous, but beautiful angles, appearing like a tree of glory on the remotest verge of the horizon. And while Abraham is gazing at this mass of heavenly splendour, and vainly trying to number its bright atoms, there comes a whisper from above the stars, which, as it passes along, hushes the breeze of night, the voice of distant streams, and the roar of wandering lions, and pierces the very core of his heart—"So shall thy seed be. There are their numbers already registered in the book of heaven." (*G. Gilfillan.*)

Vers. 7-21. **LORD GOD, WHEREBY SHALL I KNOW THAT I SHALL INHERIT IT?**—*The confirmation of faith*:—I. FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY THE REMEMBRANCE OF GOD'S PAST DEALINGS. 1. We should call to mind what God is. 2. We should consider the steps by which we have arrived at what we are already. 3. We should keep that purpose of God before us, in reference to which we first exercised our faith. II. FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY COVENANT. 1. It was a token and pledge of God's promises, not a concession to unbelief. 2. It was a covenant made by sacrifice. 3. It was a covenant which was so ordered as to give a further exercise to faith. III. FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY A FURTHER DISCOVERY OF THE DIVINE WILL. 1. This discovery was preceded by a revelation of the awful majesty of God. 2. The future was unfolded. (1) That it was not altogether a cheering prospect. (2) But it would be bright in the end. IV. FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY THE DISPLAY OF THE DIVINE GLORY. 1. The Divine glory in the overthrow of evil. 2. The Divine glory in salvation. V. FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY THE PROSPECT OF A PEACEFUL DEATH, AND OF RE-UNION WITH THE SPIRITS OF THE JUST. 1. This prospect renders the life of the believer

independent of the earthly fortunes of the Church. 2. This prospect deprives the grave of its terrors. (T. H. Leale.) *Watching with God*:—I. WATCHING BY THE SACRIFICE. II. THE HORROR OF A GREAT DARKNESS. III. THE RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT. (Ibid.) *The first stage of the covenant*:—I. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUAL CONFLICT AND GLOOM. 1. We feel our littleness and ignorance, in contrast with the greatness and glory of Almighty God. 2. We are deeply sensible of our guiltiness and impurity. See the cases of Job (xlii.) and Isaiah (vi.). 3. We are full of fear about the future. This may refer both to this life, and to the next. It may wax into a most vehement dread and horror. 4. Sometimes there is an abnormal state of the physical system. The senses are benumbed, surrounding things are indistinct and hazy; we find it hard to realize our own existence, we are dreamy and beclouded in our sensations; but spiritual and eternal things are appallingly near. The soul's sensibilities are in a state of high and extreme tension. II. WE ARE TAUGHT THE MANNER OF GOD'S HOLDING INTERCOURSE WITH US. 1. He is sovereign in its manner: fixing His own seasons, and the objects of His gracious visitations. 2. He comes by promise: all free on His part. 3. He comes by sacrifice. This He has provided Himself. 4. He comes with mingled majesty and mercy. There is the light of His holiness softened by the gentle covering, and screen, and cloud of His clemency and condescending grace. 5. He comes with an oath. What marvellous condescension! III. A LESSON OF PATIENCE AND WATCHFULNESS ON OUR PART. We are not to hurry our great transactions with God: but wait His times in patient reverence and awe. IV. THE GRANDEUR OF GOD'S PROMISES. What an inheritance is promised to us: spiritual, heavenly, Divine. (The Congregational Pulpit.) *The Cross of Christ: its blessings and its trials*:—I. THE DIVINE PROOF OF THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES. The divided heifer, &c. Christ's broken body the Divine proof. II. CHASTENED HOPES. God has to close the avenues of nature to reveal the purposes of grace. And the hopes are chastened—a "horror of great darkness" and servitude for four hundred years: here is the dark background, and it is in every picture of earthly hopes. But the end is victory—judgment on every foe and great substance. We are in the tunnel now, but we are fast emerging into the glorious sunny landscape. III. THE CROSS OF CHRIST AND ITS BLESSINGS. We look now at the nature of that sacrifice Abram had been told to prepare, and his connection with it. In it we behold the Cross of Christ, and the believer's connection with it. First of all we see it is a covenant, and made by God with Abram—"In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram." And the promise passes over into a fact. The Lord does not now say "I will give," but "I have given" (ver. 18). The "same day"—thus are the Cross, the covenant, and the believer all bound up together. And mark the three things—the "pieces," the "smoking furnace," and the "burning lamp." The "pieces" represent the suffering Jesus. The "smoking furnace"—our portion in Him, the sufferings and trials of the Cross. The "burning lamp"—God's light and promises and blessings in the midst of it all. Every believer is between those "pieces," hid in the wounded side of Jesus. Every believer there knows it is a "smoking furnace," a place of suffering and trial. Every believer too has his "burning lamp" there—the light of God's presence and His joys. And observe, it "passed between those pieces." This mingling of the joy and the sorrow is not abiding; it is "passing." The "smoking furnace" will soon be over, and issue in everlasting joy. The "burning lamp" is quickly passing, and we shall soon enter into the glorious sunshine. Are you between those pieces—bearing Christ's Cross—looking to that which is the spring and source of all your mercies? (F. Whitefield, M.A.) *Jehovah's covenant with Abram*:—Here we notice—1. The reason of the covenant (ver. 8). It was made in response to a request on Abram's part for some visible sign or token which might prove helpful to his faith. 2. The signs of the covenant. These were such as to appeal to Abram's outward vision. (1) The laid-out sacrifice (vers. 9-11). Human covenants were wont to be ratified by sacrifice. In these victims we discern a type of Christ crucified—the sacrifice which forms the basis of the covenant of grace. (2) The moving Shechinah (ver. 17). Abram had prepared the sacrifice in the morning "on God's behalf" (ver. 9); and all that he had to do now was to wait for the completion of the ceremonial. At last, however, came the mystic and awe-striking confirmation. "The glory of the Lord" appeared in the form of a smoking furnace and a fiery torch, and glided slowly down the narrow passage between the divided carcasses. It was the same "glory" which Adam had seen at the gate of Paradise, Moses was to behold in the bush, and Israel upon the summit of Sinai, and which was to lead the march from Egypt to

the promised land. 3. The blessings of the covenant. These were (1) The friendship of God. Jehovah pledged Himself to be the God of Abraham—his shield, his reward, the almighty ally. And He became such not by reason of any personal merit on the part of the patriarch, but on the ground of the great sacrifice which He was pleased to appoint and accept as a propitiation for sin (Rom. iv. ; Gal. iii. ; James ii. 23). (2) The seed. Abram's posterity is to be multitudinous as the dust of the earth and countless as the stars of the sky ; the reference here being not to his bodily posterity alone, but chiefly to his spiritual children ; that is, to all who shall share his faith in God. (3) The land. The ideal and ample boundaries of the land of promise are now, for the first time, defined in the hearing of Abram (vers. 18-21), and all is typical of " a better country, that is, an heavenly," which is the destined inheritance of the patriarch's spiritual "seed." III. A REVELATION REGARDING ABRAM'S POSTERITY (vers. 12-16). LESSONS: 1. It is the Lord's special delight to comfort and cheer the hearts of His people when they are cast down (2 Cor. i. 3, 4 ; vii. 6). 2. God is better than His gifts. The best portion any soul can win is to know and love and possess in the indestructible communion of love, Him who is the possessor of earth and heaven. 3. Verse 6 is one of the most important texts of the Old Testament Scriptures, inasmuch as it is a clear testimony to the exclusive efficacy of faith without works as the instrument of the sinner's justification. 4. Although the privileges and blessings of the gospel covenant all come from God, and are to be traced to His good pleasure alone, it belongs to man to fulfil the conditions and perform the obligations which the reception of covenant-benefits involves. 5. The faith which was imputed to Abram for righteousness formed that impressive personal character which made him " the friend of God," and which at length enabled him even to offer up his only son Isaac in obedience to the Divine command (James ii. 21-23). (*C. Jerdan, M.A.*)

Ver. 11. When the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away.—*Abram and the ravenous birds* :—I. MENTION SOME OF THOSE WELL-KNOWN INTRUDERS WHICH ARE PERPETUALLY MOLESTING OUR PEACE AND DISTURBING OUR SERVICE. 1. Wicked thoughts—the sons of Satan. 2. Worldly thoughts, which spring from the force of habit. 3. Anxious thoughts, the fruits of our unbelief. 4. Annoying thoughts, the offspring of our vanity. 5. Ecclesiastical anxieties. Church business, or Church differences. II. DISTRACTING CARES MUST BE CHASED AWAY. 1. For your own sake. No human brain can bear the perpetual toil of business, except it knows how to pause and oil the machinery by turning the mind in some other direction. 2. You will find, if you are able to take a perfect rest, by driving away these evil thoughts when you are worshipping God, that you will do your work during the other days of the week far better. It was an old Popish folly to try and tell what kind of weather there would be by the weather on Sunday—"If it rain before mess ; rain all the week more or less." Now, we do not believe that literally ; but we do believe it in a spiritual sense. If you have a bad Sabbath-day, you will have a bad week ; but if you have a good day of rest, you will find it good with your souls the whole week long ; not that you will be without trouble all the week, that would not be good for you, but you shall never be without grace during the week ; nor if you have peace on the Sunday shall you be without peace on the Monday. 3. And then let me remind you, in the next place, that the character of this day demands that you should get rid of these thoughts. Now, it is inconsistent with such a day—the day of light—for us to be in darkness. It is inconsistent with the day of resurrection for us to be raking in this grave of the world. It is inconsistent with this day of descent of the Spirit for us to be thinking of carnal things, and forgetting the things which are above. 4. The indulging of vain or anxious thoughts, when we are engaged in the worship of God, must be striven against, because it must be grievous to the Holy Spirit. How can we expect that we shall have His presence and His assistance if we give Him not our hearts ? 5. These thoughts and cares must be driven away, for if you do not strive against them they will increase and multiply. This is a growing habit. The force of habit is like the velocity of a falling stone, it increases in ever multiplying proportions. If I have indulged one unbelieving thought, there has always been another to follow it ; if I have allowed some little disturbance in the congregation to cast me down, and distract my thoughts, there has been another, and another, and another, till I have been in the pitiable condition of a minister who has been half afraid of his congregation. III. I am now to show you how to do it. 1. And we begin by saying, first of all, set your heart upon it ; for when the soul is set upon a thing, then it is

likely to accomplish it. Go up to God's house, saying, "I must give up my soul to eternal matters to-day, and I will." 2. But when you have this done, remember next—let the preparation of your heart before coming to the sacrifice assist you when you shall be there. We are told men ought not to preach without preparation. Granted. But, we add, men ought not to hear without preparation. 3. But, this done, above all, cry to the Spirit of God for help to make your spirit rest. 4. Then, when you have thus done, and you come up to the house of God, still seek to continue in the same frame of mind, remembering in whose immediate presence you are. A Spartan youth was holding the censer at a sacrifice, when Alexander was offering a victim. It chanced that while he held the censer a hot coal fell upon his hand. The youth stood still, and never flinched, lest by any utterance or cry the sacrifice should be disturbed; for he said he was in the presence of Alexander, and he would not have the sacrifice interrupted for him; and he bore the pain of the burning coal. Let us remember that Spartan youth, adding to what he said, "We are in the presence of the Almighty God." Then, if there be something which annoys us, let us bear it unflinchingly, for we stand before Him for whom it is blessed to suffer, and who will surely reward them that seek Him in spirit and in truth. 5. Another means I will give you. Take care that your faith be in active exercise, or else you cannot chase away those thoughts. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Be still, and know that He is God. 6. Take care also that thou attend a ministry which draws thee from earth, for there are some dead ministries which make the Sabbath-day more intolerable than any of the other days of the week. (C. H. Spurgeon.)

Driving away the vultures from the sacrifice:—I. First, with regard to THE GREAT SACRIFICE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. This has been, and always will be, the great object of attack by the enemies of God. 1. Note well that the sacrifice which Abram guarded was of Divine ordination. So with the sacrifice of Christ. 2. Next, we see a further reason for guarding the sacrifice in the fact that it is of most solemn import. A covenant. We cannot let the vultures tear this sacrifice, for it is to us the token of the covenant; and if there be no covenant of grace, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, and we are still under the curse of the broken law. If ye are still out of covenant with God, what hope, what safety, what peace, what joy is there for you? 3. And, next, we must guard this sacrifice, because there God most fully displays His grace. 4. We will do this all the more because this is the chief point of attack. Every doctrine of revelation has been assailed, but the order of battle passed by the black prince at this hour runs as follows: "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the crucified King of Israel." If they carry the bastion of substitution, if they can throw down the great truth of atonement, then all the rest will go as a matter of course. The cross taken away, indeed, there is nothing left worth defending. Therefore let us gather up our strength, that we may vigorously chase the vultures from the altar of the living God. 5. "How are we to do it?" says one. Well, we can all of us help in this struggle. (1) First, by a constant, immovable faith in Jesus Christ our crucified Saviour for ourselves. (2) Let your own confidence be strong, and then very frequently make an open declaration of your faith in the atoning Sacrifice. II. But now let us apply this example of Abram to ourselves in the matter of THE GRATEFUL SACRIFICE OF OUR LIVES. It is our reasonable service, that we present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God by our Lord Jesus Christ, and we must guard our consecration against the temptations which will assail it. I am addressing many of you who feel that you have entered into covenant with God by Jesus Christ. "What sort of vultures will there be?" says one. Well, there will come doubts as to eternal things. There will be questions about your own wisdom in giving yourself up to God. I hope you have been strangers to such birds of prey, but some of us have not been: doubts as to whether there be a God to serve; doubts as to whether there be a heaven, an eternal future, a blessed reward; doubts as to whether it is well to give up this world for the next, or not. Drive them away! They may come in other forms, such as dreams of ambition, the cares of life, temptations to sin, idleness, &c. In whatever guise they come, drive them away. III. Guard ALL THE SACRIFICES OF YOUR DEVOTION. When the fowls come down upon your sacrifices of prayer, and praise, and meditation, drive them away. A little boy, who was accustomed to spend a time every day in prayer, went up into a hayloft, and when he climbed into the hayloft, he always pulled the ladder up after him. Some one asked him why he did so. He answered, "As there is no door, I pull up the ladder." Oh, that we could always in some way cut the connection between our soul and the intruding things which lurk below! There

is a story told of me and of some person, I never knew who it was, who desired to see me on a Saturday night, when I had shut myself up to make ready for the Sabbath. He was very great and important, and so the maid came to say that some one desired to see me. I bade her say that it was my rule to see no one at that time. Then he was more important and impressive still, and said, "Tell Mr. Spurgeon that a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ desires to see him immediately." The frightened servant brought the message; but the sender gained little by it, for my answer was, "Tell him I am busy with his Master, and cannot see servants now." Sometimes you must use strong measures. Did not our Lord tell His messengers, on one occasion, to salute no man by the way? Courtesy must give place to devotion. It is incumbent on you that you should be alone with your Lord, and if intruders force an entrance, they must be sent about their business. (*Ibid.*) *The disturbers of worship*:—I. THE OFFERING OF THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIPPER. II. IT IS OFTEN DISTURBED AND INTERRUPTED. 1. Unbelieving thoughts. 2. Evil passions. 3. Worldly thoughts. 4. Satanic influence. III. THE REMEDIES AGAINST THESE DIFFICULTIES AND INTERRUPTIONS. 1. A devotional preparation. 2. A firm hold on the truth. 3. Earnestness in the service. 4. Unshaken confidence in the aid of the Holy Spirit. (*J. G. Hewlett, D.D.*) *Wandering thoughts removed from the sacrifice by warm affections*:—If we would prevent wandering thoughts, we should seek warm affections. Flies will not so readily light on a boiling pot on the fire, as when it stands cold in the window. Nor will vain thoughts so easily light on thy sacrifice, when burning on the altar of a fervent heart, as when offered up with a cold, dull spirit. (*W. Gurnall.*) *The sacrifice hindered by vain thoughts*:—I have heard of some men who were called walking libraries, because they carried all that they read in their memories wherever they went. And have we not too many walking shops, barns, warehouses, &c., that is, persons who carry this lumber to bed and board, church and closet? How can such pray with a united heart, who have so many sharers in their thoughts? (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 12. An horror of great darkness fell upon him.—*Abram's horror in the night*:—Abram's condition here may be looked upon in two aspects. 1. As indicating the chequered experience of the good. 2. As suggesting solemn facts in man's existence. I. MAN HAS A SOUL. II. MAN'S SOUL IS IN A FALLEN CONDITION. III. MAN'S SOUL, THOUGH IN A FALLEN CONDITION, IS STILL ACCESSIBLE TO ITS MAKER. In His communication now to Abram, God must have impressed the patriarch with four things concerning Himself. 1. His infinite intelligence. 2. His righteous control. 3. His special regard for His people. 4. That he, individually, should be taken care of. (*Homilist.*) *Watching and visions*:—What was the meaning of that vision of fire? I. IT INDICATED THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE OFFERINGS. II. The furnace may be taken also as referring to PURIFICATION, and the lamp to DIVINE LIGHT AND GUIDANCE. 1. Significant of the Divine treatment of the descendants of Abraham. 2. Illustrating the course of the spiritual descendants of Abraham—the true Israel—the Christian Church. 3. The life and work of Christ were shadowed forth in that "smoking furnace and burning lamp." Abraham "rejoiced to see Christ's day." 4. An illustration of the character of the life of individual believers. In life, trial and joy must be intermingled. (*F. Hastings.*) I. WHAT ABRAM HEARD. 1. The word of the Lord. Revelation, commandment. 2. Mode of communication. In a vision. The word of the Lord needs now no vision. How little of the word of the Lord Abram had. But here was a word addressed to him personally. 3. Time. Immediately after the record of Abraham's courage, &c. 4. Subject of the communication. (1) Encouragement: "Fear not." "shield," "reward." (2) Promise: "A son." Numerous posterity. Fulfilled in the Jews, but more particularly in believers—the spiritual "seed of Abram." Though not addressed to us by name, as this "word" to Abram, the word of the Lord is for us. Of salvation, comfort, precept, promise, doctrine. A more sure word of prophecy. Do we prize the word of the Lord? seek to understand? practise it? II. WHAT ABRAM DID. 1. He believed God. Some men need much evidence and argument before they give mental assent to the word they hear. Abram had little evidence. God spoke, and Abram believed. 2. He prepared the animals and birds (see Jer. xxxiv. 18–20). The passing between the divided parts of sacrificial offerings, the most solemn confirmation of words and covenants (see especially Heb. vi. 13–17). 3. He watched and guarded the victims thus dedicated. Would not suffer unclean birds to alight near them. The profound reverence with which he regarded this act and command of God. His faith thoroughly practical. 4. He

slept. It was in a vision he had heard the word, now in a vision he should behold its solemn ratification. Did not sleep until he had discharged his duty. III. WHAT ABRAHAM SAW. A horror of great darkness had fallen upon him. The hour, the work the circumstances, filled him with awe. He expected he hardly knew what. The profound darkness would make the light that appeared more visible. 1. He saw a lamp of fire. The sacred symbol of the Divine presence. The Shikinah. 2. He saw the fire pass between the victims. He knew no more solemn confirmation of words than this. God in His infinite condescension adopted the method of ratifying His word, which Abram, adopting to confirm his own promise, would have regarded as a most solemn oath. 3. This solemn assurance was combined with the repetition of the promise not only as previously given, but with detail and enlargement (15-21). Learn—I. To regard with thankfulness this record of the Divine word which has come to us. II. Christ is the true and final sin-offering. The Divine presence was in that sacrifice. III. God was in Christ, as the lamp was among these victims. And speaking merciful words of promise and pardon to us. IV. Christ Jesus is the Word of God. Henceforth we hear no man, save Jesus only. (J. C. Gray.)

Ver. 16. *For the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.—Why the wicked are spared for a season:—*I. This passage, taken in connection with its attending circumstances, teaches us the following important truth: GOD WAITS UNTIL SINNERS HAVE FILLED UP A CERTAIN MEASURE OF INIQUITY, BEFORE HE EXECUTES THE SENTENCE BY WHICH THEY ARE DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION; but when this measure is full, execution certainly and immediately follows. 1. That God is under no obligation to suspend the destruction of sinners until the measure of their iniquity is full, or even to suspend it for a single hour. The life of every sinner is already forfeited. 2. That when we say, God waits until sinners have filled up a certain measure of iniquity before He destroys them, we do not mean that He waits upon all, till they have filled up the same measure. In other words, we do not mean that all sinners are equal in sinfulness and guilt at the hour of their death. To assert this would be contrary to fact and daily observation. 3: That every impenitent sinner is constantly filling up the measure of his iniquity; and thus constantly ripening for destruction. This is evident from the fact, that all the feelings, thoughts, words and actions, of the impenitent, are sinful. 4. Though the measure of every impenitent sinner's iniquity is constantly filling up; it falls much more rapidly in some cases, and at some seasons, than at others. II. TO PROVE THE ASSERTION, WHICH WAS DRAWN FROM OUR TEXT. 1. The truth of this assertion may be proved from other passages of Scripture. St. Paul informs us that the conduct of the Jews tended to fill up their sins away; for, he adds, wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. By the mouth of the prophet Joel, God says, Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, for their wickedness is great. And, using the same figure, St. John informs us that he saw an angel seated on a cloud, having in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple of God, and said to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. The same truths appear to be taught by the parable of the barren fig-tree. 2. The truth of the remark under consideration is further proved by the history of God's dealings with sinful nations and individuals. III. TO MAKE SOME IMPROVEMENT OF THE SUBJECT. 1. From this subject you may learn, my impenitent hearers, why God spares sinners long after their lives are forfeited, and why He spares you. It is because the measure of your iniquity is not yet full. 2. From this subject, my hearers, you may learn the indispensable necessity of an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. You are constantly adding to your sins, to diminish them is beyond your power. Yet you must cease to commit new sins, and those which you have already committed must be blotted out, or you will perish for ever. Christ alone can enable you to do either. His blood cleanses from all sin; He is able to cast all your iniquities into the depths of the sea; and He can renovate your hearts, and render you holy, so that you shall no longer treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. 3. There is an important sense in which many of the preceding remarks are applicable to Christians. Those of you who have been such for any considerable time, have often, when contemplating your sins, and especially when in a religious declension, been ready to conclude that God would visit you with some severe temporal affliction, as a mark of

His displeasure. But instead of this, you have found Him returning to you in mercy, healing your backslidings, and putting the song of salvation into your mouths. Having often found this to be the case, you may begin to conclude that it will always be so, and thus you may be insensibly led to become careless and slothful, to think lightly of sin, and not to guard against the first symptoms of declension. But if so, God will, in a terrible manner, convince you of your mistake, and make you to know experimentally that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake Him. (*E. Payson, D.D.*)

Ver. 17. Behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.—*The furnace and the lamp*:—In this whole striking and impressive narrative there are teachings of the utmost interest and value; and I would fain extract alike from the sacrifice, the furnace, and the lamp, guiding light and strengthening cheer for Abraham's spiritual seed to-day. 1. Note, first, that Abram's long and lonely hours of watching came to an end at last, and that patient waiting upon God obtained its due reward. You, too, may find that your offering of ardent prayer, or self-sacrificing deed of service or of suffering, may seem for long unanswered and in vain. Yet, though the vision tarry long, still wait for it; the day may slowly die, the night may gather round before the gladdening light shall come, but it shall come, and turn the darkness back again to dawn. 2. Note, further, that from every offering to God—the song of praise, the fervent prayer, the submissive will, the good deeds, or the consecrated life—we need to drive, with watchful hand and eye, the vultures of evil thoughts and selfish aims and worldly motives and Satanic temptations away. Now, as then, man's extremity is God's opportunity, and still the unclean spirits which haunt and harass the Christian, even at his devotions as well as otherwise, are scared off just as they circle round for a final swoop, and wing their baffled flight away! 3. Note, further, that the mysterious furnace and the supernatural lamp were seen in direct connection with the chosen sacrifice. They moved to and fro upon the altar and among the consecrated offerings, and were seen nowhere else. Now, see how this applies to the seed of Abraham, the Israelitish race. They were a chosen people, selected and set apart out of all the tribes of men to be, in a sense, absolutely singular—God's own people. This choice on God's part, and this consecration on theirs, was symbolized and ratified by altar sacrifices and the fire from heaven. Their consecration to God brought the furnace of purification and the lamp of illumination, in order to fit them for the high and glorious destiny to which they were called. In the life and death of Jesus Christ, too, Abram's glorious seed, the vision was fulfilled. How clearly we can see the "smoking furnace" in the sore affliction through which He passed! Yet, ever amid all, through the whole of His sharp pilgrimage, He had ever the light and the comfort, the cheer and the guidance, of the "burning lamp." By His conscious sinlessness, His secret mountain intercourse with God, by the baptism of the Brooding Dove, by the Father's voice and presence, by saintly messengers from heaven, by perpetual gift of gracious power, the "burning lamp" of light and love moved along through all His life of sacrifice, up the hill of Calvary, through the sepulchre, and from Mount Olivet up to the hills of God! The patriarch's vision is fulfilled, too, in the history and experience of the Church of God, the true Israel, the spiritual seed of Abraham. The Church of Christ, the guild and family of true believers throughout all the world, is also, like Abram's sacrifice, the elect of God. It is a chosen nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, elect, precious. By holy dedication the Church lays itself on the altar of its Lord, and offers perpetual sacrifice through the blood of the Atoning Lamb; and God says of it, "I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Here, again, we see how consecration is linked with purification and illumination—here, again, the Chosen Sacrifice is subjected to the smoking furnace and burning lamp. The smoke of the one and the gleam of the other can be traced all along the line of the Church's march. You can see the reek of the furnace in the rage of Herod, in the cruelty of Domitian, in the savagery of Nero, the passion of the English Mary, the atrocities of papal Rome. You can catch the reflection of the furnace-glow in the sword of Mahomet, the rocks of Madagascar, the dungeons of Naples, the stakes of Smithfield, and the Inquisition of Spain. In some form or other, to-day, the "smoking furnace" moves through the pilgrim and militant Church of Christ. But, as with Israel of old, as with Jesus, the Church's Head, so the Church itself has never been without the glow of the "burning lamp." God's Church has never lost the light of truth, never been robbed of

the divinely-kindled lamp of Love! I want to extract one more lesson for personal application. The singular vision of Abram is equally fulfilled in the life and lot of every Christian believer. Like Abram's offered victims, the Christian, too, is the chosen and consecrated possession of the Lord. He hath presented himself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and in return, "the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." And here, again, in the individual, consecration is attended by purification and illumination. The living sacrifice goes hand in hand with the smoking furnace and the burning lamp. In the Christian life the smoking furnace is full often seen and felt. The path of suffering, test, and trial must be trodden by every child of God. This Christian must carry along a painful bodily ailment. That one must go mourning because of an absent face, a silent voice, a vacant chair. Another must struggle, baffled and perplexed with temporal and financial cares, half worsted in the fight. And still another weeps over a blighted hope, a thankless child, or an unfaithful friend. Everywhere, and with every one, the smoking furnace moves in and out along the consecrated life. But still, in the Christian's lot the "burning lamp" holds precious and abiding place. The word of promise, grace, and guidance is with him all the way. The "candle of the Lord" burns in his heart; the lamp of eternal truth and love burns with a quenchless fire, casts a guiding light on his heavenward path, sweeps away the mists even from death's deep river, expels the shadows from the very grave, and is reflected by the jasper walls that gleam on the hills of God! Is Abram afraid of the smoking furnace? In the light of the burning lamp he reads, "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward." Does Paul's thorn rankle so deep that he pleads thrice with tears and sighs to be delivered? The burning lamp flings the promise on the smoke-cloud—"My grace is sufficient for thee," and at once the apostle "glories in his infirmities and praises God in the fire!" So with thee, O Christian! In thy trials thou shalt have triumphs, in thy sorrows thou shalt have solace. For thy trouble thou shalt have double; in tribulation shall come compensation, and always and ever the smoking furnace shall be held in check by the gleam of the burning lamp! Do you ask in doubtful wonder why a consecrated life should be so closely linked with affliction? I answer that the furnace is the purifying agent making the sanctification perfect and the sacrifice more precious and complete. The furnace, too, endows the consecrated soul with the properties of steel, gives the tempered hardness and solidity of character which enables the Christian to fulfil the Apostolic counsel—"Quit you like men; be strong!" That was the end of Israel's sore distresses. "Behold I have refined thee," says Jehovah—"I have chosen thee out of the furnace of affliction." Even of Jesus it is said that He learned obedience by the things that He suffered, and that by suffering He was made perfect as the Captain of our salvation. Take heart, then, O thou follower of the Captain. If that is the way the Master trod, should not the servant tread it still? Make thy sacrifice thorough, willing, constant, and entire. (*J. J. Wray.*) *Ratification of a covenant by a burning lamp:*—In illustration of this very ancient mode of ratifying a covenant, Roberts says—"It is an interesting fact that the burning lamp or fire is still used in the East in confirmation of a covenant. Should a person in the evening make a solemn promise to perform something for another, and should the latter doubt his word, the former will say, pointing to the flame of the lamp, 'That is the witness.' On occasions of greater importance, when two or more join in a covenant, should the fidelity of any be questioned, they will say, 'We invoke the lamp of the temple.' When an agreement of this kind is broken, it will be said, 'Who would have thought this, for the lamp of the temple was invoked?'"

