



#### PREFACE.

Canon KNOX LITTLE has kindly consented to the publication of this little book; but for the selection and arrangement of its contents the Compiler is solely responsible. It is hoped that these Spiritual Thoughts may be found helpful by many who wish to offer that living Sacrifice to God which is Our Reasonable Service.

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# REASONABLE SERVICE.

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#### -Interior Life.

It is a primary rule of every wise devotional system, that special seasons should be set apart for individual questionings, for solitary intercourse with the unseen world. We have all, I suppose, learned to consider, from our earliest days of childhood, the opening hours of morning and the close of the dying day as times naturally, almost necessarily, appropriate to prayer. Happy are we if, in later life, with a rigorous persistence, we have made this lesson of childhood an abiding, a practical fact.

#### Interior Life.

Now, Advent is such a time, on a larger scale; a time when all exterior subjects of interest or claim ought to be, whatever their dimensions, banished with determination from the inner precincts of our personal being, or at least postponed, as far as may be, in the interest of those more intimate, more awful matters, which affect directly the relation of the soul with God.

To man, so great is his dignity, there are two spheres of action; the one touches all external nature, and the myriad methods and degrees of intercourse between himself and his fellow man; here rise the material fabrics, here are created the complicated systems which manifest his ingenuity and display his genius; but all such energy has its end, as its expression, on this planet (at once his home and his prison-house); and the radius, whose farthest extension fixes the circumference of this arena of activity, finds its ultimate limit There is another sphere, a in the grave. world where mortal presences can scarcely enter, where mortal utterances sink and die; no bustling crowds confuse its stately pageants, no blackening clouds obscure its vivid skies. Voices sound there, but they are clear and

#### Interior Life.

heavenly; faces smile there, but radiant with the light of God. There is an inner life bright, real, tranquil, to the true of heart.

- 1. Pray God to teach us ever to remember the deep solemnity of human life, the value of each single human soul, the value, each of us, of our own as the object of the care, the tenderness, the teaching of God.
- 2. Endeavour to be increasingly faithful to the serious, the blessed duties of the interior life. Depend upon it, it is face to face with God, at regulated times, faithfully adhered to, in prayer, in meditation, in examination of conscience, that we are not only surest of God's existence, but the binding claims of our own duties, and the needed consolation of His loving care. "The secret of the Lord is amongst them that fear Him."
- 3. Try to cultivate the habit of walking before Him; practise the presence of GOD. I remember to have heard from one of England's greatest statesmen, of one who, though not gifted, so he said, with any special powers of reasoning or of oratory, always, when he did speak, commanded the attention of the House. "There was something," he added, in some such words as these, "extraordinary about

#### Interior Life.

him. I think it was that he had 'the wisdom which cometh from above.'"

In the heart of the Christian, a scene, may be, of many ruins, a home, may be, chiefly of memories of a buried past, in silent hours, amidst a heavenly splendour, there comes a voice—clear, beautiful; it wakes up many sorrows, it stirs a pure regret, but it carries messages of hope that cheer the creature's inmost being. It is the voice of God. "Speak, LORD, Thy servant heareth." "Come," it says, "come and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "Give Me thine heart, I alone can "O LORD," let us answer with fill it." Augustine, "take these hearts, for we cannot give them; keep them, for we cannot keep "O LORD, Thou hast made us for them." thyself, and our hearts are hot and restless, till they rest in Thee."

"Oh, rest in the LORD, wait patiently for Him"; "On Thee do I wait all the day long"; I waited for the LORD, He inclined unto me, He heard my complaint"; "Our eyes wait on the LORD"; "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Thee"; "I will wait for the God of my salvation"; "Lo, this is

## The Waiting Church.

our LORD; we have waited for Him, and He will come and save us" — such are the cries alike of Psalmist and Prophet, as their high affections, born of spiritual experience, awaken in them: and such correspond with our Master's teaching, "Be ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their LORD."



## -The Waiting Church.

How best may we wait for the LORD?

- 1. Doubtless by a life of prayer. For, indeed, it is prayer that not only wakens up the noblest faculties of our nature, but wakens them up so that all become powers to quicken the longing and waiting of the soul. It is prayer that keeps alive in us that solemn and blessed view of eternity, which makes it a practical fact with practical consequences.
- 2. Again, the waiting soul surely must enter in some measure into the depth of Eucharistic mystery. "To show the Lord's death till He come," was, we know on Apostolic authority, one reason of the institution of the Sacrament.
  - 3. But chiefly what is to be remembered is

## The Waiting Church.

that waiting is an attitude of the soul. To "wait" is in some measure to realise the relation of the creature to the Creator. Yes, it is to realise the relation and the distance. Catch even a glimpse of God's glory—of goodness perfect, justice unerring, love without frontiers, mercy unfathomable—and you begin to realise the abysmal depth of your utter nothingness. See the vision of an approaching self-revealing Creator, and the creature begins to learn humility.

Humility is another name for reality; and it is, therefore, the basis of a spiritual life.

But more; when once the idea of sin and the idea of God have struck the human soul, then it must feel that Christ will come. A judgment — not necessarily, through His mercy, a condemnation, thank God—becomes inevitable. We cannot, if we are "waiting," be otherwise than possessed with a holy hope, but a not less holy fear.

And "to wait" is to deepen—surely it is to deepen—in "inwardness" of soul. To sink into the depths of light and teaching which come from Christ; to measure life in its demands and restraints by an altogether other standard than that supplied by society:

to live the inward life of meditation, recollection, self-forgetting, and prayer, as well as, as a real support of, the outward life of active duty;—this—this, surely, is "to wait."



## -Christian Watching.

IF you look through the closing chapters of the Evangelists, if you look through the teachings of St. Paul,—everywhere, up and down his Epistles—if you listen to one of the reiterated teachings of St. Peter as he warns men against the frailty under which he himself had sunk; if you go on to the fainter echoings of the Apostle John from his prison in Patmos, looking down from the height of the glory of God's revelation—everywhere, first and last, my statement is borne out by the testimony of Scripture—a characteristic "note" of Christian life is comprehended in this one word. "Watch!"

First of all, in Christian Watching there is implied a vigorous exercise of a Christian conscience. Conscience distinguishes itself from all judges because it is individual and

personal in all its demands and judgments. If it be so, how is it you must exercise it? I answer, first of all, by trying to give it more and more of a keen perception. Conscience must stand before us, as a watcher on a ship stands, guiding the bark of the soul through the wild waves and the thick darkness of this deep night of life, and crying out to us, from moment to moment, in the voice of the great LORD Whose echo it is, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, 'Watch.'" To exercise your conscience in keen perception is in part to obey the command to "watch."

But conscience requires more than to be keenly perceptive; it requires also to be wide in its range of vision; it must omit nothing. It must not fret over trifles, but it must not leave them out; it must recollect—it must learn increasingly to recollect—that attention to the little things of every day is an element in that attitude of a Christian which the Lord calls "Watching."

I may notice another way in which you may exercise conscience so as to obey the LORD's command. You must exercise it to assist you in wise decision. Wise decision, depends, in great measure, upon habit and ability

in making a true valuation of consequences. Now, conscience, if heeded, if quickened, supplies us with the data necessary for a rapid estimate of consequences, and as we practise ourselves in gazing, in quiet moments, on the consequences of life with its assistance, it becomes clearer in its statements, more ready and sure, more powerful in the assistance given by it to the will, towards wise decision; and the making of these wise decisions is simply, as the Christian sees, an act of obedience to the Lord's command, "Watch therefore."

Once more; recollect that, if conscience must be keen in vision, if it must be quick and ready in assisting to wisdom in decision, it must also finally and above all things be peremptory in command. Conscience may be wrong, it may make mistakes, but it must never be disobeyed. Conscience may demand of you what appears to be sheer loss, but, be sure of it, in the long run, if you obey its judgment, if you exercise it in such judgments, if you question it to assist you in wise decision, if you train it by the illuminations of grace, by the warnings of Scripture or experience, then you are

going far on the path that the LORD indicates as the path of a Christian: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your LORD doth come."

There is another point in Christian "watching" which I must note. It is not only by the exercise of conscience: it is by a patient practice of thoughtfulness.

I ask you practically, Do you practise thoughtfulness? You say your prayers. but do you think, as you say them, what it is you need all day! You speak to GoD about your grave necessities, about the virtues that you require. But do you think, "This day I shall be tried," and do you patiently set the current of your life against the object which you are determined to sweep away, if you are to live for God? You go to church; you listen to a sermon, you like or dislike it; you hear the words of Holy Scripture. But do you think carefully, quietly, patiently, as accurately as you can, over such truth as God has brought to your soul, in that reading of Scripture, or that discourse, that you may turn it to practical effect? I counsel you to practise thoughtfulness. Half the sins of half the world spring from thoughtlessness.

# The Significance of Death to a Christian.

take for granted what you ought humbly but earnestly to examine.



—The Significance of Death to a Christian.

"RIGHT dear in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." Ah !—we cannot doubt it—that great mystery has for souls that seek Him, some purifying, some almost sacramental efficacy; because Christ died, Death has in great measure changed its meaning. have seen, I have seen, some dear soul, so young, so beautiful, so good, that we felt the world needed, oh, so sorely! that such should be left to live, called by slow and pining sickness: day by day we have watched with a sinking heart the increasing, the warning beauty of the hectic cheek, but we have been more startled and consoled to notice how. almost visibly, the soul has advanced through its trial to perfection, as the poor body hastened—still witnessing to the hidden spiritual loveliness even in its flagging forces -hastened to decay. There only wanted-

# The Significance of Death to a Christian.

ah! we felt though we sorrowed, there only wanted death to perfect all.

Then, again, death "in Christ" is an escape from a world of trouble. We weep over graves, and who can blame us? But for the dear one gone, we know it is blessed, "taken away from the evil to come."

What is the significance of Death? Death in Christ is an accident in immortality. The great Unity of Life lasts on. Only, like the Sicilian rivers of Grecian poem, Life's stream had flowed here in rugged channels and under cloudy skies, then it had disappeared for a time into the chambers of darkness, only to reappear in fairer regions and by the sunny sea. The immortal life knows no break in its continuity, only here it is a life sin-stained, sorrow-laden; there sin is gone and sorrow ended, when "in Christ" the living spirit passes the gates of the grave.

And, further, one of the bitterest pangs of life is the pang of the parting of friends. Now, death "in Christ" is the entrance to a land where partings are no more.

It is rest from labour; it is the close of struggle; it is the sleep of the blessed; it is the fulfilment of the earthly pilgrimage; it is,

# Preparation for Death.

indeed, solemn, for it is the opening of an eternal future, but it is the passage to the Audience Chamber; it is admission to the unimagined blessedness of the Presence of Christ.



## -Preparation for Death.

To live in Faith is to prepare to die. CHRIST by His Death has given us a ground of confidence in His unflagging tenderness; and it is devotion to a Person, it is faith in JESUS CHRIST which, as it conquers the world, so it subdues the grave.

Where faith is increasing, where, with a loving heart, indeed, for those around, we have still the eye fixed upon the Unseen Reality, and a glance powerful in piercing the clouds of Time, there will be further that secret resignation to the will of God, which is unlike the dogged obstinacy of Stoicism, just because the place of a slave is different from the relationship of a child.

Resignation to the great and loving will of God, and faith in His promise and His power, if they do not destroy the sadness which

# Preparation for Death.

must accompany our human life, which must stand with us by the grave, at least they prepare us to bear the trial with unflinching courage and supporting hope.

Let us pray, let us strive for that brave, colf-sacrificing, submissive mind, whereby facing daily trial, but facing it always in calmness and love, it may train us for the last trial of all.

The sting of death is sin. "See that ye hate the thing that is evil," see that ye love the LORD. Faith, Repentance, Resignation—these are the preparations to die.

In view of the end that lies before us, let us not dream when the world needs our efforts; let us at least do our duty.

More: there is offered to each of us a blessed hope. That hope is in Christ. In that hope we may fulfil one great requirement, we may be strong.

To live in a manful and abiding sorrow for sin; to aspire with increasing efforts towards our great Ideal, to grow in the self-sacrificing love which makes the life of each a rich inheritance for all; to deepen in a steadfast trust in the Father, Who is revealed to us in the tender love of the Divine and Human

## Preparation for the Judgment.

Son; this, this is to rob death of its terrors; this, this is to tread the rough and splendid path of the Passion. This is to enter into the meaning of that great assurance—

"O Death of CHRIST, the death of death to me!"



## -Preparation for the Judgment.

THE SPIRIT of GOD, in His secret workings, is ever preparing souls for judgment, and, in preparing, is teaching the truth. However much men may be drawn to sin, and close their eyes to its real nature, His voice within them is constantly deciding with increasing clearness its evil and malignity, and bringing home to their souls the witness of conscience and the revelations of GoD.

He it is who illuminates the mind of the "member of Christ" with a vision of right-eousness, of the possibility and need of the creature being conformed in mind and affection to the image of the Creator. Men may rail against high standards, and repudiate, as chimerical, the nature of the severe exactness of a righteous law; but the Spirit is convincing the soul of the fact; sin is false and

# Preparation for the Judgment.

hideous; righteousness is beautiful and true. The same solemn voice of truth convinces the soul that judgment is coming, that good and evil cannot in the end co-exist with equal rights and sovereign sway. Man is driven by the Spirit, like Philip to Azotus, like Elijah to Carmel, to face the nature of eternal realities, and to feel the truth, the justice, the necessity of standing "before the judgment seat of Christ."

Certainly that scrutiny will be full of awe. It will be the first entire revelation of truth about ourselves, and to ourselves. It will reverse many formerly confidently proclaimed decisions; it will be a day of startling surprises, because it will be a day of truth. will be the plain realizing of the full extent of our neglect of God, or our arrogant indifference to His claim. It will be the full revelation of sins first neglected, and then become secret—the unfolding and simplyfying of a double life. It will be the exact reminder of sins now utterly forgotten; some directly your own, some of others' souls for which you are, at least in part, responsible. much good omitted, how much time wasted, how many gifts abused, how much, excellent

in itself, spoilt and turned to the injury of the soul by the manner, method, end, for which it has been done, the permitted impurities of thought or motive, the hidden dishonesties of word or deed—all this will be clear, distinct, undeniable in "that day." It will be a judgment of reality, admitting no evasion and no excuse—a judgment in inexorable righteousness.

To those who love Him best very awful will that day be! O sinner, called, claimed, endowed, gifted, taught of God, think of it now! Face sin now. Face and stay it, in the humiliation of penitence, by the power of the precious Blood. Watch and wait. Take courage, O Christian, and by grace persevere. Use the world with the serious sense that "the fashion of it passeth," with the energy and earnestness of one who knows that Christ is coming "to give to every man according as his work shall be."



-Comfort of the Scriptures.

THERE is one thought which dominates Scripture from which, and from which alone,

can come any permanent comfort to the race of man. That is the thought, the great thought of God. "When I am in trouble I will think of God," was the spiritual experience of the Psalmist long ago.

Man longs for God. And it is the blessedness of revelation that it brings before us, in all the vicissitudes of history, in all the chronicles of patriarchal life, in all the solemn tones of teaching and sorrow which come from the Prophets, in the history of the Church, above all, in the life of our Master, the great rebuking, consoling thought of One Who changes not, and never fails us—the thought of God.

(1) First, Scripture loves to dwell upon the mercy of God. If this be true, or rather, since it is true, how blessed!

Who has not felt this aspect of the Divine character as forming one of the sweetest attractions in the Psalms? It is trusting "in the multitude of His mercy" that we are to "come into" God's House; it is for "His mercy's sake" that God is confidently asked to "save" His servant; "My trust is in Thy mercy," is the cry of the soul which is "joyful in salvation"; "Thy mercy, O LORD,

reacheth unto the heavens," is the glad conviction of a soul which would otherwise sink at the thought of a world lying in wickedness; "Oh, satisfy us with Thy mercy," is its prayer when realizing the unsatisfying character of all that is not of God. It cannot forget that indications of this are everywhere—"The earth full of Thy mercy"; nor that, as it is plentiful, so it is eternal—"Thy mercy endureth for ever."

(2) Again, there is "comfort" from the revelation that is given us of the providence of God.

The Bible, indeed, may be said to be a history of little else. It stands out in the sweet pastoral stories of the earlier patriarchs, in the changing fortunes of the chosen people, in the varying strains of joy and sadness of every Psalmist, and the solemn warnings of the Hebrew Prophets.

But never is it so clearly taught as in the Christian revelation. Christ our Master, when drawing out the laws, the temper, the tone, the use, the influence, of His Kingdom in its relation to the world, *insists* again and again on the need of resisting a restless, careworn spirit, and a temptation to over-

anxiety, on the ground of a firm faith in the providence of God.

Ah! we have plenty of sorrow, plenty of toil; but, indeed, a secret of a life of usefulness, with inward peace lifted above fear of failure, unharrassed by constant dread, freed from the thraldom of human approbation, of praise or blame, is a sense, a deep sense, that "the LORD is mindful of His own"; that we must do our best and leave the rest, trusting, trusting, with a confidence that temptation shall not conquer and sorrow shall not drown, that weariness cannot paralyze and failure cannot cloud, that the LORD careth for His people, and that "all things do indeed work together for the good, the eternal good, of them that love God."

(3) And revelation "comforts" by assuring us again and again of that from which springs His mercy, on which rests His providence—by assuring us of the love of God.

God loves us, not because we are what we are, but because He is what He is. To drink in the depth of that revelation will need an eternity; but surely, surely, as the thirsty land drinks the rain in summer, as the flower drinks the sunshine in the morning of spring,

## Eternity.

as you and I drink delight from the face, from the voice, of one we love, as sweet music carries the soul into the undescribed dominions of unfettered fancy and untroubled thought, as the light of stars is tender when we think beneath it, as the summer sea, as the withering grasses and the bending corn give a sense of peace, and whisper stories from a distant land, coming in the quiet evening, flitting by us in the falling light; so, so to the heart of the sorrow-laden and weary, so to the misunderstood and misinterpreted, so to the sick and mournful, so to the sin-laden and sad, comes with a power of more than music the thought which is the most blessed in all the records of revelation—"God loves me": for "God is Love."



## -Eternity.

I AM a being of Eternity, yet this is a mysterious truth to me, i.e., half-revealed and half-concealed. I do not know exactly what Eternity means. I know it is a fact. I know I am in it and of it, yet I am also a creature of

## Eternity.

time. I cannot even conceive a state when time and space shall be no more. Yet such a state I shall know. I shall know what it is to have "life fully possessed." Think, O my soul, there will be unimagined wonders. No more sin, pain, sorrow; unending and advancing happiness and joy.

It will be the revelation of God's glory. hardly know what I mean by "glory." Think of a perfect sunrise or sunset. Think of a noble poem, a stately piece of music, a splendid painting, a heroic deed—I call these "glorious." It means something unspeakably splendid, which appeals, in the highest degree, to my sense of beauty, and kindles my joy, and rouses my enthusiasm. Think, O my soul, of being conscious of the unutterable perfection of Him Who is the Author of all that is good and lovely. Think of the vast development of faculties, so that I shall be capable of enjoying the highest happiness and the Uncreated Beauty-that,-blessed be God—may be my state in Eternity.

Eternity means the clearing away of all clouds; the reading of all riddles. I shall know, even as I am known. I shall know myself. I shall wonder why God has loved

me so, and shall love Him more and more because He has so loved me. I shall know the mysterious history of my predestination. I shall know others better. I shall understand and rejoice in the beauty of each character as I never could here. know the meaning of mysteries—of the Sacraments, of God's grace, of mysterious and inexplicable dispensations. I shall meet again those whom I have loved and known. No cloud now. No partings yonder. that is good and holy, of which I have ever dreamed, there I shall know. I shall know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. O wonderful Eternity! To this I am hastening. From this moment I may look steadily on with a bright, unflagging hope, right on and up, through the changes of time to things unspeakably glorious, which God has in store for me. O my soul, live accordingly. in the power of this thought.



-Looking to Eternal Things.

ETERNAL things! eternal things! It comes—the very phrase—like the swing and swell

of solemn church bells across the hills on an English Sunday; it floats like the thythmic swell of stately music across a sleeping sea; the heart bounds at the message, as the heart of a troubled sleeper conscious of the reassuring nearness of a loved and loving face. In the day of thickest darkness and deepest depression the religious mind takes fresh courage from the underlying certainty and support of "eternal things."

