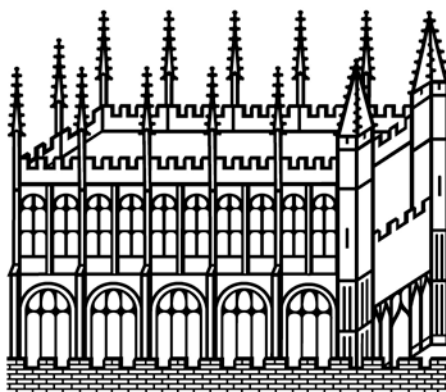




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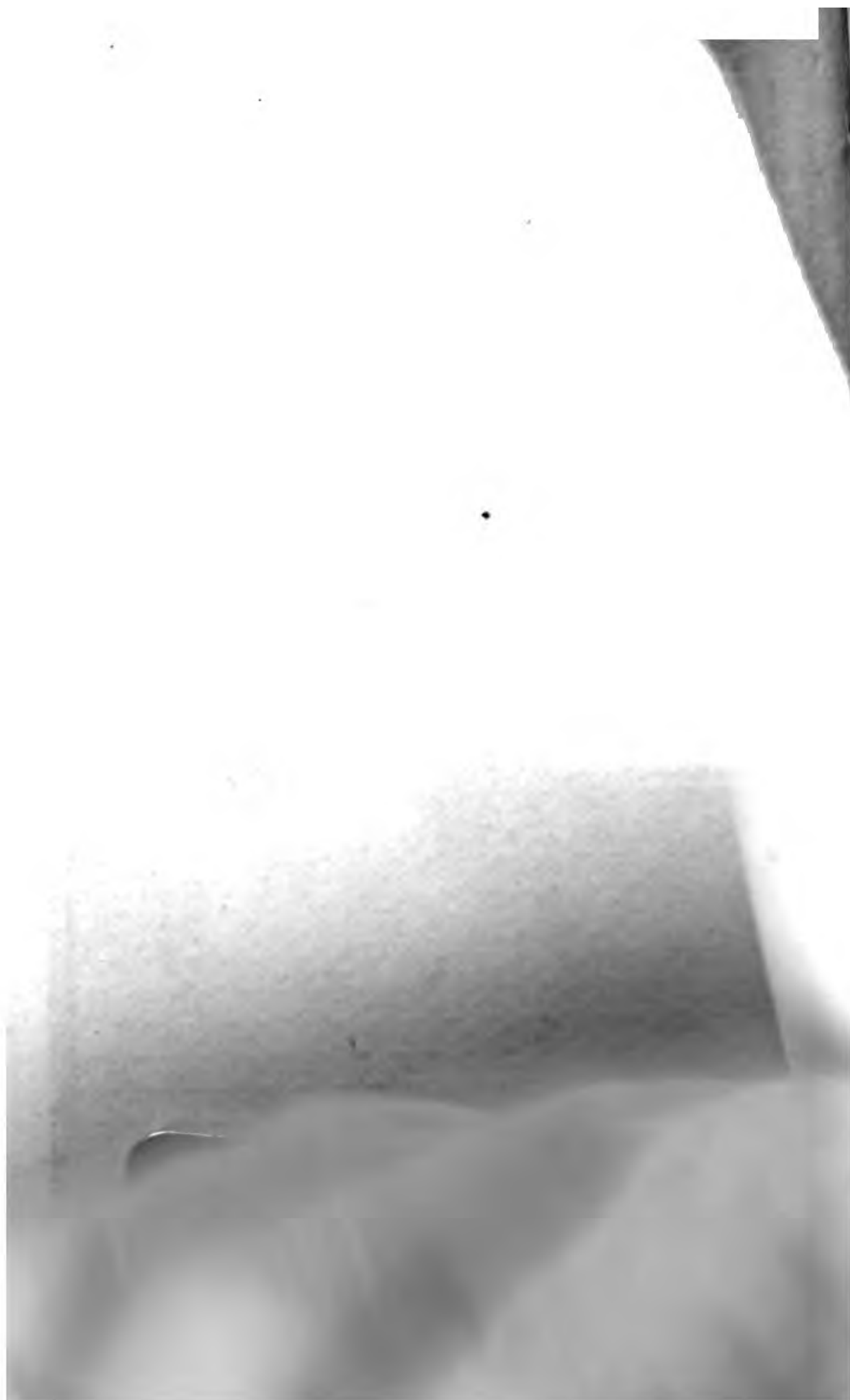