Vers. 18-21. The Lord made a covenant with Abram.—*God's covenant:*—1. The time of saints' sacrifice amidst their troubles may be the season of God's making covenant with them. 2. Not only promise but covenant hath God made to His Church for their consolation. 3. Word and sign, promise and pledge, make up God's covenant. 4. God's promise of good to come is as sure as if done already. 5. Lower mercies God may give as tokens of greater blessings—this land. 6. The Church hath had its place and portion designed in this world, for being here (ver. 18). 7. God's bounds to His Church were large under the law, much more under the gospel. The ends of the earth now (ver. 19). 8. All peoples shall be driven out to make room for the Church of God. Multitudes can be no hindrance of making good God's covenant to them (vers. 20, 21). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The river of Egypt:*—As the traveller pursues his weary way from Egypt to Palestine, he

crosses the broad channel of a river, bounded still by its well-marked banks, but destitute of water. When the rivers of Judah flowed with water, this was the southern boundary of the country, dividing it from the land of Ham, and hence it is often alluded to as the "River of Egypt." On one side is a parched desert of sand, spotted here and there with little verdant patches, where a few bushes of palm-trees grow, and flowers show their smiling faces to the scorching rays of the sun that pour down as if from a glowing furnace; but, in general, dreary, waste, and bare, with nothing to relieve the eye, almost blinded by the glare of the white sand, but occasional heaps of stones, that tell of ruin and desolation. Here and there the flat sands are covered with an incrustation of fine salt, the very symbol of barrenness. The wild ass, whose "house" God has "made the wilderness, and the barren land (Heb., the salt places) his dwellings," here ranges, far from the haunts of men, "searching after every green thing." On the eastern side of this ancient channel the country changes. Low sand-hills running in ranges parallel to the shore of the Mediterranean for a while struggle for supremacy with the verdure of grassy slopes. (P. H. Gosse.)

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 1-3. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.—*Foretelling God's appointed time*:—I. THIS MAY BE THE TEMPTATION OF THOSE WHO YET HAVE FAITH IN GOD. II. SUCH A COURSE APPEARS TO HAVE A RATIONAL WARRANT. 1. There was no human hope that the promise would be accomplished in that form in which they first understood it. 2. They were conforming to the common custom of the country. 3. The end they sought was worthy in itself. III. ALL ATTEMPTS TO BE BEFOREHAND WITH PROVIDENCE IMPLY AN INFIRMITY OF FAITH. 1. They are signs of impatience. 2. It is not our duty to aid God in the accomplishment of His promises. 3. Religion hereby degenerates into fanaticism. 4. Such an interference with the means by which God accomplishes His purpose shows a want of confidence in His power. (T. H. Leale.) *Hagar, the slave girl*:—We might have expected that Abraham would have strenuously resisted every endeavour to induce him to realize for himself God's promise about his seed. Surely he will wait meekly and quietly for God to fulfil His own word, by means best known to Himself. Instead of this he listened to the reasoning of expediency. I. THE QUARTER WHENCE THESE REASONINGS CAME. Sarai. 1. It is always hard to resist temptation when it appeals to natural instinct or to distrustful fear. 2. We should be exceedingly careful before acting on the suggestions of any one not as advanced as we are in the Divine life. What may seem right to them may be terribly wrong for us. II. THE SORROWS TO WHICH THEY LED. 1. To Sarah. 2. To Hagar. 3. To Abraham. III. THE VICTIM WHOSE LIFE-COURSE WAS SO LARGELY INVOLVED. We mourn to see in her only one of myriads who have been sacrificed to the whim or passion, expediency or selfishness, of men. (F. B. Meyer, B.A.) *Carnal expedients*:—I. THE FOLLY OF CARNAL EXPEDIENTS. Their danger lies in many directions. 1. Look at the method of our justification and sanctification before God. God's method is by faith, man's by works. The one is of promise, the other by natural means. The latter is illicit, and fails; only the former succeeds. 2. In providence. You may be looking for temporal prosperity; God may design it for you: but you have no right to seek it by covetousness or injustice, and making haste to be rich. 3. In gospel labours. You expect success, but it is delayed. 4. In regard to our sufferings and our hope of heaven. Some have been tempted to slay themselves, or those whom they have loved, in the midst of terrible affliction, to hasten their admission to glory. You may not have this temptation; but you may be restless, impatient, and unresigned. Say rather, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." 5. In regard to the millennium, and the establishment of the gospel on earth. What hindrances and delays there are. Many seek to christianize the world by the sword, by pandering to human ignorance and superstition, or by indulging the lusts and passions of men. We must be faithful to principle, and leave results to God. II. GOD'S MERCIFULNESS TO

THE SORROWFUL SAINT. "Thou God seest me." It suggests two things; 1. God's omniscience; and—2. His kind regard of His people. Let us think of it: (1) In times of desolation and sorrow. You may be lonely and forsaken, but God sees you. (2) In times of wandering and waywardness. Then let it rebuke us, and bring us to repentance and contrition. (3) In times of temptation. Then let it deter us. "How can we do this thing, and sin against God?" (4) In times of perplexity. Then let us seek His guidance—the guidance of His eye and hand. (5) It suggests a contrast between this life and the next. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Lessons*.—1. God's promise and covenant can hardly keep up faith in His own, against the discouragements of sense. 2. Sensible helps at hand may be an occasion to doubt of God's promise as being afar off. So was Hagar to Sarai (ver. 2). 3. Good souls in temptations may complain of this barrenness though God order it. 4. Sense of such wants may put souls upon unlawful means to have their desires of a seed. 5. Flesh persuades to take an uncertain peradventure in sense, rather than wait for God's promise in certainty (ver. 2). 6. Temptation may carry saints not only to the motion but action of evil. 7. Such temptations may make saints do evil, for ends seeming good. So Sarai gives her to wife. (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *The trial of faith—its infirmity*.—I. IT ORIGINATED AT A TIME AND IN A MANNER, the consideration of which may well enforce the solemn warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;"—while it painfully illustrates that other affecting saying, that a man's worst foes may be those of his own household. This transaction took place (ver. 3) after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. During all that time he had walked with God, and God had done for him great things; he had trusted in the Lord, and had been delivered. He had found God faithful to him, and had been himself enabled to be faithful to God. In particular, he had very recently received a signal pledge of the Divine favour, and a strong confirmation of the hope set before him; and never, perhaps, had he stood higher, in respect of privilege, than now. And yet, at the very time when he stands so high, he is tempted, and he falls. II. THE TEMPTATION ITSELF IS A VERY PLAUSIBLE ONE. It bears all the marks of that subtlety which, from of old, had been the characteristic of that old serpent, the devil. Observe the spirit and manner in which the proposal is made by Sarai, and received by Abram. It is plainly such as altogether to preclude the idea of this step being at all analogous to an ordinary instance of sin committed in the indulgence of sensual passion. Most unjustifiable as was the patriarch's conduct, it is not for a moment to be confounded with that of David, for example, whose melancholy fall was caused by the mere unbridled violence of an unlawful appetite. There is no room for the introduction of such an element as this on the occasion of Abram's connection with Hagar. It originated in the suggestion of his faithful wife, and had, for its single object, the fulfilment of the Divine promise, whose accomplishment otherwise seemed to be growing every day more manifestly and hopelessly impossible (vers. 1, 2). (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Sarah's sin; or carnal policy no aid to Divine plans*.—Unbelief is very prolific of schemes; and surely this of Sarai is as carnal, as foolish, and as fruitful of domestic misery as could almost have been devised. Yet such was the influence of evil counsel, especially from such a quarter, that "Abram hearkened to her voice." The father of mankind sinned by hearkening to his wife, and now the father of the faithful follows his example. How necessary for those who stand in the nearest relations, to take heed of being snares instead of helps one to another! It was a double sin: first, of distrust; and secondly, of deviation from the original law of marriage, and which seems to have opened a door of polygamy. (*A. Fuller.*) *Sarai's expedient*.—Sarai's impulse, even if mistaken, was admirable for its unselfish abnegation of what is most precious to her sex. It was such a sacrifice as only a woman had it in her power to make. Had Abram been a polygamist, or had the adhesion of his house to the primitive marriage law been less loyal than it was, there was one obvious escape from the difficulty. It is instructive that neither Abram nor his wife thought of a second marriage. The usages of the time suggested a different mode. For a childless wife to treat the children born of a favourite slave-girl as legally as her own was a resource very foreign to the notions of our western Christendom. Nevertheless, it sprang not unnaturally out of two peculiarities of society in Abram's day. One of these was the disadvantage, amounting positively to social discredit, which attached to childlessness, at a time when the primal injunction to replenish the earth still retained its full force. The other was the complete surrender of a serf's legal and social rights into the hand of his master, which in the East characterized domestic servitude. Every

home-slave stood at the disposal of his lord for whatever service the lord might require. His very children were not his own, but his master's. For a mistress, therefore, to seek by means of a female slave and favourite attendant what Providence had denied to herself, was regarded under such a state of feeling as neither immoral nor revolting. It was not even held to be any real departure from the law of monogamy, or any infraction of conjugal fidelity. There is no doubt, however, that it did involve a certain lowering of the original conception of marriage. It paved the way for concubinage of a less excusable description. And in the majority of cases, as in the present instance, it could scarcely fail to turn out ill. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*)

Vers. 4-6. When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.—*The evils of abolishing social distinctions*:—I. THOSE WHO ARE SUDDENLY RAISED IN THE SOCIAL SCALE ARE TEMPTED TO PRIDE AND INSOLENCE. II. THOSE WHO HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE ABOLISHING OF SUCH DISTINCTIONS ARE THE FIRST TO COMPLAIN OF THE EVILS CAUSED THEREBY. 1. They complain of their troubles so as to excuse themselves. 2. They often make rash appeals to Divine justice. III. THE RECOGNITION OF ORIGINAL RIGHTS IS THE BEST WAY OF DEALING WITH SUCH EVILS. 1. This is a better course than the immediate imputation of such evils to those who have caused them. 2. Meek submission becomes true might in the end. IV. THE EVILS BROUGHT ABOUT BY SUDDEN AND VIOLENT CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL STATE ARE NEVER FULLY REMEDIED. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Lessons*:—1. Nothing more proud than a beggar set on horseback, and a very ape, if you place him up aloft, begins to bridle the matter and take upon him marvellously. 2. It teacheth that adversity is better borne than prosperity of many one. 3. It sheweth the end of evil counsel, Sarah is beaten with her own rod. (*Bp. Babington.*)

Vers. 7-12. Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou?—*Providence and the outcast*:—I. PROVIDENCE FINDS THE OUTCAST AND MISERABLE. 1. There are occasions in human life when the providence of God specially manifests itself. 2. Providence finds us for a purpose of mercy. 3. Providence is minute in its care and knowledge. II. PROVIDENCE TEACHES THE OUTCAST AND MISERABLE. 1. Lessons of reproof. 2. Lessons of instruction and guidance. III. PROVIDENCE INSPIRES HOPE IN THE OUTCAST AND MISERABLE. 1. The lowest and most despised have some purpose of Providence to serve. 2. All who have consciously felt the action of a Divine Providence have some memorial of God's goodness. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The angel's message to Hagar*:—In this very gracious appearance of the angel to Hagar, it is possible, I think, to detect a twofold design. Through her connection with Abram, this handmaid had been providentially elevated into a position which carried on the one hand duties, and on the other honour. 1. In the first place, it was her present duty to return and place herself again under the heavy hand of Sarai, in order that Abram's son might be born and nurtured in Abram's home. This, therefore, was the hard command, which in the first instance the angel was commissioned to deliver. God's revelations commonly attach themselves to the working of men's own minds. It is impossible not to suspect that, as she sat to rest after her hasty flight, Hagar's conscience was already whispering words like these before the angel appeared: "Return to thy mistress and submit thyself!" But if any such feeling worked dimly in her own mind, it would certainly have failed to send her back, had it not been sharpened by this imperative command from heaven. On the other side, God graciously encouraged Hagar to such an unwelcome duty, by revealing the honours which her relationship to Abram would bring along with it. When God blesses any man, that blessing proves itself like the consecrating oil on the Jewish high priest: it flows from the head down to the skirts of the garment. In recompense for a mistress's cruelty, Hagar was to become the ancestress of a mighty race, which for countless generations has ever since dwelt in the presence of all its brethren. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*) *Hagar in the wilderness*:—I. HAGAR'S DISTRESS. Affliction and solitude often give persons time to think, and arouse a desire to pray. Misery is a voiceless prayer, which God understands. II. GOD'S MESSENGER. An appearance of the Lord at Hagar's time of need and distress. III. GOD'S MESSAGE. 1. A rebuke. 2. A command. 3. A promise. **CONCLUSION**: We see then in this narrative a valuable lesson as to God's Providence, and the way in which God is personally interested in the welfare and destinies of men. Moreover, the narrative suggests a kind of parable of God's grace. We may see in it the principles of God's dealing with sinful and sorrowing men. 1. He sees their misery and sin. 2.

He visits them in their distress. 3. He hears their prayers. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *Lessons*:—1. Christ was the angel of Jehovah sent to the Church in old times. As here (*Isa. lxiii.*; *Matt. iii. 2*). 2. God finds sinners usually when they lose themselves. 3. God's finding of them is usually when souls are brought to great extremity. 4. God sometimes meets sinners when they are flying to his enemies (*ver. 7*). 5. God will have order and relations owned when sinners' servants may reject them. Sarai's maid. 6. God expostulates in displeasure with sinners for being where they should not be, leaving the place of calling and flying to other places. Here, servants, learn your duties. 7. Souls, when God expostulates with them, are brought to acknowledge their errors and sins (*ver. 8*). 8. God counsels sinners in His way when He hath convinced them. Return. 9. God will have domestical order maintained and servants to submit to governors, and suffer sorrow, rather than sin, and leave their places (*ver. 9*; *1 Peter iii. 18*). (*G. Hughes, B.D.*) *Hagar in the wilderness*:—We have here a dramatic incident in the early Hebrew history. An Egyptian handmaid belonging to Sarai, the wife of Abram, was found by the angel of the Lord near a fountain of water in the wilderness. The angel's greeting is a recognition; he names her and defines her in three words: "Hagar, Sarai's maid!" he says, and the girl hears the searching voice and looks up to see a face of commanding majesty and sweetness. "Whence camest thou?" the angel demands. Was not the question superfluous? Do not the words already addressed to her show that the angel needed no information? If he knew her name and knew that she was Sarai's maid, he knew whence she had come. But questions are often wisely asked, less for the benefit of the questioner than of the questioned. For many a man, drifting on in a course of evil conduct that he has never stopped to define, it would be a good thing if some one, by a pointed question, could get him to say out, in plain words, just what he is doing. If he would only honestly state it to himself, he would shrink from it with horror. Always when one is going in questionable ways it is well to pause and put the thing he is doing into a clear proposition. I am engaged in some business transaction and a good angel stands by my path and asks me, "What are you doing?" If the operation, though nominally legitimate, is really fraudulent, and if I, though sometimes a little too eager for profits, am not an ingrained rascal, it may be good for me to have the question put to me in just that way. For, on reflection, I shall be forced to answer: "I am endeavouring to get the money of my neighbour without giving him a fair equivalent." And, having been brought to put the matter into such plain words, I shall be forced, if I am not a rascal, to withdraw from the operation. Not only for clearing away the haze that often obscures an unworthy purpose, but also for removing the fog in which good purposes are sometimes involved, a pointed question may serve us. There are those whose intention to do right, to live the highest life, is rather nebulous. There are men who really mean to be the servants of Christ, but they have never said so, even to themselves. Their intention lies there, cloudy, crepuscular, in their mental horizon, but it is there. It influences their lives, not seldom; it ought to have far more power over them than it has, and would have, if it could only get from themselves a frank and clear statement. If some question could be put that would lead them to say right out in words what they mean to be—to objectify their purpose in language, so that they could look at it and understand it—the process would be most salutary. There is a deceitfulness of sin that sometimes hides from a man his own deepest and purest purposes; and if these could in some way be clearly discovered to himself, it would be a great service to him. Whether a man is good or bad at heart it is well for him to know the truth about himself; and any question, whether it come from the lips of angel or of mortal, that helps him to a clear self-revelation, is no doubt divinely spoken. Hagar answered the angel's question, "Whence camest thou?" honestly. "I flee from the face of my mistress, Sarai," she said. The girl was running away from home. It was a home by no means perfect, according to our standards, from which she was bent on escaping. But this home from which she had gone forth, in spite of all the enormities wrought into its structure, was about the best dwelling-place on the earth in that day. She was turning her back on a better society, a purer life, a larger opportunity than she could find anywhere else in the world. This was the fact to which the angel's question, "Whence camest thou?" at once recalled her. But this was not all. There was another question. "Whither wilt thou go?" the voice demanded. Hagar was going down to Egypt. And what was there in Egypt that could give her peace? It was a land of darkness and moral degradation; a land where the soul of man was held in hopeless subjection to the things of sense.

This, then, is the simple fact that the angel's questions bring into the light of the girl's consciousness. Hagar was running away from the household of Abram, friend of God, and she was going down to Egypt. She was leaving a very light place, for a very dark one. Behind her were perplexities and discomforts, but great hopes also, and inspiring associations; before her was no relief for her trouble and no hope for her future. It was more than doubtful whether she would ever reach Egypt; she was far more likely to wander in the wilderness and perish by the way; but the goal, if she reached it, showed no prize worth striving for. It furnishes us a pertinent analogy. For there are other wanderers, in other wildernesses, to whom some good angel might well put the questions that Hagar heard by the fountain Lahai-roi, "Whence camest thou, and whither wilt thou go?" I suppose that I may be speaking to some whose feet are pressing the shifting sands of the wide wilderness of doubt. Their religious beliefs are in an unsettled and chaotic condition. They are only certain of one thing, and that is that they are not certain of anything. They are agnostics. Now there are subjects on which most of us can well afford to be agnostics. An agnostic is one who does not know. Well, there are quite a number of things that I do not know, and it seems to me the part of wisdom to say so. There are not a few subjects concerning which the Lord of light has seen fit to leave us in darkness. But while there are subjects of this nature, about which we do well to confess our ignorance, there are other subjects of which faith ought to give us a strong assurance. Agnosticism does well for certain outlying districts of our thought, but not for the great central tracts of religious belief and feeling. The navigator may acknowledge without shame that he does not know the boundaries or the channels of those Polar seas where man has never sailed; but you would not take passage with a captain who declared that he knew nothing of the way out of the harbour where his vessel lay, and nothing of the way into the port to which you wanted to go, and did not even know whether there were any such port. Just so in the religious life. All wise men know that there is much that they do not know; it is the beginning of wisdom to discern the limitations of knowledge; but the theory that all is uncertainty in the religious realm; that there is no sure word of promise, no steadfast anchor of the soul, no charted channels, no headlands of hope, no knowledge of a port beyond seas, is a bewildering, benumbing, deadening theory; out of it comes nothing but apathy and despair. This land of doubt is a wilderness, treeless, verdureless, shelterless, a dry and thirsty land where no water is. This is a truth—if it is a truth—that admits of no argument. It is a fact of experience; if none of you know that it is true, then it is true for none of you; if any of you do know it, you do not need to have it proved; the simple statement of it is enough. To all such wanderers, I bring the question of the angel to Hagar in the wilderness, "Whence camest thou?" You were not always in this wilderness; whence did you come? Do you not look back to a home from which your thought has wandered, a house of faith in which you once abode in confidence and peace? I am speaking now in parables, remember; it is not of the literal home where your father and mother dwelt of which I am speaking, but rather of that edifice of sacred thoughts and firm persuasions and earnest purposes and joyful hopes in which your soul was sheltered and comforted in the days of your childhood. Was there not for you, in those earlier days, a spiritual tabernacle of this sort, a house not made with hands, in which you found protection and peace? Was there not, I ask you, in the Christian faith of that past time, not only a comfort and a solace, but an inspiration, an invigoration, a bracing energy that you do not find in the dim and dismal negations of the present time? O wanderer, astray in the bleak wilderness of doubt, whence camest thou? But this is not the only question. "Whither wilt thou go?" Tarry here you cannot: here is no continuing city. Agnosticism is not the end, barren and profitless as it is. The road that you are travelling leads down to Egypt,—to "a land of darkness as darkness itself, and where the light is as darkness." You have turned away from the old faith of Christian Theism, and there is nowhere for you to go but to Pantheism or to Atheism. And these are only different names for the same benighted land. There is no light in either of them. They will not satisfy your heart. They will not satisfy your imagination. They will not satisfy your reason. And if the mental darkness into which they conduct us is so dense, what shall we say of the moral darkness in which they envelop us; of the blotting from our sky of every star of hope; of the quenching of that torch of Bible truth by which our feet are guided through this land of shadows; of the extinguishment of our faith in the infinite love of God, which is the inspiration of all our holiest endeavours? No,

my friend, I tell you truly, you who have lost your hold on the great spiritual verities and are wandering in the wilderness of spiritual doubt, you cannot tarry where you are; you must go further; and every step you go in the path that you are now travelling takes you nearer to a region where there is no ray of light or hope, a land of darkness and of the shadow of death. Can you not see, is it not clear, that you would better turn your face toward the spiritual home from which you have been wandering? Perhaps the old spiritual house in which your youth was nurtured may need enlargement in its intellectual part. Enlarge it, then! There is room on its strong foundations to build a house of faith large enough for the amplest intelligence. If there are gloomy corners in it into which the light ought to be let, let in the light! If there are chinks through which the bitter winds of a fatalistic dogmatism blow, stop them! If there are poisonous vines that have fastened on its walls, strip them off! It is the faith that we cherish, and not its flaws, nor its parasites. It is a precious faith, a glorious hope, a mighty inspiration that the old Bible offers still to those who will take it in its simplicity and rest in its strong assurances. (*Washington Gladden, D.D.*)

Nature and office of angels:—1. The nature of angels is spiritual (Heb. i. 14). This characteristic ranges over the whole chain of spiritual being from man up to God Himself. Being spiritual, they are not only moral, but intelligent. They also excel in strength (Psa. ciii. 20). The holy angels have the full range of action for which their qualities are adapted. They do not grow old or die. They are not a race, and have not a body in the ordinary sense of the term. 2. Their office is expressed by their name. In common with other intelligent creatures, they take part in the worship of God (Rev. vii. 11). But their special office is to execute the commands of God in the natural world (Psa. ciii. 20), and especially to minister to the heirs of salvation (Heb. i. 14; Matt. xviii. 10; Luke xv. 10; xvi. 22).