(1) To "look" to eternal things is at least to watch for guidance, the assisting though severe requirements of the moral law.

On the uplands of Wurtemburg I found, in the fog, the path traceable by means of posts placed at no impossible distances, where reasonable efforts were rewarded by rescue from a perilous track. We in life, my friends, have to traverse many uplands, and the way is not always plain to see. Well for us—ah! well indeed—if we hark back to our guiding-posts in a world of blinding mists and driving rains; if we struggle to do right firmly, fearlessly, with simple purpose, because it is right, and regardless of the many voices, abundant in the world, of contumely and scorn. Well for us if we return again and yet again to

clasp the well-worn and irremovable principles of the moral law. Well for us all—well indeed—if, in the midst of a world where so much is changing, we fix, with Apostolic fervour, the force of our vision on "eternal things."

(2) To gaze at "eternal things" is, again, to fix the eye of the mind in something like habitual contemplation on the great thought of God, and of that mysterious but approaching future which we habitually associate with the nearer consciousness of His Presence.

Yes, God and the future—these are eternal "A few short years shall roll," and we shall be: What we shall be, Where we shall be, are among the unimagined wonders which entrance and subdue the soul. Little we We shall know of it—this we do know. know ourselves with a sense of startled astonishment such as has never been ours before. Ourselves! Not in the mystic garb of self-interested deceiving which has made our pitiful acts of goodness loom gigantic like headlands in a misty dawn, not in the refracted splendour of the easily perverted opinion of too indulgent friends; but in the cold, clear light of undisturbed reality we shall

know ourselves as we are—yes! as we are. This also. More closely, more luminously, shall we be conscious of GoD—of GoD in the stern necessity of His perfect righteousness, in the blinding, the dazzling splendour of His uncreated beauty. Ah! to live, to try to live in the power of that Presence, and in the serious sense of that certain future,—this is to be gazing at "eternal things."

(3) And need I add that to look to "eternal things" implies a personal and habitual grasp of the redeeming work of Christ?

The transforming force of Repentance; the sweet mysterious efficacy of Absolution; the majestic mystery of the Holy Sacrament, in all its simplicity, in all its awfulness; the sweetness and potency of Prayer; the united vigour of holy souls in the Communion of Saints; the tender touches and the powerful effects of Grace in all its secret, active, elective workings;—all these run up into the remembrance and contemplation of a Person and a life. Jesus Christ in His majesty and tenderness, in His simplicity and strength, in the "sweet reasonableness" and awe-inspiring authority of His intercourse with men, in the pathetic pity and sorrow of His precious

#### Christmas Lessons.

Blood,—He, He is the central Figure and Summary of God's relation with His fallen creature; to make Him in some real sense the centre of thought and spring of purpose is indeed to be gazing at "eternal things."



#### —Christmas Lessons.

There is no Festival of the Church's Year which comes to us in so many aspects. The simplicity and humiliation of our Blessed Master seem to be the signal for an outburst of dogmatic teaching and of enthusiastic praise. Every scene of the day is filled with the awful and eternal nature of Him Who lies in the manger. As the Prophet spoke of "the Child" being "born" to us, only to go on heaping upon Him the most awful and overwhelming of titles—Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—so today the Church, guided by Isaiah and St. John, keeps our eye fixed on the helpless Infant, and our heart full of the Eternal King.

And yet awful and mystical as is such a festival, strange as the vision is which it opens up into the depths of GoD's Eternity and the

#### Christmas Lessons.

abysses of His Love, yet also it is the simplest of all.

We all know it is the Home Festival. Now families meet, and old friends return. Now a simple, quiet human gladness comes in some way to every heart. It is the Festival of the Children, and this sad world would indeed be sad and dark were it not for the songs of the birds, and the colours of the flowers, and the fair faces and cheery voices of the children. And so it is that none of us is

"So dark in memory or sad at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in hope,"
as to forget on Christmas Day the joy of the children, and to forget that that joy is due to CHRIST.

Very mysterious, very moving it is, when we feel that the deepest and the simplest things in life lie side by side. Yet so it is. The drifting of a cloud, the sweet smell of a flower, the curling foam-spray on a rising wave, the sighing whisper of a rising wind, the deep and touching sadness of the sobbing sea, the low moan in the patient waiting woods, the twinkling sunlight on the laurel leaves, the little redbreast singing in the winter hedge, the call of curlews in the

#### Christmas Lessons.

darkening morn, the strain of music in the dead of night, the stray phrase of some old forgotten song, the silent mystery of the church aisle when the winter day is drawing down, the fallen leaf, the faded flower, the half-obliterated phrase in an old letter strangely found, the shaft of light in some grand unexpected dawn, the flush of an unknown face in a crowded street, the whisper of a word or two of love in the summer evening woods, how simple in themselves, how full of power to stir our deepest souls! Oh, strange, sad, human heart! how deep its springs of life and sorrow! How near the simplest things lie to the loftiest truths! How these and such things fill the heart with anguish and the eyes with tears!

Now, so it is at Christmastide. Nothing so simple, nothing so grand, as the Christ, at once our King and Child! Nothing so high in unmeasured heights of dim elevation, and so near the simple tenderness of our own fireside! O great, dear Christ! In a world so full of tragedy, where life straining for dignity only becomes a moral farce; where show is everything, and outward look serves but to hide a hollowness within,—O great,

#### The Power of Silence.

dear Christ, sweet are Thy methods of teaching us reality! The grandeur of truth and simplicity is here. "He came down like the rain into a fleece of wool, and even as the drops that water the earth."



#### —The Power of Silence.

ALL great things come in silence. For often silence implies power without parade. It is an outcome of those vast forces of passive virtue which are the strongest things in the soul. The sense of power in reserve is the most imperious of all things, and it is the golden clasp of silence which holds it in reserve.

I hope this will not be taken to give the faintest shade of approval to the mere practice of silence from moroseness, or distaste to taking trouble. Of course, as in other good things, there is its abuse. "There is a time to speak" as well as "a time to keep silence." Speech is at least of silver, if silence is golden; and that silver should be often found, and shining, too, with the glory of a bright

#### The Power of Silence.

and loving heart. But silence is golden; it is the power of its mysterious energy which gives nerve and lasting force to speech.

In silence we come by our truest thoughts; in silence we form our wisest and strongest resolves; in silence we feel our bitterest rangs of sorrow; in silence we drink our deepest draughts of joy; in silence we touch the depths of repentance; in silence we feel the real blessedness of peace. Yes, and sympathetic souls often in silence hold intercourse in that unspoken language, which is the channel of truest interchange of thought from soul to soul.

CHRIST came in silence. To the world at large, amid the hubbub of the cities, and the cries of sufferers, and the laughter of the boisterous, and the constant noise and movement of an ordinary working world, no ear could catch the tread of the unseen feet, and hear Him come.

Only He had come. There He was, the second Adam, the Chief and Reviver of a ruined race. To the poor and simple, the few watchers and waiters, He was known; but deep had been the silence of the coming, and the world could not realize His awful

# The Light of Life.

Presence. "He had come down like rain into a fleece of wool, even as the drops that water the earth."



#### -The Light of Life.

WALK on the central glacier of the Oberland in the gloom of a summer night. gray clouds have hung about the Grimsel, and inflicted on you the sense of chill October, instead of bringing the sweet clearness of an August afternoon. The night has gathered starless and cold; but you are bent on your journey, though it requires all the energy of your determination to carry you through the discomforts of the march. The path at first is sharp and stony, then it is steep—steep in descent, steep in ascent, and your already tired and aching feet make you feel that it is hard to know which is the However, you have worse of the two. passed the polluted moraine, and at last you are on the ice. How cold it is! The breeze comes sweeping down the glacier, and chills you to the bone. Onward you go. clouds are clearing. Things are better. Star

# The Light of Life.

after star is plain above you, and the giant mountains tower grim and gaunt around you, but, at any rate, less wrapped in shrouds. Onward you go, taking more and more What is that shaft of amber, clear courage. and fine as polished steel? What that flash of deeper glory which shoots across the heavens? What is that line of scintillating gold and crimson which marks the crenulated crests of the mountains, and makes their snow-peaks and ice-lines like transparencies drenched in living fire? How glorious it is, the breaking of the dawn—the breaking of a real splendid August morning over the region of eternal snow! Gradually it steals down the slope of the mountains, till the very glacier itself is aglow. Now a world is before you, startling in its wildness and beauty your graceful Finster Aar and savage Schreckhorn, and Strahleck barrier, and then beyond, the soaring Eiger and the grim and meditative Mönch. Wild and beautiful in form and strangeness—it is all before you now.

Ah! it was all there, in its strangeness and stateliness, even when you shivered in the mist and darkness. It was all before you; but to you it was useless, unperceived, un-

#### The Light of Life.

wondered at. You needed the magic of *light* to reveal it. You *know* what it is, hough it was there before you knew it. You are a debtor to the tender mystery of the dawn.

Brethren, like that was Christ. How gently and secretly He stole upon the World! No one knew much of the Birth at Bethlehem; but a first dawn of a New Light had come. No one thought much of the ministry in Galilee or the teachings in Judæa; but truths which civilized man cannot part with were passing secretly from mind to mind. No one thought much of the teachings and sufferings of a Paul, a John, a Peter, a Polycarp, an Athanasius; but gradually over the civilized world was spreading an eternal empire. There was spreading on the "Light of the World."

It may be said—it has been said—that Christianity is a religion of sadness; that the old Greek world, for certain, was a world of joy; that our path, then, has only been darkened by Him Who is the "Light of the World."

CHRIST has shown us much that is dark and severe in human destiny; but is it not wise to know the worst? And if He has, He has

## Family and Social Duties.

done so that we may avoid the region of darkness, and He has taught us at once our power and our duty to walk "as children of the day."



# -Family and Social Duties.

MEDITATE, O my soul, on Jesus in His There is a quiet life. Nazarene home. There is daily duty of a simple kind. is authority and obedience, and mutual consideration and affection. There is companionship and sympathy. The human life of the Eternal is trained in home life. Think how He throws Himself into social duty. He is at the wedding simply to be kind, and friendly, and sociable. He works a miracle simply to save people trouble, and help them out of a little difficulty. Think of Him at Bethany, at Nain. Here, utter sympathy with sorrow. Every little tiny incident of home is known to Him. He has ordained To be His follower, I must seek His all. guidance, and follow His example in these as in great things.

# Family and Social Duties.

Meditate on the need of keeping true the bonds of life in the family. There are the young and the old. Love is the true bond of life. In fallen man it has a tendency to come down, not to go up. God's love comes down on me richly, constantly; how little I return to Him! The parent's love often overflows to the child, and the child returns If a child, watch, pray, it in scant measure. return that love; if a parent, be self-denying, thoughtful, generous, sympathetic to the children thou hast—either come by nature, as bound to thee by blood, or given by God, as bound to thee by the strongest of ties, spiritual and heartborn ties—show them love, think, work, bear for them, their love will return on thee from God. Keep the tie—the one tie, love—strong. Meditate on the spirit of this in its expansion. It is Divine charity. It must expand in gentleness, sympathy, cheeriness.

Meditate on this duty to the large family—Society. Think how thou servest GoD by cheering others up; by entering into their innocent pleasures; by brightening them; by saving them annoyance and trouble. Kindliness and love brighten all. Meditate

# Loyalty to the Revelation of Christ.

on the duty of a large and generous heart, and a bright and ready manner. Think, O my soul, of the duty of sympathy. To throw thyself into others' sorrows, or into their joys, is to follow Christ. A kind word, a sympathetic prayer, a warm clasp of the hand, may help on and revive a sinking soul. I must think of common little family and social duties as part of my calling in my LORD.



#### -Loyalty to the Revelation of Christ.

To accept Christ at all is to accept Him as the absolute truth. Hard sayings, deep and mysterious doctrines, strange supernatural statements came from His lips and from His mind. To accept these in so far as they accord with our preconceived notions, or suit our tastes and wishes, is scarcely to accept them at all. The doctrines of grace are deep and mysterious; the truth of the Atonement is an unfathomed truth; men have spent much labour, and "darkened counsel" by many words, in explaining in various senses

# Loyalty to the Revelation of Christ.

the Christian doctrine of "Justification"; and faith before now has been wrecked by debate and controversy on Christ's assertions as to the punishment of sin. What these mysteries mean we have to learn by learning how the Church of our Master has accepted and explained them, or if not fully explained (because in human words inexplicable), we must content ourselves with accepting with a loving faith. But the revelations given by our Master of His Work, His Presence, His Sacraments, His constant love, His loving assistance of His people, His final judgment, His life in glory,—these relate to each, on each soul they have a bearing. To hold ourselves in submission to His Revelation is the attitude of mind suited to His followers; to that tone of thought more light is given, and "spiritual things are spiritually discerned." To remain sometimes unsure of the exact meaning, and willing to learn, is the part of the humble and the uninstructed, but that there is some meaning, and wherever it is cleared to us there and at once to accept it; not to question and turn away because the saying is "hard," that is, because its full reach is mysterious, though its statement is clear—this

#### Loyalty to the Revelation of Christ.

is to stand in true relationship to the Revelation of Christ.

Loyalty! It is that spirit which comes of deep veneration, insight into goodness, and respect for Truth; of a brave dependence, and of a lofty humility; above all, which is overshone by, interpenetrated with the light and heat of human love.

Think of this. Think what it is for us Christians to have the vision of the highest Truth before us, and to fail in loyalty! What follows? Success, money, greed satisfied, and the dark heart, the narrow brain, the soul of the self-condemned malefactor more and more chained to sin, the victim of some Accidama where light and hope are gone; another Judas the traitor, picture of pity and horror!

Think also, to see the highest Truth and to be loyal! Certainly it means some pain, some shame; sooner or later the worldly wise, the restrained and prudent, drawn up against you in grim assault; yes, but it means also to open a door in Heaven to see "the living creatures," to know God. For such the praise and blame of earth are as the sounding of a distant wind on a night of

#### The Grace of God.

calm; as the scudding cloud that marks and illustrates the brightness of the dawn. For such as have this, there is a guide in life, a joy in sorrow, a clue to the labyrinth of duty, sunlight in the misty morning, "songs in the night."



#### -The Grace of God.

WHEN the Christian talks of the Grace of God he does not merely use a pious phrase, or imply that it is possible for a man to enjoy God's favour. "Favour" with God, it is truly said, is no mere passing mood of mind or disposition; it implies a substantial gift. Grace is essentially a Divine power which makes us GoD's children and inheritors of His Kingdom. It is a gift freely given, and of a supernatural character, coming from God for the merits of Him Who is Head of our race—the second Adam, the LORD JESUS CHRIST—and meant to promote our salvation. It is, then, a real force, but of a higher range than any created power, and is nothing short of a communication to the soul, of the Divine

#### The Grace of God.

Nature itself. We have no power to merit in any sense whatever the full gift of grace. It is true, indeed, in a sense, that the following gifts are merited by holy obedience and good works, but these very Christian excellences which draw down further gifts are themselves the outcome of the first unmerited blessing. So that the saying of St. Augustine is true: "Since it is by grace alone that every good work of ours is wrought in us, where God crowns our merits, He crowns nothing but His own gifts." The source of this blessed force is the Divine Nature, is God, but the meritorious cause is our Blessed Redeemer, JESUS CHRIST. He, by the merits of His perfect obedience, has obtained grace for the Church, His body, and all the members in particular, and the Agent Who administers this power—such is the teaching of the Catholic Faith—is the Holy GHOST. This power is the very principle of a new life in us. Begun here, it is, if we will, completed in glory, by the gradual re-formation in us of the image of God, marred by the Fall,

Men have argued and debated—and heresies have been born of debate and argu-

#### The Grace of God.

ment—on the question of reconciling Divine grace and free will. We need not spend our strength in discovering mysteries the full reach and range of which we cannot know until we "know as we are known"; but it is our duty to act on what we do know now. Free, supernatural, tremendous in its province, coming to us for the merits of our Redeemer, needed for our salvation as grace is—it still remains true that we are not mere passive instruments, not mere soulless machines; that grace is given to us that we may act accordingly, given to us to enable us to keep God's commandments, and to "do those things which are well pleasing in His sight." We are bound to co-operate with the help given to us. "By the grace of God," we may, like the great Apostle, "labour abundantly"; without God's grace we cannot do it; but it is we who have to do it after all. It is a true saying: "God commands not impossibilities, but, while commanding, He warns us to do what we can, and gives us help that we may have power so to do."



# Individual Responsibility.

## -Individual Responsibility.

Your soul, my brother, and mine, they are privileged, they are free. God is the explanation of their mysterious wealth of endowment, the interpretation of their mystic, half-articulated longings. From God they come, to God they go. He is their source, and He their end. To state this is to assert the solemn fact—responsibility. Philosophers have fancied that each movement of thought displaces some molecule of the brain, so that every airy fancy registers itself in material fact. Anyhow, this is true; every free choice of the creature between good and evil has an eternal import, and it may be, it will be if you will have it so, a splendid destiny. brother, in your hurrying, perhaps self-seeking life, have you thought of that?

The timely remembrance of responsibility eventuating in judgment has ere now changed and elevated the purpose of a life. Listen! On the upper ledges of the wind-swept Apennine stand the venerable towers of Monte Casino, below stretches the purple valley, beyond the purple sea, beneath the jagged

#### Individual Responsibility.

cliff winds the silvery Garigliano, beyond the dim and undulating plain stretch line on line of azure misty mountains, carved in the stately shapes, robed in the magic colours of beautiful dreamy Italy. Thither—if Italian legend speaks truly—thither, through the ilex woods and up the tortuous mountain paths came Totila the Ostrogoth. He had crossed the Alps, had beaten the conquerors of the world, had triumphed at Faenza, swept the Mugello, carried Florence, Ravenna, almost Rome; and now he came, impelled (who can doubt it?) by a supernatural influence, to take counsel of the wisest and saintliest of living "What shall I do, my father?" asked the barbarian conqueror, as he stood awestricken before the aged Benedict. Calmly the saint replied in this fashion: "My son, thou shalt enter Rome." "And then?" "Then thou shalt cross the sea, shalt sweep and conquer Sicily." 'And then?" "Then thou shalt reign nine years; and then," said the father, "then thou shalt die, and then thou shalt be judged." We may hope, in part at least we may believe, the lesson was not lost on Totila. My brothers, have we learnt that The grave prerogative of the soul is lesson?

# The Supernatural World.

this: life's struggle over, then it "shall be judged."



# —The Supernatural World.

I stood upon the jagged crest of the Klimsenhorn. It was the early morning; the night had been one of raging storm; the morning broke chill and grey. Thick, impenetrable masses of mist swept past us; once and again a stronger breeze hurried more rapidly along the volume of vapour, broke it for an instant, and gave us a faint, a passing glimpse of glory. We knew, hence we realized, that even from that lesser peak there was to be seen, if only we could see it, a prospect as fair as any dominated by the greatest giant in the Alps. At last the moment came; suddenly, as by an unseen hand, the thick opposing curtains of the clouds were rolled away, and there beneath us lay in sunny loveliness the thrilling spectacle, the unfolded panorama of the lake and the mountains, with creeks and bays, with peaks and promontories, from Fluelen to Lucerne.

# The Supernatural World.

Now that is like the supernatural life. It is, and it is lovely; but for long and often it is hidden from the soul. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him."

By what means has God laid bare to man the splendid vision?

(1) Well, first, I think, by Prophecy.

Prophecy is God's Revelation by Word. Wherever any spiritual *truth* is taught, the words that teach reveal something of God.

And in proportion as that word is really directly, authoritatively from God, that mode of teaching tends to impress and interest the human mind, both by the overwhelming importance of the facts revealed, and by conveyance of that indefinable reality, the tone of a supernatural life.

As the poet by his genius interprets—so far as he is a poet—the deepest things of human nature to the soul; so the prophet—so far as he is a prophet—interprets God.

(2) And what Prophecy was by word, that Miracle was by act—a revelation of the supernatural world. Miracles have revealed at least this, the nearness and the power of the personal God; they have been the seal which He has placed visibly upon some great

## The Supernatural World.

moral revelation, to mark, by an act in nature, the reality of a supernatural world.

(3) And then, above all, there was the great revelation—the Revelation by Himself.

"God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His SON."

Yes. "By His Son." JESUS CHRIST gave the crowning Revelation. He did more; indeed, He did not merely give a Revelation; He is a Revelation Himself.