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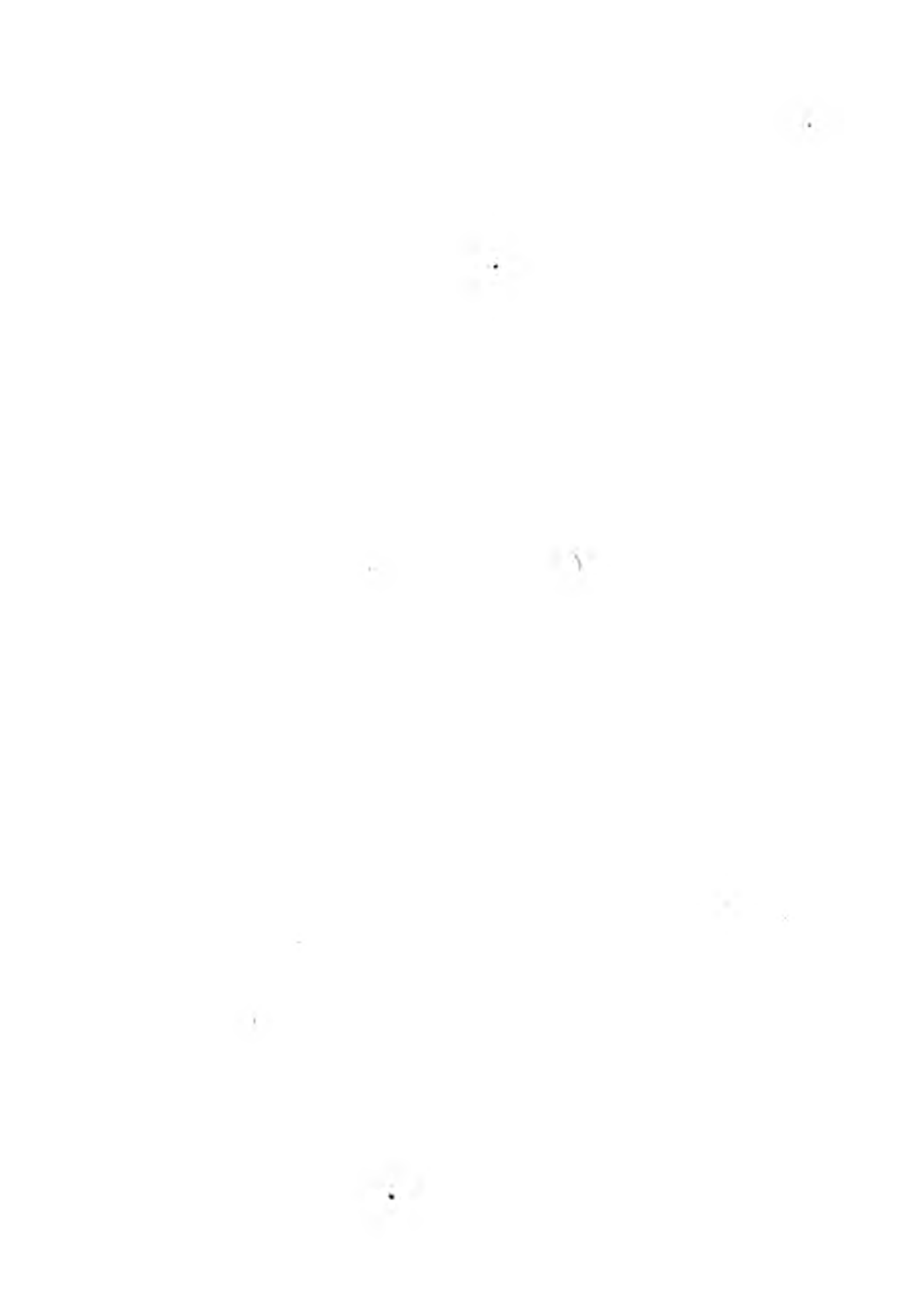


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Rule of Life.