3. The angel of Jehovah. This phrase is specially employed to denote the Lord Himself in that form in which He condescends to make Himself manifest to man. For the Lord God says of this angel, "Beware of Him, and obey His voice; provoke Him not, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in His inmost" (Ex. xxiii. 21), that is, My nature is in His essence. Accordingly He who is called the angel of the Lord in one place is otherwise denominated the Lord or God in the immediate context (Gen. xvi. 7, 13; xxii. 11, 12; xxxi. 11, 13; xlviii. 15, 16; Ex. iii. 2-15; xxiii. 20-23 with xxxiii. 14, 15). It is remarkable at the same time that the Lord is spoken of in these cases as a distinct person from the angel of the Lord, who is also called the Lord. The phraseology intimates to us a certain inherent plurality within the essence of the one only God, of which we have had previous indications (Gen. i. 1, 26; iii. 22). The phrase, "angel of the Lord," however, indicates a more distant manifestation to man than the term Lord itself. It brings the medium of communication into greater prominence. It seems to denote some person of the Godhead in angelic form. (*Prof. J. G. Murphy.*)

Hagar:—1. In the story of Hagar and her slave-wifehood we have an emblem of the Mosaic Dispensation, which God interposed parenthetically during the long waiting of His Church for the coming of Christ (Rom. v. 20; Gal. iii. 19). 2. "Hagar is a symbol of the expedients we make use of to win for ourselves what God seems unwilling to bestow—expedients not always glaringly sinful, but, though customary, yet not the best possible. And this episode warns us that from a Hagar can at best spring an Ishmael" (Dodge). 3. This narrative solemnly calls us to guard against two apparently opposite sins which Abram and Sarai committed in the matter of Hagar, and which often meet still as temptations to the believer—the sin of distrust, and that of presumption. 4. In the appearance of the Angel of Jehovah to Hagar we have a beautiful example of God's tenderness towards the erring, and of His gracious readiness to forgive. 5. From Hagar's subsequent submission to her mistress we learn that while it is not in nature to rejoice in trial and persecution on their own account, yet so soon as we become persuaded that it is the Lord's will that we drink of this cup, and that there will be an abundant recompense hereafter, it does become possible for us to "glory in tribulations also." 6. Let us write upon our hearts this name of the Lord: "Thou God seest me." To do this is the sum of all religion, the centre of all security, and the source of all happiness. The God who sees us, and who permits us to look upon Himself, is the Angel of the Covenant, our Divine and Human Redeemer. May our eyes meet His every day! (*Charles Jerdan, M.A., LL.B.*)

The angel's questions:—In calling Hagar "Sarai's maid," he seems tacitly to disallow of the marriage, and to lead her mind back to that humble character which she had formerly sustained.

The questions put to her were close, but tender, and such as were fitly addressed to a person fleeing from trouble. The first might be answered, and was answered: "I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai." But with respect to the last, she is silent. We know our present grievances, and so can tell "whence we come," much better than our future lot, or "whither we are going." In many cases, if the truth were spoken, the answer would be, from bad to worse. At present, this poor young woman seems to have been actuated by mere natural principles, those of fleeing from misery. In all her trouble, there appears nothing like true religion, or committing her way to the Lord: yet she is sought out of Him whom she sought not. (*A. Fuller.*) *Submission enjoined*.—The angel did not say "fight it out and let the strong one win." He advised submission, and this is the first instance in which such advice is given in the Scriptures. It is a great Christian law we know, but it is early to find it in Genesis! "Submit yourselves one to another for the Lord's sake," is a lesson which reads well in the church; but Hagar heard it not under a Gothic roof, half-chanted by surpliced priest, but "by a fountain of water in the wilderness, in the way of Shur,"—she the only hearer, the angel the priest of God! A good church, too, in which to learn the lesson of submission. I see Hagar taking a draught of the fountain, and trudging home again on weary feet; going back to work among the sharp thorns, and to have words keen as stings thrown at her all the day long. A sorry fate, you say, to be pointed out by an angel! But wait. You do not know all. Who could bear all the ills of any one human life without having some help, some light, some hope? A wonderful word was spoken to the woman—"I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." As if he had said—"If thou didst know thy destiny, thou wouldst think little of Sarai's mocking; it is but a momentary pain; bear it with the heroism of silent patience." And, truly, this same angel speaks to us all. He says, "If you will walk in the way of the Lord you shall have blessing after sorrow, as the flowers bloom after the rain; persecution you cannot escape, nor slander, nor cruel words; but your light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. One hour in heaven will banish every sad thought of earth; submit, be patient, and return not evil for evil." Oh, listen to the angel; it is God's angel: it is God Himself. (*J. Parker, D.D.*) *Water in the desert*.—The following extract from Mr. Burleigh's graphic account of the march of the British columns from Korti to Metammeh and the Nile, gives a picture of the deprivation of water in the desert, which plainly shows what our soldiers have had to endure in this particular. "We started about three a.m., and succeeded in reaching Abu Halfa Wells at noon. We had turned into a ravine in the Galif range to get to the springs. Our first sight of them was dreadfully disappointing. At the foot of a low ledge of rock near a clustering of dying down palms in a black basin of mud lay a little pool of pea-green water, covered with scum. The pool was not more than 20 feet long and 10 feet wide, and a sounding taken with a pole showed it was not over 10 inches deep. The murmur of satisfaction with which we were prepared to greet the blessed water died away in our throats, and we all sadly gathered around the soupy substance that was to serve horse and man for drinking purposes. Inwardly many of us vowed never again, if we lived, to grumble again at the quality of the London supply. Our guide excitedly shouted there was water enough for all, and that it was of excellent quality. Slipping down from his camel he made for a hole three or four feet deep, in which lay, limpid and cool, ten or twenty gallons of good-looking water. A stern sense of duty had impelled Colonel Barrow to place guards over the pool and this well hole, so that the apparently scant supply might be equally distributed, and our guide was driven off. He went, however, but a few feet away, and began digging a hole in the sandy gravel with his hands, and soon unearthed a flow of muddy water. Then it was our faces all brightened, for surely the little water-course was full of hidden drink. Pannikins, canteens, water bottles, and horse buckets were soon at work, and the men took their turn at dipping and drinking the greenish liquid. The taste was not unpleasant, in spite of its old turtle-soupish appearance and consistency. Before all, it was water, and we drank large draughts until our thirst was quenched. The horses received two bucketfuls each, which they quaffed even more greedily than ourselves. Had we given ten to each animal I believe they would have swallowed every drop and whinnied for more. The clear water in the well was left untouched for the sick, and we found that as we drew from the pool, and reduced its depth a few inches, that quite pellucid springs began to flow in, refilling it almost as rapidly as we used it. The

steady drain and the constant dipping into our own tank disturbed the mud, so that in a short time the green tinge merged into brown, and ultimately into black, such as you see in the London gutters after heavy rain. With an unquestioning faith in its virtues we continued to drink the thickened water, inwardly blessing the Arabs for not having poisoned the wells by throwing dead cattle into the pool. That afternoon and night the whole force had abundance of beverage, and coffee and tea flowed once more around our bivouac fires." *God's presence with His people* :—"I have read," says an old divine, "of a company of poor Christians who were banished into some remote part, and one standing by, seeing them pass along, said that it was a very sad condition those poor people were in, to be thus hurried from the society of men, and made companions with the beasts of the field. 'True,' said another, 'it were a sad condition indeed if they were carried to a place where they should not find their God; but let them be of good cheer, God goes along with them, and will exhibit the comforts of His presence whithersoever they go. God's presence with His people is a spring that never fails.'" *The beautiful man* :—A little boy, the only child of a poor woman, one day fell into the fire by accident, during his mother's absence from the cottage, and was so badly burned that he died after a few hours' suffering. The clergyman of the parish did not hear of the accident until the child was dead. He went, however, to try and console and comfort the mother. To his great surprise he found her very calm and patient and resigned. After a little conversation she told him how that God had sent her wonderful comfort. She had been weeping bitterly as she knelt beside her child's cot, when suddenly the boy exclaimed, "Mother, don't cry; don't you see the beautiful man who is standing there and waiting for me?" She told the clergyman that she thought it must have been the Lord Jesus. The angels in heaven care for, wait upon, and minister unto Christ's people below. *Goodness of God in affliction* :—A Sunday-school teacher with the movable alphabet put together the sentence, "The Lord is good to all," and required his class to repeat it. One little fellow refused. The teacher asked his reason. He said because it was not true. "God is not good to father nor to me. He has taken my little brother away, and father is home crying about it." The teacher explained that God in love had taken the little brother to a better home, and would take him and his father to join him if they loved the Saviour. The child said, "Oh, I'll go and tell father," and at once ran to him with his lesson and comfort. It consoled and benefited both father and child.

Ver. 12. *He will be a wild man.*—*The national character of the Arabs foretold* :—**I.** THESE WORDS CONTAIN NOT A MERE CONTINGENT PROMISE, BUT A SPECIFIC PREDICTION OF FUTURE EVENTS. A bare announcement of what would be the physical, moral, and social condition of the person or persons to whom the passage refers. **II.** THESE WORDS ARE INTENDED TO APPLY, NOT MERELY TO THE PERSONAL HISTORY AND CHARACTER OF ISHMAEL, BUT TO THE HISTORY AND CHARACTER OF HIS OFFSPRING. Some of the terms employed and some of the things affirmed are not only unintelligible, but absurd, if they are to be understood of Ishmael rather than of his offspring; for in what sense can it be affirmed, that "his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him"? Individually, that strife at all events would very soon be brought to an end. How, either, could it be affirmed that he should "dwell in the presence of all his brethren," if a single dwelling, and that a tent in the wilderness, were the only thing intended to be set forth? **III.** THE ARABIANS ARE THE DESCENDANTS OF ISHMAEL. **IV.** THE ARABIANS HAVE EXEMPLIFIED IN THEIR WHOLE HISTORY AND CHARACTER ALL THE PECULIARITIES MENTIONED IN THIS PASSAGE. The term here employed is singularly strong in relation to the first part of the subject. That subject is divided into three particulars: the first, declarative of their freedom; the second, of their hostile dispositions; the third, of their numbers and their power. 1. Here, I say, you have a declaration concerning their freedom: "He will be a wild man." The language is peculiarly strong; and literally, the affirmation is, that Ishmael should be the same as the animal described in the thirty-ninth chapter of the Book of Job. There the word is literally rendered "the wild ass": and we read, "Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who has loosed the bands of the wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings; he scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver; the range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing." No terms could have been employed, more fitly or more vividly describing the

roaming liberty, or, if you will, licentiousness of the entire Arab nation, whether you regard their internal condition or their external relation. 2. Secondly, we are assured not only of their freedom, but also of the singular hostility of their disposition: "His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." During the lapse of three thousand years, they have by turns assaulted all their neighbours, and been assaulted by them. At this present moment they seek not the alliance of the great or the small, the rich or the poor; they care not who wins or who loses in the strife of the world, if they can remain—the hated of the whole family of mankind besides. What is sacrificed or what is gained is to them matter of perfect indifference if still they may frown upon a world they deem their foe. This has been the case, while all other nations have passed through the phases of slavery and of freedom, of poverty and of wealth, of luxury and of hardihood, of disaster and of danger. Still the Arab is the same. 3. Thirdly, these words exhibit to us their numbers and their power. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." Not an easy thing this, to affirm concerning any individual, in the early period of time to which reference is made. Few, indeed, could ever have attained to such distinction, because there are but few nations who ever arrive to any great degree of honour; much less to such a state of renown, as to secure observation in the pages of inspired truth, or in the general history of the world. Yet if you have been called upon, at all events, to point out those individuals, perhaps the very last you would have fixed upon would have been the son of that poor outcast slave, without a father, without a friend, without a prospect excepting the wilderness for his home. Yet these wanderers in the desert and amongst the rocks were the objects and the sources of surprise and of terror to their early neighbours. It was they who first gave to commerce its gold, its spices, its gems. It was they who furnished to the navies of Tyre that for which they were renowned. It was they who gave to monarchs that by which they decorated their halls and their palaces. It was they who gave to arms honour and renown, while with one hand they seized on the fertile plains of Egypt and with the other laid hold on the mountains of Assyria. Thus during successive ages did they continue "dwelling in the presence of all their brethren; whether the Babylonian or the Macedonian, whether the Persian or the Roman swayed the destinies of the world, the Arab occupied the same position, and exerted to a great extent the same power. In later days, however, they came forth under another form, and their course was followed by far deadlier consequences. They lifted up in one hand the Koran, which they regarded as at once the product and the instrument of their great prophet, who said he came from God; with the other they brandished the sword, while nations trembled and fell. They passed off to the east—rushed through the turbid and impetuous waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris—and laid prostrate the millions of India, even to the walls of China. They passed to the north, swept the sacred shrines and hollow mummeries of Palestine; laid prostrate the cities and temples and towers of Greece—rushed through the Bosphorus—reared the tokens of their power, and at length became consolidated into a mighty empire, in the eastern part of Europe. They passed to the west—overflowed the plains of Egypt with more resistlessness than the waters of the Nile—dashed along the coast of Barbary—rolled away to Central and Western Africa—overleaped the pillars of Hercules and the barriers of Spain—planted the crescent on the walls of Grenada—illuminated darkened Europe with a ray of science—and then returned, leaving the marks of their science and their power in arithmetical characters, used in every one of our schools. And so their history, so unique and so marvellous, has been interwoven with the history of all people, to gather from them all some increasing attestation of the truth of this book, the pillar on which our hopes rest; and resting where we can defy the dashing of every wave, assured that we are in the truth of Him, "in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways." (*J. Aldis.*)

Vers. 13, 14. *Thou God seest me.—The retrospect of a special Providence:—*Hagar had heard the voice of the Lord, and had distinct evidence of His providential care and regard. I. THAT IT IS A REVELATION OF GOD. "She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." The doctrine of a general Providence affects us languidly; the impression of it is vague; but there are times in our history when the events are so remarkable that it is as if God had spoken. His finger is plainly seen. This revelation of God had three aspects. 1. It was

severe. Hagar was reminded of her fault, and exhorted to instant duty. 2. It was soothing. It is because God "has heard out affliction" that He speaks to us. 3. It produces the impression that God knows us—(1) Intimately. Sight imparts most vivid and extensive knowledge. One glance conveys more to the mind than the most accurate and laboured description. God not only sees us, but sees through us, and knows us altogether. (2) Graciously. For good, and not for evil. The light of love is in God's countenance. II. THAT IT SHOULD EXCITE AMAZEMENT AND GRATITUDE. (T. H. Leale.) *A particular Providence*.—1. Difficult to believe. We think of God in heaven, and forget that He is also on earth. 2. Sufficiently attested by examples in Holy Scripture. 3. Made clear and certain by the history of our Lord's work on earth. 4. Realized in the history of every believer. (J. H. Newman, D.D.) *God's continual presence*.—"Thou God seest me." Pause for a moment to contemplate the force of this impressive thought. Life is spent beneath the eye of God. In every part of His dominion, in all the worlds He has formed, His never-closing eye is present, His creative power is felt. The beams of His all-observant thought surround us. God, said the Greeks, is "All Eye." It is not the feeble and changing glance of fickle guilty man, but it is the pure and perfect scrutiny of the Eternal God, "in whose hand our breath is." "Thou God seest me." Then it is not a vague and general observation, but a particular and minute notice—the sinner in his guilt equally with the Christian in his devotions—the peasant in his cottage equally with the prince on his throne. Not the actions only, but the principles, "me"—all that constitutes our essence, all that forms our character, the interior recesses of the spirit, the hidden motives of the heart, the secret springs of the character. This thought may be one—1. Of grandeur. With respect to God—His infinite dominion—His immense survey. With respect to man—his dignity—his responsibility—his destiny—he must, some day, come immediately before this Being. 2. Of terror. We are never safe. Sin cannot be even thought of without being known. Think of this when temptation invites. There is no darkness which can hide from God. 3. Of consolation in sorrow. He sees with a Father's eye which fills with compassion. He knows all the trouble of our spirit and our desires to be purer and better. 4. Of hope in danger. He sees, not to increase our misery, but to help and save. He sends His Covenant Angel to succour this desolate woman. None need despair, since God thus helps the outcast and the miserable. (Archbishop Secker.) *Belief in the Divine omniscience the foundation of a true and earnest life*.—This text may be regarded as—I. THE BASIS OF A LIVING CREED. II. AN INCENTIVE TO A USEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE. Two things are essential to such a life—1. Sincere love of the truth. 2. Earnest practice of the truth. III. A RESTRAINT UPON A SINFUL COURSE. Let these words, "Thou God seest me," preserve you from—1. Unhallowed thoughts. 2. Selfish motives. 3. Formalism and hypocrisy. 4. Despondency and unbelief. (J. R. Goulty, B.A.) *The eye of God*.—Does it not seem both strange and sad that these familiar words should suggest a feeling akin to terror in so many human hearts? How appalling does it seem to reflect that there is no possibility of escape from its relentless, inexorable vision! Yet there was a time when such a thought as this would have awakened only feelings of pleasure in the human mind and heart. When Adam came into the world fresh from the hand of God, nothing could have been further from his thoughts than to regard this consideration as suggestive of terror. On the contrary, he found true deep joy no doubt in just such a reflection as this. But the moment man sinned, and fell by sin, in nothing were the lamentable consequences of the fall so apparent as in this. The eye of God, that before seemed to cast rays of beneficent sunshine on his path, now seemed to shoot a hot and scorching thunderbolt into his soul. He felt that he must needs find a hiding-place from that eye. Surely it would be simply impossible to do what many of us do if we really believed in our hearts, and were dwelling on the thought, "Thou God seest me." You never knew a thief that perpetrated a felony before the very eyes of the officer of justice, and knowing that he was being observed. And should we dare to break God's law, and defy His Majesty, if we really believed that God was looking at us? or would men indulge in the miserable hypocrisies with which they seem to succeed sometimes in stupefying their own consciences, if they really believed that God both saw them and saw through them? Men get into such a way of playing a part before their fellow-men, that it would seem as if at last they grew to feel as if they could overreach and impose upon Almighty God. But they cannot! Always, and in all circumstances and conditions, in my best moments and in my worst, in

public and in private, within, without, "Thou God seest me." What does He see? My brethren, let us in answer lay proper stress upon that little but, to each of us severally, important word *me*. It is the real "me," the actual self, that God sees. First there is the social self. The fine gentleman that moves in good society, with his company manners, endeavouring to make himself particularly agreeable to all around him. Well skilled is he to repress all that the world in which he moves—not less hypocritical than himself—would be disposed to frown on. He avoids what is coarse, abjures what is in bad taste, checks any display of the selfishness that may be natural to him, may even exhibit not a little self-control, should he be crossed by some petty annoyance. If he is proud, he has the sense not to show it; and strangers think him wondrously affable. This social paragon is so well venerated that you almost begin to think he is not venerated at all, and the superficial glance of society discerns only a charming exterior, and an amiable and estimable ornament for itself. But what does God see? Peradventure a whitened sepulchre, a disguised savage, far less to be excused for the latent savagery of a selfish, passionate, licentious, and rapacious nature than the naked savage in the wild, who never wore any veneer except war-paint, is to be excused for his. And as for this conventional presentment of self God sees it not, or only sees it to see through it as the flimsiest of disguises. It is not this respectable sham that God sees, but the real actual self, whatever he may be. "Thou God seest me." Yet again there is the commercial self—not quite such a paragon of perfection as the social self. There is much less veneer about him, and much more exposure of some inner substance, which, whatever its true nature, is not always very smooth or very pretty. Yet it passes muster, because there are so many more all around it that are its moral counterparts. A little greedy, a little avaricious, a little selfish and unscrupulous the man may be; but then, you know, that sort of thing is to some extent expected in business; and against these little failings how much of sterling merit is there to be set! First, there is the great merit of solvency! You are a substantial man, and can always pay twenty shillings in the pound; and in these days of rascally bankruptcy there is no small virtue in the eye of the commercial world. Then again you have never condescended to any vulgar form of swindling. You would scorn the idea of doing anything that could by any means expose you to the action of law, or induce commercial ostracism. A respectable man of business, that is what the world sees. Is that the real self, or only the self that has to do duty at the office? Is that the thing that God sees when He looks at you? or is it only another and less attractive counterfeit presentation of self that He sees through and through? Don't let us attempt to blind Him, for we cannot. "Thou God seest me." The secret things of dishonesty, the idolatry of Mammon, the indifference to others, the selfish eagerness to make capital out of their ruin, the readiness to lie without a blush, if only there is no particular chance of the lie being detected—all this, and a great deal more, may be included in the "me," without interfering much with my commercial reputation, provided I can make it pay. With Mammon once on my side, there is not much to be feared from unfriendly criticisms in most commercial circles; but what does God see? But we must come nearer home. There is the domestic self, whose faults and failings are perhaps even more apparent than those of his commercial presentment. Your wife knows more of your real moral character, probably, than do those with whom you transact business. Your children too—for children are always sharp observers—may have noticed many a little failing about you that you would not like published in the drawing-room or in the counting-house; but then domestic affection is very apt to be blind. So even here we don't get at the real self. We see perhaps the respected father, the idolized husband; but what does God see? Perhaps a father who slapped his child's hands for stealing a lump of sugar, when he had that very day put a hundred pounds into his pocket by "operating" ingeniously upon the market, or by perpetrating some other act of skilfully-disguised fraud; or thrashed his boy for telling a lie, when he himself had told at least a dozen that day in his own counting-house. Alas! we don't get at the real man even when we find him at home. But God sees more than either wife or child, or servant or friend. "Thou God seest me." But we must go further still. There is the ideal self, which, like a familiar spirit, we ever carry about with us—a presentation of self to self, in which we are careful to ignore or excuse all that is evil or faulty, and to magnify all that is good. How rare a thing is it for any man to entertain a really poor opinion of himself, whatever mock-modest expressions we may use? Or I might put it thus: How many of us would be able to stand behind a hedge, and hear with anything like a feeling of equanimity our

faults and failings described with accuracy by a neighbour? Yes, I believe that most of us have an ideal self that we confuse with the real, and for which we have always a kindly feeling; but it is not this that God looks at. His eye is fixed, not on the phantom, but on him who creates it; not on the ideal, but on the actual. "Thou God seest me." He sees our thoughts, detecting the secret springs of motive from which our actions flow. He discerns at a glance what our life-purpose is, and which way it flows. He sees our religion, and knows whether or not it is more than skin-deep. And He sees our actual irreligion; how, it may be, some of us in this church to-night have desecrated our nature by closing it against God. We have barred the door against the Divine Visitant, and He saw us doing it! The eye of God pierces through every barrier, and discerns it all. "Thou God seest me." What does He see? The past as well as the present; the series of years gone by, as well as the marks that they have left upon our character to-day. In the completeness of our history, as well as in the real character of our moral condition, it still remains true, "Thou God seest me." And yet, seeing all this as no one else can or does see it, the wonderful thing is He loves us still. Poor, wandering, desolate soul! What a sudden rush of joy must have possessed her as she thus learnt for the first time, not as a mere religious or theological theory, but as a blessed fact, that truth which lies behind all other truths—the Fatherhood of God! And He sees us too, and sees us, as He did her, with a Father's eye, and loves us, wanderers though we may be, with a Father's heart; and He who took an interest in Hagar, takes an interest in us. "Whence comest thou?" Ah! who shall answer that question, and trace the history of our being up to its hidden source? Yet do we know something of the answer to the question so far as regards the race. When comest thou, O fallen man, who hast lost all contact with God, and wanderest aimlessly on from day to day, having no hope, and without God in the world? Let us never forget it, however low thou mayest have fallen, however far thou mayest have wandered, thy first home was Eden, thy first experience the revealed love of thy Father—God. "Whence comest thou?" Let us turn from the race to the individual, let us apply the question to ourselves. Whence do we come? In early years we were baptized in the Tri-une Name, and were branded with the Cross of Christ in token of allegiance to Him; and can we doubt that He who called the little ones to Himself, and laid His hands upon them, and blessed them, met us with His blessing in those early days? Have we turned our back upon our birthright privileges? and are we, as it were, going away further and further from all that we had a right to enjoy? Do we come from the comparative innocence of childhood? from the purer associations, the holier aspirations, of our earlier days? from the better influences of Christian homes? from the favourable atmosphere of religious society? "Whence comest thou?" Have you left all that is best and purest in human life behind you? Has your progress been all in the wrong direction? And whither wilt thou go? Perhaps you have never paused to reflect where those wandering steps of yours are taking you. Like Hagar, you have wandered on without any definite idea as to where your wanderings were to end. Whither wilt thou go? The world, with all its fading pageants, its flimsy inanities, invites your steps. It offers pleasure, but not joy; excitement, but not happiness; intoxication and stupefaction that shall benumb your nobler faculties and check your aspirations, but no satisfaction; stagnation, but not peace. How little has it done for you in the past! and in the future it can do still less. Its capacities of gratification diminish with each passing year. Yes, whither? Is there no welcome for thee in thy Father's house? no greeting of love? no feast of joy? Is He thy foe, that thou shouldst fly from Him thus? (*W. Hay Aitken, M.A.*) *The omniscience of the Deity:—I.* In the first place I would endeavour to lay before you the ARGUMENT FOR THE OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD WHICH IS DERIVED FROM NATURAL RELIGION. We assert, then, that the doctrine of the omnipresence of God results from the truth universally acknowledged, that the world owes its existence to a Creator. Wherever we direct our view we perceive marks of intelligence and design. In every part of the universe accessible to our survey, we have therefore the most resplendent proofs that there the hand of God hath been; consequently, at that period, at least, the Divine Being was omnipresent. I make this limitation, because, to argue with correctness, it is required, that we should infer no more than the premises laid down will allow. But now it is possible, for it may be conceived, that the Divine Creator, having made all things, and, consequently, having then been present everywhere, afterward withdrew His immediate agency. Wherefore, even upon the principle of such persons themselves, when properly understood, the omniscience of God follows as a necessary

consequence. For if, as must be acknowledged, everything in the universe is under the control of some one or more of these laws, it follows that in every point of the universe, the Deity is acting; and where He acts, there He is, and where He is, there He perceives. II. Having adduced the testimony of natural religion to the omnipresence of God, we proceed to lay before you THE PROOF FURNISHED BY THE SCRIPTURES. The testimony of the text will be found clear and strong. How awful are the words of Elihu, "His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves" (Job xxxiv. 21). To the same effect the wise man speaks in the fifteenth chapter of Proverbs and eighth verse, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good." See the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Proverbs and eleventh verse, "Hell and destruction are before the Lord, how much more the hearts of men." Neither do the Scriptures represent Him as a mere spectator, but as a witness and judge who scrutinizes the thoughts and actions with all their circumstances, and makes a just and righteous estimation of them. I know and I am witness, saith the Lord. The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by His actions are weighed. "All the actions of a man are right in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits." The Scriptures declare that God is the Governor of the material and moral world; consequently, as it is necessary that the Creator and Governor of the universe should be in all places of His dominion at the same moment, in order that He may sustain and guide the whole, so it is absolutely necessary that He should have a perfect knowledge of everything, without which omnipotence and omnipresence were useless. The Scriptures declare that God is the moral governor but the judge of all men; they represent Him as having given laws of the most spiritual character—that is to say, relating to the spirits of men in the most comprehensive manner. They reach to every part of our conduct, and not only direct the outward life, but give also law to the most retired thought and inward affection. Thus we are told, Proverbs xxiv. 9, "That the thought of foolishness is sin." III. I shall close the subject WITH AN APPLICATION OF ITS SEVERAL USES. 1. Let us take occasion from the subject, to adore, with humble gratitude, the long-suffering, patience, and tender compassion of our God. Does He see the first dark thought of lust or rage, and does He look on still and spare us till it be fully formed and executed? How incomprehensible, then, must be His patience. 2. Let the subject of the Divine omniscience be a prevailing motive with us to honesty and sincerity. He who can thus realize the Divine presence, cannot, dare not be a hypocrite. 3. Again, from the subject of the Divine omnipresence, let every sinner remember that God is present at the commission of all his crimes. 4. Further, the doctrine of the Divine omniscience affords abundant cause of joy to the godly. His eyes are continually upon you for good. He is perfectly acquainted with your wants, and He knows all things that are required for their supply. This qualifies Him to be the object of your trust and confidence. On Him you may safely depend. 5. Lastly, let the doctrine of Divine omniscience restrain us from every sin, and excite us to every duty, "Thou God seest me." (J. F. Denham.)