Plato's idea of "the Good Man" here, and here alone, and here accurately was realized. Here man was seen in perfection. Here was the exhibition of "the Son of man,"—God's idea of man revealed. Here was seen sin, by seeing its necessary result in contact with Perfect Goodness; the fact, the horror of sin revealed. Here was seen a perfect Sacrificial Offering. "Without shedding of blood no remission." A perfect Obedience required. Where was it seen except on Calvary? "Perfect through suffering!"

More. Never more emphatically than in the several scenes of that tragedy did Jesus declare and insist upon His essentially Divine

# The Supernatural Powers of the Soul.

Nature. His Life, the vivid image of perfect beauty, perfect holiness, would be a psychologic puzzle that none could read, unless indeed, as He said, so He was—GOD.

Everywhere He had taught the fact, and the mysteries, of another world.

My brother, has Jesus been so known by you that you have learnt that lesson from Him?



# —The Supernatural Powers of the Soul.

Man dwells upon this spacious planet, he lives in the circle of the rolling years. He is bound to both, but both he must conquer. What are the forces by which he conquers,—by which he transfigures, the temptations of time and sense into the stepping-stones to a higher life? They are these:—

(1) That Divine gift which is the power of inward vision. By this the soul may see the supernatural. It has its image and prototype in our ordinary consciousness of the reality of substance, which yet we cannot see.

It is given to the soul first as a tendency; it grows, if used, until it attains the strength

# The Supernatural Powers of the Soul.

of a clear-sighted inward eye. It is an illumination, it is also a power. By it the soul ascends, and sees, and contemplates, and enters into the fact and meaning of unseen realities. That capacity is the capacity of Faith. You need it, O my brother, for life, for eternity. You have it, have it, O Christian, baptized unto Jesus Christ. You "have put on Christ,"—are you careful to use, to live by it, that it may be strong?

(2) There is another principle, another power; it is, above all, a spring of activity in supernatural effort, as the natural power, which faintly shadows it, is the spring of activity in ordinary life. Natural hope is a natural capacity. There is a higher. It rests upon the fact of the sinless, loving nature of The Christian hopes because God our God. More; it claims, it appropriis what He is. ates the promises of God in Christ. Christ is the revelation, the seal of these promises. CHRIST is the Christian's hope. Hope, the supernatural virtue, strengthens the soul, not merely to gaze at the beauty of that fair, that unearthly landscape, but to enter in, and say, with holy fear, with humble confidence, "This paradise is mine."

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# The Supernatural Powers of the Soul.

Is it yours? Christ's promise, Christ's indwelling, is its strength, its foundation; by union with Him it is wrought into, and developed in, the soul of the creature. "Christ in you the hope of glory."

(3) And there is one more, one splendid endowment, supernatural in its character, indescribable in its beauty—what am I that I should speak of it? Who, who can ever paint its loveliness? Its natural image is sufficiently splendid; of that natural gift, in fact, it is the completion and the crown. We have all known something of it, surely. have felt something of its thrilling ecstasy, something of its tender power. By most, I suppose,—I hope,—it was the first lesson learnt. And to many,—I trust in some form to all,—it appears at least intermittently, from the cradle to the grave. Life, the use of life, is to learn it. Parents, teach it early, as you only can, to your children. Brothers, I charge you never let life's struggle, the world's cruel badness, strangle it in your hearts. It is sunshine in darkness, rest in weariness, the vigour of revival in ebbing life. There are many and fierce powers able to slaughter the highest things, to dissolve the lovliest images.

## Sacramental Agency.

beautiful things which, done with, are needed not, and die. Faith ends, Hope ends; one bursts into vision, one develops to fruition. This is eternal; for this is essentially of the Godhead. GOD is Love.



#### -Sacramental Agency.

It is one of the strangest, saddest witnesses of the death-veil thrown over the understandings of fallen men, that there should ever have been doubt in the truth and efficacy of the sacramental life. Nothing, no revelation of the Church of CHRIST, is more in harmony with the analogy of all that we plainly see, than the revelation of sacramental agency. Why, we live in a world which is itself a sacrament. Outward signs are ever before us, but of the inward forces which they witness or convey, we know absolutely nothing, except from their effects. We are born of parents, yet reason and succession of generations remind us that they are instrumental in transmitting, that they are not the sources of our life. "One is your Father in Heaven." We are nourished by food; yet

to say that material for food is only of benefit when brought into proper contact with a healthy organism, is to say that it has no creative, only an instrumental, sustaining strength. When the command of the Creator has sent forth for man the messenger of death, the daintiest fare, the most exhilarating wine, will not check for a day the moment of the change. God is the self-sufficing, self-possessing Life, the fountain of all being; and, as in natural life He uses instruments, so in spiritual things, in dealing with His creature, who is at once a spirit and a body, He has revealed to us that He uses sacramental veils and instruments, whereby to convey the sustaining strength of spiritual life. Every sacrament of the Church has, of course, its proper scope; but all in some degree or manner convey to the soul the life-giving Life of the second Adam, whereby is applied, because in it dwells, the Righteousness of GoD.



—The Sacraments Divinely Ordained. It has ever been observed by the devout teachers of the Church that our Blessed

LORD, in His own earthly life, seemed to show us, by His actions towards those who were around Him, and who sought His help, the truth of the Sacramental Principle. Divine Person is the meeting-point of God and man, and the actions which are recorded of Him in His sacred Humanity were doubtless meant to teach us how GoD, through that Humanity, willed to approach, and affect, and enter into union with us, His creatures, in the whole range of our nature. He heals the sick, He re-invigorates the paralytic, He raises the dead, He absolves the penitent, He gives sight to the blind, He restores hearing to the deaf; and in all these actions the simple effort of His will would have been all that was necessary. But it was not all that He employed. He touches with His hand, or He allows Himself to be touched on the hem of His garment, or He speaks solemn words, or He uses a glance with His eye, and He is ever employing the force of His whole Self—Body, Soul, Divinity—in working out the restoration of man.

Again, the mysterious power of that sacred Body—instinct with Divinity—is constantly kept before us. In the moment of transfigur-

ation, its mysterious splendour is revealed to the astonished Apostles; in the moment of penitential agony, it fully expresses the suffering of the Soul by the terrible spectacle of the sweat of blood; and when upon the Cross He made of Himself, once offered for the sins of the whole world, a sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, His arms were outstretched for a world-wide embrace, His wounded Body and the shedding of His precious Blood were the chosen expressions of the tremendous sacrifice. And again, to assist the faith of His followers-lest that faith should be crippled by materialistic notions and "shortened thoughts,"—after His Resurrection He permitted His disciples to learn at once the reality of His sacred Body and its extraordinary and supernatural powers, by the manners of His various appearances and disappearances before them, when that Body was shown to be entirely free from the ordinary limitations of material substances. When we consider these things in the life and action of our Master, we must surely be thoughtless Christians indeed if we do not expect some sacramental mystery.

And surely all this comes to us with

redoubled force when we consider of dealing with the two great manner Sacraments. He insists upon submitting Himself to the baptism of John, and so connecting by His own act in His sacred Person the old dispensation with the new. He foretells in His conversation with Nicodemus the character and necessity of Christian Baptism. Here He emphasizes the fact that there is no other possible way of entering into His Church. As no one can be born into the human family except in accordance with the natural laws ordained by God, by which natural life is transmitted; so can no one be born into the family of the Redeemer except in submission to the supernatural law of regeneration appointed by Him, by which the soul receives a germ of His supernatural And then, after having foretold the coming Sacrament of Baptism, we find that our LORD instituted the same by distinct command to His Apostles before He left them.

In the same way with regard to the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, there is first that marvellous discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum recorded by St. John, with its

emphatic assertion and reassertion—in the face of the unbelief and scorn of enemies, and the wondering fear and doubtfulness of disciples—of His intended gift to humanity of His own Body and Blood. And then, just towards the close of His earthly life, He instituted it with awful solemnity and dignity before His Apostles on the night of His Passion.

If it were possible to imagine that when our Lord spoke, as He did speak, of Baptism —where it may be had—as a necessity to salvation. He in reality meant that it was only a figurative and more or less decorative symbol; if, when our LORD spoke of eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood, He in reality meant thinking about Him or believing in the Gospel; then we can surely say in sober earnestness that He went out of His way to use misleading language, and language which, in fact, has—on this supposition misled His Church from the first until now. This is, of course, inadmissible. The sacramental system is a part of the Gospel of Christ, is a part of the faith "once for all delivered to the saints," and for which we must "earnestly contend."

# The Sacraments Foreshadowed in the Jewish Church.

# The Sacraments Foreshadowed in the Jewish Church.

WE are taught in Holy Scripture that the Church of the older dispensation was a Church of type, of preparation, of promise. St. Paul does not hesitate to speak of all that the Jewish Church could give as "beggarly elements"; that is, merely external forms or semblances having no intrinsic power. was a Church of shadows, so we are taught; it led men to look towards a better country, though they could not hope themselves to If, indeed, the Christian Sacraenter there. ments are only what they are sometimes represented to be by those who sit lightly by the Faith of the Church—if they are only symbols and figures; if Baptism only represents symbolically the necessity of goodness; if the bread and wine in the Holy Supper are only meant to remind us that CHRIST died, then we might fairly say that, instead of having passed from a Church of shadows into a Church of substance, we have, in fact, passed into a Church where there are only the thinnest shadows of a dream. Indeed, certainly,

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with regard to the supposed object of the bread and wine in the Holy Communion, we might fairly say that if their only purpose was what has been represented in such theories, then that purpose would be much better served by a crucifix or a picture. "We are come to Mount Zion," we have no longer "beggarly elements"; the Catholic Church has made a great advance upon the narrower Our "out-Church of the old dispensation. ward signs" are quickened, ennobled, and glorified by the presence of those splendid realities to which they call the attention of the faithful heart, and of which they are the channels.



# -The Efficacy of the Sacraments.

THERE can be little doubt that much of the misunderstanding with regard to the sacramental system of the Church has arisen from the fact that devout minds have feared that to this was attached the idea of what may be called a *mechanical* method of salvation. This is, of course, untrue. We cannot be saved by *mechanism*, however Divine; we

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cannot be purified and exalted ex opere operato. It is quite probable that Sacraments, like everything else that is good—like the pulpit, like the Bible—have been misused or abused by sinful men. The ministration of absolution, or of the Body and Blood of the LORD, may have been to some a "ministration" of death unto death, but usum non tollit abusus: no amount of abuse can take away our respon-The efficient force sibility for a proper use. of Sacraments, indeed, does not depend, as the Church teaches, on the goodness of those who administer them or the holiness of those who receive; that efficient force depends upon God's Word, His "Yea and Amen," depends upon the unchangeable promise and command of CHRIST; but the results and consequences to any given soul must, of course, depend upon the dispositions with which Sacraments are received. In the case of Holy Baptism, administered to infants who have not reached years of responsibility, the gift is a gift of free grace, and the soul puts no obstacle in the way of the full effect of the Sacrament. In the case of the reception of all other Sacraments, the fulness of blessing received depends upon the degree of truth of

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heart and faith and repentance in those who receive. The *power*, in fact, as the Church teaches, is in GoD's gift, and right dispositions in those who receive remove the obstacles which might otherwise hinder the effects of grace.

It is a striking truth also, and quite consistent with the humiliation of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, that such simple forms should have been chosen to convey such majestic gifts. He came amongst us as a helpless Infant. The majesty of His Godhead was concealed in the form of a little child, in the swaddling clothes, in the manger; and He continues among us, giving His incarnate Life to transform the fallen life of His people under the simplest and humblest forms. What is commoner than water, and simpler than bread and wine; the laying on of hands; a few spoken words, and so on? But what more majestic, what more entirely needed by the tottering pilgrim in the journey of life, than the gift or revival of the all-powerful Life of his Redeemer conveyed to him under such forms as these?



#### The Holy Eucharist.

#### -The Holy Eucharist.

PRE-EMINENT is the dignity of the Eucharist. Of this let us think when we speak of the sacramental life. It contains Christ in the value and virtue of His atoning Passion, of His Resurrection and Ascension. It has two chief uses which should never be forgotten by the Christian.

(I) It is, for the continual remembrance"; that is, the continual memorial, the continual showing forth before God Almighty of "the Sacrifice of the death of CHRIST and of the benefits which we receive thereby." In type and prophecy it was foretold in the older dispensation; four times in the New Testament is the account of its institution recorded, and one of these records is given by St. Paul, who had himself received this revelation in all its details—so important was the Eucharist —from the risen and ascended LORD Him-In all the records we have the careful statement of the sacrificial acts—the taking, breaking (in the case of the bread), blessing, receiving (or giving), and the "doing in remembrance," or offering as memorial.

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Once, and only once, and once for all, was the "great sacrifice, obiation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world" made with the rending of the sacred Body and the shedding of the precious Blood upon the Cross, but that one offering for sin, made once and for ever, is represented again and again on the thousand altars of the Church, to "show" before GoD "the LORD's death till He come." To join the priest in doing this is to be present at the Church's great Prayer-meeting, and all who are baptized and who are not demoniacs, or who are not excommunicate, have a right and duty to be there.

(2) Then there is that other use which is the privilege of the soul confirmed in the Church—the Communion of the Body and Blood. Once the appointed symbols of bread and wine have been consecrated by a properly ordained priest, using the words appointed by our LORD Himself, we know that, "under the form of bread and wine," there is the Real Presence of our LORD. His delight is to be with the sons of men. He comes to unite Himself with us, not merely as a spirit, but with the whole of His nature, affecting

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the whole of ours. He permits us, if we will, so to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood that "our sinful bodies may be cleansed by His Body, and our souls washed through His precious Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us." What a wonderful and blessed gift! How needed by pilgrim-man for "strengthening and refreshing" in the toils of his pilgrimage! how needed by him for supporting the soul when, wrenched away from the body, it has to traverse the valley of the shadow! Yes, and what wonderful effects it must have through the soul upon the body, since with the reception of this sacred Food our LORD Himself distinctly connects some special prerogative of resurrection! Ah! when we contemplate the sacramental life, everything is at once simplicity and mystery; everything is in accordance with what is revealed of the needs of our nature and the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.



#### The Season of Lent.

#### -The Season of Lent.

LENT, with all the poetry of a season consecrated by the habit and tradition of the Christian Church, cuts into our modern life with its peremptory demands, and its teaching and calling, at first sight so out of tune with modern life. "At first sight?" Yes; but not when we look further. Surely all real and fruitful effort in conduct, as well as growth in character, must depend upon the due invasion of eternity into the domains of time.

Here and now we do well to remember a very pressing danger.

In an age of progress, and progress of unparalleled rapidity, the active life seems likely to rob the contemplative of much which ought to be its possession. There is plenty of religious activity. Is there as much of religion? Plenty of energy and work. Is there corresponding piety? Plenty of rank leafage. Is there deep strength of root in a strong soul to keep the tree firm before the coming storm? The real effective power of work is lost—worse than lost—if the inner

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forces are not kept fresh and strong. All right and well and necessary it is to work for God, but we must take care to be ourselves much with God. Have we not need, dear friends, to learn and remember and practise the truth that there is no work so dignified, so fruitful, so abiding, as the serious effort and activity of prayer? Few things are sadder than a fair dead body when the soul is gone. And it is possible, all too plainly possible, to carry on the routine and decencies of a religion when the soul, the living soul, has fled.

Settle it in your minds, then, that there is nothing so needed in an age like ours as determined withdrawal of the soul from the clamour of the world and the work of life, into the secret presence-chamber, where we learn our own weakness, and gain experimental certainty of the strength of God. Settle it in your minds that what your prayers may want—from the pressing demands of business—what your prayers may want in length they must gain in intensity. Settle it in your minds that you must work in time, but the scope of your inward vision must be—indeed, it must be—eternity.

# God's Claim upon our Gratitude.

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To fail in gratitude is to be worse than a heathen; for to fail in gratitude even towards our fellow-men is to forget the claims of those who, when we needed it, remembered us. To be ungrateful is to be at once thoughtless and selfish and dishonourable. Gratitude is the loving recollection of those who, in some sense, "first loved us."

And has not God a first call on this? Count up your blessings; perhaps they are so familiar to you, so strongly secured to your possession by what seem, from habit, indissoluble bonds, that you have forgotten that they are blessings. Better at once awake from that dream. "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth." Perhaps you have nourished the habit of looking at the dark side till it has the power, the tenacity, of second nature. Look at the bright side now.

Think of the blessings you have in common with all. The sun that shines "upon the evil and the good"; the rain that "falls upon the

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just and the unjust"; "creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life." Are these too "common," too part and parcel, as you deem it. of the indefeasible rights of humanity? Well. think of particular mercies—your home, your friends, the dear souls whose presence is your sunniest day, whose absence is your darkest cloud. of yourself, your health, your strength; it may be your recovery from serious sickness. Think of the many pleasant days that have been; such an evening in the thirsty, glowing summer; such a morning in the early spring; such a pleasant country walk; such a still night on the moonlit sea; the vast world of beauty and glory which broke upon your spirit from the memories and the thoughts of the mighty dead, from the magnificence of nature, above all, from the warm, pure, tender, unfailing affection of the human heart.

Our happiness is a very secret thing, but a very real. A heart may agonise, while yet, with calm countenance, it bravely faces life. A heart, too, amidst the commonest toils, the most distasteful duties, may have (which may not, if it will?)—may have, from the inner and outer treasures that it holds, an unfailing

# The Mystery of Sin.

spring of pure human happiness. Who gave it? Whence came it? Recognise the Giver.



# -- The Mystery of Sin.

SIN, in so far as it prevails, is a final rupture between the creature and the Creator; Sin is the dissolution of the bonds of life; it is the separation of man from the source of his being; Sin is the act by which man in his madness parts company with Gop. therefore—as Christianity feels and teaches —it must have severe results; it creates a We, each of us, have condition of soul. fluctuating moods, and tempers subjected to the influence of change; the weather affects us; a passing word will turn astray the sweeping current of our hurrying thoughts; this afternoon we are cheered by the sunlight, tomorrow we may be saddened by the shadow; we are the victims of a frenzy of feeling; we have tingled to the ecstasy of pleasure; we have staggered in a delirium of joy; we have been cut to the quick by the anguish, the acute, the exquisite anguish of sorrow. Man's feelings pass, his temper changes, but the

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deliberate act of his rebellious will is not a temper, is not a feeling; no, there lies between them the untraversed chasm between the trifling accident and the solemn act. That act of a rebellious will is Sin, and it has this serious influence on the soul,—it creates a condition.

Sin! It leaves its mark behind; it lends a certain horror to person, or circumstance, or place, which does not of itself fade away, and which can only change its character by the power of the precious Blood. There is a spot on the slope of the Schilthorn where, near a frowning rock and in the dip of the mountain gully, there stands, soft against the blue of summer, sharp against the winter clouds, a lonely cross. It does not mark a grave, but it marks the spot of Death's sudden summons. It reminds the traveller of a pathetic tragedy; sometimes creeping over it comes the breeze of the valley, laden with the freshness of sloping pastures, and rich with the sweetness of innumerable flowers; sometimes there pass across it, leaving messages of unuttered sorrow, the voices of commiserating winds; sometimes it gathers brightness from the blaze of sunlight;

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sometimes it takes a sober tone from dim fantastic shadows sent travelling over it by the long processions of the stately clouds. Clouds, sunshine, light, and wind speed away on their journey, but it stands changeless and alone. Death has made that spot for ever memorable; although the Cross robs Death of horror, for it speaks, though seriously, of Immortality.

Now, thus with Sin. It also marks with horror, lonely, unalloyed. It leaves its mark, but the horror can be changed to sinners by the contact of the Cross.

Sin! It is a revolutionary power. It darkens the understanding; it chills the affections; it corrupts the springs of motive; it deceives the most keen-eyed perceptions; it paralyzes spiritual activity; it lays its icy arrest on interior goodness and interior joy. It is a concentrated force of petrifaction; it creates the hard heart—of which St. Bernard speaks with horror—which forgets the past, is indifferent to the present, and careless of the future, proof against the voice of pity and the cry of prayer. The noblest nature is revolutionized by Sin.