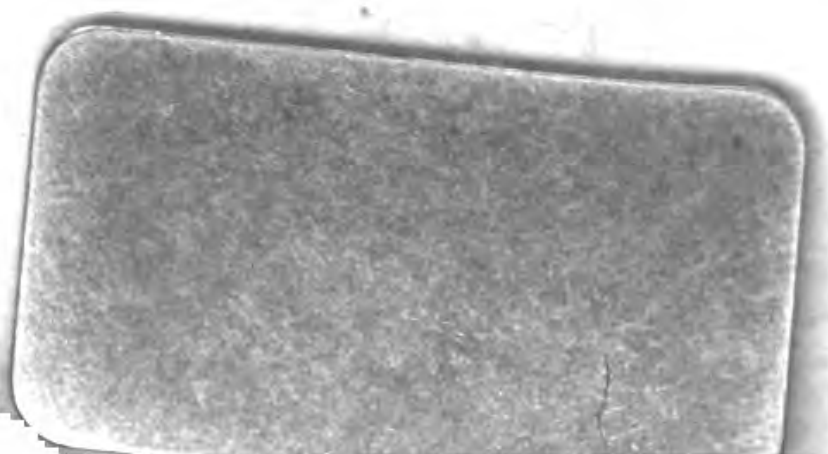


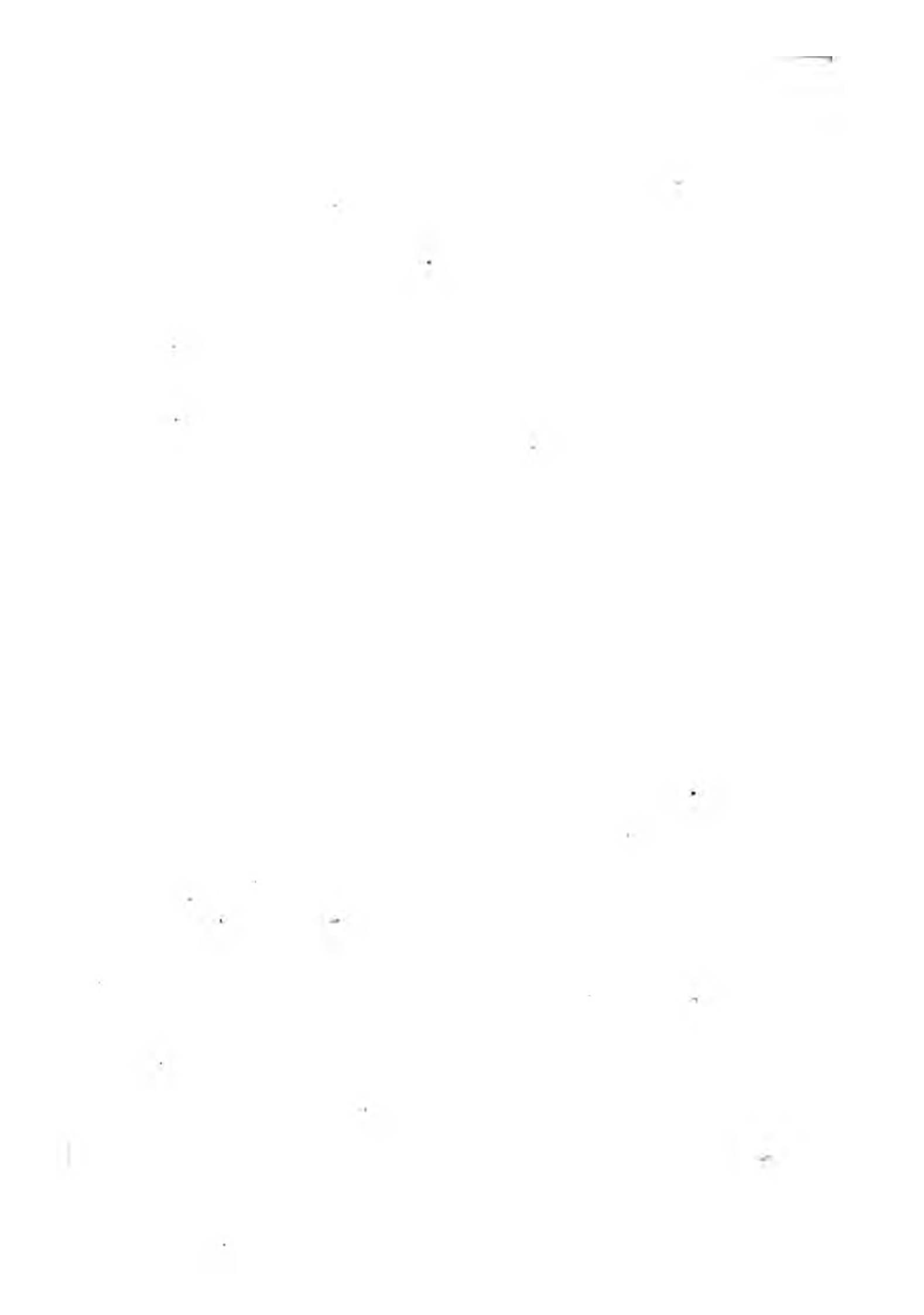