*The Divine inspection of man:—*I. LOOK AT THE TEXT IN A DOCTRINAL ASPECT. 1. God sees us Himself. 2. God sees us completely. 3. God sees us perpetually. 4. God sees every rational being as He sees us. The Indian, the African: all can adopt language of text. II. LOOK AT THE TEXT IN A PRACTICAL ASPECT. The thought of God's omnipresence, when received into the heart, is—1. One of the most powerful restraints from the commission of sin. 2. One of the most powerful incentives to do His will. 3. A source of true delight. 4. A remedy for the dangers and sorrows of life. (A. McAulane, D.D.)

*The angel in the wilderness:—*I. THE NAME OF THE LORD. "Thou God seest me," or, Thou God of vision; "for she said, Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?" i.e., I have seen Him that He has seen me; I have seen Him and lived. Hagar's seeing God was God's seeing Hagar. The vision was not merely objective, but subjective. The state of Hagar's mind was doubtless preparation for some such interposition. Lamenting her sin, weary, desolate, praying for help. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. II. CONNECT THE REVELATION WITH THE PERSONAL HISTORY. Hagar saw the Lord, received His word of grace into her heart, obeyed His commandment. The faith which initiates practical obedience is a progressive blessedness. When we know that God has appeared unto us, when we have looked into His countenance in the light of His reconciling love, when we feel assured that our life is under His eye, that it may be in His hand, then bondage is liberty, submission is delight, patience is growing expectation. (R. A. Redford, M.A.)

*Hagar in the wilderness:—*This

self-interrogation of Hagar is suggestive of three things. I. IT SUGGESTS A SOLEMN FACT IN HUMAN HISTORY. God sees us. 1. The very nature of God implies this. 2. The Bible teaches this. II. IT SUGGESTS A SAD TENDENCY IN HUMAN NATURE. Hagar's question implies a fear that she had not been sufficiently conscious of this fact. 1. The signs of this tendency. (1) Deadness of soul. (2) Profanity of life. 2. The causes of this tendency. (1) Dislike of God. (2) Dread of God. III. IT SUGGESTS AN URGENT OBLIGATION IN HUMAN LIFE. A sense of God's continual presence will—1. Restrain from sin. 2. Stimulate to virtue. 3. Strengthen for trial. 4. Qualify for the full mission of life. (*Homilist.*) *Omniscience*:—I. THE GENERAL DOCTRINE. God sees us. 1. This may be easily proved, even from the nature of God. It were hard to suppose a God who could not see His own creatures; it were difficult in the extreme to imagine a divinity who could not behold the actions of the works of His hands. The word which the Greeks applied to God implied that He was a God who could see. They called Him *θεος* (*Theos*); and they derived that word, if I read rightly, from the root *θεωθαι* (*Theisthai*), to see, because they regarded God as being the All-seeing One, whose eye took in the whole universe at a glance, and whose knowledge extended far beyond that of mortals. There were no god if that God had no eyes, for a blind God were no God at all. 2. Yet, further, we are sure that God must see us, for we are taught in the Scriptures that God is everywhere, and if God be everywhere, what doth hinder Him from seeing all that is done in every part of His universe? 3. But lest any should suppose that God may be in a place, and yet slumbering, let me remind him that in every spot to which he can travel there is not simply God but God's activity. Wherever I go I shall find, not a slumbering God, but a God busy about the affairs of this world. 4. I have one more proof to offer which I think to be conclusive. God, we may be sure, sees us, when we remember that He can see a thing before it happens. If He beholds an event before it transpires, surely reason dictates He must see a thing that is happening now. Read those ancient prophecies, read what God said should be the end of Babylon and of Nineveh; just turn to the chapter where you read of Edom's doom, or where you are told that Tyre shall be desolate; then walk through the lands of the East, and see Nineveh and Babylon cast to the ground, the cities ruined; and then reply to this question—"Is not God a God of foreknowledge?" II. Now I come, in the second place, to the SPECIAL DOCTRINE: "Thou God seest me." 1. Mark, God sees you—selecting any one out of this congregation—He sees you, He sees you as much as if there were nobody else in the world for Him to look at. 2. God sees you entirely. 3. God sees you constantly. 4. Supremely. III. Now I come to DIFFERENT INFERENCES for different persons, to serve different purposes. 1. First, to the prayerful. Prayerful man, prayerful woman, here is a consolation—God sees you: and if He can see you, surely He can hear you. 2. I have given a word for the prayerful, now a word for the careful. Some here are very full of care, and doubts, and anxieties, and fears. Don't give up in despair. If your case be ever so bad, God can see your care, your troubles, and your anxieties. 3. And now a word to the slandered. There are some of us who come in for a very large share of slander. It is very seldom that the slander market is much below par; it usually runs up at a very mighty rate; and there are persons who will take shares to any amount. Well, what matters it? Suppose you are slandered; here is a comfort: "Thou God seest me." They say that such-and-such is your motive, but you need not answer them; you can say "God knows that matter." 4. Now a sentence or two to some of you who are ungodly and know not Christ. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Hagar at the fountain*:—I. In speaking of Hagar I shall first dwell for a little upon HER REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE. 1. Observe that Hagar had outlived herself. The untamable spirit which afterwards showed itself in her son Ishmael raged in her bosom. So, too, have we met with those who have deliberately left the ways of God and the people of God, and all semblance of goodness, because they have thought themselves badly used. They do not, indeed, care what becomes of them: they would flee from the presence of God Himself if they could. 2. While she was there, in the moment of her desperation, she was found by the angel. What was there about her that Jehovah should come out of His place to seek her? Yet He came in unexpected grace as He is wont to do. He remembered the low estate of His handmaiden, and because His mercy endureth for ever, He found her by the fountain in the wilderness. 3. When the angel of the Lord found Hagar, He dealt graciously with her. Indeed this was the object of His finding her; He came in pity, not in wrath. Blessed be God, it has happened to tens of thousands

that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. When they have run away and outlived themselves, grace has followed them, grace has convicted them, grace has admonished them, and grace has made large promises to them. II. Now I want you to notice HER DEVOUT ACKNOWLEDGMENT. When that which we have described happened to her, she acknowledged the living God. My text says, "She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." 1. She spake to Him that spake to her: after this fashion do we all begin our communion with God. Oh, when God speaks to you, you will soon find a tongue to speak to Him. What did she say? 2. She acknowledged Him to be God. "She called the name of the Lord that spake to her, Thou God seest me." It is one thing to believe there is a God, but it is quite another thing to know it by coming into personal contact with Him. 3. Observe that she acknowledged His observant love. She could not help acknowledging it, for it flashed before her eyes. 4. In the presence of that God she felt overpowered and ready to yield. She was so overwhelmed that no rebellion remained within her. She girds her garments about her, and she makes the best of her way home to the tent of Sarai. Her mistress is hard; but sin is harder. III. Let me now call to your notice THE MANIFEST AMAZEMENT of this woman; for in her glad surprise she uttered a sentence which runs as follows: "Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?" Expositors will tell you that as many senses may be given to this sentence as there are words in it; and each one of these senses will bear a measure of decent defence. I shall not go into them all, but I think I see clearly that she was amazed that God should care for her. "Thou God seest me. Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?" Does He see me? Do I see Him? Do you not say, "Why me, my Lord? Why me?" Sit still in holy wonder, and adore and bless the Lord. 5. I think her next amazement was that she should have been such a long time without ever thinking of Him who had thought so much of her. She says, "Have I also here looked unto Him that seeth me?" "What! Have I been these years with Abraham, and heard about the God who has been looking at me in love, and have I never glanced a thought to Him?" Her ungodliness astounds her. 6. But next, she is amazed still more to think that at last she does look unto God. In effect she cries, "What! Has it come to this? Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me? Is Hagar at last converted? What a surprise it must be to rebels to be thus seized in the arms of grace and transformed into friends of the King! I ask God that such a surprise may await some who are here to-day. May you also inquire in amazement, "Have I here also looked after Him that seeth me?" 7. One other surprise Hagar had, and that was the surprise to think that she was alive. It was the common conviction of that age that no man could see God and live. The awakened sinner, when he is met with by the God of grace, wonders that he has not been cut down as a cumberer of the ground. IV. HER HUMBLE WORSHIP. 1. She worshipped God heartily and intelligently, according to her knowledge. 2. She worshipped beyond her knowledge, according to her apprehension. 3. Her worship was wonderfully personal. 4. Her worship proved itself deeply true, for it was followed by immediate practical obedience to the command of the Lord. V. We will conclude by glancing for an instant at the well which became THE SUGGESTIVE MEMORIAL of this special manifestation and singular experience. That well—we do not know what it had been called before—but that Beer, or well, was henceforth called Beer-lahai-roi, or the well of Him that liveth and seeth. Will we not all at this time drink of that well? It was a very happy thought to attach a holy name to a well, so that every traveller might learn of God as he refreshed himself. When a person comes to drink at certain fountains he reads, "Drink, gentle traveller, drink and pray." The inscription is most suitable. It is fit that men should pray when they receive so precious a refreshment as pure water. It was specially meet that travellers should henceforth and for ever pray at a spot where the Lord Himself had been, and had called to Himself a wanderer who had felt compelled to cry, "God lives, and God sees." (*Ibid.*) *What seeing God does for us*:—(Sermon to children.) "Thou God seest me"—a name for God found by a woman who had run away from duty. She could not run away from God. It took her back to duty to feel that God saw her (Jonah, and Psa. cxxxix.). I. GOD'S EYE ON US MAY MAKE US UNCOMFORTABLE. Illustration: Servant girl cutting out eyes of picture which seemed to watch her pilfering. Sentinels in Portland prison. Prison with hole in door, and the warder's eye ever there. II. IT MAY MAKE US HAPPY. If we are in any trouble. Sad thing to feel alone. Widowed mother in trouble. Little children say, "Is God dead, mother?" If God

sees. He must be there. If He is there, He must be there as Helper. III. IT MAY MAKE US STRONG. "Can do all things through Him who strengthens us." Some, like Adam and Eve, hide from God. Some, like David, can say, "I flee unto Thee to hide me." (*The Weekly Pulpit.*) *The eye of God always upon us*.—I. A REFLECTION VERY PLEASING TO GOOD MEN. "Thou God seest me." 1. This is a pleasing reflection when I fear some hidden corruption which has hindered the answer of prayer, and often deprived me of comfort, but which I cannot, after the most faithful investigation, detect. He can discern it—"Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me." 2. This is a pleasing reflection when I feel those infirmities which make me groan. He sees grace, however small; He sees the disadvantages of my situation, the influence of the body over the mind, and of sensible things over the body; He sees that the "spirit indeed is willing when the flesh is weak." 3. This is a pleasing reflection with regard to prayer. I often know not what to pray for as I ought; but He always knows what to give. I cannot express myself properly in words; but words are not necessary to inform Him who "knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit—my desire is before Him, and my groaning is not hid from Him." 4. This is a pleasing reflection when I am suffering under the suspicions of friends or the reproaches of enemies. "Behold my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." 5. This is a pleasing reflection when I am in trouble. He knows all my "walking through this great wilderness"; He knows where the burden presses; He knows how long to continue the trial, and by what means to remove it. II. TO THE WICKED IT IS A VERY AWFUL REFLECTION. 1. God sees everything you do. 2. He does not forget anything He has seen. 3. And to complete the terror of this consideration—all He has seen He will publish before the whole world: and He will also punish all that He has seen "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." III. The reflection will be found very USEFUL TO ALL. 1. Useful as a check to sin. For can a person sin while he realizes this? Can he affront the Almighty to His very face?—Impossible. 2. Useful as a motive to virtue. The presence, the eye of One who is above us, and whom we highly esteem and reverence, elevates our minds and refines our behaviour; and we desire to act so as to gain His approbation. A servant feels this when he is before his master, and a subject when he is before the king. One of the heathen philosophers, therefore, recommended his pupils, as the best means to induce and enable them to behave worthily, to imagine that some very distinguished character was always looking upon them. But what was the eye of a Cato compared with the eye of Jehovah! 3. Useful as a reason for simplicity and godly sincerity. Oh! let it banish all dissimulation from our religious exercises; and, whether we read, or hear, or pray, or surround the table of the Lord, let us remember that "God weigheth the spirits." If we had to do with men only, a fair appearance might be sufficient; "but the Lord looketh to the heart." And can we play the hypocrite under those eyes which are as a flame of fire? (*W. Jay.*) *The omnipresence of God*.—1. The first idea presented to us is one of wonder, admiration, and comfort. It does not so much express her awe as her surprise and delight, that the God of whom she had heard in Abraham's family should have appeared to her in her perplexity. "Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?" 2. I go on to observe that the omnipresence of God is salutary only when it implies watchful and personal inspection of our conduct, and personal interest in our welfare. We are under a government; we live under an immutable system of law. We ignorantly think to evade it; but the Lawgiver is all eye and all ear. We have no adequate motive for a moral life, except it be the active oversight of a moral Ruler. Every transgressor hopes to escape observation. The great majority need a power out of ourselves, independent of our own strength, resolutions, or sense of duty; yet not superseding, but quickening and aiding these motives to high moral conduct. We do not want to set aside the social esteem which follows good conduct; but this being of most precarious quality, we want to aid it by the sense of Divine approval, manifested to the individual by a personal, all-seeing Judge and Ruler. (*B. Kent, M.A.*) *God's all-seeing eye*.—I. THAT WE ARE EACH OF US THE OBJECTS OF THE DIVINE NOTICE. 1. God sees us by virtue of His omnipresence. 2. God sees us that we may be the objects of His providential care. 3. God sees us as preparatory to the final judgment. II. SOME OF THOSE SEASONS WHEN WE ARE PRONE TO FORGET THE DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE. 1. In discharge of the common duties of life how often may we say, "Have I here looked after Him that seeth me?" When

we come to the sanctuary we expect to meet with God, for we know that He has said, "In all places where I record My name I will come and bless them." But when the services of the sanctuary are ended, and the Sabbath is closed, and the morrow has come, and one man has gone to his farm, another to his merchandise, how prone are we to lose sight of the solemn truth, "Thou God seest me." 2. Under the pressure of severe temptation how often may we propose this question. 3. So, too, in reference to some of the sorrowful events of human life the inquiry of my text will apply. If you have ever been sorrowful and have not been comforted—if you have been weak, and have not been strengthened—if you have been despairing, and hope has not revived, it has not been because God has forsaken you, but because you have not "looked" or sought for Him; and oh, if God had only come to us when we "looked" for Him—if He had not surprised us with many a visit, and succoured us with unexpected help, how seldom would He have come to us at all. (*H. J. Gamble.*) *The omniscience of God illustrated—a sermon to children:*—I. Who is God? 1. A Being, great in power, wisdom, knowledge, love. 2. A Judge. 3. Your Father. His eye is upon you, to protect, preserve, supply wants. 4. Your Saviour. II. WHY DOES GOD SEE ME? 1. Because He is full of goodness and mercy. 2. Because He loves you, and would make you happy, by making you like Himself. III. WHEN DOES GOD SEE ME? At all times. He sees you when you entice others to join you in some foolish act, and while you are making the lie to hide the fault; He sees you making that lie. He sees you when Satan is busy about you, to do you some mischief, and keeps Satan away that he may not hurt you. IV. WHERE DOES GOD SEE ME? In all places. Adam among trees. Hagar in wilderness. Jonah inside monster of deep. Daniel in lions' den. V. WHAT DOES GOD SEE IN ME? He sees in you, my child, a sinful heart; He sees you a child of fallen Adam, ready to follow the temptations of Satan, and to do all manner of evil. Again: God sees in you children a backwardness and reluctance to do what He commands: and you don't like reading your Bibles, and you don't like coming to church. VI. WHAT DOES GOD WISH TO SEE IN ME? He wishes to see in you repentance, that you may ask for forgiveness for the past, and help for the time to come. He wishes to see in you a prayerful heart; not a mere saying, but a thinking of the words you say. (*T. J. Judkin.*) *The all-seeing eye:*—1. God sees your heart—what you are. Others do not see your heart; they cannot. They can only see what is outward. You cannot see the heart of so small a thing as a watch. It has a gold or silver case, and a beautiful dial, and hands such as good watches have, and you may pay a large sum of money for it; and yet its inside, which is the real watch, may be all defective and wrong. Now your heart determines what you are. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is what you think and feel, and wish, and purpose, that marks out what you really are. And I daresay you are sometimes thankful enough that nobody can see that; things are often outwardly so good, and yet so bad within. But God sees it all—all that we are within—all that is going on in our inmost heart. The heart is transparent to Him. It is as if it were made of glass. 2. God sees your life—what you do. Much of what is outward, as well as all that is within, is unseen and unknown by others. Many things are done secretly. I have been in institutions in which a large number of young people are being educated. Looking from the governor's room into the common hall where they work and play and get their meals, is a window that commands the whole. He had scarcely to rise from his chair in order to see all that was going on. And they knew it. Every now and then you might see an eye turned to the window, especially if there was anything questionable or wrong going on. And sure enough there was the face at the window—all was seen by the governor! And yet, even in such a case, where there is the sharpest look-out, it is possible to elude observation; things are done which no one sees, which everybody denies, and sometimes it is impossible to find out who has been the wrong-doer. But God sees all. Nothing escapes His observation. He slumbers not nor sleeps. The most secret thing that any one can do, lies open to Him. Every word, though spoken in a whisper, He hears. Every act, however hidden, His eye looks right down upon. 3. God sees you in the dark. It is wonderful what an idea most people have of darkness, as covering and hiding things. Now, we need to be reminded that however it may be with men, darkness makes no difference to God. He sees in the dark just as in the light; so that, so far as He is concerned—and it is mainly with Him we have to do—it is of no use waiting till night, till it is dark. 4. God sees you in the crowd. When one wishes not to be seen, he likes to get into a crowd. We speak of being "lost in the crowd." Hence it is so easy to do many things in

a crowd, which one would not do alone. Hence evil becomes so bold in a crowd. I recollect seeing a number of youths standing at a corner, in a seafaring town, going great lengths in the way of scoffing and reviling and ridiculing all that was good. A friend challenged any one of them to go out with him along a country road and say the same things there. He dared them to do, one by one, what they did boldly in the mass. I need not say the challenge was not accepted—all shrunk from it. But here, too, it is otherwise with God than it is with men. Just as darkness makes no difference, so numbers make none. Each individual out of ten thousand stands out as distinctly as if there were but the one. 5. God sees you when alone. A strange feeling of being unobserved, so as to be at liberty to do anything, comes over one when he is alone. There is such a sense of solitude that, so far as any one else is concerned, it seems to matter little what one does. To be left alone with oneself is far more dangerous for some than to be surrounded by the most skilful of tempters. Many have found their way to prison and to ruin just through being left alone. But when one is most alone, in the most out-of-the-way place, in the remotest corner of the earth—God sees. Gehazi, the prophet's servant, thought he was all unobserved when he hurried after Naaman, the Syrian, after he was healed, and by a lying device got money from him, which he stowed away securely, and then presented himself before his master. How he must have been startled when Elisha said, "Went not my heart with thee?" And so God says, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" 6. God sees you everywhere. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3). "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, throughout the whole earth" (2 Chron. xvi. 9). "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord" (Jer. xxxiii. 24). 7. God sees you always. There is no moment when He does not see you—night or day—waking or sleeping—alone or in company. It is told of Linnæus, the famous naturalist, that he was greatly impressed with this thought, and that it told on his conversation, his writings, and his conduct. He felt the importance of this so much that he wrote over the door of his study the Latin words: "*Innocui vivite; Numen adest*"; "Live innocently; God is here." We might well have these words before us everywhere. (*J. H. Wilson, M.A.*) *The punctuality of Providence*:—We wonder at the smooth working of the machinery for feeding a great city; and how, day by day, the provisions come at the right time, and are parted out among hundreds of thousands of homes. But we seldom think of the punctual love, the perfect knowledge, the profound wisdom which cares for us all, and is always in time with its gifts. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*) *God's eye*:—We think much of being seen of men; some of us would do anything for the sake of keeping up appearances. We should not give a penny to the offertory instead of a shilling if our neighbour could see us; we should not sell an adulterated article over the counter if a friend were looking over our shoulder. There are certain things which we do in private which we would not let our acquaintances know, and yet God knows all. We may lock our door, we may draw down the blind before we commit a sin, but God sees us: no lock shuts Him out. (*H. J. Wilmot Buxton, M.A.*) *God's omniscience*:—Nomus, one of the heathen gods, is said to have complained of Vulcan, that he had not set a grate at every man's breast. God hath a glazed window in the darkest houses of clay; He sees what is done in them when none other can. To God's omnipotence there is nothing impossible; and to God's omniscience there is nothing invisible. *God is present*:—Here is a young banker. When he was a boy in a country home, his mother bought for him an illuminated card with this text on it. It was framed and hung at the foot of his bed, so that every morning it was the first thing that met his eye when he awoke. By and by he went to a large city and entered a banking establishment. His father's last words to him, as he bade him good-bye, were, "Remember your motto, Thou God seest me." He soon rose to position, securing the unlimited confidence of his employers. Then came the hour of temptation—to enrich himself by taking a large sum of money and running off. It grew upon him and mastered him. All was ready. He stayed behind when the other clerks left the office. He turned the key of the safe and the heavy door swung open. The money was counted. It was in his hands. The deed was all but done, when the old text—the text of his boyhood—flashed out. Conscience awoke. The money fell from his hands. It seemed as if it had a voice—as if it said, "Thou God seest me," and the agonized youth cried out, "O God of my mother, save me from this awful crime." The money was replaced, and the young man was saved. (*J. H. Wilson, M.A.*) *Unconscious surveillance*:—Some years since a trio of gentlemen, members of a large mercantile firm, came into the office of the writer, and,

under injunctions of profound secrecy, desired the favour of using the window for a few days. The privilege was readily granted, and one of their number was at once installed behind a curtain, where, with a powerful glass, he could rigidly scrutinize every movement of a certain clerk in a large building across the way. The young man, all unconscious of the vigilant eye constantly upon him, was absorbed in his duties, making entries and receiving money; and, whatever consciousness of innocence or guilt was carried about with him, the suspicion of a rigid watch upon his actions—every movement closely scanned and weighed by his employers—doubtless had never entered his mind. The surveillance was continued nearly a week when it was abruptly terminated, and the result, whether in discovery of wrong or establishing innocence, I never learned. The incident made a profound impression upon me, suggesting, with thrilling distinctness, the solemn truth which men are so prone to forget, “Thou God seest me,” and enabling me as never before to realize how open before Him are the hearts and ways of men, their desires, volitions, actions; and that at last He shall bring every work into judgment whether it be good or whether it be evil. (*Old Testament Anecdotes.*)