# The Fifty-first Psalm.

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THE 51st Psalm is the result of an agonizing mental struggle, whose deep throes of lifegiving anguish are rendered clear by the light of an inspired mind. So deep does it penetrate to the springs of human nature, that it has for centuries, since it was first written, expressed, more exactly than any other formula of religious thought, the trouble of a soul awakening up to the dreadfulness and darkness of sin, to its unsatisfying gifts and its fatal allurements, but awakening in the tender light of a deep and loving penitence. The 51st Psalm, therefore, is a store-house of principles, for principles are the fundamental truths, which express necessary conditions of the life of every living soul, and of its relationship to the source of its being; and no truths relating to man's life are so deep and so serious as those which are brought to light when he is aroused to the real fact of holiness and goodness, and the infinity of misfortune involved in any outrage done to them.

And so each principle in the Psalm is a ray

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of supernatural illumination. What a dispelling of darkness is here! Here is a witness that the one ground of sorrow is to have offended God. Alas! how is it that we dread pain of body, dread injury to our good name, dread sudden change of circumstance, and do not dread sin? Acknowledging, for the most part, a hideous power, we do not revolt from it. What is the meaning of it all? Surely, a witness to a mysterious and miserable darkness, spreading over our mental and moral vision. But when that darkness goes by the light of the Sun of Righteousness!— O the clearness of the heavens! O the shining of the stars! This Psalm is the record of the passing of the darkness, though in showers of It is like the breaking of the clouds after a spasm of storm; it is like the outburst of a sheen of sunlight, from a skycountry of burning noonday, on a world long gripped before in the fangs of fierce and hungry frost.

And for this reason, it is intensely drenched in the *interior*, the *personal* spirit; it is all God and the soul. For indeed it is a note of true religion, that stands ever marked in Christianity, that it makes much of the

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individual. The ancient world, as you know, dreamt about, or acted on, a morality based upon an idea of the paramount importance of the State. True religion has recalled man to himself; has taught him to "possess his soul." Why is this? Why, because it points persistently to a future account, not of all merely, but of each.



#### -The Grace of Penitence.

Penitence is a sincere heart-rending sorrow for sin, from love to God. Penitence is a sinner's condition of soul when really illumined by truth. The grace of penitence is the temple of preparation. Easy words to say, but whence can the power come to waken in these earthly hearts such unearthly visions, to fill these depraved affections with this heavenly love? There is but One Who can give that power—God, the Holy Ghost, "the Loving Spirit," and He alone can "lead unto the land of righteousness."

And this brings us into view of our duties in the inner life, whereby, following the first

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calls, aided by the constant help of the Spirit of God, we may come within range of those Divine teachings which kindle and deepen penitence. How are we to seek for penitence; what must we do? In one sense the answer would be,—by the practice of self-examination. Well, certainly it is needful—certainly to know what our sins are, is necessary in order to true sorrow for them. But that is very far indeed from being all our duty.

Self-examination at certain times, fixed and earnest, is a very needful spiritual discipline. but it is not penitence. And, indeed, it is a very dangerous mistake, fallen into, one fears, by some, that a minute self-scrutiny will take the place of sincere contrition. To know oneself at all is in the highest degree a difficult, and, when all is done, is, in this world, a most imperfectly effected work; but to know oneself truly is impossible, without something more, without Divine assistance, which must be earnestly sought in prayer. Without earnest prayer for contrition,—diligent, heartfelt, prolonged,—you may succeed in cataloguing your sins, as you would catalogue the books in your library or file the bills in your office, but you are no farther towards

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the broken and contrite heart, which "God will not despise."

No thoughtful man can afford to dispense with serious thinking, in some degree, about the grave questions of life and eternity which affect the world; but, if he is to grow in grace, and in knowledge of God, he must have times of solemn intercourse with his HEAVENLY FATHER, in which such questions are applied directly to himself. The exercise for such times as these is the exercise of meditation. Meditation is mental prayer it is that exercise of the energies of the soul, whereby resting upon some facts of eternal truth, it waits for instruction from the Spirit of God. To meditate on sin, and on the love of God in Christ, is to ascend into the region of truth, where the soul is awakened to peni-There is no subject of meditation so fruitful in this sweet, sad lesson as the Passion of the Redeemer. The suffering of JESUS is that exhaustless store-house whence are drawn, by the DIVINE SPIRIT, the richest lessons of the sin of man, and the tenderness So long as men view it from without, as they reason, argue, debate, and theorize, they may find unfathomable difficulties, and

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dash against insurmountable barriers, and end in heresy or unbelief. But let the humble spirit lie at the bleeding feet of Jesus till the Holy Spirit raise it to a full view of the mystery of His majesty and His lowliness, then it sees its own sin and His sorrow; it sees, with the eye of truth, the hidden glory, and the heart is broken in that true, calm sorrow, which is a sorrow unto life.



### -Godly Sorrow.

This high sorrow is no sickly sentiment. No; it is the pain of the soul; it is the reactionary shiver of the immortal spirit under the shock of its touch on the things of Eternity when beset with the dangers of Time; it is the fainting of heart in the vision of blessedness, amid facts of failure and struggles of a life of toil; it is the sense of a high ideal too painfully unachieved. More: it is the Being of the creature in darkness indeed, but with a prospect of the sunlight, and a memory of the glory, conscious, amid whatever gloom, that the light of the one is the harbinger of the other; it is Sorrow with Hope.

## Godly Sorrow.

In the depths of the Pass of the Splügen the rocks rise high and precipitous, and are crowned with crags; in the dark night the mountain oak and ilex cling to the crannies of the clefts, and moan with the wailings of the wind; the waters rush below, tormented like unresting spirits in pain; the tortuous pathway vexes with its windings, and seems never to lead to an ending, and only to threaten death; the moon breaks out from the mass of storm-clouds, the path, though dim, is evident; the rain may pelt, and the wind may lash you, but you are rising; the path may be tracked to the crest of the mountain; in fact, you are nearing the dawn.

In the Scuola di San Rocco stands a Titian—the fairest vision of Christ—the eye speaks of pain unspeakable, and the head fails with the anguish of the thorns. And close by, in the Accademia, is the Madonna and Child; but there is a light on both the faces which arrests the gazer—brightness amid darkness—the light of a higher life. Such is the Christian's sorrow, illumined by submission to God. It always has the promise of a purpose working to an end.

Yes, there is labour and sorrow—labour,

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because at all costs you must do your duty; sorrow, because you feel, feel often and acutely, feel all the more, the less the feeling is literally justified, your failure before your great ideal. But the outcome of labour takes the sunshine like the Pala d'Oro in the evening light at Venice, and the sorrow has a blessed and a penetrating influence, and a meaning and a message all its own.



### -The Meaning of Salvation.

What is it to be saved? It is to be placed habitually on a higher platform of thought, to hold the keys of the picture gallery of Eternity, where we may move in unembarrassed freedom when wearied with the fret and ugliness of every day. More, it is to be awakened to a sincerity of manly and abiding sorrow for aught in our motives or actions unworthy or wrong. More still, it is to be settled in pure, ennobling, peaceful, and high and purifying desire. In a sense at least I may say it truly, there are who are religious yet not good, there are who are good yet not religious; those want a stronger

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moral purpose, these a keener insight into spiritual things. To be saved is to unite the two; to feel and fulfil the demands of our relationship to the Undying, and recognise and reach the accomplishment of the claim of duty to our fellows, who share with us the destiny of death.

What is it to be saved? It is to have that light of the heart, that strength of the will, that eager purity of the affections, by the force of which we breast the waves of sorrow, sustain ourselves with meekness under the strain of success, and in the darkest hours, as in the brightest moments, do not fail in unselfishness and truth.

What is it to be saved? It is to rise out of the ruts of convention; it is to strangle the treachery of self; it is to have the clear eye and spiritual understanding of the inhabitant of Eternity, to see the beauty of that light that "never shone on sky or sea," the light of perfect human goodness reinforced and purified by heavenly love; to be advancing in fitness to play our part as citizens of that blessed commonwealth which is quickly coming—"the New Heaven and the New Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness." In

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one word, it is to have the heart of a man, as his Creator conceived him, pure, tender, and loving; it is with that heart to love God supremely, perfectly; and in God to lose self in love for others—that is to be saved!



#### -Christian Battle and Brotherhood.

A distinguished writer of our own day—Mr. Max Müller—struck with the thought, which had written itself in the minds, and in some instances expressed itself in the words, of early Christian teachers—has said something of this sort, that it was by Christianity that the word barbarian was erased from the dictionary of mankind, and replaced by brother—that in vain, too, we search the pages of Plato and Aristotle for the word humanity —that the idea of mankind as one family, the idea of men of all nations becoming children of God, is of purely Christian growth. a true testimony, that, before our REDEEMER came, men fell into castes and classes, rulers and slaves, Greeks and barbarians; but CHRIST changed it all.

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And when we come to look at the Christian battle, the encouragement is not merely although that, we know, is supreme—that God has entered the arena as our companion, but that we are also supporting one another, that we Christians are fighting side by side; that one great power of the soldier is the encouragement of a brotherhood created by CHRIST, and that He has taught us in our battle to call one another brothers-in-arms. remember an anecdote told by an officer of the English army of an occurrence the night before the storming of the Redan, which showed how great an encouragement that sense of brotherhood, so strong amongst soldiers, had been to the heart of one whose courage was flagging in prospect of the next day's terrible slaughter, and how it had helped to bear an inexperienced boy through the trying hours of waiting and anticipation, so terrible to the bravest of men on the eve of a Revelation and experience witness to us all, that in the struggle against the powers of darkness and the forces of sin that strength is not wanting to the Christian soldier.

Have you known a man who is fighting for JESUS, as father, as brother, or as son, in

CHRIST? Your heart leaps up to meet him, and it gives you courage yourself for the battle. Sin is disintegrating; Satan and his forces lead to hatred; hatred is a separation of man from man, and man from God; hatred is the power of murder; hatred is the first-born evil; that hatred, if it could, would destroy your Creator. The battle of the soldier of Christ is in love. Love strengthens faith. Love is the nerve of life. To love one another and to love God is the earnest of victory.



## -Doing Good to all Men.

"To do good to all men" in a really religious sense implies self-denial, determination, and that rare and beautiful thing, truth of character. We feel this the more we remember that all really Christian action must mean a following of Christ. Christ would not argue deftly, or adroitly conceal His meaning, or have recourse to subterfuge or flattery, or appeal to the lower human passions. If He were to reign at all, He would only reign by

faith. What He did was to be careful never to impose upon any one, but to show Himself precisely as He was. What He did was not to practise or praise adroit deception, or, so to speak, argumentative sleight-of-hand, but, at all costs, to insist upon the majesty and beauty of truth. The consequence has been, as we very well know, that under very different social conditions, and on levels of civilisation very divergent from one another, He has, by the confession of His enemies, and to a degree quite unrivalled in human history, "done good unto all men, and specially to the members of His own holy Church."

If our lives are to be finally fruitful, it cannot be doubted that they must follow the same plan. There never was an age in which high principle and disinterestedness and unselfish efforts were more entirely needed, if, in any truly religious sense, we are "to do good unto all men, and especially unto them that are of the household of the Faith."

Hence it is that in paying practical attention to such an exhortation there is implied a very deep and real sense of the greatness of the true battle of life—the battle between good and evil.

These two vast powers are tace to face in human life in internecine struggle. struggle has been deadly since the Fall of man. and deadly it will be to the end, and in our short years of probation here the greatest of all responsibilities which lies upon us is to see to it that we take the right side. dogs our steps and shadows our lives. Unseen powers push on its advance over the mass of mankind. Goodness is within the reach of every human soul, even the very humblest, and it is the very highest thing that man has known or can know. Forces unseen and splendid are placed at men's disposal to assist them to its attainment, although the warp in their wills, their mysterious downward tendency since the Fall, makes it more difficult than the pursuit of evil. Therefore it is that exertion and vigilance and loyalty are needed in the Christian just as much in this age as in any age, for though the form of the battle may change, the battle itself must go Therefore it is that, if, being Christians, we have any sense of the use of life and of its gravity and seriousness, we must "do good unto all men, and specially to them that are of the household of the Faith."

The one thing which supremely and above everything else we must aim at is sincerity, reality, duty, and truth. Thoroughness, not show, we must make for. More and more as life goes on we must fear and shrink from all that is merely showy, and flashy, and insin-We Christians profess to be the cere. followers of One Who in pain and strain withstood the violence of temptation, and refused to win anything that could be given Him by the world or the flesh, or the powers of evil in their most attractive aspect, if the price to be paid by Him was the slightest act of disobedience to God.

This is surely what the Apostle means; at least this—for he means, of course, much more in detail—that if the great use of life is "to do good unto all men," the first great duty of life is to learn the meaning of goodness ourselves.

The needs of men are indeed extreme and constant in spite of all the gifts of an advancing civilisation. There is need of kindness and gentleness, of tolerance and considerateness, of large-hearted sympathy, and self-denying devotion. There is need of earnest, solid, quiet work, instead of

#### True Earnestness.

"screaming"; of earnest, faithful, unflagging prayer, instead of talk; of high principle instead of colourless platitude; of faithfulness instead of indifferentism; there is need of backbone; there is need of truth. Christ in His sternness, Christ in His gentleness, Christ in His quiet but firm resistance to temptation—He is our Ideal.



#### —True Earnestness.

What is earnestness? It is not gloom, it is not grim determination, it is not dogged persistence, it is not revolting narrowness, or stupid and tormenting fanaticism. What is earnestness? Earnestness is that temper of mind, that habit of thought which comes of taking, of habitually taking, the truths of eternity as realities, as, in fact, they are. Earnestness knows nothing of "notional"; it is connected with "real assents." Earnestness will not name Angels as a child would fairies, or Heaven as the Greek poets would talk of the Land of the Lotus, or the City of the Clouds. Earnestness cannot separate facts into categories, according to their size

### True Earnestness.

and their fashion, but only according to their motives and their eternal consequences. Earnestness sees the substance of things, not the accidents; it values the soul and the character, not the fashion or the title. there is an earnestness that, doubtless, becomes at times grim and forbidding. of this. It is possible that the earnest man may think so much of the things of Eternity as to disparage the duties of Time—possible for him to forget that all God's gifts are not (if I may so say) directly religious gifts, but are also natural and individual—possible that for him Art and Science, and power and beauty, and the delight and humour of young hearts, and the revelations of poetry and the voices of song, because these have been touched with the trail of the Serpent, may seem necessarily and evidently bad. Alas for him! Then he loses the heart of a helper, the God-shared Spirit "out of darkness to bring light"; so frightened is he at the licentiousness of the Cavalier, that he throws himself headlong into the repulsive Pharisaism of the Roundhead.

True earnestness remembers that Nature is not to be choked, but to be chastened and

#### True Earnestness.

trained; that not the possession of desire but its unregulated sway is a sin; that it is a gift to be educated and restrained. Earnestness, true earnestness, will not be morbid and morose, for that is selfishness; it will exert If, indeed, it is itself to win and to reform. serious, and even solemn (for is not life so?), it is also beautiful, it is sunny. Serious, yet full of sunshine, as the masses of marching clouds are solemn and beautiful above the crags of Engelberg when the sun is westering, bright, even though awful, as there is an awful yet dazzling splendour in the cloudfragments above Florence to the gazer from the Apennines after a night of storm. Earnestness, indeed, implies awe and a sense of life's tragic sorrow; but this earnestness has a touch of the sunlight, for it is the outcome of a heart thrilled with the spirit of the Crucified, realising facts, banishing self, not, indeed, forgetting the reality, but none the less alive to the nearness and the unutterable beauty of another world.



## Prayer.

#### —Prayer.

Prayer is the voice of a supernatural hope, and by prayer that hope is nourished and enlarged. Prayer implies energy and eagerness in the one who prays, and a willing mind and a loving heart in the One to Whom the prayer is addressed. It is the voice of a real need: it is conditioned by the character and the revelation of God. If it is made in faith and hope; that is, if it is real prayer, it will never be unanswered, although, as God sees farther than we see, the answer may come in an unexpected form. Prayer is the very lifebreath of the soul. As the movement of the lungs is necessary for the life of the body to make use of the air we breathe, so prayer is needful for the soul that it may breathe the air of Eternity. The joy and blessing of prayer is felt by those who sincerely use it, and, like other things, it grows by habit and is strenghtened by practice. To be a religious man is to be a praying man. If we will, we can cast all our care upon God, and carry to Him every anxiety, every pleasure, every sorrow, with the confidence that however long He may appear to keep us

### Prayer.

waiting, or however different the answer may seem to be from that which we would have hoped for or expected, still an answer there will be, and a good one, from Him Who is goodness.

Duty is a very sacred word, and we must do our duty. There is no duty, however, more imperative than that which is insisted upon by our LORD, that "men ought always to pray," and never to give in. We know in ordinary matters what a splendid characteristic it is of a strong and practical character "never to say die." Apply this to the greatest of all things—apply this to religion, and you have the teaching of our LORD. Prayer, no matter if it seem to be unanswered, must never be omitted.

We must pray for ourselves, we must pray for others, we must pray for the Church, we must pray for sinners, we must pray for God's people, we must pray for the dead. Unhappy mistakes, in these latter days, have hindered men from this last kind of prayer. This, however, is a duty. Our Lord must have taken part in prayers for the dead, as He was diligent in His attendance at the Temple service. Holy Scripture takes for

## Self-Respect.

granted all through that so we shall pray. Not a single phrase in the Bible ever forbids such a practice, as of course it would do if it were wrong. The Church of Christ has always used this devout practice from the first; it is only miserable modern heresy which has hindered men from a faithful performance of this duty.

"More things are wrought by prayer Than this world dreams of."

The night may be dark, and the clouds may be gathering; life may indeed be, nay it must be, "labour and sorrow," but there is sunlight beyond the darkness, and there is rest beyond the toil. We see the first flashes of it, we feel its first joys, when with an unconquerable hope which refuses all cowardly abatements, we follow the teaching of our Master, and are always loyal to the practice of prayer, and "never give in."



## —Self-Respect.

THE ground of the duty of Self-respect is that I am made in the image of God. My body, as well as my soul, has been sanctified

## Self-Respect.

and set apart for God in Baptism. Temple of the Holy Ghost. All relating to it is sacred, and the body must be cared for, and trained, and disciplined, as in the My body will perish in presence of God. its natural condition, for it carries in it the seeds of death. It will be changed to be "fashioned like unto the Body of His Glory." I must discipline it for that great change. must not assert itself against the soul, but be ruled by it. It is sacred because, further, it is exalted to a supernatural power by receiving the Body and Blood of the LORD. I must respect it, and, therefore, teach it to be brisk and ready and restrained, so as to be the handmaid of the soul.

Respecting myself, as in GoD's image, and GoD's child, I must be diligent to maintain an equal calmness of temper and a regulated habit of life. Ah! my GoD, surely faithfulness in times of work and business are duties of the Self-respect Thou teachest! I lose this temper of Self-respect by giving up self-rule under some impulse. When so tempted I must go back to quiet, interior thought. I am in danger from interior hurry, instead of maintaining thought and reflection. Bright-

# Equability of Temper.

ness and briskness in all duties—whether pleasant or distasteful—is a part of Self-respect. Towards others an effort to maintain readiness and pleasantness of manner, from recollection of God, and love of God. This I must do. Help me in these things, my God.

Many disturbing things come in life. Thou art in a higher world than these, O my soul. Thou art born for things lasting and Divine; why be carried away by these? Respect thyself, and, therefore, maintain interior serenity. Patience is a gift of Christ. I must exercise myself in patience, i.e., strong Self-control. If so, is not tidiness, completeness, quickness, absence of vanity in the toilet, and care of the body a duty? And vigour, readiness, self-restraint, calmness, sweetness in the soul? I must see God in all. Respecting myself, I must keep a pure heart, turning away quickly from evil.



## -Equability of Temper.

EQUABILITY of Temper is the effect of interior mortification of self-love. It helps those

# Equability of Temper.

with whom I live. I must not struggle to make others feel the passing impressions which affect my own soul. This is the constant effort of a self-seeker and a self-deceiver. He or she is always bemoaning self to others. I must let these impressions be a secret with God, and, it may be, with some spiritual guide whom I can trust. I must scorn the temptations to self-love. I must live above them. I must unite myself with the Will of God. I must seek for grace to be self-restrained, and, while grave, yet bright and easy, and sympathetic with others. It is the Christian's duty not even to look proud and severe, but I am to rather, affable and considerate. resist the outbreaks of anger and bad humour. I am to try to put the best meaning I can on the action of others towards me, and to be If others content with things as they come. are bright, be thankful; if not, try to be The object is to be anxious to please God, and ready to accept His Will.