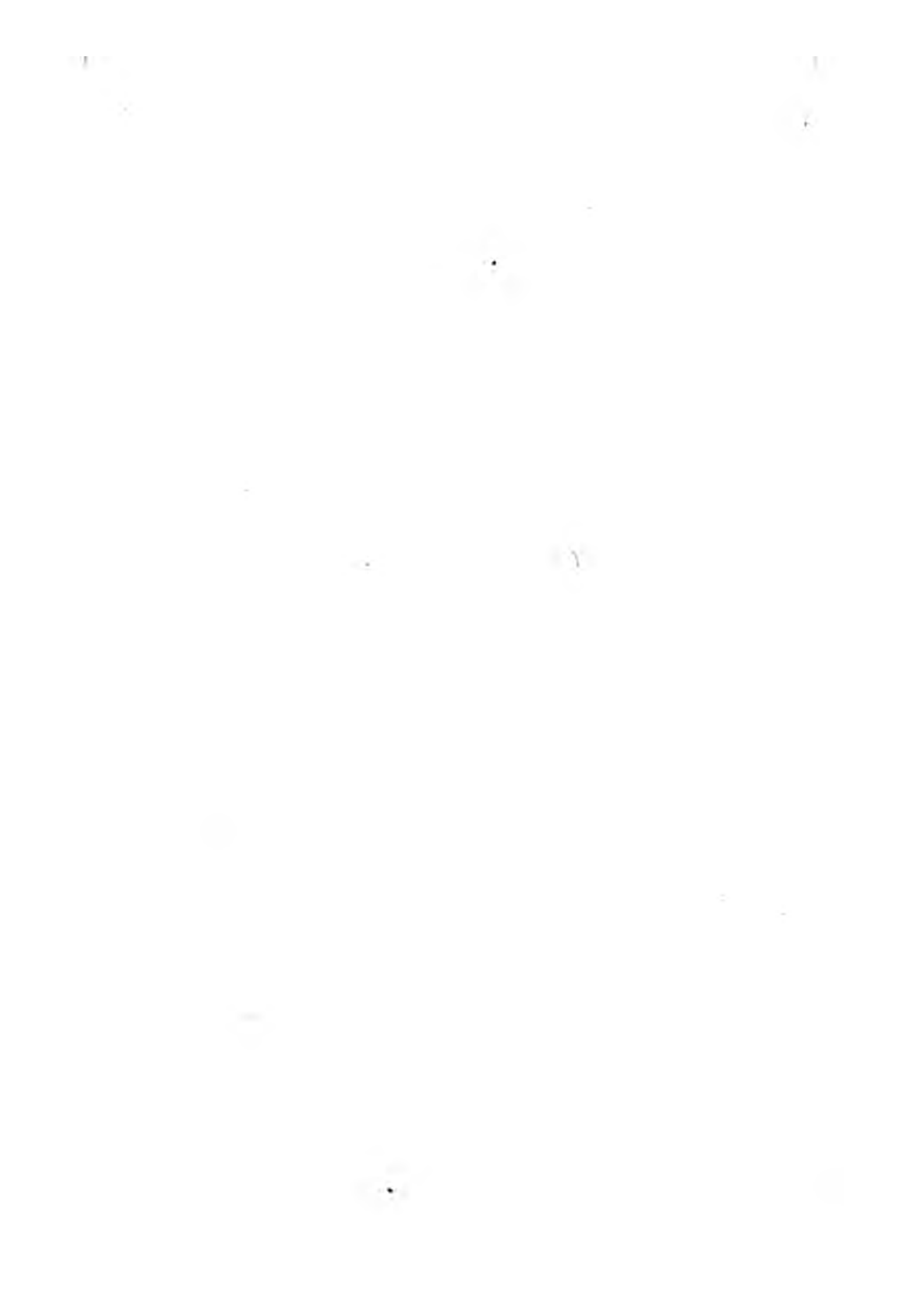
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**THE
RULE OF LIFE.**