Thought of omniscience.—A man went to steal corn from his neighbour's field. He took his little boy with him to keep a lookout, so as to give warning in case any one should come along. Before commencing he looked all around, first one way and then the other; and not seeing any person he was just about to fill his bag when the son cried out, “Father, there is one way you haven't looked yet!” The father supposed that some one was coming, and asked his son which way he meant. He answered, “You forgot to look up!” The father, conscience-stricken, took his boy by the hand, and hurried home without the corn which he had designed to take. *Power of the eye*.—Mazzini's soul was an inner lamp, shining through him always. Here was the strength of his personal influence. You could not doubt his glance. (*Thousand New Illustrations.*)

Perfection of omniscience.—Is this universe an unsurveyed and solitary waste? Do you fancy there is no presence to cheer it, nor eye to look upon it for ever? There is an eye whose vision is spread all over this amazing scene. There is a mind present unto it in all its illimitable extent. The Eternal One at the same moment converses with its immeasurably remote extremes. There is a mind to whose intelligence all this amazing vast of worlds on worlds, and suns on suns, and systems on systems, is distinctly apparent. Every atom in this magnificent immensity, whether sinking in its depths or aspiring in its heights, whether resting on its axis or whirling on its verge, is watched by the intense and eternal scrutiny of the omnipresent and omniscient God. (*Bishop Hamline.*) *God is ever near*.—The people of God, if they read nature aright, might learn much from even her humblest page; for the bending grass has a voice as distinct, if not as loud, as the sturdy oak. Myriad voices ever testify that God is near. This truth was found beautifully realized a little while ago by one of the agents of the London City Mission, who was visiting in one of those courts where the houses are crowded with inhabitants, and where every room is the dwelling of a family. In a lone room at the top of one of these houses the agent met with an aged woman, whose scanty pittance of half-a-crown a week was scarcely sufficient for her bare subsistence. He observed, in a broken teapot that stood in the window, a strawberry plant, growing and flourishing. He remarked, from time to time, how it continued to grow, and with what jealous care it was watched and tended. “Your plant flourishes nicely; you will soon have strawberries upon it.” “Oh, sir,” replied the woman, “it is not for the sake of the fruit that I grow it.” “Then why do you take so much care of it?” he inquired. “Well, sir,” was the answer, “I am very poor, too poor to keep any living creature; but it is a great comfort to me to have that living plant; for I know it can only live by the power of God; and as I see it live and grow from day to day, it tells me that God is near.” “Thou God seest me.” A young Christian lady was laid on a sick-bed. She was often unprotected and alone. One night very late, as she was lying awake on her bed, her family all asleep in their rooms around, a man was seen by her entering her door. He stopped a moment after he had gained entrance, her little night-lamp shining on them both from the stand by her bedside. He saw this sick girl surveying him with perfect tranquillity. She raised her finger, pointing upward, and said, “Do you know that God sees you?” The man waited a moment, but made no reply, and then turned and walked immediately out, having opened no other door than the street-door and the door of her chamber. Thus God interposed and defended her by the weakest instrument, but with the mightiest power. “Thou God seest me.” When the great Phidias had completed his reclining statue of Theseus, some one, knowing that the statue

was to occupy an elevated position in the temple, and observing that the back of the master-piece was as highly polished and as carefully completed as was the front, asked why such waste of time and energy, when no one would ever see whether it was finished or in the rough. The sculptor calmly and reverently replied, "Men may not see it, but the gods will." Our every act is under the inspection of the living God. (*Christian Age*.) *One of God's ambassadors*:—It presented a difficulty to the mind of the Emperor Trajan, that God should be everywhere and yet not be seen by mortal eye. "You teach me," said the Emperor, on one occasion, to Rabbi Joshun, "that your God is everywhere; and you boast that He resides among your nation. I should like to see Him." "God's presence is indeed everywhere," said the Rabbi, "but He cannot be seen. No mortal eye can behold His glory." The Emperor insisted. "Well," said Joshua; "but suppose we go first, and look at one of His ambassadors." The emperor assented. The rabbi took him into the open air. It was noon-day; and he bade him look on the sun, blazing in its meridian splendour. "I cannot see," said Trajan; "the light dazzles me." Said the rabbi, "Thou art unable to bear the light of one of these creatures; how, then, could'st thou look upon the Creator? Would not such a light annihilate thee?" *God counts*:—A plate of sweet cakes was brought in and laid upon the table. Two children played upon the hearth-rug before the fire. "Oh, I want one of those cakes!" cried the little boy, jumping up as soon as his mother went out, and going on tiptoe towards the table. "No, no," said his sister, pulling him back, "you must not touch." "Mother won't know it; she did not count them," he cried, shaking her off and stretching out his hand. "If she didn't perhaps God counted," answered the other. The little boy's hand was stayed. Yes, children, be sure God counts. (*Children's Missionary Record*.) *God sees us through Christ*:—"Thou God seest me" is a very unwelcome thought to a great many men, and it will be so, unless we can give it the modification which it receives from belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and feel sure that the eyes which are blazing with Divine Omniscience are dewy with Divine and human love. (*A. Maclaren, D.D.*)

CHAPTER XVII.

VERB. 1, 2. The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before Me, and be thou perfect.—*Walking before God*:—In a certain sense we must all walk before God, whether in solitude or among the haunts of men. But it is open to us to realize His presence, or to dismiss it from our minds. It is the first of these courses which God counsels Abraham to adopt. The words imply that the realization of the Divine presence is the secret of all perfection. The text answers the question as to how the work of our calling may be done devoutly. It bids us "do all in God," by habitual mindfulness of His presence. I. The counsel to be mindful of God's presence might seem to be quite practicable for those who have to work merely with their hands. But work which involves thought seems to preclude the realization of the Divine presence at the moment of its being done. In answer to this we need only observe that all that is necessary is the consciousness that God's eye is upon us. Consciousness of a presence need not interfere with the most active operations of mind. The mind of a speaker may be intensely occupied while he is making an extempore address, yet all the time he remembers that the eye of the audience is upon him. Consciousness of their presence forms the very groundwork of his mind. II. The conception of God's presence will take different shapes in different minds. We may regard Him as locally present everywhere, the veil of matter screening Him from our view; or we may regard Him as having a certain intimate connection with our minds, as upholding momentarily in us the powers of life and thought. III. In cultivating the consciousness of the Divine presence, we shall find it useful to catch at every help which our circumstances afford. If our hearts are right and true, we may find Christ—or rather may be found of Him—not only in the quiet country, but in the busy city, in the midst of the traffic of secular affairs. (*Dean Goulburn.*) *A revelation and a requirement*:—I. **THE REVELATION**: "I am the Almighty God." God is always sufficient. Enough for every being and occasion, responsibility and work. All knowledge, wisdom, authority, power. II. **THE REQUIREMENT**: "Walk

before Me," &c. 1. An onward and forward step. 2. The habitual recognition of God. (*S. Martin.*) *The revelation to Abraham*:—I. The sun, the moon, the stars, were the old gods of the East, the Elohim, the high and mighty ones, who ruled over men, over their good or bad fortunes, over the weather, the cattle, the crops, sending burning drought, pestilence, sunstroke, and those moonstrokes of which the Psalmist speaks when he says, "The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night." And these the old Easterns worshipped in some wild, confused way. But to Abraham it was revealed that the sun, the moon, and the stars were not Elohim, the high and mighty ones: that there was but one Elohim, one high and mighty One, the Almighty Maker of them all. II. Merely to believe that there is one God is a dead faith, which will never be counted for righteousness, because it will never make a man righteous, doing righteous and good deeds as Abraham did. Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness because it was righteousness, and made him do righteous deeds. 1. His faith in God made him brave. He went forth he knew not whither, but he had put his strength in God, and he did not fear. 2. Faith made him high-minded, generous, and courteous; as when he bids Lot go whither he will with his flocks and herds. Abraham was a plain man, dwelling in tents, but still, as the children of Heth said of him, a mighty prince, not merely in wealth of flocks and herds, but a prince in manners and a prince in heart. 3. Faith in God made Abraham a truly pious man, it made him the friend of God. His communion with God is the especial glory of Abraham's character. This gave him his name, "the friend of God"; or as his descendants the Arabs call him to this day, simply "The Friend." III. Abraham believed God because there was in his heart something which there is not in all men's hearts—something which answered to God's call, and make him certain that the call was from God—even the Holy Spirit of God. Blessed is the man who has chosen his share of Abraham's faith: he and his children after him shall have their share of Abraham's blessing. (*C. Kingsley, M.A.*) *Preparation for fresh spiritual privileges*:—I. DIVINE VISITATION. 1. To reward long trial and patience. 2. To reveal the Divine purpose more clearly. II. ENLARGEMENT AND EXALTATION OF THE IDEA OF DUTY. The more we know of God, the more exalted and noble our conception of the duty we owe to Him. Our sense of the holiness of His law increases. 1. We have a clearer idea of the standard of duty. "Walk before Me." The moral character of God is proposed for our imitation. 2. We see what is the true evidence of duty. "Be thou perfect." Perfect obedience—completeness of spiritual character—respect unto all God's commandments—these are the evidences that our duty has been rendered acceptably. The constant aim after perfection is a proof that our piety is real and sincere. 3. We have the Divine encouragements of duty. "I am the Almighty God." As we have infinite goodness to furnish us with an idea and an example, so we have infinite power to support us and to give us the necessary strength. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The power of God*:—We cannot conceive of a God without power; nor can we conceive rightly of Jehovah only as a God of infinite power; as the Almighty God, as He is called in our text. By this name He revealed Himself to Abraham, when He appeared to him to confirm the promise of a very numerous posterity; a thing that seemed unlikely, if human appearances only had been consulted; but to encourage his faith in the promise, He says, "I am the Almighty God." This was enough; Abraham was satisfied. He believed; he waited; and the promise was fulfilled. It will also greatly assist our faith, and promote our devotion, if we receive and retain a solemn conviction, that God is a being possessed of infinite power. Let us trace the evidences of this truth. I. In the original production of all creatures. II. In the preservation and government of all creatures; and, III. In the redemption of sinful man. I. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3). They were not merely formed, they were created; they were made out of nothing, the matter of which they were formed was created; for "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. i. 1); and these two words, "the heaven and the earth," include all the countless myriads of creatures and things which fill the universe, and far exceed the view of mortals. God alone can create. 2. The power of God, as it is displayed in the preservation and government of His creatures. The whole system is preserved in its beautiful order by the same Almighty hand which gave it being. He upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb. i. 3). Mark the display of the same Almighty power in making constant provision for the vast family of the universe. The continuance, from age to

age, of the various orders of animals, beasts, birds, fishes, insects, and all the multitudes of trees, plants, and flowers, must be ascribed to the same Almighty power. The moral government of God is still more wonderful. To His power in restraining evil spirits we owe much of our safety and comfort. We are more sensible of His power in restraining wicked men. But as the world is, it would be infinitely worse, if God did not withhold bad men from their purposes; but all hearts are in His hand. 3. The power of God as it shines in the redemption of sinful men by Jesus Christ. Observe this power in the presence of the great Redeemer. When we consider the first planting of our holy religion in the world, by instruments so feeble, and notwithstanding obstacles so great, we shall see with what propriety the gospel is said to be "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. i. 16). But it concerns us most of all to trace the effects of Divine power in the application of the gospel to the heart, without which its publication to the world, and its preservation to this day, will not avail to our personal salvation. The gospel is designed to produce a great inward change. The corruption of our nature renders this change absolutely necessary; and it is a change so considerable, as to be called in Scripture a new creation (2 Cor. v. 17): this, of course, can be effected only by the power of God; and, therefore, true converts are said to be made "willing in the day of His power" (Psa. cx. 3). Let us contemplate one more exertion of Divine power. When Moses saw a bush on fire, and yet that it was not consumed, he turned aside to behold it with admiration. In that burning bush he beheld the emblem of Israel afflicted in Egypt, yet not destroyed; and we may perceive in it an emblem of a true Christian, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. i. 5). And what but the power of God is sufficient for this purpose? What, then, shall we say to these things? What use shall we make of our meditations on the Almighty power of God? Let Him be adored; let Him be feared; let Him be trusted. Let Him be adored. He, and He alone, is the proper object of religious worship. Observe and admire His power wherever you see it; and where can you look without seeing it? Let this Almighty God be feared. Fear not man, who can do nothing but as permitted. Fear not man, said our Saviour, "but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear Him which after He hath killed the body, can cast both body and soul into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear Him" (Luke xii. 5). "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Yes; "trust in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Isa. xxvi. 4). What cannot He do who is almighty? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. xviii. 14). (*G. Burder.*) *The life, walk, and triumph of faith*:—I. The first thing we shall speak about, upon this occasion, is SURE RELIANCE. The foundation of it is laid before us in the text. True confidence leans alone upon God, who declares Himself to be Almighty God, or God All-sufficient—for such is an equally correct rendering of the passage. All true faith hangs upon God, as the vessel upon the nail. Strong faith realizes the all-sufficiency of God, and that is the secret of its strength, the hidden manna on which it feeds and becomes vigorous. God is God All-sufficient; simple as that truth is for us to speak, and for you to hear, it is a deep unfathomable, and did we really grasp its truth and dwell upon it, it would have a very wonderful effect upon our whole conduct. 1. This blessed text, "I am God All-sufficient," may apply to us in times when we are inclined to shirk any service for God. Thou art foolish, but I am wise. Give thyself up to My guidance: trust thyself in My hands, and thou shalt achieve marvels; and exceeding great wonders shalt thou accomplish by My power and grace." 2. This word may also be useful to those who are trembling under some present temporal trial and affliction. 3. The same may also be applied to each of us when we are under spiritual depressions. Inward tribulations are frequently more severe than temporal trials; the man of God knows this full well. "I am God Almighty," saith the Lord: "Therefore say thou unto the enemy, 'Rejoice not over me, for though I fall yet shall I rise again.'" II. Secondly, our text goes on to speak of our RIGHT POSITION. The Lord says, "I am Almighty God," and then He adds, "Walk before Me." It is much easier for me to talk about this than it will be to practise it. The meaning is simple—the actual obedience grace alone can work in us. "Walk before Me." Not merely "think before Me," and "pray before Me," but "walk before Me." I know many find it easy to cultivate a sense of God's presence in their own study, or in the room where they are accustomed to pray, but this is the point—to feel it in business, and in the details of every-day life. Oh, it is a great word this—"Walk before Me." Its brevity is not so notable as its fulness. Surely it means realize My presence, and then, in general

life and ordinary conversation, continue under a sense of it, serious, devout, holy, earnest, trustful, consecrated, Christ-like. But He meant more than that. "Walk before Me." That is, "Delight in My company." True believers find their choicest joy in communion with God; and did we always walk with God in a sense of communing with Him, our peace would be like a river, and our righteousness like the waves of the sea. "Walk before Me." Does not it mean just this, in a word, "Do not act as seeing anybody else except Me? Walk before Me." Now, Abram had walked before Sarah: he had listened to her, and much mischief had come of his so doing at different times. The dearest friends we have are often those who will lead us most astray when we take counsel with flesh and blood. "Do not allow your course to be shaped by regarding Hagar, or regarding Ishmael, or regarding Sarah, or anybody else. 'Walk before Me.'" I am persuaded that a regard for God, a sense of duty, a straight-forward following out of convictions, is the only true style of living, for if you begin to notice the whims and wishes of one, then you will have to do the same with another; and if your course of conduct is to be shaped to please men, you will become man's slave and nothing better; and no child of God ought to come into that condition. III. But we must pass on, for there is another point, and that is, as we have considered our sure reliance and our right position, we notice next our GLORIOUS ARM: "Be thou perfect." Now, the connection shows us that the only way to be perfect is to walk before the Lord. If any man desires holiness, he must get it through communion. The way to be transformed into the likeness of God is to live in the company of God. First, God must be known as All-sufficient; thus He helps and enables His servant to walk before Him, and then, as a consequence, that favoured servant labours to obey the word of command, "Be thou perfect." "Oh," says one, "but how can we be perfect?" I will ask thee another question: Wouldst thou have God command thee to be less than perfect? If so He would be the author of an imperfect law. "The law of the Lord is perfect;" how could it be otherwise? I do not find that He bids us partly keep His law, but wholly keep it. And so the Lord holds up this as the standard of a Christian, "Be thou perfect." And does it not mean, let us be perfect in desiring to have all the round of graces? Suppose a man should have faith, and should have love, but no hope: he would not be perfect. He would be like a child that had two arms, but only one foot; it would not be a perfect child. You must have all the graces, if you are to be a perfect man. And as we have all the graces, so we should seek to have in our lives exhibited all the virtues, in the fulfilment of all our duties. It is a very sad thing when you hear of a Christian man that he is a very excellent deacon, that he is a very admirable local preacher or Sabbath-school teacher, but that he is a very unkind father. That "but" spoils it all. A saint abroad is no saint if he be a devil at home. Now, I think I hear somebody saying, "How shall we ever reach such a height?" My dear brother, you never will do so except you remember the first part of the text—"I am the Almighty God." He can help you. If there be any sin that you cannot overcome yourself, He can overcome it for you. If there be any virtue you have not yet reached, He can lead you up to it. But I will not detain you longer, except to notice that last word. It is a very sweet word: "I will make My covenant between Me and thee." Oh, it is the man that knows an All-sufficient God, and that lives in the presence of God, and that endeavours to be perfect in his life—it is that man that enjoys intercourse and communion with God, such as no one else knows, for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." "There shall be a covenant between Me and thee." (C. H. Spurgeon.) *Walking before God*:—I. A DECLARATION—"I am the ALMIGHTY GOD." II. A COMMAND—"Walk before Me." Think, act, speak, under a sense of God's omnipresence. III. A FURTHER COMMAND OR PROMISE. "Be thou perfect," or, "Thou shalt be perfect." 1. As a command it imports, "Thou shalt be upright and sincere in thought, speech, action." 2. As a promise, "Thou shalt be perfect as thy state and nature can bear, in knowledge, holiness, happiness." (J. Benson, D.D.) *The Almightyness of God*:—1. Rebukes our lack of unwavering faith. 2. Teaches us to leave with God all that concerns us. 3. Teaches us to practise perfect openness with God. 4. Is the remedy against all discouragement. *To walk before God is*:—1. To live as in His sight, and under His special inspection. 2. To realize, at all times, His presence and His Providence. 3. To feel the dignity of the godly life. We are not to walk behind Him, as if ashamed, but before Him, as conscious of the dignity of our high calling. 4. To feel the constant energy of spiritual life. We cannot fail with the Almighty power behind us. 5. To feel the love of God towards us. 6. To ap-

prehend God's love by our faith. *Walk before Me, and be thou perfect*:—I. THE DIVINE SUMMONS. "Perfect" here means whole-heartedness—entire surrender of being. Such an attitude can only be maintained by a very careful "walk." II. THE REVELATION ON WHICH THIS SUMMONS WAS BASED—"I am the Almighty God"—El-Shaddai. "All power is Mine, in heaven and upon earth. Of old I laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of My hands. I sit upon the circle of the earth; and its inhabitants are as grasshoppers. I bring out the starry hosts by number, calling them all by names, by the greatness of My might, for that I am strong in power: not one faileth. 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?" All this is as true to-day as ever. And if any will dare venture forth on the path of separation, cutting themselves aloof from all creature aid, and from all self-originated effort; content to walk alone with God, with no help from any but Him—such will find that all the resources of the Divine Almightyness will be placed at their disposal, and that the resources of Omnipotence must be exhausted ere their cause can fail for want of help. III. THE COVENANT WHICH WAS DIVINELY PROPOSED. 1. It referred to the seed. 2. It referred to the land. 3. It referred to the coming child. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *Consecration to God—illustrated by Abraham's circumcision*:—On the occasion of this gracious manifestation, God was pleased to do for Abram what I think is to us an admirable and instructive illustration of the consecration of our redeemed spirits entirely to His service. 1. First, then, let us notice in the words of God to Abram, THE MODEL OF THE SANCTIFIED OR CONSECRATED LIFE. Here it is: "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." 1. For a man to be thoroughly sanctified to the Master's service, he must first realize the almighty and all-sufficiency and glory of God. 2. True holiness is a walking before God. The saint feels that he must not, dare not, transgress, because he is before the very face of God. 3. The next words are, "and be thou perfect." Does this mean absolute perfection? Freely I do admit that the model of sanctification is perfection. II. Secondly, THE NATURE OF THIS CONSECRATION as illustrated in this chapter. 1. Genuine spiritual consecration begins with communion with God. Note the third verse—"Abraham fell on his face, and God talked with him." By looking at Christ Jesus, His image is photographed upon our mind, and we are changed from glory to glory, as by the presence of the Lord. 2. The next point in the nature of this consecration is that it is fostered by enlarged views of the covenant grace. "As for Me, behold My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." 3. Note, in reading these words, how this covenant is revealed to Abram peculiarly as a work of Divine power. Note the run of the passage, "I will make My covenant between Me and thee." "I will make thee fruitful." "I will establish My covenant." "I will give unto thee." "I will be thy God," and so on. Oh! those glorious "wills" and "shalls." Ye cannot serve the Lord with a perfect heart until first your faith gets a grip of the Divine "wills" and "shalls." 4. Further, Abraham had a view of the covenant in its everlastingness. I do not remember that the word "everlasting" had been used before in reference to that covenant, but in this chapter we have it over and over again. "I will establish My covenant for an everlasting covenant." Here is one of those grand truths which many of the babes in grace have not as yet learned, namely, that the blessings of grace are blessings not given to-day to be taken back to-morrow, but eternal blessings. 5. In considering the nature of this consecration, I would observe next, that they who are consecrated to God are regarded as new men. The new manhood is indicated by the change of name—he is called no longer Abram, but Abraham, and his wife no longer Sarai, but Sarah. Ye are new creatures in Christ Jesus. 6. Note further that the nature of this consecration was set forth to Abraham by the rite of circumcision. Taking away the filthiness of the flesh. III. THE RESULTS OF SUCH A CONSECRATION. 1. Immediately after God's appearing to Abraham his consecration was manifest, first, in his prayer for his family. "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" Men of God, if you are indeed the Lord's, and feel that you are His, begin now to intercede for all who belong to you. 2. The next result of Abraham's consecration was, that he was most hospitable to his fellow men. Look at the next chapter. He sits at the tent door, and three men come to him. The Christian is the best servant of humanity in a spiritual sense. I mean that for his Master's sake he endeavours to do good to the sons of men. 3. The third result was, Abraham entertained the Lord Himself, for amongst those three angels who came to his house was the King of kings, the Infinite One. Every believer

who serves his God doth, as it were, give refreshment to the Divine mind. I mean this, God took an infinite delight in the work of His dear Son. He said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and He takes a delight also in the holiness of all His people. 4. Once more, Abraham became the great intercessor for others. The next chapter is full of his pleadings for Sodom. If we do but become consecrated to God, thoroughly so, as I have attempted feebly to describe, we shall become mighty with God in our pleadings. (*C. H. Spurgeon.*) *Abraham admonished*:—This admonition implies a serious reproof. It was like saying, "Have recourse no more to unbelieving expedients: keep thou the path of uprightness, and leave Me to fulfil My promise in the time and manner that seem good to Me!" What a lesson is here afforded us, never to use unlawful means under the pretence of being more useful, or promoting the cause of God. Our concern is to walk before Him, and be upright, leaving Him to bring to pass His own designs in His own way. (*A. Fuller.*) *The repetition of the call*:—I. He saw the Lord again, and heard His voice calling him, as it were, anew. God was manifested to him in glory, and spoke to him in power. "The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God" (ver. 1). II. Abram is called to be perfect. Now, this word "perfect," or "upright," when applied to man, in the Bible, is not absolute, but relative. It relates, for the most part, not to the whole character of a man, but to some one particular feature of his character, some individual grace or virtue specified, in respect of which he is said to be complete or entire, consistent and sincere. In the instance before us, it is the duty of "walking before God," in respect of which Abram is exhorted to be perfect—"Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." Now, to walk before God, is to walk and live as in His sight, and under His special inspection: to realize, at all times, His presence and His providence; to feel His open and unslumbering eye ever upon us. Thus to walk before God is impossible, if there be not redeeming love on His part, apprehended by faith on ours; and to be perfect, guileless, and upright, in so walking before God, is the great duty of the believer. He alone can discharge that duty. III. Abram has a sufficient reason given to him for his compliance with the command—"Walk before Me and be thou perfect." It is a reason founded on the nature of God Himself. God appeals to His omnipotence, as warranting His expectation that His servant's walk before Him should be perfect. "I am the Almighty God." "This is thine encouragement to act with entire frankness and unreserve in all thy dealings with Me, and to let all be open and undisguised between us. I have all power and all sufficiency; and all that concerns thee may be safely left to Me. There is no need of any underhand or circuitous mode of procedure, nor any occasion to resort to any doubtful walk of thine own for the accomplishment of all that thine heart desires. I am the Almighty God: walk before Me. Commit thy way to Me, and I will bring it to pass. What is it that troubles thee, and would tempt thee to try some device of thine own for relief? Is it sin? And hast thou found no Saviour? Then know that I am the Almighty God; and that, as the Almighty, I have all power to forgive sin. Let thy sin, in all its blackness, be laid bare before Me; for I am the Almighty God; I have a provision such as no resources but Mine could furnish—a provision of infinite wisdom, and power, and love, by which I freely cleanse thee from it all." In this way, Abram, when in danger of relapsing into worldly indifference, through the hardening influence of the deceitfulness of sin, and the yielding of faith to sense—of the Spirit to the flesh—is called authoritatively and peremptorily to repent, and do his first works. The process of awakening is simple and effectual, as every work of God is, and it is exactly suited to his case. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *A constant walk with God*:—It is not one or two good actions, but a good conversation, which will speak a man to be a right Christian. A true believer, like the heavenly orb, is constant and unwearied in his motions and actings. Enoch "walked with God"; it is not taking a step or two in a way which denominates a man as a walker, but a continued motion. No man is judged healthy by a flushing colour in his face, but by a good complexion. God esteems none holy for a particular carriage, but for a general course. (*G. Swinnock.*) *Perfection requires time*:—The acorn does not become an oak in a day; the ripened scholar was not made such by a single lesson; the well-trained soldier was not a raw recruit yesterday; it is not one touch of the artist's pencil that produces a finished painting; there are always months between seed-time and harvest; even so the path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. (*J. Nichol.*) *Christian perfection*:—Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation, made up of these gracious stars—

perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies as well as for our earthly relations, and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase, "perfect love," instead of the word "perfection"; understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fullness of the Christian dispensation. (*J. Fletcher.*) *Risks attending moral perfection*.—There are things precious, not from the materials of which they are made, but from the risk and difficulty of bringing them to perfection. The speculum of the largest telescope foils the optician's skill in casting. Too much or too little heat, the interposition of a grain of sand, a slight alteration in the temperature of the weather, and all goes to pieces: it must be re-cast. Therefore, when successfully finished, it is a matter for almost the congratulation of a country. Rarer and more difficult still than the costliest part of the most delicate of instruments, is the completion of the Christian character. Only let there come the heat of persecution, or the cold of human desertion, a little of the world's dust, and the rare and costly thing is liable to be cracked, and become a failure. (*F. W. Robertson, M.A.*) *Culture necessary to the perfection of Christian graces*.—Have you seen the tulip-bed in the garden of the florist? have you marked the gorgeous colours, the rich variety, the delicate pencilling? All these gay flowers were once of a dark dingy hue. Year after year did the gardener watch them, tend them, transplant them from soil to soil, till at length, one by one, some sooner and some later, they broke into these glorious hues, this boundless variety of stripe and freckle. Then did he remove them to his choicest border, and shelter them from sun and shower; and now thou gazest on them in their beauty. Thus dark and unlovely once were the redeemed of the Lord: such pains and watching did He bestow upon them; year after year did He look for the lovely graces of the Spirit in them, till one and another, not all at once, like the tulips, but by degrees, oftentimes slow and painful, shone forth in the beauty of holiness. And thus as He transplanted them to His heavenly courts, where, never scorched by the sun, nor smitten by the shower, nor torn by the winds, they shall bloom for ever and ever. "Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the court of our God" (*Psa. xcii. 13*). (*H. G. Salter.*) *Shortcomings as well as excellencies of character to be recognized*.—An ordinary painter would have been satisfied with executing a picture of grapes which deceived even the birds; but the eminent artist who did so, was dissatisfied with his own performances. Pliny informs us that Zeuxis once painted a boy holding a dish full of grapes so well, that the birds were deceived and flew to the grapes to peck at them. Zeuxis, notwithstanding, was dissatisfied with the picture: "for," said he, "had I painted the boy as well as he ought to have been painted, the birds would have been afraid to touch the fruit." Thus does the Christian dwell more on his shortcomings than on his attainments, and the reason is, that "he who has much grace apprehends much more than others that great height to which his love ought to ascend, and he sees better than others how little a way he has risen towards that height; and, therefore, estimating his actual love by the whole height of his duty, it appears to him astonishingly little." I once observed the following motto attached to a coat-of-arms on a gentleman's carriage, "Tout bien, ou rien," and it struck me as being peculiarly expressive of what ought to be the Christian's feeling. (*F. F. Trench.*) *Overhastened perfection*.—They say those herbs will keep best, and will longer retain both their hue and verdure, which are dried in the shade, than those which are suddenly scorched with fire or sun. Those wits are like to be most durable which are closely tutored with a leisurely education; time and gentle constancy ripen better than a sudden violence. Neither is it otherwise in our spiritual condition: a wilful slackness is not more dangerous than an over-hastening of our perfection. If I may be every moment drawing nearer to the end of my hope, I shall not wish to precipitate. (*Bp. Hall.*)

Vers. 3-8. My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.—*The second stage of the covenant*.—Already Jehovah, the Covenant God, had appeared thrice to Abram. 1. Simply to assure him that he should be blessed, and become a blessing (*chap. xii. 7*). 2. To give him the promise of a numerous progeny, as the dust of the earth for multitude (*chap. xiii. 16*). 3. To repeat this assurance, but now likening the number of his seed to the stars of heaven (*chap.*

xv. 5). This third vision was confirmed by a solemn sacrifice. In it God stands clearly out as the contracting party, conveying certain blessings to Abram, and requiring the performance of no distinct conditions on His part. Now the covenant has moved forwards another stage, and Abram is to take his own part in it by receiving the appointed sign—"the sign and seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised" (Rom. iv. 11). This second stage of the covenant was marked—I. BY MORE DEFINITE AND CIRCUMSTANTIAL PROMISES. This law of progressive revelation has an illustration in the case of Abram. The original promise is renewed, but spread more out into details. Consider these promised blessings—1. In their natural greatness. Though they have a higher meaning and importance, yet there are aspects of them which belong entirely to this present world. 2. In their spiritual significance. Their ultimate reference is above and beyond the things of time and sense. The sands on the sea-shore, and the multitude of the stars, speak to us Christians of the number and extent of the true Church of God. II. BY A CHANGED NAME. Abram had reached a new stage in his history, and this is indicated by a new name. With God, names are not empty designations, but represent the truth of things. To Abraham it was as a new life to find the promises growing more clear, the gifts of God's goodness more palpable and evident. III. BY SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT ON THE PART OF GOD. God is the fountain of the blessing, and the sole proposer of the terms. His covenant is the only foundation of all our hope. We can look for nothing but what is thus assured to us. To believers in covenant, God converses the riches which are in Christ. They are bound to a life of faith and love, and He engages Himself to impart His fulness. 1. This should excite our gratitude. 2. It should stimulate our faith. 3. It should excite our reverence. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The ratification of the covenant* :—I. GOD'S TREATMENT OF ABRAHAM. 1. His revelation of Himself. 2. He changes the names of the patriarch and his wife. 3. An enlarged promise. 4. The promise of a son to Sarah. 5. Yet Ishmael is remembered for good. II. ABRAHAM'S CONDUCT. 1. He readily entered into the covenant. He instantly submitted to the prescribed rite. 3. He included in the covenant all whom he could influence. III. APPLICATION. God proposes to enter into covenant with us. He has given His Son as a sacrifice for our sins, and made us the most gracious and abundant promises. Now, we are required to take up the covenant and accept the conditions of it. 1. Look at the covenant on God's part. (1) He reveals Himself to us as the Almighty. Think of His greatness and power. (2) He gives us a new name, He calls us His sons. He changes our nature, and makes us partakers of His own. (3) He appoints us the sign and seal of baptism and the Lord's Supper, in token of our covenant relation to Him. (4) He then lays upon us His great and holy command, in keeping of which we shall realize perfect safety and immortal blessedness. 2. Our duty. (1) We are to walk before God, the Almighty. (a) Remember His presence. (b) Seek His guidance and approval in all we do. (c) Look to Him for protection and reward. (2) In this way we shall be perfect. Sincere and upright. Happy. Safe. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *God's everlasting covenant* :—I. THIS COVENANT IS THE SHEET-ANCHOR OF CHRISTIAN FAITH. No fear of defeat or failure. II. THIS COVENANT IS A PERPETUAL COVENANT. "Everlasting" is the period of its duration. It is for all ages, all dispensations, all believers in all the world to the end of time. III. THIS COVENANT WAS MADE WITH ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED AFTER HIM. Parents do not make enough of it, or plead it with sufficient faith and persistency. IV. THIS COVENANT IS GOD'S EVERLASTING ARM UNDERNEATH THE SAINT. Away, then, with fear. (*J. M. Sherwood, D.D.*) *Faith in God's naked word* :—The more entirely thou canst rely on God's naked word and promise, the stronger is thy faith; for then thou trustest Him on His own credit, without any bond from another; and this is faith indeed. He that walks without staff or crutch, is stronger than he that needs these to lean on. (*W. Gurnall.*) *Distrust of God's promise* :—The awkwardness of our hearts to suffer comes much from distrust. An unbelieving soul treads upon the promise, as a man upon ice; at first going upon it he is full of fears, lest it should crack. (*Ibid.*) *God talked with him* :—I. SATISFACTORY COMMUNION. The Rev. James Owen, of Shrewsbury, being asked, when on his death-bed, whether he would have some of his friends sent for to keep him company, replied, "My fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and he that is not satisfied with that company doth not deserve it." II. DEGREES OF COMMUNION. Some value the presence of their Saviour so highly that they cannot bear to be at any remove from Him. Even their work they will bring up, and do it in the light of His countenance, and, while engaged in it, will be

seen constantly raising their eyes to Him, as if fearful of losing one beam of His light. Others who, to be sure, would not be content to live out of His presence, are yet less wholly absorbed by it than these, and may be seen, a little farther off, engaged here and there in their various callings, their eyes generally upon their work, but often looking up for the light which they love. A third class, beyond these, but yet within the light-giving rays, includes a double multitude, many of whom are so much engaged in their worldly schemes, that they may be seen standing sideways to Christ, looking mostly the other way, and only now and then turning their faces toward the light. (*E. Payson, D.D.*)

Vers. 5, 6. **Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.**—*Spiritual parentage*:—I. The change of name here made was founded on a change of character. II. His fatherhood of Isaac was in consequence of special Divine interposition; and the fact is confirmatory and illustrative of the teaching of a spiritual sonship, so often alluded to in the New Testament. III. For faith-character he is made the father of the "faithful," or the full-of-faith. Mere natural descent counts for nothing. Conclusions: 1. Faith is an inheritance. 2. Faith is the sign of our descent. 3. Faith may be transmitted. (*The Homiletic Review.*) *Abraham a father of many nations*:—"Abram the Hebrew" stands at the head of many a great stream of history, like the river of Eden which parted into four. Of the leading faiths of the world, there are three which cherish his name with equal veneration; and these three are the only monotheistic faiths. To the Jew, the Moslem, and the Christian alike, the prophet Abraham forms a common ancestor. Trace these three forms of belief to their fountain-head, and they meet in the tent of that ancient confessor, exiled in the dawn of the world for his faith in the unity of God. Divided in so much else, the Englishman and the Turk, the Moor and the Arab, the Catholic and the Jew, agree in deriving their spiritual, if not also their natural, descent from that primal "friend of God." Most literally has the promise of his new name been fulfilled. He has become a "father of many nations." (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*)

Vers. 7, 8. **I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee.**—*The faithful Covenanter*:—The communion and fellowship of man with God, was first founded on a covenant of works made with Adam in Paradise. But this fellowship being placed in man's own freedom, and having so weak a foundation, he lost both himself and it, so that now by the first covenant of works, Adam and all his posterity are under a curse; for we cannot fulfil the law that requireth personal obedience, perfect obedience, and exact obedience. He that "continueth not in all is cursed" (Gal. iii. 10). Now after this fall, man's happiness was to recover again his communion and fellowship with God; and therefore we must have a new covenant before we can have life and comfort. God must enter into new conditions with us before we can have any communion with Him. There are four periods of time of renewing this covenant: first, from Adam to Abraham; and in those first times of the world, those that were under the covenant were called the "sons and daughters of God," "the children of the promise," and the covenant of grace was called a promise of the blessed seed. Secondly, from Abraham to Moses; and then it was called a covenant, and they the children of the covenant. "I will establish My covenant." A covenant is more than a promise, and a more solemn thing, because there be ceremonies. The third period of renewing the covenant of grace was from Moses to Christ; and then it was more clear, when as to the covenant made with Abraham, who was sealed with the sacrament of circumcision, the sacrament of the paschal lamb was added, and all the sacrifices Levitical; and then it was called a testament. That differeth a little from a covenant; for a testament is established by blood, it is established by death. So was that; but it was only with the blood and death of cattle sacrificed as a type. But now, from Christ's time to the end of the world, the covenant of grace is most clear of all; and it is now usually called the New Testament, being established by the death of Christ Himself; and it differs from a covenant in these respects: First, A testament indeed is a covenant, and something more. It is a covenant sealed by death. Secondly, A testament bequeathed good things merely of love. It giveth gifts freely. A covenant requireth something to be done. But to come to that which I specially intend. The words, as I said before, contain the renewing of this blessed and gracious agreement between God and man to Abraham, the father of the faithful. "I will establish My covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee,

in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee." The words, you see, contain a covenant; and here are all things—all the articles and circumstances that agree to any covenant whatsoever. Here are the parties, both that make the covenant and that are covenanted with. Here is the substance of the covenant, and the qualities of the covenant, and the condition of the covenant. The party making the covenant is God, "I will be thy God." God is the party covenanting. God indeed is both the party covenanting and the substance of the covenant: "I will be a God to thee." They fall both together in one. The parties covenanted with, are Abraham and his seed—his seed by promise. The substance of the covenant is, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." The qualities of the covenant are—1. It is a sure covenant: "I will establish My covenant." 2. It is an everlasting covenant: "I will establish My covenant for an everlasting covenant." 3. It is a peculiar covenant: "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed; that is, only between Me and thee, and thy seed; not with the refuse of the world, but only with thy seed by promise; only believers, whether Jews or Gentiles." 4. It is a most free covenant. It was made to Abraham, whom God called out of Ur of the Chaldees, out of an idolatrous nation, out of an idolatrous family; even as it was at the first most freely made to Adam in Paradise, when he was in a most desperate estate. So here it was freely made to good Abraham: (1) The love of God was free to him when He called him, being an idolater; and then it was freely renewed afterward, when he was good, as we shall see anon. 5. It is a covenant consisting most of spiritual things. It is a spiritual covenant. I mean especially promising spiritual favours, although the other things, as appendices of the main, are likewise meant. And then, lastly, you have the condition of the covenant; and that, though it is not expressed, yet it is implied. "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." "Therefore thou shalt take Me for thy God, carry thyself to Me as thy God," &c. "I will be thy God." This is the covenant in the Messiah; but first, what is it to be a God? I answer, To be a God, take it in the general, is to give being to the creature that had no being of itself, and to protect and preserve the creature in its being: in a word, to be a creator; for providence is the perpetuity and continuance of creation. This is to be a God. What is, then, to be thy God? "I will be thy God." I answer, To be a God in a more peculiar manner, is to be a God in covenant; that is, not only to be a God to preserve and continue this being of ours in a civil life, but it is to be a God in a higher relation to us; to be a God in a reference to an eternal, supernatural estate in heaven; to be a God here in grace, and hereafter in glory; and thus God is a God in a gracious covenant, only by Jesus Christ, and to those that believe in Him. "I will be thy God": that is, "I will be thy God in Christ," to give thee a better being than this world can afford; to free thee from the cursed estate thou art in by nature; to deliver thee from all ill, spiritually and eternally: especially to bestow on thee all good, spiritually and eternally; especially as we have it in the words of the covenant (Gen. xv. 1), "I will be thy shield and thy exceeding great reward"; a shield to keep off all ill, and a reward for all good. So in Psa. lxxxiv. 9, "God will be a sun and a shield," &c.: a sun for all sweet comfort and good, and a shield in regard of defence from ill; a sun and a shield till we come to the possession of eternal happiness. Well, to come to the trials. But let me first add this to the former: whomsoever God is a God to, it is known specially by spiritual and eternal favours. A man cannot know certainly that God is his God by outward and common things that castaways may have; for a castaway may have Ishmael's blessing and Esau's portion, blessings of the left hand, common graces. To know undoubtedly, therefore, that God is our God, must be by peculiar matters; for those whose God God is are a peculiar people, a holy nation, severed from others. First of all, then, know what the Spirit of God saith to thy soul; for they that are God's have His Spirit, to reveal to their spirits the secret and hidden love of God. But if the voice of the Spirit be silent in regard of testimony, go to the work of the Spirit; but go to the peculiar work of the Spirit. Let us, then, come to the trial by our carrying ourselves to God. Can we say with David, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?" or "What is there in earth in comparison with Thee?" (Psa. lxxiii. 25.) When the conscience can tell us that we make God our treasure and our portion above all earthly things, then we make him our God. 2. Examine what affections we have to God: for it is affection that makes a Christian. Single out some few that we are most offending in. (1) As, first, for fear, it may shame us all. Indeed, a Christian upon his best resolution is better. But the ordinary carriage of men is, they fear men more than God; they fear everything

more than Him that they should fear above all. (2) And so for joy and delight : we make God our God when we joy in Him above all things in the world ; when we make Him our boast all the day long, as it is *Psa. xlv. 8* ; when we make Him our glory, as He is called our glory in *Jer. ii. 11*. God is our glory if He be our God. (3) Again, If God be our God, we will trust in Him, rely and depend upon Him above all things ; for whatsoever our trust is most in, that is our god. Now if our conscience tell us that we trust most in God, more than in wealth or friends, and will not to displease God please any man, it is a sign that we have made God our God, because we trust in Him. (4) Again, If we make God our God, we may know it by our obedience, especially by the obedience of the inward man. But to proceed, and to come to some few familiar signs more that will try us, though these may try us, in the intercourse that is between God and us. (a) Whosoever hath God for their God, they have the Spirit of supplication and prayer, to cry unto God, to run unto Him, especially in extremity. All God's children have the spirit of adoption to cry, "Abba, Father !" (b) Again, We may know that God is our God by this, by our separating from all others, in ourselves and out of ourselves. (c) In a word, to name no more trials but this, whosoever God is a God to, there will be a transforming unto God, a transforming unto Christ, in whom God is our God. Having now thus unfolded these terms, let us see what we may draw from thence for our use and comfort. 1. First, then, if by these trials we find that God be not, or have not been, our God, alas ! let us never rest till we make it good that God is our God. 2. But, secondly, when we have found God to be our God, then make this use of it, a use of resolution. Is God my God ? then I will resolve to please Him, though all creatures be against me. 3. Again, If God be our God, then let this stop all base and covetous desires after earthly things. 4. Again, If so be we know this for a truth, that God is our God, then let it be a use of exhortation to stir us up to keep, and maintain, and cherish acquaintance and familiarity with Him ; as it is in *Job xxii. 21*. 5. Lastly, If by these comfortable signs we find God to be our God, then here is a spring of comfort opened to a Christian. If God be mine, then all that He hath is mine ; He is my Father ; He is my Husband ; He is my Rock ; His goodness, His wisdom, His providence, His mercy, whatsoever He liath is mine. "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee," &c. I come now to the qualities of this covenant ; and before I speak in particular of them, I beseech you observe one thing (which I will but touch, to make an entrance to that which follows), from the manner of setting down the covenant ; it is not here set down as it is in other places of Scripture ; "I will be thy God, and thou shalt be My people" ; but here is only the first part, the main of the covenant of grace recited, "I will be thy God." Why doth He not say, too, Thou shalt take Me for thy God ? Because where the first is, He ever works the second ; our part depends upon His. It is therefore—to come to the first quality—called a free covenant. It cometh from God merely of grace. Again, secondly, it is a sure, a certain covenant. I will establish My covenant. But in whom is it established ? how cometh it to be sure ? It is established in Christ, the Mediator of the covenant, in the Messiah ; for "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (*Gen. xii. 3*). That is the fundamental promise. And as it is a sure covenant, so, thirdly, it is an everlasting covenant. "I will make an everlasting covenant with thee." God is everlasting, Christ is everlasting, the graces of the Spirit are everlasting. When we are dead, He will be a God unto us, as it is said, "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," their God when they were dead. He is the God of our dust, of our dead bodies. He will raise them up, for they are bodies in covenant with Him. Again, it is a peculiar covenant. God is in covenant only with those that answer Him, that take Him for their God, that are a peculiar people. It is not glorying in the flesh ; but there must be somewhat wrought that is peculiar before we can be assured we are of Abraham's seed, and in covenant with God. And we may know that we are God's peculiar by some peculiar thing that we can do. What peculiar thing canst thou do ? To speak a little of that by the way. Thou lovest and art kind ; but, saith Christ, what peculiar thing canst thou do ? A heathen man may be kind and loving, but canst thou overcome revenge ? Canst thou spare and do good to thine enemies ? Canst thou trust in God when all means fail ? What is the power of the Spirit in thee ? Doth it triumph in thee over thy natural corruption ? Canst thou do as Abraham did ? He left all at God's command ; canst thou do that if need should be ? Canst thou leave children, and wife, and life, and all at God's command ? Canst thou sacrifice Isaac as he did ? Canst thou more trust in the promise of God than in the

dearest thing in the world, yea, than in thy own feeling of grace? (*R. Sibbes, D.D.*) *The covenant as made with believers:—*I. THAT THE COVENANT OF GRACE IS MADE WITH THE SAINTS, AND THEY ARE ALL FEDERATES THEREIN, WILL APPEAR BY THESE ARGUMENTS. 1. From the type of the first Adam, for he is made the type of Him that was to come. Thus as the first covenant was made with the first Adam and all his posterity, so the second covenant is made with the second Adam and all His posterity also. 2. We read of a covenant made with persons and people, and promised unto them as special mercies, a covenant made with Abraham and Isaac, a covenant made with David: "The Lord has made with me an everlasting covenant in all things ordered and sure" (2 Sam. xxiii. 5). 3. It will appear from the promises of the second covenant, though it is true, that they are all yea and amen in Him, yet are they properly and formally made unto us, either the first promises of grace or else of reward unto grace. Promises of grace are, "He will give His Spirit, and will give repentance, He will heal our backslidings," &c., and "We have an unction from the Holy One," &c. 4. The covenant of grace is a covenant in the hand of a Mediator, and confirmed by the death of the Testator; it is not only a covenant, but it is a testament. 5. The sacraments are seals of the covenant of grace. 6. There is a double oath to confirm this covenant, there is an oath made by God the Father to Christ, and there is an oath also made to us; there is an oath made unto Christ, and therefore He is said to be made a priest by a covenant oath (Psa. cx. 4), and the oath to us: "Who are heirs of promise, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie" (Heb. vi. 17, 18). II. THE REASONS WHY IT WAS NECESSARY THAT THE COVENANT OF GRACE SHOULD BE MADE WITH ALL THE FAITHFUL, AND NOT WITH CHRIST ONLY AS THEIR HEAD. 1. To answer those great ends why God will deal with man in a covenant way. (1) The Lord will enter into covenant that He may declare His glory, not only in a way of goodness, but in a way of faithfulness. In the creation, the Lord did show forth much power and wisdom, and in the law much holiness; but there was no way to manifest His faithfulness, but by covenant: "The Lord hath chosen you above all people, that you might know that He is the Lord the faithful God" (Mic. vii. 20). 2. The Lord's intention was to honour man also; and it is one of the greatest and highest dignities that the Lord hath put upon His people, to bind them unto Himself for a name and a glory; and (Deut. xxvi. 18, 19) the Lord did avouch them to be His people, to make them high above all people; and therefore the staff of beauty mentioned in Zech. xi. 10 is the covenant between God and His people. 3. That the Lord might bind men unto Him more firmly in a way of obedience, and that the obedience might be made the more sweet. Man was bound unto God by a bond of creation; and from whom he has his being, unto Him did he owe his service; but the Lord will bind him unto Him with a further cord and bond of stipulation; the one was natural and necessary, and the other voluntary. 4. That the people of God might exercise faith in their prayers, putting these bonds in suit that the Lord hath made over unto them, when they look upon themselves as sons of Abraham, heirs of promise, and children of the covenant, &c., and thereby they come with a great deal the more boldness before the throne of grace, as David, "Let the thing Thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and his house be established for ever" (1 Chron. xvii. 23, 24). 2. There is a covenant made with the saints also, that they may see that they are as strictly bound to obedience in their own persons under the second covenant, as they were under the first covenant; and that the doctrine of the gospel though it be a doctrine of liberty, yet is not a doctrine of licentiousness. 3. That the saints also may stand in awe of the threats of God under the second covenant. (*W. Strong, D.D.*) *The covenant renewed:—*I. WHY SHOULD IT BE NEEDFUL FOR MEN TO RENEW THEIR COVENANT SO OFTEN? 1. Because of the unbelief of our spirits, and from the infirmity of our faith: for the confirmation of our faith in the mercy and grace of the covenant. 2. To manifest the sincerity of our hearts, that though we fail in the duty of it, yet our hearts still stand to it, we delight in the Law according to our inward man; though we fall every day, yet says a soul in covenant with God, I love to think of renewing the engagement that is between God and me; as a loving and tender wife loves often to renew her engagement to her husband, and to have it much in her mind. 3. By reason of the falseness of our hearts; there is so much treachery of spirit, that we are not easily kept within bounds, our purposes are easily broken, and men draw back from the Lord by reason of the falseness of their hearts, and the treachery that is in them: "How weak is thy heart" (Ezek. xvi. 30). 4. They renew their covenant, that by often repeating and renewing it, it may be set on upon their