Equability of Temper has about it a real charm, and, therefore, helps on GoD's work. It is a help to the practice of many virtues, and prevents me from being guided by the passions and impressions of the moment. I

# Equability of Temper.

must try, therefore, amidst the daily worries of life, not to lose calmness. Nor shall I, if I live in GOD, and often look up to Him. And this calmness inspires confidence, and helps souls.

I am, for this reason, bound to struggle against passing humours. It is by the victory of such humours that the happy relations of life are disturbed in the family as in society. If I allow this fault, people who might otherwise be happy are made uneasy. not know where to find me. If pleasant this evening, and morose to-morrow morning, I darken souls, and take the energy—because the brightness—out of other lives. It is selfishness, it is want of self-command; it arises from want of watchfulness. I must overcome this if I am to serve God. To overcome it I must pray and watch for patience, so as to resist the risings of impatience when face to face with what irritates. I must pray and "Fear God, and be strive for brightness. cheerful," said a holy man. I must pray and strive for sympathy. I must not be wrapped up in self, but often see from others' points of view. Each of us must influence others, and must answer for this gift, and it is a special sin against it, to allow inequality of Temper.

#### The Fear of God.

#### -The Fear of God.

This fear is a solemn dread of the creature in presence of the Creator. Well, then, with real thought on the Passion, why must we feel, as a prominent principle, a Fear of GoD?

(1) The Cross, witnessed to two things—God's awful and necessary judgments on human sin. It must be so. God could not be God if it were otherwise.

We cannot conceive right being otherwise than right, and wrong than wrong; we cannot imagine created dissonances in the harmony of the moral law, and what is that but saying that there are eternal necessities in the being of our Creator? And, if so, being good, His judgment must be severe, must be awful, on persistent sin.

We say so in our saner moments, but how are we to feel the truth of our saying? The answer is—Calvary. If God's judgments fell on the Representative of our humanity in such awful truth and severity, what does God think of sin? Yes, put God before you in the anguish of sorrow, face to face with human evil, then you have an answer how to

### The Fear of God.

feel yourself, who are subject to its corrupting influences, and hence a guiding, ay, a restraining principle.

(2) But this fear is also a serious apprehension of the dreadfulness of evil in itself. Christ's suffering was a willing act; it was a complete, unbroken energy. He did not suffer by halves. He withdrew from His Soul the sense of His Godhead that He might plunge in unrelieved, accumulated pain. But, then, all mankind have thought, have felt, how great, how blessed, how manlike, how Divine, how stern was that suffering; indeed, the awakening souls have felt the tender love and the inexplicable mystery of the Passion, and, wakening to this truth, have cried:

"Not for nothing, not for nothing, has the Eternal agonized!"

Oh, then, life is a serious business. Fear God.

(3) Further, this fear is not weakening; if it restrains, therefore it braces. It is the mark of a rich and balanced nature, when face to face with facts, to act with a proportionate affection, because it is, in fact, a soul in submission to noble and ennobling truth.

## Dryness of Spirit.

The genius of Michael Angelo made the Sibyls splendid on the ceiling of the Sistine from the magnificence of proportion quite as much as from the softness of colour; proportion is the secret of lasting charm. It is holy fear that is the principle of proportion in the relation of the creature—the fallen creature—to his Creator. To see God in suffering is, by grace, to have a proportionate affection; by it we are restrained, by it we are awed and solemnized, by it we act as men should in the felt presence of their Maker, by it we learn, in fact, our proper place.



# —Dryness of Spirit.

THERE are humble souls who are unnecessarily self-tormented by a haunting fear that their penitence is false or inadequate, because they are unable truly to claim such warmth of feeling in their own case, as they hear others express. But it must never be forgotten that penitence does not mean any warm emotional sense of regret, but a will and heart turned vigorously from sin, for love to God. It is certainly true that dryness of

# Dryness of Spirit.

spirit is sometimes the penalty of a heart whose early loves and fairest affections have been given to sin, not to GoD; it is certainly true that some "root of bitterness," some allowed self-pleasing, some known yet admitted evil, some insufficiency of willing surrender, chill in many the warmth of penitence; but it is also true that one form of chastisement for those who are special objects of His love, is the sense of forlornness, of the cold heart, and weighted life, and dimness of spiritual vision, and belief in, rather than experience of, the love of God. Servant of God, take Where you are not permitting a courage. known sin, where you are watching against sinful self-indulgence which chills devotion, where you know that the sins once committed you wish had not been done, where you turn from the memory of them with distaste, and banish thoughts akin to them with promptitude and indignation, where, in fact, you are diligently striving to obey Him, your Gonah; take courage, preserve, that is truth, though the feeling is not with it; your "soul loveth" your Master, though His love for you, unchanging as it is, for the time He does not allow you to feel.

## Dryness of Spirit.

There are days in early spring when the flowers are opening, and the unfolding woods are sounding with song; the sky is softest azure, and the sun is bright; the fair undulating hills lie in dim blue outline, and the valleys are half veiled in hazy melting mist; all the earth seems dreaming, half wakening, and scarcely willing to be wakened, from its winter sleep. Another day the flowers still are opening, and the leaves are green; the sun is shining, and the skies are blue; but the woods are almost voiceless, and the distances are clear and hard, for a chill March wind is blowing, and nature is shivering, as she passes from her slumbers. Perhaps it is a whisper of the winter not quite dead. Perhaps it is a helpful wind, checking herbage too rapid to be rich. whatever it be, the warmer days are coming, and, cold or genial, it is the spring.

So with you. Once a warm day gladdened, now all is cold. Remember what there was, and pray, and wait, and preserve. Religion is to cleanse, not merely to comfort. "O wait for the LORD."



#### The Mind of Christ.

## -The Mind of Christ.

OUR Blessed Master had a "Mind," or Character. It was large, all-embracing, yet I find in it, unflagging strength. distinct. Here was steady purpose in complete proportion to the end in view. Sorrow was felt, trial brought pain, human feelings were keen, but the quiet strength never gave way. He was always, with all kinds of men, self-commanding. He never failed sympathy, yet He never "gave Himself away." He was considerate and kind, but in all duty decided. If so, O my God, strength and decision are not only admirable and attractive; they are duties.

CHRIST in all things was true. He did not always say anything and everything that happened to be true, when it would have been unsuitable or uncharitable so to speak. Some men do that, by way of being true, and so are true to a sort of skeleton truth at the expense of charity; but CHRIST never spoke anything false, never over-coloured or exaggerated. Not only true in word, He was true in bearing and life—simple, natural,

#### The Mind of Christ.

sincere. Flattery did not intoxicate Him, nor the wrong advice of friends lead Him away from the straight path. He was full of "sweet reasonableness," but never of unprincipled compromise. He said what He meant, and meant what He said. My God, Thou hast set Him before me, with the whole tenor and texture of His life and way transparently and strangely true.

Think also; His Mind and Character were toned by Eternity. All was in true proportion. It was a Life and Character of unflagging activity. In a hundred small ways He was a busy Man among busy people, but He was never fussed. His commonest work was done with a high level of mind. He worked in time, yet lived in Eternity. He carried lofty views and principles, and the atmosphere of Eternity, into the most trivial occupations. It was also a Life and Character of deep contemplation, and reflection, and prayer; but this never interfered with the activities of duty. These were toned by this. In all things unbroken communion with His Father. In all things every occupation of time ennobled and purified by the breath of To come near Him is to feel the Eternity.

## Passion Sunday.

value and greatness of the most common duty, and the greatness, beauty, heavenliness of eternal things.



# -Passion Sunday.

THE Fifth Sunday in Lent is a kind of landmark. It marks a point in our ecclesiastical and, I hope, in our religious progress as we advance through the Church's penitential The tradition of the Christian teaching. Church has marked it as Passion Sunday. We begin—that is the saying of the great teachers of the Church of England—we begin, as the Jews began fourteen days before their Passover—we begin fourteen days before the great Festival of the Christian Year, to remember, before we enter into the details of the Holy Week—to remember what I may call the principles or the philosophy of the Passion.

Now, can we follow a better guide, I want to ask you, can we go under the guidance of a hand stronger in its pointing, or a mind clearer in its thinking, than the mind and the

## Passion Sunday.

hand of St. Paul! And is it possible to find St. Paul's thoughts about the Passion of our most dear Master more clearly, more tersely, more vigorously stated than they are stated in these words—"GoD forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of the LORD"?

You will ask me, then—How can I glory in the Cross?

(1) Try to follow the example of CHRIST.

"He left a life, not only to admire, but to imitate." You may. Many men have feared they could not imitate Christ under the altered conditions of modern life. You can. Christ never laid stress upon rank, or fortune, or place, or dignity, or genius. But He did lay stress upon a true heart, upon deep humility, upon sincere penitence, and I may gather up the words that I have said in one phrase—He laid stress upon reality of character.

Here and now, as Passion Sunday comes to you, say to yourselves, at least in the power of that example, "Henceforth from to-day, in my joys, in my sorrows, in my pleasures, in my depressing moments, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of the LORD.'" Follow the example of Christ.

### Passion Sunday.

(2) There spreads before me a large horizon as I speak these words. I remember, when we lay under the headlands of Samos, the night was dark, and the storm had been gathering; but as the morning began to come, the storm died down, and the waves became calm with Ægean smoothness. And we watched—I and another—we watched across the mountains of Asia the breaking of the First there came a shaft of crimson, shot apparently from an unseen hand; then another, then another. Gradually the sky was amber; then the peaks of the mountains were illuminated with light of indescribable colours; then the light cropt slowly down the mountains, and then we laughed with gladness as it spread across the waves. "This," we thought, "this is like the saying of Scripture—'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

A good man is a great power, and a good man is a representative of the Cross. Try, then, to glory in the Cross of the Lord.

(3) Remember that no really great thing is done in any department of life without self-sacrifice.

## The Mystery of Humiliation.

Remember, you have to live for others. Don't be selfish; don't be careless; don't be indifferent; in one word, glory—glory according to your measure and opportunity, according to your weak body, according to your struggling brain, according to your wild, beating heart; glory, glory in the Cross of Him Who was the brightest and the truest, the noblest and the best, and Who will save you, if you will be saved by Him, by the power of His Cross.



# —The Mystery of Humiliation.

"EMPTIED Himself of Glory," "became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross." What, in a measure at least, does the Apostle mean?

Think of God—God of inexhaustible resource, and gifted with one proud ignorance, the ignorance of the sense of need. God, infinite in His awful Oneness, and yet rich as the teeming life of illimitable worlds, before the dazzling beauty of Whose perfections the fairest facts and sweetest scenes of loveliness,

# The Mystery of Humiliation.

in a world of moral and material glory, fade as the emptiness of a dream. Think of Him—for an instant if you can—taking to Himself the perfection and the weakness of Human Nature, laying aside the unstinted blessedness of His attributes of glory, and then even the life and warmth of His pure and adopted Manhood, and descending to the agony of a degrading Death. You say, "Here at least is a witness to some awful truth, this I cannot afford to disregard." Such is the force of this broad view of the subject; such is the appeal of the Mystery of Humiliation. What does it teach?

- (1) Man has sinned. Which of you, who is sane, denies it? But that sin is *the* giant evil, that it were better anything, yes, anything, my brother, than that you should fix your will in rebellion against the Source of life and love; that is the teaching of the Mystery of Humiliation.
- (2) It teaches the foundation of all moral greatness, that is humility. The old-world Humility, even the greatest, was "founded in self-love, supported by Pride." Christ crucified says this: "Would you know? would you advance? would you achieve?

## The Precious Blood of Christ.

One way, the emptying of self even to the limits of a death of shame."

(3) It reminds that there is hope, and, amidst all our sorrows, there is encouragement. Things are not what they seem. To look through Nature on to God; to see in every check, in every sorrow, in every trouble bravely borne a certain step of advancing to a better world—this is the proud possibility of the Christian who has grasped the teaching of the Cross. Is it yours? Oh! let it be. Take courage and endure.



#### -The Precious Blood of Christ.

Why "the Precious Blood of Christ"?

(1) "Precious" from universal, subjective necessities; needs of man, that is, needs felt, certified within the precincts of the soul.

Your sin, my sin, are facts, to us the most saddening, most oppressive. Ourselves we cannot free. Is there a power of deliverance?

The answer to such a question, I submit, must involve a mystery, the whole matter is so certain, and yet runs up so completely into the regions of another life. The answer

#### The Precious Blood of Christ.

has come; come, mysterious indeed, as we expect; but decisive and positive, as we need. The Christian faith alone has ventured on that answer. There is a power of deliverance, and its hieroglyph, the symbol which summarizes and expresses it, is "the Precious Blood."

(2) Twin thought with this, has ever been present to the mind of man the horrible sense of a link between the mystery of Sin and the tragedy of Death. This has coloured, this always must colour life. All have felt it. To borrow an expression of Sainte Beuve, arising out of an incident he touches, "The extreme happiness scarcely separated by a trembling leaf from the highest pitch of despair—such is human life." Death is intertwined with life. No progress can alter its condition, no advance can reverse its prerogative, and nothing short of the triumph of the Resurrection could diminish prestige.

Man has felt that the horror of sin and death is relieved by the dim desire of sacrifice, and the certainty that some great and splendid use of death must be, and it only can be, the "death of death" to man. That

## The Symbolism of the Cross.

solemn human certainty has found its one adequate fulfilment in "the Precious Blood."

(3) Why "Precious"? "The Precious It is the speaking symbol Blood of Christ." of a perfect Obedience, of a surrendered Will, of a willing and entire Oblation on the part of the Representative Man, Who is none other than the Eternal God. This is the Oh, magnificent mystery of Atonement. "What folly," to borrow an mystery! expression from a French essayist—"What folly to paint romances when there is something far more wonderful which is true!" This, this is too utterly needed, and yet too entirely marvellous to admit of the thought that it is false. Anything so splendid, so awful, so needed, man cannot invent it-"the builder and maker is GoD."



## —The Symbolism of the Cross.

A MODERN writer relates a beautiful story of a little child in a London hospital, preparing to undergo an operation. He tells of the sympathy of the other little patients in the

## The Symbolism of the Cross.

ward, of the agreement to intercede for the one little sufferer for preservation from pain. How was God's angel to know this little Mary from other little Maries in the neighbouring beds? Such was the children's difficultywhat was to be done? At last it was agreed that the little creature should compose herself to sleep with the wee arms folded in the form of the sacred sign. The prayer was heard that night, and before the dawn of morning God had sent His angel and called the little lamb to His arms. How sweet the faith of the little ones! And how the choice of the sign for the angel, revealed in those little souls that sense, so instinctive in our suffering race, of the pathos of man's sorrow, and the depth and tenderness of GoD's love!

Of course, "the sign of the Cross" is in no way sacramental; but it has that sort of power which every commemorative act, done with dispositions of piety, must have; it disposes the soul for receiving the actual grace so constantly, so abundantly offered by God. Love the sacred sign. It was traced on your forehead at Baptism; it is the symbol of your soldier's calling in the armies of Christ; it stands above the Altars of the Church as a

## The Symbolism of the Cross.

witness to the supernatural forces supplied to the Christian; it may well be flashed upon your frail bodies, in moments of trial or devotion, as a reminder of their entire submission to the discipline, and consecration to the service of the dear, crucified Master; in life it warns off Satan from the child of Divine predilection; revives the memory of holy obligations in the moment of trial; and in death, as a signal of the "power of the resurrection," it consecrates the Christian's grave.

But whatever love the Church has had for the sacred sign, it is but the natural outcome of her deeper feeling, her affection for the spirit of the Cross.

Life, human life, even at its gladdest, is shaded with a dash of human sorrow because of human sin; every bright thing in this low world has its mate, its counterpart, in the twilight of sadness or the darkness of gloom. Christianity is true to life. The central object of her devotion is a crucified Master; the eye looking out on such a picture from the dusky dimness of the solitary spirit must have at least some memory of tears. The Christian's life is indeed a life of unspeakable

# The Principle of the Cross.

blessedness, his soul deepens in interior joy, but "watching," "self-discipline," "self-conquest," are his watchwords. He must "use the world as not abusing it," he must practise self-sacrifice, he must lead a mortified life. All things must be marked and consecrated by the stern power of self-renunciation; by the ennobling spirit of the Cross.



# The Principle of the Cross.

What is the principle of the Cross? Principles are compact expressions of a broad view of duty. Life is short; -- God to be glorified, man to be assisted, duty to be done; and Christ, taking such broad views as these, taking them not as theory, but as exacting certainties, acted upon them: "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him Who judgeth righteously," Ah! what does it mean? It means this: first, that the noble and happy life negatively must depend upon the practical acceptance of such a maxim as, "Evil cannot be conquered by evil; it must

# The Principle of the Cross.

be conquered by Good." Secondly, "Suffering is a power which is not to be evaded by recriminative vindictiveness, but used rightly as a sad but effective force for the victory of goodness." Thirdly, and positively; "The valuable part of man is the soul, the interior being, the central life,"; "The great thought of man is GoD and His glory, and before the mind it must be left clear and consistent, not only in moments of enthusiasm, but in moments of a quiet life." Indeed, CHRIST did supremely remind His followers that in the moment of death, consciously, as in the moment of life, He was face to face with And further, and surely, He taught God. that as God must be kept before us, and the value of the soul must never be forgotten, so "Man, as man, must be loved"; that we must live for our fellow-creatures, and in the sight of God. Gather up thess principles; gather up the majestic teachings of the Passion; gather up, my brothers, the lessons of that lofty, that dignified, that suffering Humanity. What does it all mean?

In one word, it means self-sacrifice. Gratify your passions, seek your self-advancement, please yourself; let men be self-interested;

# Conformity to Christ's Death.

let women be affected and self-conscious, your life is a miserable, a scorched, a fruitless Be self-sacrificing, forget yourself, put your foot upon this brute within you; conquer this self-seeking, rise into the inner sense of the spectacle of the Passion; feel that life is short, that man is glorious, that God in man must be glorified; live for God, live for your fellows, and you have learned,— I do not care where you stand,—in the pulpit, or in the office, or in the ranks of a soldier, or in the chambers of the lawyer,—you have learned the needed clew to the mystery of that great Humanity; you have learned the secret of a happy, because of a noble, of an ennobling life.



## —Conformity to Christ's Death.

To His Death! Two facts must be remembered here.

(1) That Death was the crown, the result of bodily anguish of the severest kind. The physical tension of the Passion was extreme.

Once grasp the Catholic Faith as expressed in the Creed of Nicæa, you will see three

# Conformity to Christ's Death.

things—first, that an ingenuity of torture is discernible in the nails, the cross, the crown, the scourge; further, that this told on a frame not merely sensitive, but supremely sensitive from its supernatural dignity—"the Body of God"; and lastly, that these sufferings were sanctified by that which they also expressed in language of overwhelming and pathetic power—His love for those for whom He died.

(2) Death was equally the crown of severest mental pangs. He plunged into a flood of suffering with the intensity of a full foreboding and a continuous consciousness—He was God. It is a true assertion, "God was the sufferer," and He suffered with the complete power of His being. "Man was the sufferer" also—He was perfect Man, and suffered with the acute sensibility of His adopted nature.

What, then, is exhibited in this extremity of suffering? This: A will, a brave and blessed will, triumphant; a spirit wholly subdued, because unflinchingly disciplined and thoroughly in hand. A soul in the glow and glory of a new atmosphere of heavenly origin, a new virtue—that Patience—that is,

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## Conformity to Christ's Death.

that Love in the strength of endurance which is a creation of the Cross. More: here is seen the Representative Man selfforgetting in love for GoD; the living GoD emptied of self in love for man. "conformed to His Death," then, is, according to our measure, to have at least some likeness to this; to have the spirit disciplined amid whatever sorrow, subdued at the cost of whatever suffering to some self-surrendering desire of love for God, and love for man; to have it in possession of some of that Divine degree of enduring strength which gives the soul a faint semblance to the great sweet Patience of Jesus Christ.

- (1) It sorrow is (as it is) a universal language, pain is a world-wide experience. Christ crucified says, "Receive it with resignation, or even welcome it, as the saints have done, with joy; it becomes a power quickening the spirit's glance into eternal realities of unimagined beauty, educating the soul for a better life."
- (2) "Conformity to His Death" is that ennobling temper which possesses a virtue capable of transforming great calamities and heart-piercing sorrows into abundant

blessings; nay, which is more, capable of bringing large returns from slight self-conquests, of changing the trifles of life into powers for eternity.