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**THE
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RULE OF LIFE.

BEING

AN EASY EXPLANATION

OF

HODGES AND SONS, PRINTERS, PROMPT.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

By the
Author of "The Rule of Faith."

JOHN HODGES,
46, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

1873.



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HODGES AND SONS, PRINTERS, FROME.

PREFACE.

THE favourable reception of the first book of this series has encouraged me to submit the second in the hope that it may be kindly read. I have followed out in *The Rule of Life* the design which I had in *The Rule of Faith*, and should this meet with the like success, shall hope at no distant period, to offer *The Rule of Prayer*. I desire to thank my reviewers for the generous way in which they have discovered merit and excused the faults in *The Rule of Faith*, and the credit they have given me for but one motive, the bringing in a very cheap form as much of Church teaching and meditation as was possible. If it shall please God that any part of these books may be a comfort to any soul or may afford an hour's quiet in the care of life, I would ask that one to remember the author in his or her prayers, and to believe that his wishes are more than satisfied,

PREFACE. CONTENTS.

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THE RULE OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Of Obedience—Education—The Will of God—Of the Perfect Man—Of the Unwritten and Written Law—The Institution of the Decalogue—Of the Christian's Life in Christ—Of the Spirit of Obedience—Of Free Will—Of the Division of the Decalogue—Of the Love of God and our Neighbour.

THE RULE OF LIFE. How close do these words bring us to the line of duty, which in its plain soberness and stern reality must be ours through life ; from the water of Baptism even to Eternity !

“ To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams ;” and, “ If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the commandments.” It is thus that the Old and New Testament meet in the one word, *Obedience*. It is said that one, a meek and holy con-

fessor of our own, when asked what he would recommend for our whole life, replied: "*Uniform Obedience.*" Meaning, as we are told, that the happiest state of life was that in which we had not to command, but to obey solely; where we chose not for ourselves, but where our path of duty was clearly defined, and all we had to do was to follow it out. No one can study the Word of God without hearing for ever the same voice, which spake in the Gospel to the Scribe, speaking throughout and telling us that obedience is the only path which leadeth heavenward. There is the reality, and that, the steady onward continuance in the line of duty; *that* alone will give a man peace here and enable him, when he hath done all, in the great day of account, *to stand*. That voice teacheth practical holiness: "Keep the commandments." No one can read the lives and labours of Apostles, so far as the New Testament and Church History gives them to us, without being convinced of the same truth. S. Paul's description of his own work and his own manner of life (2 Cor. vi. 1-10), and his continual reminder to us of what he always had in view, "The mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus;" S. Luke's account of the early Christians who ate their bread from house to house, who gave up lands and all that this world holdeth dear, that they