spirits the more, and lay the greater engagement upon them. 5. By reason of the forgetfulness of the heart; there is nothing that the ungodliness of a man's heart is more prone to than to forget his engagement unto God, and therefore was that strict charge laid upon them (Deut. iv. 23). 6. By reason of the ignorance and blindness of the mind of man, we have need to be remembered of our covenant, and to renew it often; we are all narrow-mouthed vessels, and receive all things from God but by drops, and light comes in upon us but by degrees in several beams, and a man looks often upon it before he can understand it; and therefore the Lord gives unto us "line upon line, and precept upon precept" (Isa. xxviii. 10). II. **HOW IS THIS WORK TO BE DONE, AND WHAT IS IT FOR A MAN TO RENEW HIS COVENANT.** 1. He that will renew his covenant with God must be deeply sensible of the breach of covenant, and of the unfaithfulness of his heart therein. 2. It must be with a resolution of heart to break all our covenants; men are said to "make a covenant with death and hell" (Isa. xxviii. 15). 3. A man must know the terms and read over the articles of the covenant anew; for no wise man will set his hand to an obligation, of which he is not well acquainted with the condition. 4. It must be with a free and full consent of heart, for the covenant in the renewing of it must be as voluntary as it was in the making of it; to make fair promises while men are under the rod, as many do in sickness, they promise to lead new lives, but yet return to their old ways. 5. A man must be willing to bind himself in the highest way unto obedience thereunto. When the people did make a covenant, they did stand up to the covenant, and said, Amen, Amen. 6. It must be with an earnest desire to God for grace to keep it, and an acknowledgment of our weakness and inability to perform any one of the duties of the covenant. III. **WHAT ARE THE TIMES AND SEASONS THAT THE PEOPLE OF GOD HAVE SPECIALLY OBSERVED IN RENEWING OF THEIR COVENANT WITH THE LORD?** 1. When a man hath eminently fallen into any great sin, or hath relapsed into former sins that were repented of, and that we have humbled our souls for, and if being washed, we have again defiled ourselves, and turned again to folly, then is a season in which the Lord calls you to renew your covenant. 2. In time of public humiliation, when men would divert and turn away judgment either from a nation or a person, then is the time for them to renew their covenant, and this was the ground of the covenant that Hezekiah made (2 Chron. xxix. 8). 3. In a time of public reformation, when the foundations have been destroyed, and all things out of course, and a great deal of difficulty appears, and even impossibility in carrying on the work; yet the people of God, looking upon it as a duty, have set upon it with full resolution and purpose of heart, and have covenanted to go through with the work, notwithstanding all opposition. 4. As a testimony of a man's thankfulness for any great mercy or special deliverance, or as an argument of faith that a man is to use unto God, when he doth pray for and expect from God any special mercy. 5. When a man finds his heart bent to backsliding, and he is unsteady and unstable in any good way. 6. When a man doth receive the sacraments, any of the seals of the covenant, it is his duty to renew the covenant, as often as we set to the seal anew, we shall read over the obligation anew. IV. **NOW THE FRUIT AND BENEFITS THAT THE PEOPLE OF GOD HAVE FOUND BY THE RENEWING OF THEIR COVENANT ARE MANY.** 1. It hath been a testimony to them of the truth of their repentance (Matt. iii. 8). 2. It is the foundation of consolation (2 Chron. xv. 14, 15); in the time of Asa the king of Judah they swore with a loud voice, with trumpets and cornets, and all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their hearts. 3. It is a means to establish and stay the heart, which is in itself exceeding fickle and uncertain. 4. It is a special means joined with fasting and prayer to prevail with God for mercy, when a man is willing as well to engage himself to duty, as he is to expect mercy from the Lord, "They sought the Lord with their whole desire, and He was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about" (2 Chron. xv.). 5. It doth not only establish the heart, but make it better; as the will becomes good at first by willing what is good, so it is then best when it most strongly wills what is best. Now when doth the will more strongly will what is best, than when it doth most firmly renew its covenant with God, its best good? So many grains as there are of a determined will in adhering to God, according to the terms of the covenant, so many grains there are of saving grace. 6. The frequent renewing of our covenant with God is that which fortifies the heart against temptations. 7. Such as oft renew their covenant with God have a great advantage for the strengthening their union with Christ. 8. The principal part of the soul's communion and walking with God as a friend consists in this renewing its covenant with God. 9. The frequent renewing of our covenant

with God is the most sovereign means to prevent or recover the soul out of any course of backsliding. (*Ibid.*) **To thy seed after thee.**—*Why the Lord will take children into their parents' covenant, and not take in the parents alone, and leave their children in the condition in which they were by nature:*—The grounds of it are these: To show the extent of the grace of the second covenant; the Lord hath not dealt with men as He did with the angels, He did make a particular covenant with every particular angel, but He doth not so with men. He has always delighted to take in man into a covenant made with parents for them, that men might see that grace prevented them, and that they were engaged unto God, and His promise was out of grace entailed unto them as a birthright; and, therefore, as in the first covenant, God takes in Adam and all his posterity, and the second covenant is made with the second Adam and all His posterity; so, that there may be a resemblance hereof kept in the world, He hath taken in the children into their parents' covenant, that they may see grace extend beyond their persons, even to their posterity. I. THAT IT IS A SPECIAL PRIVILEGE FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN, THAT THEY ARE TAKEN INTO THEIR PARENTS' COVENANT, will appear by these arguments and demonstrations. 1. It will aggravate their sin if they abuse it; therefore it is a mercy and a privilege in itself: for what is not a mercy and a privilege in itself, that cannot add to a man's sin and judgment. Now, as it is in riches and honours, and all the blessings in this life, they will be unto a man judgments if they are abused; therefore, they are blessings in themselves, blessings in the thing, though a snare to the man; so this very argument that is brought to prove that they are no blessings, and give no benefit, doth clearly prove that the thing itself is a privilege and a blessing. 2. For a child to be disinherited and cast out his father's covenant is a very great judgment, and the sorest of all outward afflictions that can befall a man; as we see it in Cain, "Thou hast cast me out from the face of the earth, and from Thy face I shall be hid." 3. It is promised as a special blessing for the visible Church of God to continue in any man's posterity; and therefore we are to look upon it so (Gen. iv. 25); it was so in Seth, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew"; and so it was promised to Shem, "that the church of God should be in his posterity continued," and that in due time "the Lord should enlarge Japhet to dwell also in the tents of Shem." 4. It is the greatest wrath that God doth pour out upon men in this life, to cast them out of external church privileges. II. BUT WHAT ARE THOSE PRIVILEGES AND THOSE PARTICULAR BENEFITS THAT COME UPON A PERSON AND HIS POSTERITY THEREBY? 1. Many of them shall be saved, elected, and converted to God; for the Lord doth take the number of His elect out of the loins of His own, the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven is hid in the visible Church here as wheat in a heap of chaff. 2. It is the only ground of hope that parents have for the salvation of their children dying in their infancy. 3. There is no ordinary way of salvation, but it is amongst them that are taken into covenant, salvation is of the Jews: there was in an ordinary way salvation to be had nowhere else, and therefore, by being taken into the outward privileges of the Church, a man is brought into the ordinary way of salvation. 4. It is a special honour to be the vineyard of the Lord, the garden of the Lord hedged in from the rest of the world. 5. By this you have special privileges: Jerusalem is the valley of Vision, and Jeshurun the seeing people; it is Ariel, the altar of the Lord, chiefly to them are committed the oracles of God, which they are to keep and to transmit unto posterity; it is a depositum laid up and concredited to them: "In Judah is God known, His name is great in Israel; He hath not dealt so with other nations"; they are a people near unto Him, and the Lord hath promised that He will give them His special presence: "I will dwell in the midst of them"; Christ walks in the middle of the golden candlesticks, though He be in glory. 6. By coming under the outward privileges of this covenant, they have very glorious operations, mighty works upon them that other men have never experience of; and all this, even in them that perish; and they have this as a fruit of their external interest; for (Hos. vi. 5) there is hewing and slaying, there is sowing and planting, when the rest of the common fields lie untilld, and there are great gifts bestowed, such as the Lord doth not bestow on any other sort of people in the world; for the great gifts that come from Christ as ascended are upon the visible Church of God; yea the thorns and briars in the Church have the rain and influences, great and many common works of the Spirit raising and elevating and improving nature, the least of which works and motions is more worth than the world, it is so in the things, though it prove at last a curse to the man. 7. They by this means come under the care of the

Church. 8. They attain many temporal blessings, and are delivered from many temporal afflictions thereby; Ishmael had many outward blessings by Abraham's covenant; the external blessings of the covenant are made good to them; God will not destroy Jerusalem, and the judgment came not upon King Hezekiah, "for David My servant's sake," and, "I will not rend it from Rehoboam, because I will not put out the light of Israel." III. WHY WILL THE LORD HAVE THE COVENANT RUN BY WAY OF ENTAIL, IN REFERENCE TO THE OUTWARD PRIVILEGES OF IT, AND NOT IN REFERENCE TO THE INWARD GRACES OF IT? The covenant that was made with Adam was to convey the one as well as the other, and the image that he had received he was to convey to his posterity, and the promise of life spiritual, and life eternal, was made unto his posterity in case of his obedience, as well as unto himself; and therefore, as all died in him, so all should have lived in him. So that by the first covenant Adam might have conveyed not only outward privileges, but inward graces also; and whereas now by reason of the fall, all mankind do convey death to their children, but not life. 1. The Lord will not have the graces of the covenant entailed from parents unto posterity. (1) Because the curse of the first covenant is now become *ex traduce*, by propagation, and all the posterity of Adam do now as naturally convey the curse, by reason of the broken covenant, as Adam should have conveyed life and blessing, if he had stood in his integrity; and therefore whatever the immediate parents be, Adam's sin comes alike unto all whether they be godly or wicked; and the child of a godly parent is as truly and as deeply guilty of the sin of Adam in his birth, as the child of the most wicked man that is, that is an entail left upon all mankind that can never be cut off, while there is a man born upon earth. 2. Because under the second covenant it is the election of God that takes place, and puts all the difference between men and men, between whom in themselves there is no difference. 3. Because since the fall the Lord has appointed another way to convey life unto His people, and that is not by generation from the first Adam, but by regeneration from a second Adam; and therefore, the Lord will surely honour His own way, and He will not convey the grace of the covenant from parents unto their posterity, but from Him only who is the second Adam. (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 9-14. Every man child among you shall be circumcised.—*The covenant seal*.—I. ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE. 1. It taught the natural depravity of man. 2. It taught the necessity of purification. 3. It taught regeneration. 4. It taught that God's people are to be distinguished from the children of this world. 5. It taught dedication to God. 6. It pointed to Christ, who does not come by natural generation. He was the promised seed. His human nature was pure from its source. Thus circumcision preaches the whole doctrine of salvation, its necessity, and the means by which it is brought about. It proclaims the soul's need—of the mortification of the flesh, of repentance, of a Saviour from sin. II. ITS SUBJECTS. The rite of circumcision was enjoined not only upon Abraham and his seed, but also upon all his servants or slaves, and upon all born of them in his house. Every one connected with him by social or domestic ties must submit to this outward sign of the covenant. In his capacity as a father and as a master he had to see that this rite was administered. 1. The principle of human responsibility. 2. That a man is accountable for the souls of those who are connected with him by social or domestic ties. 3. That the covenants of God are not narrow in their range. 4. That in our duty to others there is an element of hope and encouragement. III. ITS OBLIGATION. 1. Because God commanded it. 2. Because God's commands were hedged about by sanctions. (*T. H. Leale.*) *The sign of the covenant*.—It is only in proportion as we know the spiritual meaning of circumcision that we can enter into the joyous appropriation of the friendship of God. But if we are willing, our Lord and Saviour is both able and willing to effect in us this blessed spiritual result. I. SEPARATION. Abraham and his seed were marked out by this rite as a separated people. And it is only as such that any of us can be admitted into the friendship of God. Blood-shedding and death—the cross and the grave—must lie between us and our own past life; yea, between us and all complicity with evil. II. PURITY (Col. ii. 11). There is hardly a single grace dearer to God than this: to keep lily-white amid the defiling atmosphere. Purity can only be attained by the special grace of the Holy Spirit, and by doing two things: first, by our turning instantly from paragraphs in papers, or pictures on the walls, and all things else, which excite impure imaginations; secondly, by our seeking immediate forgiveness, when we are conscious of having yielded, even for a

moment, to the deadly and insidious fascinations of the flesh. III. OBEEDIENCE. "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." We do not obey in order to become friends; but having become friends, we hasten to obey. Love is more inexorable than law. And for the love of Him who calls us by so dear a title we are glad to undertake and accomplish what Sinai with all its thunders would fail to nerve us to attempt. (*F. B. Meyer, B.A.*) *The seal of the covenant*:—I. THE PROMISE OF THE COVENANT. 1. The renewal of the promise. 2. The fullness of the promise. 3. The wide range of the promise. II. THE OBLIGATION OF THE COVENANT. Divine promise is connected with human duty. III. THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT. Circumcision reminded those who used it as a religious rite, ordained of God, of three things—1. Separation from the world. So baptism is the token of a new life given by God. 2. Consecration to God. 3. Family religion. (1) Children, servants, all the household, were to come under the covenant. (2) It was to be handed down from one generation to another. Conclusion: See, then, in this narrative not merely a history of what took place so long ago, but lessons for us now: lessons as to Divine grace; as to human responsibility; and as to appointed outward ordinances which serve to join together the thought of what God gives, and of the service we ought to render. Such ordinances, used in a faithful, humble, earnest spirit, are seals and channels of covenanted blessing. (*W. S. Smith, B.D.*) *Circumcision instituted*:—All benefited, whether slave or master. I. A PAINFUL CEREMONY. Full of meaning, and suggesting then what the New Testament teaches now, "Your bodies are the temple," &c. II. ADMINISTERED TO CHILD WHO COULD KNOW NOTHING EXCEPT PAIN. "What good?" "Unreasonable?" "Cruel?" "Following our own reason," no child would have been circumcised. But God's command far outstrips man's reason (ver. 14). And Col. ii. 11, 12, shows that baptism now answers thereto. And is equally for babes. A week old. Parents ought to do as this tells them. Do you so. And then look for a blessing, if only you will teach and train them as Christians—day by day—every day. (*G. Venables.*) *Circumcision—the seal of the covenant*:—I. AS TO THE TIME OF THE APPOINTMENT of this ordinance, it is important to observe, that Abraham is now about to become a father, not according to his own will merely, but according to the will of God; he is to be, in a remarkable manner, the founder of a family or house. II. THE RITE ITSELF now instituted, the sacramental act, is not an unmeaning form or ceremony. It is significant of the great leading fact in the covenant of which it is the seal—the extraordinary and miraculous birth of Him who is pre-eminently and emphatically the seed of Abraham, the holy child Jesus. III. Hence it appears that it is strictly and properly to THE COVENANT OF GRACE THAT CIRCUMCISION, AS INSTITUTED ON THIS OCCASION, HAS RESPECT. It is true that under the Mosaic economy it served a farther purpose. It became a national badge or mark of distinction—the pledge of the national covenant in terms of which God governed the nation of Israel. Even then, however, it did not lose its primary and original significance. To a spiritually-minded Jew—to one who was an Israelite indeed—it was still the token of the better covenant, and the seal of the righteousness that is by faith. And as at first ordained for Abraham, it had absolutely no other meaning at all. It could have no other. For, in the first place, there is no limitation or restriction of it to the Jewish nation in particular. It is enjoined on Abraham, as the father of many nations; and on all, generally, who are of his house, or may be embraced, by whatever right, even the right of purchase, within it (vers. 9–13). And, secondly, the covenant with which it stands associated is not temporal and national, but spiritual and universal. It is the everlasting covenant, in the one seed of Abraham, which is Christ. IV. THE CHILD, EIGHT DAYS OLD, WAS TO BE CIRCUMCISED. And are the children of God's people now to be placed on a worse footing than in the days of old? Is there any evidence of a change in this respect? On the contrary, did not the Lord specially distinguish little children as the objects of His love, taking them into His arms, and affectionately blessing them? And do not the apostles proceed all along on the principle that the visible Church is to embrace not only all the faithful, but their children also? Thus Peter (Acts iii. 39) speaks of the promise being to believers and to their children. Paul also (1 Cor. vii. 14) founds an argument on the assumption that the children of a believing parent are, not unclean or common, but holy. And, accordingly, we read in the Book of Acts (chap. xvi. 33, &c.) of entire households being baptized; the expressions used being such as to render it very unlikely that the little children were excluded. V. On very much the same principle on which this initiatory rite is administered to the children of God's people, IT IS DECLARED TO BE OF INDISPENSABLE OBLIGATION, and

the neglect of it is made a ground of exclusion from the visible Church (ver. 14). So is it also with the sacraments, the signs and seals of grace. No liberty of discretionary choice is left in regard to their observance; it is not merely my precious privilege, but my bounden duty, to receive them. (*R. S. Candlish, D.D.*) *Circumcision*:—It is impossible to arrive at a clear idea of this remarkable rite, and of its true meaning in the Mosaic system, without pursuing its origin and history more clearly than is generally done. We distinguish four chief periods. 1. Circumcision seems to have been first practised by the Ethiopians and other nations of Southern Africa. The question arises, What was the origin of this singular custom? It must evidently have a general cause, inherent either in the human mind or in the human frame, since it was in use among so different nations, possessing no mutual intercourse. Now, a religious motive seems to be out of the question; for some of the nations alluded to are not only strangers to all religious ceremonies, but are destitute of all moral feelings. Philo distinctly observes, that it prevents the painful and often incurable disease of carbuncle; it, further, obviates some fearful disorders; modern travellers testify that it precludes great physical inconvenience among the Bushmen; and the Christian missionaries who exerted themselves for its abolition in Abyssinia were, by the dangerous physical consequences, compelled to desist from their plans. If we hereto add, that among nearly all those tribes the operation is performed not in infancy, but at the approach of puberty, it becomes evident that the burning temperature of their southern climes, in many cases combined with a peculiar bodily structure of those races, gave rise to the custom of circumcision. 2. From the south, it spread northward into Egypt. Many parts of this country were colonized by emigrants from Ethiopia; and thus many primitive customs of the south were transplanted into the land of the Pharaohs. The intercourse with Ethiopia was both constant and animated. Now, the same complaints to which we have referred as frequent in Ethiopia may, in many instances, have appeared in Egypt also; and circumcision may, therefore, as a matter of precaution, have been gradually adopted by all Egyptians. But it recommended itself to this people from another consideration also, in their views of the highest importance: that of cleanliness. The examination of the mummies; the fact that the Colchians, who were Egyptian settlers belonging to the army of Sesostrius, performed the ceremony; and the accounts of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, Philo and Strabo, concur to prove that circumcision was a general and national institution among the Egyptians. Now, the great authority and exceeding reputation for superior wisdom which they possessed in the ancient world induced many nations to adopt from them, among other institutions, the practice of circumcision also. Thus, it was performed by the Arabians and Edomites, by the Ammonites and Moabites, by the Phœnicians and Syrians about Thermodon and the river Parthenius; and in this instance, not merely blind veneration, but a regard for health and cleanliness, assisted in spreading the custom. 3. It was natural that the wise men of Egypt should connect some higher religious or philosophical notions with the rite of circumcision, especially since it had become entirely their own. Now, it is well known that a great part of the Egyptian religion consisted in the deification of the powers of nature, and especially of generation; this idea is chiefly represented by their two principal deities, Osiris and Isis, who presided both over fertility and fruitfulness. In Egypt a chief part of the festival of Bacchus was the public procession of the phallus, performed in an obscene manner amidst the wild songs of women; and the same rites in honour of Bacchus were from Egypt introduced into Greece. It was, further, generally believed that circumcision enhances prolificness; and the Egyptians ascribed their increasing population, in a great measure, to the same custom, although it was, besides, considered to be attributable to the purity of the air and the quality of the water of the Nile. It seems evident, therefore, that the Egyptian priests connected circumcision with the very centre of their religion; that they regarded it as a part of the system by which they endeavoured to penetrate into the secret working of nature; and that, by dedicating the prepuce to their gods, they ascribed to them the wonderful powers of generation. 4. Among the nations which derived the custom of circumcision from the Egyptians were undoubtedly the Hebrews. But did Mosaism blindly adopt a heathen ceremony? And here we have arrived at the culminating point of this deduction. In no other institution, perhaps, do we see with greater force and distinctness that fundamental principle which pervades the whole legislative part of the Old Testament, and without regard to which it will ever be impossible to comprehend its full spiritual meaning, and to balance its exact

historical value. . . . By connecting the rite of circumcision with the purest ideas of resignation and piety, Mosaism laid a sure foundation for moral conduct; licentiousness, stimulated by the fiery temperament of the Oriental, was checked; the passions were restrained; and if sinful ideas or vicious imaginations arose within him, he was reminded by the covenant sealed on his flesh that he had promised holiness of life and innocence of the heart. Hence the word "uncircumcised" was in the Hebrew language generally used in a purely figurative sense; and phrases like "uncircumcised of heart" or "of ear" prove that the rite here discussed was indeed conceived as a type of some of those inward virtues which constitute the chief end of religion. The blood of circumcision confirmed the personal covenant; hence the boy was, on the day when that rite was performed, called "a bridegroom of blood" (Exod. iv. 25); and the resected foreskin, which was considered unclean, typified both the abnegation of lasciviousness, and, like the offering of the firstlings, the acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. Thus a custom of the basest sensuality was converted into a rite of morality; worship of nature into reverence of God; and hierarchically into theocracy. Therefore, to sum up our opinion on circumcision, Mosaism was compelled to retain it on account of the ignominy with which its neglect was regarded by neighbouring nations, and, in consequence, by the Hebrews themselves; but it reformed it from a physical expedient or superstitious rite into a symbol of holiness and of alliance between God and man. (*M. M. Kalisch, Ph.D.*)

Notes on circumcision:—Originally circumcision was performed with a stone-knife, to prevent inflammation (see note on Exod. iv. 25), but at present it is safely done with a steel knife, except on boys who die before the eighth day from their birth, when the ancient custom is followed, as is the case in all instances among the Abyssinian Christians. Sons of Hebrew mothers and heathen fathers were admitted, but not compelled, to circumcision. The operation was generally performed by the father himself, but any Israelite was allowed to act in his stead; heathens alone were excluded. In cases of emergency women even were admitted. But as practice is required to prevent danger, pious persons devoted themselves to that office, which they exercised gratuitously, finding their reward in the consciousness of having introduced the children into the holy covenant. The boy generally received his name on the day of circumcision. And hence we may derive another collateral reason why Abraham's name was changed when that ceremony was commanded to him. There is no historical difficulty in the supposition that circumcision was already introduced in Abraham's time, though it can scarcely be doubted that it received its deeper and internal development only since the diffusion of Mosaism; for it was long generally neglected, and Joshua first carried it out in its full extent (Josh. v. 2-9); but from that period it seems, on the whole, to have been faithfully observed; the epithet "uncircumcised" was deemed the greatest insult and ignominy; and the strictures of the prophets are not directed against its omission, but against "the uncircumcised circumcised people" who observe the external ritual, but are nevertheless "uncircumcised in heart"; and in this sense even circumcised nations seem sometimes to have been simply called "uncircumcised ones," a proof how clearly the internal purity was regarded as the only aim of this rite. Among the Israelites, therefore, circumcision took, in the course of time, deeper root, while it gradually fell into disuse among the Egyptian people—a natural consequence of the fact proved above, that the one regarded it as a matter of religion, the others of expediency. Although it was by no means an exclusive characteristic of the Israelites, since they shared it with many other nations, and though it was not even original among them, its sacredness was, indeed, peculiar almost to them alone; and hence heathen conquerors, as Antiochus Epiphanes and other enemies, often rigorously interdicted it as one of the surest means of weakening among them the faith of their ancestors; but they never succeeded; it was practised in secret till they were again permitted to perform it without restriction. (*Ibid.*)

Significance of circumcision:—In its heathen significance it was certainly saturated with that worship of the forces of the physical world in which probably polytheism took its rise, and with polytheism nearly all the religions and mythologies of antiquity. It bore very directly on the deification of the generative or reproductive virtue in nature—the foul source of much that was cruel and nearly all that was obscene in the mysteries of paganism. Transferred to holy soil, and attached to a covenant of grace, it implied an acknowledgment that God, who is above nature, and not any natural force whatever, is the true Author of physical life and its increase; the sovereign Giver of fertility; above all, the only Quickener of a holy or consecrated life. It taught that what is born of the flesh can only be flesh. It suggested that

it is by the painful renunciation of fleshly desire and natural self-confidence man must be surrendered to God's service as His fit instrument for gracious ends. Finally, it served to point forward to one pure and superhuman birth, through which alone the fatal chain that links in one the sinful generations of mankind could be severed, and a new fountain of salvation and blessing opened for the fallen race. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*) *Circumcision*.—The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher says: "If there was one thing which the Jews set above another, as they do still, it was circumcision. It not only was a patriotic ordinance, but it had come down to them as a race peculiarity, a symbol of which they were proud, and they ran along the line of that observance clear back to Abraham himself. While I was in the West, I came across a Rabbi who told me that a man had travelled over six hundred miles with a child in order to have him circumcised. 'I admit,' he said, 'that the people may not have been moral, and may not have been religious, but they wanted the child circumcised anyhow.' That feeling existed in the time of the Apostle Paul to the last degree. The Jews felt about that as you feel about baptism and the Lord's Supper. Paul says: 'Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.'" *The baptism of infants founded on this covenant*.—Mark how this renewal of the covenant turns upon the consecration of children. Hitherto we have to do with grown-up people, but now we are brought face to face with little ones. We have hardly had a child at all as yet in this long history. One wonders what notice God will take of young life; will He say, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," or will He shut them out of His view until they become great men? Is a child beneath God's notice? Listen to the covenant: "He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you." What an oversight on the part of the Lord not to observe that a child eight days old could not understand what it was about! What a waste of piety to baptize an infant of days when it cannot understand what you are doing to it! It cries, poor thing; therefore, how ridiculous to baptize it! It plucks the preacher's gown, or chuckles and coos in the preacher's arms; therefore, how absurd to admit it into the covenant! For myself, let me say that when I baptize a child I baptize life—human life—life redeemed by the Son of God. The infant is something more than an infant, it is humanity; it is an heir of Christ's immortality. If there be any one who can laugh at an infant and mock its weakness, they have no right to baptize and consecrate it, and give so mean a thing to God. God Himself baptizes only the great trees; does He ever baptize a daisy? He enriches Lebanon and Bashan with rain, but did He ever hang the dew of the morning upon the shrinking rose? Account for it as you please, God did appoint circumcision for the child eight days old! Christian baptism is founded upon this very covenant. Abraham was ninety-and-nine years old when he was circumcised; Ishmael, his son, was thirteen years old; and then came the infant men-children. So in heathen countries the man is baptized, and the woman, and the child of days. We plead Divine precedent. Whatever objections stand against baptism stand against circumcision, and, therefore, stand against God. The child does not understand the alphabet, do not teach it; the child does not understand language, do not teach it; the child does not understand the Lord's Prayer, do not teach it. You say the child will understand by and by; exactly so; that answer is good; and by and by the child will understand that it was baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, three persons in one God. Beautiful, too, is Christian baptism when regarded as the expansion of the idea of circumcision. It well befits a tenderer law; circumcision is severe; baptism is gentle: circumcision was limited to men-children; baptism is administered to all: circumcision was established in one tribe, or family, or line of descent; baptism is the universal rite—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." So we go from law to grace; from Moses to the Lamb; from the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, to the quiet and holy Zion. (*J. Parker, D.D.*)

Vers. 15-22. As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah.—*The clearer revelation of covenant blessings*.—In God's spiritual dealings with mankind the patience of faith is rewarded by a clearer discovery of His will. Obedience is the way to knowledge. The darkness in which faith commences turns to light in the end. The lines along which God's gracious dealings are to proceed are now distinctly laid down before Abraham. The clearer revelation, in this instance, is marked by the same general characteristics as belong to the advance of Scripture. I. THERE IS THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THINGS CONTRARY TO HUMAN EX-

PECTATION. 1. Thus God preserves His own glory (Prov. xxv. 2). God hides His purpose from man until the time comes for Him to reveal it more clearly. This concealment must tend to His glory, for it is rendered necessary by His infinite superiority to us. We who are but of yesterday cannot scan the designs of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting. The great deep of God's judgments is to us unfathomable. 2. Thus God preserves His independence of man. He has no need of our suggestions or advice. How can we contribute any light to Him who is the Fountain of Light? 3. Thus God humbles the pride of man. If we could calculate beforehand what God shall reveal, or what blessings He shall bestow, we might be tempted to pride ourselves upon our clear and sure reason. Our humility is promoted by that arrangement which renders it impossible for us to discover what God is pleased to conceal. 4. Thus piety is of necessity a life of faith. God so deals with mankind that if they are to serve and please Him at all they must trust Him. We are made to know enough of His goodness to commence trusting Him; and He still keeps much hid from us so that we may continue to trust Him.