"Why," said a pupil of the great Angelo as he watched his master chipping carefully at the marble, with hands of power enough to throw in a few bold touches, an undying thought, into soulless clay—"Why waste your time on trifles?" The answer of the master was in this fashion, "Trifles! Understand, young man, that from trifles comes perfection, and perfection is no trifle." My brother, the power of the Christian ideal is seen in its application to the trifles of life.



# —The Burial of Jesus.

THERE is a stillness in the mind of Christendom that may be felt on Good Friday night and Easter Eve. Why? Because the Leader of His people has led us through the mystery of the grave. Ah, me! however hurrying may be our day of labour, at least, at least by the side of that resting-place we cannot

but think with closed lips and tearful eyes on the impenetrable enigma of another life.

Death, so the Christian knows for certain, is an act of solemn separation. The undying spirit has quitted for some new method of. existence its mortal home. Let it stay within that earthly dwelling-place, breathe in the breath, speak with the lips, act in the nervous hands, flash from the living eyes: then the mortal frame borrows from the immortal spirit its gift of immortality. But death has come, the cruel king has wrenched asunder those fast-united friends. Death has come and tossed aside the frail form to decay. The thought is unbearable. "Is this the end, is this the end?" In view of such a possibility nothing more saddening than the buryingplace of the creature; but since that Good Friday funeral CHRIST'S Burial has sanctified the grave.

Henceforth the grave to the Christian is a witness to the meaning and limit of the great separation.

Certainly to us who are left behind, and in fresh remembrance of the dead we love, the separation is sufficiently awful. It is something, it is *everything*, to read in the act of the

Representative Man what must be meant. Well, the souls of the dead are robed in mystery: sometimes—ah, me!—how dim, how distant, how blended with mists, how shrouded in cloudy circumstance of dreams! But this, at least, is clear, there is some special force in the separation for the ennobling of the body; some peculiar power for developing the energy of the soul.

In view of those who are dear to us, we shrink from the thought of change. But the change of the grave will be like the transfigured reality of Jesus in the tomb; what is weak or saddening gone, what has moved the love of our hearts, even in this world, abundantly there. Awful in Jesus, awful in ourselves, is this great separation, but blessed that it means a power of enlarging life and increasing beauty.

And there is a hint in the entombment of Jesus of the limits of that separation. It cannot last. The strange dark sleep of death is the prelude to a resurrection morning.

And again, the burial night of the Redeemer gives a tender touch of sentiment to the grave. Nor is this wrong. Sentiment, when true, is like the poetry of life expressed in

painting, the deeper emotions in material. It is feeling, deep true feeling, thrown into the forms of fancy or imagination. False sentiment is never so detestable as in Religion. But Christianity, because it is (to borrow a phrase used in another sense) "the humanity"; Christianity, enthusiasm of because it is a religion of Divine everlasting realities; Christianity, because it is not for a nation or a race but for man; Christianity rouses the deepest feelings and expresses them in sentiments of Beauty, as the deep and massive energy of the ocean flings up the sun-bespangled spray. There is a sweet touch of the real truth of things expressed in a pure poetic sentiment, in the Christian certainty that Death is Sleep. Now the calm majestic rest of the Redeemer is the evident witness that there is this mystery in the grave. It is the sleeping-place of the weary. "They rest from their labours."

Yes, life is labour, and labour is the true though transfigured consequence of the Fall, and those who "sleep in Jesus" are called to achievement; cut off early "like a flower," or gathered in onward years like "the garnered autumn sheaf," they have ended their earthly

# The Resurrection of the Body.

duty, their work is done. Their graves are symbols of faithful service, sleeping-places of the weary. Ah! as you love them you would not call them back again. Such is the solemnity, the blessedness, of the Mystery of the Grave.



# -The Resurrection of the Body.

THE Catholic Faith proclaims "the Resurrection of the Body." What does it mean?

It means that for every child of man the hour is coming when the body—the frail and crumbling temple of the soul—shall pass from the home of corruption to conditions of an evident and sensible existence, endowed with movement, gifted with life; the form will be the same as in the days of the old life long ago. And if it be asked by what power this overwhelming miracle is wrought, the answer is, in apostolic phrase, by "the Glory of God."

It is true that this was not a truth in the Christian Revelation altogether new to men. Undoubtedly the prophecy of Daniel expressed it in some measure, if not the poetry

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of Job; doubtless also Martha evidenced a knowledge of such a truth when she conversed with Christ not far from her dead But it was Christ Who brother's grave. brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel"; and it was also—witness His repeated miracles of raising the dead, witness, above all, His own rising, and the palmary proof to Thomas from the discovery in the Risen Body of the gashes of the Passion; it was also CHRIST Who clearly taught and evidenced the fact that the body shall rise again, whilst He also evidenced the truth in His own Divine Person that in very deed it must die.

That death may be sad, may be tragic. It is. The heart sinks and withers beneath the thought that the form so dear to it, so expressive of the light and beautiful soul, should be, must be, the slave of corruption. But this, at least, is a consoling consequence. If the whole man has had to pay the penalty of sin, the body in its dissolution, the soul in its disembodiment, Reason herself demands, what Revelation asserts, that the whole man should share the victory—the body by a splendid reconstruction, the soul by restoration to its ancient

## The Resurrection of the Body.

home. God's promise of man's entire beatitude is a pledge that this article of the Christian creed is true.

The Church does not trouble herself with any details about particles of matter; about its mysterious onward march in bodies she has nothing to say; but she does assert continuous identity, and she has on her side two important teachers—(I) The affections and yearnings of the human heart; and (2), which is more to the point—Divine Revelation.

(1) There is an infinity about pure human affection which points to another life. Here we have time enough given us just to have great hopes and strong loves, and then what seemed so stable has vanished like a morning dream. They vanish, they do not end. The practical instincts of pure affection and noble aspiration point imperiously to a better world. As well say that the evidence of the affections goes for nothing, as that the robin's song does not speak of autumn, or the coming swallow of the spring; as well say your strong desire for happiness with those you love, your deep longing for continued converse with souls blessed beautiful, but gone, goes for nothing, as that

discord in resolution does not delight you because it teaches of the coming mystery of harmonious union, or that the first faint shafts of the eastern colour do not herald the morning dawn.

(2) Better still, Revelation. "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." And best of all, the Revelation—the quiet form on Good Friday night, the Risen Jesus on Easter Day! As certainly as sleep implies awaking, so—since Jesus was buried and rose again—the grave means resurrection from the dead, means, in fact, that here we work and there we wait, wait for the great awakening.



### -Christian Advance.

THE Christian life is a life of advance. It is a life of inner yearnings, purified, strengthened, steadied powers from God. It is a life going on towards an object, to the complete fruition of which it is intended to attain at last. Is it yours?

If it is so, notice what must be your case. It has been said that, in the middle ages,

men were inspired by the thought of patriotism—and in our time they are inspired only by the thought of commercial enterprize—that we now forget the thought of country in the engrossing necessity of labour. I do not know whether or not this is precisely true; but I do know that in the Christian life, the sense of personal need, the thought therefore of labour, and the enthusiasm for country must meet and be united.

One of the wickedest and cruelest of Roman emperors was once startled by the estimate, formed by a prisoner brought before him, of his own place in life. wretched tyrant, who for years had been amusing himself with the grossest debaucheries and the basest cruelties, was astonished by this stranger whose nationality he could not fix. He was puzzled by the account the man gave of himself. A Roman he was not; a Greek he was not; nor yet a barbarian. What in the world then could he be? There was an answer upon the man's lips, clear enough to us, though an enigma for Nero: he was a Christian. That truth absorbed him. My brothers, if you are to advance in the life of glory you must realize

and know that fact. Your country is a heavenly one. In the depth of your life nothing you can do in the outer world can enter so as to satisfy. But to realise the fact that the crisis has passed over you, that you are in a new sphere, that you belong to a heavenly country—that is a thought to urge you onward. "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

You must go further: You must recognise the fact St. Paul recognised, that with the "mind of the flesh" there must be a fight without quarter. One step more, and then, indeed, you are on your journey. You must not be negative. You must be positive. You must learn that Heaven is your country, and try to live in-not merely think of-Heaven, in thought, in aspiration, in desire. Remove the hindrances to this, and place one picture before you, one object towards which to strive. You must take care to take none but it: take care to take it as such completely—the image of Jesus the Redeemer. To set Him always before you, to think whether you are pleasing Him in what you do, to ask Him for His grace to guide in action; to love those around you because

CHRIST is in them "the hope of glory," to place Him before you not only as your Ideal and Object, but as your final, your complete Reward, and yet to look for Him not in the future only, but now; to seek Him not in Heaven, but here; to ask that He may be manifested in your heart, to pray that His Spirit permeate your life,—this is to be "seeking those things which are above." And if you do this, if you recognise the fact, that you are in a sphere of immortality—that therefore you must quarrel with, and fight down, and cleave asunder "the mind of the flesh": if you struggle against it in all its renewed assaults, and, whilst doing so, set before you that sweet picture for daily contemplation, then what is your life? It is an advance along a journey that may be infinite, but the joys of which, as you move on, are infinite too. You are leaving the old days of conversion, leaving the first moment of realization, leaving the start of your pilgrimage. Your place in the world may be low, common, and quiet, your mental gifts may be far from dazzling, but your life, is "shining more and more unto the perfect day."

#### In the World-Tribulation.

#### -In the World-Tribulation.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation."

What did He mean? First, He meant the existence of a real power, an active temper in the wills and desires of fallen men, arising from obstinate adhesion to principles derived from exclusive regard to the visible order of things, and shaped according to rules and objects limited by the grave. He meant the potency of accumulated human habits of thought and intention which of set purpose shut out all reckoning with Eternity. He meant the virulence of human determinations deliberately and insolently ignoring or defying God.

Hence there lay before the Christian, if he had strength to be a Christian, strength to defy this arrogance, and oppose this impertinent assumption, a long and necessary course of trial. To the followers of Christ there was to be wear and tear, fret and worry, weariness and anxiety, and what men would be sure to call folly and failure owing to their dissent from the dicta of "the world."

#### In Christ-Peace.

So it was with Christ, so it must be with His followers.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation" is a necessary teaching of the Cross. then—such is the illuminating revelation of the Resurrection under the interpreting energy of the Spirit of God—the "tribulation" is turned to excellent uses. Trial is the school of obedience; trial is the means of the growth of character; trial is the method of discipline; trial is the training of faith. There is this sad fact of the outer life of the Christian; but the silence of the winter world witnesses to the coming life of spring; the narrow wrapping of the narrow bud witnesses to the opening flower; the dark night witnesses to the morning; the outer struggle of the Christian witnesses to the Inner Life.



#### -In Christ-Peace.

THE Christian may have, must have, an outer life in the world, of training, toning, educating—in fact, of "tribulation"; but

#### In Christ—Peace.

with equal certainty he has a true life, an inner life, "in Christ."

The character of the inner life—as of the majestic life of the Eternal even in His Passion—is this, "in Me ye may have peace."

Examine, then, some of the conditions of the Mystery of Peace.

And think, I have called it (and rightly, have I not?) a mystery. It is no mere acquiring the right of rest by the sacrifice of principle, it is no mere buying of freedom from disturbance at any price, it is no mere "making a solitude" and "calling it Peace." No, it is an inner condition of soul realized, and blessed; and that it may be ours some conditions must be fulfilled. What are they?

Sin must be forgiven, its weight removed, its tormenting sense of ever-reviving power attenuated, the wear and tear of its memories softened and relieved by penitential tears. This is a possibility of supernatural life; this is a result, a blessed outcome of life "in Christ." Do not lie down under the weight of unrepented sin, or the enemy may leave you to the lethargy of despair; no! gather the forces to oppose.

#### In Christ-Peace.

Resistance, the onward march of a struggling soul, the yearning towards, the crying for, the seeking after forgiveness, these are needed; then, then—for Christ is unfailing in His promise—it is the peace, the real rest of the weary, not the stillness and lethargy of decay.

(2) Again, there are who are scarcely sensible of any prominent or deadly sin. They are not frightened by the phantom, for they are not conscious of having done the wrong. None the less in many such there is a life "heavy laden"; sooner or later they are the victims of perpetual ennui.

To such souls Peace is a stranger. But, believe me, when the supernatural life is maintained by grace, through sacrament and prayer; when the soul is learning to act in this life on the principles of another; to stand, so to speak, a head and shoulders above mere earthly aims; to seek—whatever be its outer toil—to seek in the inner life after GoD; to live, to move, to work, in fact, "in Christ"; then like the consistent calmness of the sunlight on the quiet summer day, then like the majesty of stillness in the unfathomed azure of the summer night—then there is Peace.

## The Good Shepherd.

(3) As a condition of peace we must surrender an attractive principle, and adopt one, at least, apparently severe. It is natural, but it is perilous, to take as a guiding principle the wish to please ourselves.

The deep danger of an unsubdued will, of misdirected, undisciplined desire, is that these powers in an undying spirit fix it on things of a dying world, and hence destroy the harmony of the soul, its inner perfection, that is, its interior peace. To have this treasure, this so fair, so needed, we must be freed from the tyrannous and trembling anxiety to please ourselves.

Repentance, resistance to sin, a mind lifted in loving and eager thoughts to eternal things, a desire, disciplined and away from mere self-pleasing; these, surely these, are conditions of the peace of the inner life.



### -The Good Shepherd.

I AM to think of Jesus as the Good Shepherd Who speaks to me. He calleth His own sheep by name. If I will, I can hear His voice in words spoken from the pulpit, in the conversation

# The Good Shepherd.

of friends, in the reading of devout books. Sometimes He speaks in sweet thoughts which come to me, in the tender touches of the SPIRIT of GOD in the soul. Sweet and loving Shepherd, all the nobler and better things in me come from Thee. Blessed it is, dear Shepherd, to arouse myself to remember that Thou art speaking to me, for the words that Thou speakest they are spirit and they are life.

If He speaks to me, I must listen. am I to listen for the Divine voice? To listen for Him I must hold the powers of my soul in restraint. I must keep myself in calmness and peace. External things are in movement. Without, is the noise of the world. noise is filling my soul, I cannot hear the voice of the Good Shepherd. The danger of excessive pleasure, excessive business, excessive work, is this—the powers of the soul become dissipated. I must keep some time for retirement, for watching over myself, for listening to the voice of the Good Shepherd; then—by His HOLY SPIRIT—He will guide me. If He find me quiet, attentive, listening, then JESUS will teach me. "Speak, LORD, Thy servant heareth."

# Witnessing to Christ.

I must follow His teachings, and obey His voice, if I am indeed to be "the lost sheep" found. I must be ready and generous, willing to make ventures, strong to make sacrifices. Sometimes He may call me to trial—I must endure it; to silence—I must refrain my lips; to speech—I must speak out. Dear Shepherd, whether the way Thou callest to, be smooth or rough, give me grace to follow. Alas! how often have I failed in this! different would my spiritual state be had I Obedience to the voice is only obeyed. better than sacrifice, but sacrifice must, indeed, often be the duty to which I am called if I practise obedience.



## -Witnessing to Christ.

WITNESS, true witness, is never lost. The witness of truth and charity is never wasted. Young as Stephen was, and short as his career, he yet has left behind him, in the pages of Scripture and the affections of Christendom, a distinct personality, and a still productive work. Ay! long centuries have elapsed since the body of that young

# Witnessing to Christ.

martyr was laid in a sorrow-covered grave. But on the night that "devout men" carried the bruised and mutilated corpse to its unrecorded tomb, the work of the martyr scarcely had begun. We celebrate his memory; and must we not remember that the Spirit Who guided him dwells also with us?—the LORD to Whom he looked in his trial is near us still?—and may we not rise to the great ambition that, following his example, our work, by the same power, may have its proportionate, its blessed consequence, when we lie low! I intreat you, then, to exercise that lofty office in such a manner as it is yours to I intreat you to witness to IESUS CHRIST. To do it, you must imitate the typical martyr. You must have a real interest in, desire to know His Truth, to use upon it such abilities as God may give you. You will never be condemned for a failure in ability, but you may be for a failure in the use of what you have. You may not speak "with the tongues of angels," but you may speak simple words that are your own. Further, you must have a boldness, which comes from sincere conviction, which is a reward of life kept in faithful communion with the Source of all

#### The Christian's Ideal.

supernatural graces, which is a result of faithful prayer, no mere audacity of natural temperament, which may be a mere impertinence, offspring of irreverence or self-conceit—you must have a boldness for truth, never separated from the tenderness of charity. But if you are to witness to Him, you must know Him, as your own Redeemer, your only hope.



#### -The Christian's Ideal.

THERE is One Ideal before us all Who applies Himself to every situation, to every age, to every rank. As the Eternal Word, He is the very Fountain of genius, the Light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. As the pattern Man, He shows us the necessary glories of our humanity. He lived in time, but for eternity. We must follow Him, and do the same. That is another way of saying we must remember the spirituality of our nature, and reach towards the ideal of life. He was a perfect example of truth; we must follow Him there. That is another way of saying we cannot give ourselves away to a

#### The Christian's Ideal.

one-sided and insulting view of our poor human nature, but take the whole and real view of its greatness and its sorrow. He was the great example of love; we must follow Him there, too. That is another way of saying that passion must be purified and affection illuminated by goodness, and all that is base and degrading must be fought against with unflinching energy; for the corruption that is in the world comes through evil and unchastened desire, and to allow that to rule us is to numb or lose the highest of all powers that are given to us—the power of love.

We must be idealists; we must follow JESUS CHRIST.

Below us are depths of horror, of an Inferno created by boiling passions and devilish wickedness and rebellion against goodness and God. Better not dare to look down there lest false lights of hell deceive us and lure us to destruction, and we lose our souls. There are glorious heights above us; we may see the tops of everlasting mountains; the stars are fading. Look up! we are on the track of the dawn. Be like him who

Loved well because he hated—Hated wickedness which hinders loving.

## Devotion to the Holy Ghost.

Still more, be like Him Who died for us; sooner than betray the cause of humanity, keep before you the Ideal. Your capacity for goodness and greatness will be measured by your power of throwing yourselves forward to the future while you are living in the present life. There is another world. There will be a New Heaven and a lew Earth. wherein dwelleth Righteousness. Live for that. Let righteousness be your study, and strength your duty, and love which purifies, the very atmosphere of your being. Avoid that which is evil, cleave to that which is good; and there lies before you a future of unimagined wonder and unmeasured blessed-Beloved, let us live for the ideal; and ness. then "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."



## —Devotion to the Holy Ghost.

I AM to remember that as I worship One God, so each Subsistence or Person in the Godhead is to be adored. The FATHER is adored in prayer continually, and especially

## Devotion to the Holy Ghost.

in the Lord's Prayer. The Son is worshipped in prayer and thanksgiving, especially at the close of every prayer in His Name. I must worship the Holy Ghost by prayer, by reverent thoughts, by loving and humble thankfulness, for His love. In worshipping each Person I worship God, under the special thought of the office of that Person which it has pleased God to reveal. I owe devotion to the Holy Ghost, for to us He is the great gift of the Incarnate Christ. Through the coming in the Flesh of the Eternal Word, the Holy Ghost has come to dwell in the Church, and in the soul of the Christian.

Let me think with awe and adoration of the Holy Ghost. I see His Majesty in the revelation of His Being, and in creation. Meditate, O my soul, on His Being, "He proceedeth from the Father and the Son." He "ceaselessly derives His origin from the Father and the Son." I must adore Him then, for thus He is the Eternal Love of the Father to the Son, and the Son to the Father. I must think of Him as what theologians call "the Term of the Godhead." Think how He is revealed in creation. "Let Us make man." "The Spirit of God moved upon the

## Devotion to the Holy Ghost.

face of the deep." He is in direct touch with all creation. All created things are, in a special sense, His work. He is "the LORD and Giver of life."