II. THERE IS AN INCREASED STRAIN PUT UPON THE STRENGTH OF OUR FAITH. 1. God's gracious purpose is to throw our faith completely upon its own inherent power. It must not be hampered by the operations of the intellect, or by the feelings of the heart. 2. Faith must look to God alone. III. THERE IS A REVELATION OF HUMAN WEAKNESS IN US. The faith of Abram, though it rose superior to trials, was yet mixed with some human weakness. 1. The weakness of a thoughtless amazement. The laugh of Abraham, when he heard the real direction of the promise, unquestionably had in it the elements of adoration and joy. But there was also in it a kind of unreflecting amazement—that unhealthy astonishment which paralyses. It was a joy which was yet half afraid. 2. The weakness of doubt. In verse 17, Abraham expresses a doubt. It was a momentary feeling, but at that time it rose irresistibly to the surface. 3. The weakness of attempting to thrust our own way upon God. IV. THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY GIVEN FOR THE GLORY OF GOD'S GOODNESS TO SHINE FORTH. In every fresh revelation God is but showing Himself to His servants. He is showing His goodness more and more, and that is His glory. The qualities of the Divine goodness would now be manifested more clearly to the soul of Abraham. 1. This is seen by the supernatural character of the blessings promised (vers. 15, 16, 19). 2. This is seen by the intrinsic excellence of the blessings promised. 3. This is seen by God's gracious provision even for those human desires which betray imperfection. God would remember Ishmael, after all, and in some way satisfy the yearnings of Abraham's heart (ver. 20). God does not chide His servant for those humanly natural longings. With all his imperfections, the heart of the patriarch was right at bottom, and his purpose to please God steady and sincere. If we have true faith, whatever desires there are in us which still betray some human imperfections, God will turn them into better courses, and show us His way. (*T. H. Leale.*) *Sarah : Abraham's wife and Isaac's mother :—*

I. SARAH'S HISTORY. II. SARAH'S CHARACTER. 1. There was in her a clear and decided spiritual faith. 2. She had a strong, loving, and imperious affection. 3. There were defects in her faith, and may have been defects in her character. III. THE TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SARAH'S LIFE AND HER PLACE IN THE UNFOLDING OF THE REDEMPTION OF HUMANITY. The story is written in the Book of Genesis mainly in the masculine gender and in relation to Abraham. But, in reference to the covenanted mercy, there are two great blessings to which special significance is attached, and concerning both Sarah's was a prominent position. The one was the seed, the other the land. (*W. H. Davison.*) *Sarah :—*

I. THE MEANING OF HER NAME, AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THE COVENANT. II. DEFECTS IN HER CHARACTER. 1. She did not, as the Scriptures teach, avoid all appearance of evil. (1) At the palace of Pharaoh. (2) At the court of Abimelech. 2. She did wrong in giving Hagar to be Abraham's concubine. 3. She showed a weakness of faith in laughing at the promises of God. 4. She was cruel in sending Hagar and Ishmael away from her home. III. THE STRENGTH OF HER CHARACTER. 1. She was truly devoted to her husband, and preferred him to all others, even though kings sought to gain her. 2. She is commended for her holy life and fidelity to Abraham, and as such is an example for wifely imitation (1 Pet. iii. 6). 3. After all, faith was the ruling principle of her life. Doubt was only a momentary exception. (*The Homiletic Review.*) *O that Ishmael might live before Thee.—Abraham's prayer for Ishmael :—* I. ABRAHAM'S UNBELIEF. Not that his prayer was altogether destitute of faith. He believed in the reality of the personal God, and in His power and willingness to bless; but unbelief as to the methods was

struggling with his faith. 1. It is the thought of the heart that is here recorded. 2. The natural obstacle to the fulfilment of the promise was greater now than on the previous occasion. 3. He had to discharge from his mind a belief which he had long nourished and cherished. II. ABRAHAM'S IMPATIENCE. III. ABRAHAM'S NATURAL AFFECTION. (*J. W. Lance.*) *The prayer for Ishmael:*—I. A SPIRIT NATURAL TO A TRUE PARENT. Abraham desired the prosperity of Ishmael. II. A SPIRIT ESSENTIAL TO THE TRUE SAINT. Dependence on God. III. A SPIRIT HONoured BY HEAVEN (ver. 20; see ch. xxv. 10–15). (*Homilist.*) *Abraham's prayer for Ishmael:*—I. WHAT THE CHRISTIAN PARENT SEEKS FOR HIS OFFSPRING. What is meant by living before God? It means to enjoy His forgiving grace, that we be not consumed by His wrath; and to receive His fostering protection and blessing, without which life would be a calamity, and existence a burden. We would not have our children go forth through life neglected of God; still less, contending against Him as an enemy. Many blessings may be included in this general one. 1. There are spiritual blessings; life in and through Jesus Christ. Forgiveness. Regeneration. Eternal life. 2. Temporal good is sought; not without, but in addition to, spiritual blessings; and not absolutely, but in entire submission to the will of God. II. HOW THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD ACT TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THESE DESIRES ON BEHALF OF HIS OFFSPRING. 1. Prayer. 2. Instruction. 3. Example. 4. Discipline. Conclusion: (1) To parents who neglect their duty altogether. Ye are cruel fowlers, and dreadful for you will it be to meet your spoiled and ruined offspring in hell. (2) To those who labour in this way. Be encouraged and incited to persevere. Your work will not be in vain. (3) To all who bring their children for baptism. You do take these vows upon you. Be faithful. This you cannot be, unless fully bent upon your own salvation. (4) To young people. See your parents' anxiety for you. Be awakened to a sense of your sin and danger. (*The Congregational Pulpit.*) *Abraham's prayer for Ishmael:*—I. IT MUST STRIKE THE MOST CASUAL OBSERVER, THAT THERE IS A SPECIALITY IN THE PRAYER which makes it necessary that the import of the prayer should be unfolded. For it appears not but that Ishmael was in all the glow and vigour of his youthful health; there was no symptom of physical decay, there was no indication of approaching death. Whence, therefore, and why did the patriarch pray, "Oh! that my child might live?" Was it that his days might be lengthened out? Was it that his health might continue unimpaired? was it that he might live to a green and a good old age? No, we find a key to the patriarch's prayer in the one simple expression—"Before Thee." "Oh! that Ishmael might live before Thee." Before his father's eyes, before the eyes of mankind, the child lived; but the father had reference to another and a higher and a different life—a life in the sight of God. It follows, then, that adequately to comprehend the import of the prayer, we must illustrate the death, from which the patriarch desired his child to be set free. And we are led to remark, that every child of man, as he comes into the world, is dead in the sight of God, in a twofold sense; he is legally dead, he is spiritually dead. He is dead in the sight of God in law, and he is dead in the sight of God in his moral nature. He is "dead in trespasses and sins." But how, then, is life given to man? and what was the life, for which the patriarch prayed on behalf of his child? In order to remove the eternal death under which we lie, the Son of God took our nature upon Himself, stood as our substitute; so that God might be just in justifying every penitent, that lays hold on the righteousness of the Redeemer and comes to God in faith. Every one, then, that by faith is brought into a participation of the righteousness and redemption that is in Christ, is, in virtue of that righteousness and that redemption, passed from death to life. II. I pass simply and briefly to press upon you THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT PRAYER. 1. The importance of the patriarch's prayer appears, in that till that prayer is accomplished in a child or in a man, that child or that man is a poor, maimed, imperfect being. What a wretched life is the mere vegetable life for a man to live! 2. But the importance of the patriarch's prayer is still more emphatically and touchingly impressed on our minds, if we remember the fearful peril in which every man stands, that is not "living before God." (*H. Stowell, M.A.*) *Parental duties and encouragements:*—I. I shall inquire WHAT BLESSINGS SHOULD A CHRISTIAN PARENT SEEK FROM GOD ON BEHALF OF HIS CHILDREN? 1. Is it forbidden to desire the continuance of their natural life? Certainly not; provided that desire be entirely under the control of submission to the will of God. 2. Nor is it forbidden to ask those things for our children which would contribute so much to their temporal comfort; provided, that desire be also in entire submission to the will of Jehovah. 3. Still, however,

these things are but secondary objects of desire with him who contemplates, in its true light, the character and destiny of that being which with rapture he calls his child. What can or what ought a Christian parent to desire for his child, as the grand ultimatum of all his anxiety and solicitude, short of everlasting bliss? It is in this sense that he uses the prayer of Abraham, "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee." II. I shall now mention THOSE MEANS WHICH MUST BE USED BY HIM IN ORDER TO OBTAIN IT. In the distribution of His favours to the human race, God generally connects His bounty with our exertions. This remark applies both to temporal and spiritual benefits. 1. If we would have our children grow up as we desire, we must maintain discipline in our families. By discipline, I mean the exercise of parental authority in enforcing obedience to all suitable commands and prohibitions. This part of religious education should begin early. The supple twig bends to your will, while the sturdy oak laughs at your authority. 2. Instruction is the next branch of religious education. I shall consider: (1) The matter of instruction. And this must be the doctrines and the duties of revelation. Assiduously inculcate upon your offspring every relative and every social duty. Teach them that holiness is necessary both to our felicity on earth and in heaven. (2) The manner of religious instruction should also be regarded with attention. This, of course, should be as much adapted to the capacity of the child as is possible. Instruction should not be confined merely to stated seasons, as in other branches of education; but it ought to occupy a considerable share of the common conversation of the parent. 3. If you would give either meaning or force to anything you say, add to instruction a holy and suitable example. I would also insist upon the necessity of not only setting them good examples at home, but of using the utmost caution that they be not exposed to the contagion of bad example abroad. It should therefore be your business to select for them suitable companions. Of course, this establishes also the importance of choosing a proper person to superintend the general education of your children. 4. Let it not be supposed that any system of education can be complete without prayer. III. EXHIBIT THE ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH THE SCRIPTURES AFFORD, THAT SUCH EXECUTION WILL BE BLESSED TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THEIR DESIRED END. (*J. A. James.*) *Passion, impatience, and expediency*:—I. THE DARLING WISHES OF MEN ARE NOT ALWAYS GRATIFIED BY GOD. II. A REASONABLE EXPLANATION OF THIS REJECTION OF ISHMAEL CAN BE SUGGESTED. 1. God had other purposes in view, from which He would not depart to gratify the wishes of the best man living. 2. The purpose of God was associated with righteousness, whereas Ishmael originated in a pitiful, immoral expedient. Many a failure in the individual life, and church life, and national life, is rooted in the rank, poisonous manure of wrong-doing. 3. The blessing of God was in connection with Isaac, the glad meditative son of peace. It is in vain that we try to force the hand of Providence if our heart is set on Ishmael, the offspring of our human passion and impatience. III. GOD WILL, IN AN UNEXPECTED SENSE, ANSWER OUR PETITIONS. Look at the answer that came to Abraham's prayer. It had already been predicted that he was to be "a wild man, his hand against every man," &c. Now still further comes this guarantee. "... I will make him a great nation." Abraham's gift of intercession was not an unqualified good. If his supplication had not been successful, much misery might have been spared to himself, his family, his nation, and humanity at large. Can any one calculate the mischief that has been created by the existence of Ishmael in the world? (*W. J. Acomb.*) *Abraham's dilemma*:—Abraham believed God, and was overcome with joyful surprise. But a doubt immediately occurs, which strikes a damp upon his pleasure: "The promise of another son destroys all my expectations with respect to him who is already given!" Perhaps he must die, to make room for the other; or if not, he may be another Cain, who went out from the presence of the Lord. To what drawbacks are our best enjoyments subject in this world; and in many cases, owing to our going before the Lord in our hopes and schemes of happiness! When His plan comes to be put in execution, it interferes with ours; and there can be no doubt in such a case which must give place. If Abraham had waited God's time for the fulfilment of the promise, it would not have been accompanied with such an alloy: but having failed in this, after all his longing desires after it, it becomes in a manner unwelcome to him! What can he do or say in so delicate a situation? Grace would say, Accept the Divine promise with thankfulness. But nature struggles; the bowels of the father are troubled for Ishmael. In this state of mind he presumes to offer up a petition to heaven: "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!" Judging of the import of this petition by the answer, it would seem

to mean, either that God would condescend to withdraw His promise of another son, and let Ishmael be the person; or if that cannot be, that his life might be spared, and himself and his posterity be amongst the people of God, sharing the blessing, or being "heir with him" who should be born of Sarah. To live and to live before God, according to the usual acceptation of the phrase, could not, I think, mean less than one or other of these things. It was very lawful for him to desire the temporal and spiritual welfare of his son, and of his posterity after him, in submission to the will of God: but in a case wherein natural affection appeared to clash with God's revealed designs, he must have felt himself in a painful situation: and the recollection that the whole was owing to his own and Sarah's unbelief, would add to his regret. (*A. Fuller.*) *A mother's prayers*:—A young soldier suddenly embraced religion much to the surprise of his comrades. One day, he was asked what had wrought the sudden change. He took his mother's letter from his pocket, in which she enumerated the comforts and luxuries which she had sent him, and, at the close said, "We are all praying for you, Charlie, that you may be a Christian." "That's the sentence," said he. The thought that his mother was praying for him became omnipresent, and led him to pray for himself, which was soon followed by a happy Christian experience. *Prayers of a mother*:—Samuel Budgett was about nine years of age, when, one day passing his mother's door, he heard her engaged in earnest prayer for her family, and for himself by name. He thought, "My mother is more earnest that I should be saved than I am for my own salvation." In that hour, he became decided to serve God; and the impression thus made was never effaced. (*W. Arthur.*) *Why Ishmael could not inherit the covenant blessing*:—Two reasons in particular seem to have made it unsuitable, or even incompatible with the Divine purposes, that Ishmael should be the continuator of the sacred line, and the inheritor of that blessing for mankind which had been secured to Abraham by covenant. I. For one thing, Ishmael was slave-born. The children of a slave mother shared her condition, even when the father was a free man—indeed, though he were the master himself. In the absence of any issue by the free and proper wife, it is true that Ishmael could have inherited his father's wealth, just as, in the absence of any issue, Eliezer of Damascus might have done so. Inherently, however, he possessed no right of inheritance. So soon as a free-born son appeared, Ishmael sank to his mother's level. It is easy to see how unfit such an heir would have been to represent, at the very outset of a family history which was to be saturated throughout with symbolical meaning, the entire body of God's spiritual children, for whom the great blessing was ultimately destined. II. In the second place, God's covenant with Abraham's seed was one of gracious promise. By it, the Eternal and Omnipotent drew near again to sinful men, laden with spontaneous blessings, such as they themselves could neither win by force nor merit by virtue, but must expect to receive through the superhuman operations of God. The Promiser of such blessings must be also their Donor. The fulfilment of a Divine promise, whose characteristic is sovereign grace, could not lie within the sphere of man's natural ability, or what in Bible language is called "flesh." It lay outside that region altogether; in a redemptive, and therefore miraculous, interposition of God. Now it corresponded ill with an alliance like this, that the first to inherit and transmit its benefits or hopes to posterity should be one into whose origin there had entered so little faith, and so much fleshly policy and fleshly desire. (*J. O. Dykes, D.D.*) *The love of the worldly life*:—Ishmael was born after the flesh; and he was first in order, as being "born of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man." He was, nevertheless, a gift of God, and, perhaps, a gift of faith; but he was not the one to whom the promise was made. Ishmael, therefore, stands for the promise of this earth, of the world, and of this present life. I do not mean that he represents our sin, nor those evil passions which haunt and afflict us, nor the low, gross life of carnal men: for Abraham, his father, was a man of faith and a servant of righteousness before Ishmael was born; but he stands for the fair good promise of this earth, before a better thing is born in the soul. While the world lasts, it is the gift of God; for He created it, and "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Our desire for it, our love of it, our pleasure in it, are natural, and would not be subject to reproof, had we never known of another state and a higher life. And there is a time, in the history of God's servants, when they might fairly be likened to Abraham, content in Ishmael, and devoted to that child which Hagar bore to him. What Ishmael was to his father, such was once, to many a man and woman now consciously and resolutely alive in Christ, the first and native wish and

passion of the undisciplined will, the first love of the mere worldly life. The child of the heart was there, beloved, and to all appearance, secure, yea, moreover, sufficient to every desire and wish. The thirteen years had established that dominion; and, in the still possession of that dear object of a natural desire, the conscience had grown torpid, and the earlier hours of life had slipped away. Consider if it be not so. The history of many a life, perhaps the history of every life led apart from God, is this: that some prevailing tendency, some dominant motive, exists there, having the influence and gentle lordship of a child of the heart, the offspring of the desire and will. Of offspring thus engendered, naught can come but anxiety and pain. Ishmael's pedigree was fated and banned from the very first; it is so with everything that springs out of the human heart without the prominent grace of God. Whenever a man permits some one desire to get the better of him, or, at least, to exert a wide and general influence over his actions; and when he finds, as the result, that he is growing nervous and uneasy, that a feverish solicitude pervades his thoughts, that he frets himself continually, that the dignity of a well-balanced character is slipping from him; or else, when it is come to this, that he feels as if with one deep draught of that soul-desire, every day, he could be content to live on here, interminably; or when, for the want of such gratification, the day is tedious, and the hours are long, and hunger and thirst grow and burn within; when signs like these appear, he must be blind indeed who cannot read the story of his life; who knows not that he is fast in the world's net; that another Lord besides his own has dominion over him; that the fierce and untamed Ishmael is in his tent; that his life is bound up in a temporal promise, and that he has ceased to care for the promise of the world to come. So is it with you, who are not consciously and lovingly in Christ: and so was it once with you, who, now changed and altered from the pattern of your former selves, can yet look back upon days when you were wandering, and either thought wrongly, or thought not at all, of God. And here the allegory meets us once again, and shows the marvellous dealings of the Holy Ghost with the souls of those whom He brings forth and fixes in the Lord. As Ishmael represents the promise of the earth, so Isaac stands for the promise of heaven. The new promise comes, not in the natural course of things, not in the common order of this monotonous world, but in another way, known to God. Marked religious changes are sometimes the result of strange and bitter disappointment; but it is not always so. They often come, simply, of some word of the Lord, which carries a promise, and yet breaks in upon a repose in which we would fain have continued without even His most holy intrusion. The object proposed is above this world, and beyond it; faith discerns, resignation accepts, the "old man" dies hard. Slowly and with reluctance hath many an one cast forth the bondwoman and her son, to give place to the intruder who "cometh in the name of the Lord." It should not be thus with reasonable men when they lay hold of the promises of God. Those promises are unearthly, distant, and somewhat shadowy; they are calculated, not to add a piquancy and zest to the banquet which we have already spread for ourselves, but to sweep all from the board and lay the table anew. They demand, on man's part, submission and resignation; they tell him that it is time to leave off playing with petty conceits, and that the hour has come to go to the rigorous school of Christ, where men may not seek their own, nor mind earthly things, but bend themselves bravely to duty, and let pleasure go for a time. Who can hear these things without trembling? Who can rebuke the rising wish that it might be otherwise? Who can wonder that men should try to keep as much of the old life as they can, when they attempt the higher life of grace? Such emotions appertain to that weakness of ours in which God's grace must be made perfect; and the victory is to be sought, by accepting what may look like a dubious favour and setting faith in its rightful lordship over sight. Then, if the trial seem too hard to bear, reflect once more upon the allegory; there is comfort in it, if you read it intelligently. Ishmael lived. The natural gifts and blessings of God are not destroyed by His supernatural graces: they are remanded to their own place, allowed to work out their determined ends, to yield increase after their proper law. Nothing can be lost for ever, which God's grace can hallow; the Son of Man cometh to save, not to destroy; and that, in us, which God saw and pronounced to be good, when He created us, may be refined in fire, purified, and may be a part of our eternal treasure. (*M. Dix, D.D.*)

Ver. 21. My covenant will I establish with Isaac.—*Isaac, a type of Christ:—*
 1. He is born in a miraculous manner. He was the child given by promise, and

came not in the ordinary course of nature. So Christ was long promised and miraculously born. 2. He was the son of the house, while all others were his servants. So the position of Christ in the heavenly household was made by His birth. No circumstances could alter His relationship to that household. He was there by a natural necessity. Others may come and go, but the Son abides. 3. He was the progenitor of a free race. Isaac was the son of the free-woman, and the ancestor of a great and free people. Christ makes men free when they are born into the kingdom of God by His spirit, and thus belong to that holy nation whose children walk in perfect liberty. 4. He was the channel of blessing to all nations. Christ was the life and power which gave effect to that blessing. He was that blessing itself. *Isaac, a type of the regenerate man*:—1. He was born by a distinct act of the will of God. So the regenerate man becomes God's child, not by the course of nature, but by a special grace. He is eminently born of God. 2. He was free born. So each child of God is made free from all bondage. He needs not the commands of law to compel him to obedience, for he obeys from love of his Father. Thus Isaac was the type of the evangelical dispensation, as Ishmael was that of the legal.

Vers. 23-27. *In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.—Obedience to the Divine voice*:—I. PROMPT. 1. To delay is to despise God's authority. 2. It is safest to act upon moral impulses immediately. II. UNQUESTIONING. God's will is both law and reason. III. COMPLETE. A particular and intense regard to God's known will is the essence of piety. (*T. H. Leale*.) *Abraham's obedience to God's command*:—There are three things in particular in the obedience of Abraham worthy of notice. 1. It was prompt. "In the self-same day that God had spoken unto him," the command was put in execution. This was "making haste, and delaying not to keep His commandments." To treat the Divine precept as matters of small importance, or to put off what is manifestly our duty to another time, is to trifle with supreme authority. So did not Abraham. 2. It was punctilious. The correspondence between the command of God and the obedience of His servant is minutely exact. The words of the former are, "Thou shalt keep My covenant and thy seed after thee, . . . and he that is born in thy house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed." With this agrees the account of the latter; "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son; and all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him." A rigid regard to the revealed will of God enters deeply into true religion; that spirit which dispenses with it, though it may pass under the specious name of liberality, is antichristian. 3. Lastly: It was yielded in old age, when many would have pleaded off from engaging in anything new, or different from what they had before received; and when, as some think, it would be a further trial to his faith as to the fulfilment of the promise. "Ninety-and-nine years old was Abraham when he was circumcised." It is one of the temptations of old age to be tenacious of what we have believed and practised from our youth; to shut our eyes and ears against everything that may prove it to have been erroneous or defective, and to find excuses for being exempted from hard and dangerous duties. But Abraham to the last was ready to receive farther instruction, and to do as he was commanded, leaving consequences with God. This shows that the admonition to "walk before Him, and be perfect," had not been given him in vain. (*A. Fuller*.)