Meditate on the Holy Ghost in His energy of perfecting the works of God. All the fair order or cosmos of the natural world, its beauty, and glory, and sweetness, are brought out by Him. He is thus the Agent for carrying out, in creatures, the Eternal Will of God the FATHER and GOD the SON. He perfects and adorns in the spiritual world. The blessed angels feel His touch, and receive through Him their beauty. He brought before the angels the revelation of the Incarnation to lead them on to full blessedness. Those who refused fell, notwithstanding His loving Will: He led on to perfection, those who embraced it. He is the Worker Who perfects Divine life in the souls of men. many energies of Love He guides, comforts, warns, teaches, takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to souls. O loving and awful Spirit, let me adore Thee,—Thou most beautiful, tender and loving,—in awe and love.

## The Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier and Comforter.

## —The Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier and Comforter.

THINK of that Blessed Spirit Who is "in the whole world, building up and sanctifying the soul." Think of the infused virtues in Baptism. Remember, O my soul, that thou canst believe. Thou hast the power of faith, enabling thee to see the invisible, and to "quench all the fiery darts of the Wicked One." Thou canst see the invisible. thou hast the manly strength of Hope. Thou canst meet disappointment, distress, despondency, despair, with a moral energy and spiritual force, which "throws light, and strength, and life into the promises of God." soberly and strongly, Thou canst hope, resting thy hope intelligently on the power, the character, and the promises of God. Think, O my soul, thou canst love. canst sanctify human love. Thou canst "love goodness, and hate iniquity." Thou canst climb from human love to divine. Thou canst love GOD. In love is thy rest. Who gave thee these powers? The Blessed Spirit gave

# The Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier and Comforter.

them in the Sacrament of Baptism, and strengthens them in actual graces day by day, so that using them thou mayest be "sanctified, and meet for the Master's use." O blessed and loving Spirit. I love Thee. I adore Thee.

Think, O my soul, what gifts have been given thee to reinforce and protect these The world, the flesh, the devil, powers. attack these powers. Thy faith may grow dim, thy hope languish, thy love grow cold. What hast thou received in the Sacrament of Confirmation? Wisdem, understanding, counsel, knowledge—these are breathed into thy soul with the laying on of hands—they protect thy Faith. Like warriors round their chief, they are ready to do battle with the enemy, so that Faith may live and rule. Ghostly Strength and Holy Think again. Fear are given thee to protect and invigorate thy Hope. It may be assailed by Presumption. These great and precious gifts are ready, O my God, to sustain it. Think again. What protects and expands thy Love? Thou hast the gift of True Godliness. A gift helping thee to "taste and see that the LORD is

## The Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier and Comforter.

gracious." Stir up these gifts, and thou art safe to live by Faith, and Hope, and Love—to be sanctified, to grow in holiness. Who has given thee these? The Blessed Spirit of God. All honour and praise be to Thee, O loving Spirit.

Meditate, O my soul, how if these are allowed to act there come fruits—"Love, joy, peace "—towards God. " Longsuffering. gentleness, goodness, trustiness, patience," towards man. Towards thyself, Self-restraint. These keep the soul in peace. They comfort Think further. and soothe. Thy troubles There are anxieties about in life are many. the Church, about thy friends, about thine own soul. Whence comes this interior peace in trouble which thou knowest? Why has every cloud for thee its silver lining? Why hast thou eager, and reverent, and tender thoughts of God? Why is there sweetness in the beauty of the world, in the faces of little children, in the love of woman, in the love of IESUS? Why are there "songs in the night," though the night be dark? It is the loving Spirit. He soothes thee as a mother soothes her child, if tho allow it. He com-

## The Blessed Trinity.

forts, He consoles. O most tender and loving and beautiful One, I love thee, I adore.



## -The Blessed Trinity.

THE Church meets you with the revelation, "I believe in One God, the Father—in One JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten of one substance with the FATHER,—in GOD the HOLY GHOST, the LORD and Giver of life." The thirst of humanity is not a quenchless thirst. It can be quenched in the unfathomed depths of the nature and character of the living God. The living God! Yes, remember the Catholic doctrine is this: The work of each blessed Person is the work of all; for the basis of life is one; "I believe in ONE God." Lift up your hearts. It is the loving heart which By the power of the meets the mystery. Spirit lift your heart to the heart of Jesus, and feel the heart-throbs of a man! By the power of the Spirit lay your head upon the breast of Jesus, know that you are resting on eternal truth, lying as John lay, "breast to breast with GOD." Read there, see there, in

## The Blessed Trinity.

that sweet face of Jesus, the vision of the Father's love.

The teaching of the Church on the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is a strictly practical truth.

- (1) First, it reminds us of the dignity and duty of an immortal life. Remember this. O soul, with so many needs, remember, all but one are passing, non-essential. thought of that one emphasizes thine immortality. O soul, with the one source offered for thy satisfaction, see to it that things of time press lightly upon an immortal spirit, for they can never satisfy; its only satisfaction is the living God. Dwell upon the thought of God. It takes shape, it may be dwelt upon in the Life, the Passion, the Glory of Then act as an immortal. JESUS CHRIST. Time cannot assuage thy longing—"athirst for Gop." If the soul's thirst can only be allayed by Him, its real field of activity is the immortal life, which faintly imagines the eternity of God. Remember and act.
- (2) And again. Remember that the thought of the Blessed Trinity teaches the value of time. It is a stimulus to self-improvement. All good things come from God. Everything

## Like the Face of an Angel.

beautiful in Nature, perfect in Art, truly great in Literature—all greatest, tiniest discoveries, made by man (his trifling works he fancies himself a god for making!)—all come from God. Learn all you can. Be respectful towards men; careful to cultivate literature, if opportunity is yours, remembering always that every path of knowledge may be trodden safely then, and only then, when the eye is fixed unswervingly upon the living God. To the humble heart all teaches—God.



## —"Like the Face of an Angel."

What is a face? A face is the dial-plate of the soul; surely, though not always appreciably to human eyes, are traced the marks of increasing or dying passion, the records of advancing thought and quickly travelling time. A face may take its habitual lines and marks of changeful feeling from the lower nature holding sway, or from the overmastering influences of the outer world. Or, in those whose souls are living in communion with eternal truth, it takes its saddening shadows from the deepest love and penitence,

## Like the Face of an Angel.

its brighter gleams from the glories of another world. In either case often, especially at a crisis of destiny, there is visible a revelation of the inner life, of the final result of all the multitude of forces which have gradually succeeded in making their lodgment in the very central citadel of the soul. At such times all that is accidental, all that is assumed, all that belongs to an artificial pose, then fades and passes; all that is real remains.

Hence the effect upon us frequently of a face in a crowd. Sometimes it is one of whom we know literally nothing, and yet our eyes, resting for the moment upon the features of one happening then to be in rapturous joy or overwhelming sorrow, have rested—and we feel it—on the revelation of a human life. So some faces come to us, remembered indistinctly, and yet haunting our very dreams, moving us,—by their slight and delicate tracery of pathos and suffering,—moving us to the deepest, keenest sympathy.

Now, what was the power of St. Stephen's face on which was riveted the gaze of the council? What? why, the angels are God's messengers; they see the face of the FATHER; they catch some expression of the uncreated

## Guardian Angels.

Once on earth that had been seen in beauty. its real loveliness; no mere earthly attractiveness of exactly-chiseled feature, but the beauty of the Face which revealed, to those who gazed on the Incarnate, a Sinless Soul. Once it had awed the multitudes, subdued the intrusive band in the garden of Olives, flashed on Peter and melted him to penitence, gazed on the Magdalene and wakened her to heavenly love; now the likeness of its loveliness was seen on the face of the martyr, because in his soul was Jesus the crucified. Like Jesus in suffering, His martyr was like Him in unearthly beauty—"His face was like the face of an Angel."



## -Guardian Angels.

I MUST remember that I have "come to Mount Zion, and to an innumerable company of Angels." I have, if I will, holy fellowship with these Blessed Ones. Think of what a dignity this is to me. Think how it shows tender care and loving Providence for me. He might do it all Himself, and it is by His

## Guardian Angels.

power that all good is done. He teaches me to love Him more; I feel less awestruck and frightened, I am not so lonely, I am one of a great company, I feel God's care and watchfulness and arrangements for me. The Holy Angels have responsibilities and duties towards me; let me remember my duties towards them, and learn deeper love to God.

Remember how the Holy Angels watched over, guarded, cared for our LORD, in His human life. I am His own child by Holy I am "one with Him, and He Baptism. with me." I am an "heir of salvation." God tells me in the Bible that they take care of me in the same way. My Guardian Angel was given me when I was baptized. How he has watched over, and thought of, me! How I have often pained him! These Blessed Ones comforted my Lord in His temptation; if I allow them, they will comfort me. strengthened my LORD in His penance of blood in Gethsemane; if I allow them, they rejoice in my repentance.

My Angel,—and other Holy Angels with him,—have guarded me or helped me in dangers of the body, on horseback, on the railway, at sea. May I not learn, like them,

## Guardian Angels.

to be on the alert to do what GoD sends me to do.

Think, O my soul, in what marvellous ways the Holy Angels not only guard but help. comfort, soothe, lift me. It is sweet to be in good company. Sweet to be among those who think noble thoughts, and say gentle, strong, brave, pure words. Why, amidst those who are evil, and fear not God, do there come to me sweet thoughts, kind and humble towards sinners, but strong and helping against sin? Why, amidst base and evil speakers, comes the whisper, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"? My Angel, who knows something of the exquisite beauty of that vision, is reminding me, lest I should lose that joy. Why do there come sudden, sweet thoughts of holiness and goodness, and a noble life, and better things, when I hear sweet music, noble poetry, watch a stately sunset or a tender dawn? My Angel is helping me to enter into the meaning of the lovely things which are a joy to him. When I come to die, may I be comforted by the thought of the loving and Blessed Ones, waiting to bear my soul to God.

## The Secret of Prophetic Power.

## -The Secret of Prophetic Power.

WE are not prophets any more than we can claim to be apostles. Yet in our measure we are both. Each is a witness, each should be an active, uncompromising witness, to truth and duty.

It may be, at times it is, by strong stern speech, "the word in season," the severe reproof, the faithful reprimand, the kind encouragement, the earnest vigorous appeal. Times for these are given you; see that you seize them.

Or it may be by unrelenting silence; when words are powerless silence is most eloquent; you cannot, you know, some of you, at times you cannot speak against the evil, you can by silent faithfulness refuse to share a sinner's sin. For such times of speech or silence you need power; the secret is the same, the changeless God is working with you still, and you too may be "fellow-workers"—to borrow the bold assertion of an Apostle—"fellow-workers with God."

The secret is the same. A deep, a deepening sense that each has his vocation,

## The Secret of Prophetic Power.

and therefore you have yours; determined faithfulness to that known vocation; and further, a brightening faith in goodness, unchilled by the frosts, undarkened by the clammy atmosphere of this sad twilight of a world; faith in God's changeless, inviolable goodness; faith in the possibility of goodness, by His grace, in your own souls, and in the souls of your fellow-men; and then a humble effort, and a firm resolve to part with nothing that brings you nearer GoD. The Church. the sacraments, the practices of devotion, the the Scriptures, the long-tried study of revelation of the Christian creeds, part with none. Above all in life, see that ye live what "Whosoever," says the ve have learnt. author of the Imitation, "would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ." Be Godlike in spirit as ve learn of God. Never leave Him. Cling to all that brings Him nearer. Such earnest clinging is the earnest of perseverance at the last, the foretaste of the "double portion." "As thy soul liveth, and as the LORD liveth, I will not leave thee."

#### Submission of the Mind.

#### -Submission of the Mind.

To "learn obedience" to the truths of the Christian Faith, to bathe the mental habits in the cleansing waters of the Spirit, Who gives light, humility, courage, and truth, is the one way possible for emancipating the mind from the thraldom of corruption; but to do this, how hard, how full of sorrow, how severe at times the trial and the strain; ah me! as in other things, in this also, "obedience is learned by the things" we "suffer."

But do not mistake me. It is not the mere craven cringing of a thought believed, before the tyrant rule of a statement asserted with the lips but in no way credited; it is not a cruel compulsion placed upon the fine freedom of a real or rightful opinion. No; this is not application of the law of sacrifice to the realm of thought. Certainly there may be minds driven by sheer dismay at the doubtfulness of all things, to sink low, and lie upon the rude foundation of definitely asserted fact, like a weary bird pelted by the pitiless tempest and gasping at last on the Certainly, also, there may be other ground.

#### Submission of the Mind.

minds, scared by self-mistrustfulness into a need of trusting wholly to a great tradition. hoary with ages of existence, pillared on the opinions of uncounted centuries. Be reverent to these. In this wild mysterious world, mistakes may, will be made, which are scarcely sins; and even through their own mistakes God guides them, leading souls in many ways; some by humble, some by nobler paths, may reach their rest. submission of thought to sacrifice, is rather this:—Strong souls the re are who—conscious of the essential weakness, in a world so vast, of the wandering intellect, the wayward speculations of the human mind, infected as it also is with that poison of corruption which tinges everything this side the grave—assert a strong supremacy, gift of God's Spirit, but at the same time forget not, while seeking truth. this wilfulness. this unabashed audacity of human ignorance, but remember rather that the path to truth is by humility. The first thing, they know, is to desire the truth; the next to sit as learners in God's Church; then, having learnt humbly to follow on, then, having acquired the sacred treasure, to guard the same. To leave men's

#### The Psalms.

criticism, and desire the Revelation of GoD; to quit our own miserable inquiries, and choose the Path of the Pathless One; to watch against the wilfulness that slights, the sin that weakens our power of believing; this, as it is an evidence of strength, and even of stern decision, is not lacking in an element of trial, requires submission to the law of sacrifice.



#### -The Psalms.

THE Psalms are the Church's manual of devotion. They are so because they rise from a spring of the deepest religious affections, and also from a source of inexhaustible revelation. There is the revelation, not merely of fact and doctrine under their ordinary aspect, but of the deeper and more delicate relations of God and the soul, and the many moods of devotional feeling and desire in which the human spirit, eye to eye with its Creator, can but find expression for its wants and longings.

There is no condition of human want and human joy or sorrow which they do not meet

### The Psalms.

and express. They are mystical with St. John of the Cross, full of tender submission and strong faith with Thomas à Kempis, ablaze with passionate wish or sorrow with St. Augustine in his spiritual struggle and sustained They touch the deepest chords repentance. in human hearts, and fall in with all situations with an unparalleled adaptability. morning of the storm when danger is near, the evening of stillness when the breeze ripples in the corn, the breaking dawn of purity and splendour, the lonely night of desolation and darkness, the time of full human happiness, the hour of racking human pain—always and everywhere these find solace or strengthening in this volume of sublimest poetry and prayer; and always and everywhere they find such solace because they are in this book confronted with, consoled by, God.

Let it is this passion of the soul for GoD which makes the Book of Psalms so universal in its power and beauty; for, indeed, "the soul is by nature Christian"; indeed, "religion is the passion of humanity"; indeed, amid all our sins and failures, what we need and long for most certainly and truly is—GoD.

## The Divine Kingdom.

And so, too, when we study the Psalms under the light of any doctrine of the Faith, their power and inspiration are pressed upon He Who is "the Light of the the mind. world" taught His servants-Psalmists and Prophets—and so they speak of Him. The mystery of prayer, the sweetness of meditation, the secret of communion of God with the soul of His creature, the awful and blessed power of the Eucharist, the source and greatness of the Church's destiny—above all, the Coming, the Life, the Passion, the Triumph, of the Church's LORD—these spring up before the eye illuminated by faith, and are everywhere found in the Psalms.



## -The Divine Kingdom.

LET us ask what are some of the prominent and general characteristics of the Kingdom established by Christ, and swaying, under His supremacy, the souls of men.

Well, clearly it was to be a kingdom of moral and spiritual persons. Its purpose was the training men under a law of goodness for a blessed end.

## The Divine Kingdom.

The Bible may be said to be, from first to last, the teaching, the exaltation, of righteous-In the checkered history which it embraces, this is an unchanging theme. the simple and honest stories of patriarchal times, in the vicissitudes of fortune, in the record of the chosen people, in the plaintive lines and passionate longings and triumphant strains of the Psalmists, in the terrible wrath and heart-piercing tenderness of the Hebrew Prophets, it is ever the same. The advance of righteousness, the triumphs of goodness, the development of man's highest hopes, and only true destiny, by his submission to the Law of righteousness—that is, of the code of the Divine Kingdom—these were taught everywhere, always, and by all.

Then Christ came. And then the moral Law, instead of losing anything of its exacting demands or severe rebukes and teachings, is filled out with a meaning which it is necessary for all men to understand. The Sermon on the Mount, the stray teachings of His different missions—these are engaged in laying down a Law of righteousness by which men are to submit to be ruled. The Kingdom is a kingdom of moral power and moral

## The Divine Kingdom.

demand. "The righteous LORD loveth righteousness, His countenance beholdeth the thing that is just."

Again, the Divine Kingdom is to know no frontiers either in place or time. In strange and shadowy sketches, in tones of mystic half-expressive music, by type and figure and allusion, this had been long foretold; and then He came and worked in our nature, but evidently for all. He was "a Light to lighten the nations," as well as "the Glory of His people Israel." There was nothing temporary or local in the sovereignty He founded; it was to be a universal Kingdom for every region of the habitable world, stretching through all the ages of the history of man.

And more; it stretched beyond the confines of this scene of sense and time. Precepts, teachings, principles, implied and required Eternity for their full application. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and earth," was a claim of absolute sovereignty in the regions of the blessed, in the realm of the dead as well as among the families of living men. No one has ever, as Christ, claimed and implied such boundless power.

And, further, it was to be a personal dominion. No words could sufficiently express the nearness of the person and rule of the King with the lives and very inner souls of His subjects. His Kingdom was to be Himself in action. No distant monarch distantly to be adored, but a King pervading His Kingdom, ever present, ever waiting, ever giving laws, ever assisting in their fulfilment.

The Throne of the King Himself was to be set up in every life, and in the details of choice and act of each separate soul, and so the living whole was to be, by the power of the Divine Agent—the Blessed Spirit—an expression and manifestation of Himself. Real Presence, Personal energy, Personally energetic power,—these are watchwords of the Divine Kingdom.



#### -Marks of the Church.

THE marks of the Catholic Body are stated full plainly in the Creed.

(1) The first of these marks is *Unity*. As time has gone on, and as human ambition or

human passion has wounded and marred the Church's Body—as they wounded the Body of her LORD on the Cross—there have been divergencies on this and that. Some parts have exaggerated the meaning of pious opinions; some have underestimated their value; but throughout the Catholic Church there is unity in "the Faith." Whatever territorial name you assign to parts of the Body, and whether or not in close and external communion with the Anglican, the Roman, the Eastern Church, you find the living voice proclaiming "the Faith once for all delivered" in the Nicene Creed.

The same is true of the unity of Sacramental life. Everywhere the regenerate soul is knit into Christ, puts on Christ by the "one Baptism for the remission of sins"; everywhere the souls of the faithful are offered, for "their spiritual food and sustenance," the Body and Blood of the LORD.

Unity thus arises from being united to the one great Head, the invisible and everpresent Christ. No difference of time or clime, none of the quart is in God's family which have wounded the Body and marred or interrupted visible communion, are able to

prevail against the blessed certainty that all are having "the sinful body made clean by His Body, and the soul washed in His precious Blood," and have the power offered them by which they may remain "evermore one with Him, and He with them."

(2) The Catholic Church is Holy. At first hearing, this appears a strange statement, for we know too well that there have been many baptized into the universal Church whose lives have been sinful, and sinful in a very But, indeed, our Master serious degree. foretold this. He warned us that the field must be one of tares as well as wheat; He taught us that in the net there would be fish of every kind; and He foresaw the mistake that earnest men would make, and, therefore, forbade us to forestall the last great division, teaching us that we must wait for that until the hour of His own unerring judgment, when He Who knoweth the secrets of men's hearts will give an unerring award. brethren, every member of the Catholic Church is not "holy" in the full sense of that high and awful word; but the Catholic Church is holy, because of the holines of its great Head, CHRIST our LORD, Who is the

Source and Spring of holiness, and Who guides and governs it by His Holy Spirit; holy in her teachings; holy in the end she places before her—the glory of God, and the sanctification and beatitude of man; holy in her moral precepts, her propagation and support of moral Law; holy in the power of her teaching, aided by the Blessed Spirit, to sanctify souls; holy in a multitude of the peers of the Kingdom—the blessed and saintly who have attained to holiness; holy, in fact, in the source and reason of her being, and in the means and end and aim of her work.

(3) The Church is Catholic. She is for all times and all races. She is the representative of the Divine Kingdom, whose function is restrained by no lapse of ages, and stretches far beyond the limits of immeasurable space. Let us, therefore, always remember that if we love our dear English Church, it is, it should be, not because she is consonant with the tone of our national life; not because she has a history which records her services in the making and supporting the best that belongs to us as a splendid empire; not because Kings and Parliaments have honoured

her, feeling their obligations to her, or insulted her in the foolish self-deceiving notion that she—who created them—owes to them her life; but because she is that part of the Catholic Church which in God's providence has a Divine mission to the people of our race.

(4) The Church is Apostolic. The ministers of the true Church are in three orders mystic reminder of the Triune Life of GoD-of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Tracing up their commission from step to step, we find they received it from the holy Apostles, who themselves were gifted by Christ with that mission and that honour which, as Representative of our humanity, and as our Mediator and as Head of the Church, He received from His FATHER's hands. FATHER hath sent Me, even so send I you." No man is a minister of the Catholic Church merely from an inner persuasion of his fitness. or because an assembly of ministers of some society of modern foundation have "called" him to such an office; but only because he has received, from authority possessing gifts handed on from CHRIST and His Apostles, the grace of Orders to fulfil such a function

## Conditions of Membership in the Catholic Church.

in the Church. "No man taketh this honour to himself but he that is called" and sent.

And she is Apostolic by reason of handing on the Apostles' doctrine, binding the faithful together in their fellowship with Christ the Head, handing down their tradition of the Sacraments, and calling Christians to the worship of God in the use of Apostolic Creed and Prayer. She "continues steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of the bread, and he prayers."



## —Conditions of Membership in the Catholic Church.

(1) To be a member of the Catholic Church we must be baptized with water, and in the Name of the Holy Trinity. There may be good people who are not baptized—good people who have been most faithful to the natural virtues God has given them, to the light with which He has enlightened their consciences from time to time; but one gift

# Conditions of Membership in the Catholic Church.

they have not had—that seed of supernatural life which is theologically called "regeneration." In our society they are not members; they are not members of the Catholic Church. There may be bad people who have received the grace of regeneration. It is sorrowful, it is heart-breaking. But a hand does not cease to be part of your body because it is paralyzed, nor your son cease to be your son because he is undutiful. The unworthy child of the Church needs the grace of repentance to revive him into life, needs a complete surrender to his Father's claims to reawaken him into dutiful obedience.

(2) As time goes on the grace of Baptism must be fostered by prayer, and the soul, awaking to full mental consciousness, must willingly submit to God, must willingly surrender to His claims, must willingly in purpose and desire substitute God's Will for its own in the ordering of life—must, in fact, be converted. Conversion may be gradual, as often in holy souls who do not sin away the grace of Baptism, but develop it by God's aid; or it may—it has been—what we should call sudden. "God

# Conditions of Membership in the Catholic Church.

fulfils Himself in many ways." But there is no fulness of "entering in" unless we "be converted and become as little children"; there is no completeness of loyal and loving and fruitful sonship unless we surrender to the workings of the grace of God.

- (3) Of course, also, for abiding and fruitful membership in the Catholic Church, there is needed "the profession with the lips of, and the assent with the heart" to, "the Faith." "Habitual faith," as theologians call it, may be enough for infants of immature years, but to "them who by reason of use" have grown to age of responsible will and understanding "actual faith" is necessary; they must adhere with heart and understanding to the truth witnessed to and taught by the Church.
- (4) And for full and fruitful membership there is need to recognize the authority, and use the ministrations of the appointed ministry. Our Master has established an ordered Kingdom, and the use of His appointed ministrations is the use of Himself.
- (5) And hence also, for that full and fruitful membership, we must take our share in the

## The Emotional Element in Religion.

Holy Sacraments and the appointed blessings of the Church. To be excommunicate from them, or wilfully to exeommunicate ourselves, is to be living with—for us—the blessings and gifts of our heavenly heritage in practical abeyance.



## The Emotional Element in Religion.

In religion there is, there ever must be, an emotional element. Noble emotion, lofty and purified feeling, is ever the homage paid by human nature to the beauty of Goodness, and the attraction, and even entrancing loveliness, of Truth. Nature, in her tender and majestic moods of softness or of storm; human nature, in its external fairness of form or expression, more still in its interior attractiveness of purity or of self-forgetting;—these have a power unrivalled in force and persistence of awakening and stimulating the nobler and loftier feelings of the human heart.

Sweet to the soul at eventide is the voice of the sweet singer; sweet to a generous heart and an earnest mind the burning word

## The Emotional Element in Religion.

of encouragement, or the supporting glance of affection from a fair face speaking the thought of a soul beautiful and loved and strong. Human nature—human nature, so sad, so wrecked, so erring, yet so beautiful, with the likeness of a Divine life, and the air of a better country still upon it, despite the Fall—this, above all, will waken the human soul, and send the heart throbbing in waves of noble, therefore of bravely controlled, emotion.

What else is the meaning of the high office of poetry, of painting, of music? By what else do you thrill in romantic literature under the touch of the master's hand? How otherwise, but through this response of feeling, could many of those reawakings of nobler thoughts and intentions which often fill us with shame at shortcoming, and through sorrow and pity do us, undoubtedly do us, good?

Naturally, then, when the better vision of a heavenly country, when the fairer vision of Him Who is "chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely," are presented to the human mind, these will kindle our enthusiasm and fire our feelings.

## Acceptance of the Faith.

This is not wrong—on the contrary, it is right and real, and it may be blessed. Only let us remember such feelings, indeed, are religious, but they are not Religion; if with them we allow ourselves to be content, we shall make a great mistake. They become dangerous if they are not—to borrow a phrase from chemistry—precipitated into conduct, if they do not leave behind them a deposit of more firmly fixed conviction, a residuum of unassailable principle, and a calmer depth of conscientious resolve.



## -Acceptance of the Faith.

To accept "the Faith" in mind, to allow the reasonable conclusion from it to kindle the affections, to allow both to give impetus to the will—this is necessary in a Christian. Do you "believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth"? If so, you are in the path of a reverent, a resigned, a responsible, life—a life of energy, of submission, of trust. Such a faith checks one's anxiety, and consoles by dependence, and gives rest by filial reliance. Do you "believe

## Acceptance of the Faith.

in Iesus Christ His only Son our Lord"? Do you believe in all that astonishing revelation of unbeginning life and love, placed at a point of time under conditions of a human existence, and descending to the heroic effort of voluntary death? If so, love and hope are kindled, and the soul catches a vision of a state of better moral and spiritual power than we have ever known, one day and at last, to be ours. Do you "believe in the HOLY GHOST"? If so, there is a quicker ear for listening to Divine inspiration, and a heart more responsive to appeals tender and strong. Do you "believe in the Holy Catholic Church"? If so, what a bond of brotherhood here on earth! if so, what a new view of what we long for-"salvation!" deliverance from allotted punishment by some mental athletics in this world; not some "acceptance" of Christ's merits to be a password into Heaven, but an energetic and yet peaceful enjoyment of communion with Him Who is the Source of life, which leads to increasing conquest of evil now, and entire deliverance from it in another life. Do you "believe in the communion of saints"? If so, the horizon enlarges; you recognize

## Acceptance of the Faith.

your place in a world of spirits at one with the Spirit from Whom we come, and each helping others by every holy act of love and prayer. Do you "believe in the forgiveness of sins"? If so, why carry a burden, when by your own soul's act of contrition and confession you may be rid of it, and enjoy the absolving mercy of Him Who is the One Mediator between the Nature Human and Divine? Do you "believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting"? so, you will reverence this mysterious dwelling of your soul, this consecrated clay, and strive to live in the conditions of Time with a spirit proportioned to an Eternal destiny—strive to convert your lower impulses by the constant instinct that you are "born to be a king." I do not mean that complete achievement follows at once. Far from it. But there whatever failings—the will be—amidst upward look, the earnest effort; there will be the recurring confidence in One Who has borne your griefs and carried your sorrows; there will be prayer for perseverance, and, at last, there will be victory.



# Morality and Religion.

### -Morality and Religion.

RELIGION, we cannot fail to feel, is a deeper thing than morality. Morality suggests to us rules and principles. It is noble, it is necessary, but it is hard. Morality applies itself first to one point and then to another point of duty; we are apt, even if we are its fairly good disciples, to be unbalanced, to lay so much stress upon one duty, that we forget another. Morality is hard and active; it has got its eye outside, and from the outside carries messages in. It holds up a high ideal indeed, but there is hardness about it, and want of human help. By itself it reminds man of failure.

Religion, on the contrary, applies itself not to a point here or a point there, but to the whole life; it is a harmonizing power, it carries the soul forth into action with forces stronger than its own; it is morality with life and power thrown into it from a living Presence. It is a felt relation between the creature and his God, and it does not lay down a rule here and there to guide conduct, but it sweeps through the whole being with a

# Morality and Religion.

breath of life which gives to moral rules the energy and beauty of the thoughts and will of One Who can be known and loved. Looked at from one aspect, it seems to be a great emotion, for it undoubtedly clasps and stirs the emotional nature of man, wakening up the very springs of affection, setting all the chords of being in vibration, and penetrating even to the fountains of tears. Looked at from another point of view, it is a stirring enthusiasm; the mind is illuminated by it, as well as the affectionate nature warmed. It is "an enthusiasm of humanity," because it is an enthusiasm from and for Looked at from another point of view, it is an increasing knowledge, coming from without, and poured into the human soul, with a corresponding trust and sense of dependence possessing the creature as he looks up towards God.

But more. There are natural and necessary relations between man and the Being to Whom he owes his life—the relation of a living creature to its reason, its object, and to the end of its life; the relation, Christianity teaches us, more tender and perfect, of a child to its father. From these relations

### Religion and Art.

there results a tie or bond between man and God. To know and feel that bond or tie, to strengthen it as it should be strengthened, to maintain it in the energy that is necessary for practical results, to fix it in living activity so that it shall not be broken,—that is to have a religion. To neglect or ignore all this is to be missing the true aim of life. To recognize and act upon this is to be a religious man.



### -Religion and Art.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights." Art is one of those "good gifts," and to be true to itself, it must be distinctly religious. Real artists never made mere copies and photographs of the mechanism of things, much less did they choose the vilest types and the worst situations, as the means of studying humanity: they have had to treat of evil indeed, because evil is in the world, but they have put it in its proper place. They have depicted it as the foil to goodness, they have led men through the things of sense to the great unseen world,

### Religion and Art.

through the struggles and toils of a sinful and yet God-born humanity to realize the splend-our of goodness and the final and certain victory of truth; they have shown sin to be misery; they have had to do, in fact, with a spiritual world; they have been no mere photographers; they have been idealists, they have worked from within.

Even the old Greeks could do this: they understood something of the splendour of great ideas in the plays of Sophocles, in the pages of Plato, in the figures of the frieze in the Parthenon, in the idealized statues in the temples. Then turn to the Middle Ages. Who teaches us of the greatness and the sorrows of humanity like Francia, like Perugino, like Angelico, like Raffaelle himself? These men worked from within; they worked from their own souls; they could put aside the merely accidental, the merely transitory, and bring out the Lasting and the Eternal. On the roofs of Orvieto, and even-with all the more or less realistic and anatomical turn of Angelo—on the ceilings of the Sistine, if you find sometimes the gigantic, or even the grotesque, you always find genius working out from Eternity, you find the triumph of

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#### Trust.

the Ideal. "Idealism" in Art is reality. "Realism" is falseness and caricature.

Ah! beware of taking any part in, or giving any encouragement to, that modern form of desecration of GoD's "good gifts" which is showing itself in a realistic and vulgar pictorial and scenic tendency, and in a debased and degrading literature.



#### -Trust.

It is worth while to remind ourselves what stress is laid in Scripture upon the habit of trust. Naturally, we find this brought out most distinctly in those writings which deal more than others with the interior and spiritual life—in the Prophets and the Psalms. "Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God." "My God, I have put my trust in Thee; oh, let me not be confounded!" "Oh, how plentiful is Thy goodness... that Thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in Thee!" "The Lord delivereth the souls of His servants; and all they that put their trust in Him shall not be destitute";

### Trust.

"Put thou thy trust in the LORD, and be doing good": "The Lord shall stand by them and save them . . . because they have put their trust in Him"; "I will not trust in my bow . . . but it is Thou that savest us" Then there is the statement of the miserable fall of the wicked accounted for in this way: this is the man that took not GoD for his strength, but trusted unto the multitude of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." Here again is the cry of a religious mind: "I will dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever; and my trust shall be under the covering of Thy wings"; or, "The righteous shall rejoice in the LORD, and put his trust in Him, and all they that are true of heart shall be glad." Again, in a beautiful image, in which Gop is represented as the motherbird sheltering her young, "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." Or again, in another period of psalmody, the sweet singer of Israel teaches, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put any confidence in man"; or again, he feels that he can fearlessly meet those who jibe at higher things: "So shall I make answer unto my blasphemers, for my trust is in Thy

#### Trust.

Word." "They that put their trust in the LORD shall be even as the Mount Zion, which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever."

The same is the case with the prophets. "I will trust, and not be afraid," is the cry of Isaiah. "Who is among you," again he crieth to those who in a dark time have not forsaken religion—"who is among you that feareth the LORD, that 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."

The same truth comes out in Jeremiah, amidst all his sadness, and in the lesser prophets; and one of the most beautiful prophecies of Malachi dwells upon the fact that in the Name of the Messiah the time shall come that not only the Jews, but the Gentiles—the nations—shall trust. And can we forget how the great Apostle, in writing to his disciple Timothy, assigns this attitude of soul as the true account of the endurance of Apostolic trial? "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." Do we

#### Faithfulness.

sufficiently take into our minds the importance attached in Holy Scripture to the spiritual attitude of *trust* in GoD?



#### -Faithfulness.

It is equally striking, and naturally so, that Holy Scripture should lay stress upon faithfulness. For faithfulness is the co-relative of trust. If, indeed, in any nature trust is to be a prevailing power, it is because in that nature there is some deep conviction that somewhere or other faithfulness does exist. "I have declared Thy faithfulness"; "I will make known Thy faithfulness"; "Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the heavens"; faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me"; -such are statements of various psalmists in speak-"Righteousness shall be the ing of God. girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins"; such is Isaiah's description of the Saviour. "I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness"; such is the promise of God by Hosea to His repentant Church. And when the Divine CHRIST, speaking out of eternity by St. John, would exhort His

#### Faithfulness.

Church and His people to rise to the height of their calling, "Be thou faithful unto death," He says, "and I will give thee a crown of life." And among the revelations which are made to us in Holy Scripture of the character of God, St. Paul asserts categorically that "God is faithful."

Faithfulness, indeed, may be said to be the most beautiful and the most necessary charac-There are many teristic in a true soul. beautiful things in the moral world; there are all sorts of gradations of light, and all sorts of combinations of colour; just as in the natural world the eye may delight itself in the variegated spectacle of changing flowers and colouring leaves, or in the constant and ever-varying pageantry of the splendid heavens. So in human character. Even with all our sins and all our frailties, there is an unfathomable fund of interest. and there are inexhaustible resources of beauty.

But however much we admire gifts and graces and beautiful characteristics, or incipient, or possible, or developed excellences in human character, there is one thing about which we are quite certain, and that is, that

#### Faithfulness.

the real ground and bond of all that is truly lovely—if that loveliness is to command our permanent admiration and our complete confidence—is that characteristic of unshaken truth and firm reality which can be relied upon, which assures us that what we admire has strength in it, and will last—which we call faithfulness. It is the bond of friendship; it is the heart's core of real love; it is the power which demands and draws out, and has a right to draw out and demand, the heart's best gift, which is perfect trust. which to exist at all must exist without a flaw. It lies behind the nature of moral things, as interminable, unchanging space lies behind our atmosphere and our stars. It has to be taken for granted; it is so real, it has to be practically forgotten in the moral union between hearts and hearts. It is like the air we breathe, or the earth we tread upon, or the light by which we see the material universe. We hardly reason about it, or think of it, or discuss it. In the real union of moral nature with moral nature, and soul with soul, there it is, there it must be, or all As nothing in the moral world is so is lost odious, or destructive of human happiness

# The Eternal City.

and human goodness, as lightness and inconstancy, so nothing is so necessary, nothing so beautiful, as faithfulness.



### -The Eternal City.

THE Eternal City is in fact the working out of the two-fold Divine benediction. completion and beatified result of purified characters. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way," and "Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven and whose sin is covered." This is the glorious end of innocence and penitence. How does the corrupt heart of man doubt or disbelieve it! Innocence! can it be found? To "keep innocency"—is not that a dream? No, not so: there are those whose names are engraved on the hands of the Crucified, who have walked through the fire and felt no scorching, have faced the enemy and never been hurt by him; there are those in whom the powers of darkness have found no home; sweet souls, sweet and strong; plunged in sin, as Jesus in the Agony, it pains, it cannot harm or stain them. Their

# The Eternal City.

joy has never left them; their robe of baptism never been soiled; hearts full of tenderness, and yet on fire with indignant horror at wrong; princes of the children of men, "they walk with GoD, for they are worthy"; kept by grace from transgression, free from "the great offence," they have made no treaty with death, they have their feet on the track of the Dawn.

And the penitent suffering souls, yet victorious. Once conquered, once surrendering, once captive to the Evil Powers; dreamers, or disappointed or downhearted, the world has overtaken them, or the Devil enticed, or—

"The sinful Flesh In its rose mesh"

has entangled them,—but one Vision at last prevailed—the Vision of supreme love and sorrow, the Vision of Christ; and the "grande et suave vulnus amoris"—the "broad sweet wound of love"—became their salvation. Blessed are they, travel-soiled and wayworn, yet they too at last, at last, have their feet on the track of the Dawn.

And in the end? Why, holiness and everlasting life, the triumph of saints, the completion of character, "No night there."

# The Gates of the Eternal City.

The breaking of the Dawn! It is coming, it is coming, there is a land of brightness after darkness; amid all sorrow hope will yet have its triumph: "there shall be no night there!"



# -The Gates of the Eternal City.

THERE is a sermon included in the works of St. Bernard, though probably not written by himself, where the preacher speaks of the Gates of the City.

There is, he reminds us, the gate of Innocence, through which the spotless ones, with baptismal grace unsullied by the world, shall enter in; there is the gate of Justice, the path of apostles and martyrs, of "just men made perfect," on whom the Sun of Righteousness had shone with the warmth of His fullest splendour, and was reflected in the glory of their labour and the fervour of their love; there too the western gate, the gate of those who, like the Magdalene, once were slaves of Satan, but became the temples of God, and fleeing from the regions of

### The Gates of the Eternal City.

darkness set their faces to the breaking of the day, and made for the morning; there too is the gate of God's Pity, there where those enter who, having lived in sin, by a miracle of mercy are led to contrition at last—the gate of the ignorant and sorrowful, the gate of the penitent thief. The four gates are of the opposite conditions, for who is innocent needs not penitence, and who is an object only for pity has not righteousness.

There too amongst the gates of the Innocent is the gate of the King, where none can pass but He Who "knew no sin." There among the gates of the Just are the ways of those who have lived righteously in devotion, or of those who pressed on, ever "hungering and thirsting" for higher things, or of those who, though attacked with temptation to many sins, held foward by a firm resolve. There too amongst the gates of Penitence are the paths of such as like St. John the Baptist mourn for sins not their own, of those too who turn with entire and ready conversion from darkness to light; yes, and of those who, though wanting in fervour and in the glory of charity, wanting therefore in the spirit of liberty, yet were not to be

# The Gates of "he Eternal City.

despaired of, pecause, undertaking the yoke of Christian service, at least they persevered. And there among the gates of Pity is the steep path of those who, once worldlings, have been awakened by death's approach to a sense of sin, who have made restitution of ill-gotton gain, and who in sorrow and amendment have "made to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," and, through the grace that came by the intercesssion of the faithful, enter in; there also the gate of such as, even after many sins, in sincere sorrow, make a good confession; and there, yes, there also, the gate for those of whom indeed man and the Church knew nothing—the secret gate of hidden contrition, of such as were known only to Him Who knows the hidden ones, and Who can never by the very terms of His nature of tenderness—can never spurn the being who, though late, alas! and known only to His omniscience, comes to Him with a broken and contrite heart.

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