might be more entirely and thoroughly Christ's, *all* speak the same thing. They looked on the world around them with its attractions and its snares, as something *unreal* and *passing* away ; they saw the far-off land which they called the *city to come* as the end of their work and pilgrimage and as the only real and lasting hope, and so with the vivid memory of words heard from the lips of Christ or transmitted through inspired teaching, of a coming suddenly and a reckoning with His servants ; of a love to Him which must not be shown in word only, or in an outward profession (however needful that might be) but in keeping His commandments, they added *to their faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance godliness*, that they might come behind in no gift waiting for that coming. Thus they realized in the quiet line of every day duty, as masters and slaves, as merchants and labourers, as men of family ties, and as solitary that if they would love Him as he desired to be loved, they must keep His commandments.

So then there is that which meets us at the threshold of life when we come from the laver of Baptism, which we can never shake off, the obligation to be His soldiers and servants *to our lives end*. Sentiment, feeling, emotion, and the like fade away before the stern reality of the vow which we

can never release ourselves from. We are Christ's, and Christ's for ever ; we may be, and many are, but indifferent and careless, and unprofitable, nay even slothful servants, but *servants* we are, such as we are, and bound by that promise as well as by the power of His redemption, *to obey*. We are then, to use the eloquent words of the sainted John Keble, "launched in the ocean of eternity." Of how many may it be feared that, for lack of that steady obedience, they never reach the Haven where they would be.

"Let us all for once lay to heart this most serious, yet most certain truth, we *are* ; whether we will or no, we exist ; we are in God's world, and we cannot resist His will. We *are* ; and in spite of what the evil one may sometimes whisper to us, we very well know in our hearts, that we shall be for ever. You cannot put away from you the yoke and burden which your Creator has laid on your shoulders, the yoke and burden of your duty to Him and to your neighbour. You may by His grace, cause the yoke to become easy and the burden light ; but you cannot put it away from you. You cannot bury your talent or hide it in a napkin, and hear no more of it ; an account is sure to be demanded of you. You are fairly embarked on the great ocean of eternity ; you cannot stop ; you cannot draw back ; on

The Rule of Life.

and on you must sail for ever and ever. A great prize is set before you, or a great and unspeakable loss; you have a soul to save or to lose, an immortal soul, and you cannot say *that* you had rather decline doing either; it is a hazard which *must* be run; your soul must be saved or lost. Why should you wantonly throw away so much of life's sweetness and comfort? for depend upon it, all the days and years that we put off turning to God are so much sweetness and comfort thrown away." (Keble.)

Just so: our happiness as well as our life; for, to the true disciple the two are the same, is to be found only in the path of duty, faithfully followed out, and our rule of life is His commandments.

"Who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle," says the Psalmist. "Who shall dwell in Thy Holy Hill." And what is the answer? "Even he that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." Obedience being that which secureth peace and salvation.

Again, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee."

Where the faith and the obedience, which are mutually dependent, and take their value the one from the other, are said to, by the grace of God, keep the disciple in perfect peace. And if faith be that holy inspiration which

enables us to grasp at the unseen and make it our own, which will have us see that this world is not enough for our happiness, and move us for ever to desire His presence, who filleth all things that we may learn more perfectly His will; obedience is the hand-maid, for by that we surrender ourselves to the perfect will, and because we can offer nothing else, we offer ourselves, body, soul, and spirit; like Mary, we choose at His feet that good part which shall never be taken from us.

In meditating on the Rule of Life, it is of the first importance to bear these truths in mind. We must remember what a comfort obedience is, and how it is the only reality, all else being, like the world we live in and the society in which we move, mere shadows, liable at any moment to pass away. Obedience is the less attractive of Christian virtues, because it calls into play so much that is against nature, namely, self-discipline, self-denial, self-control. And it combats effectually, self-love. David says, "I am wiser than the aged because I keep Thy commandments." Discipline of thought, and life, and heart teach us much of self, make us wise in God's ways and cognizant of the ever-growing evil of our own nature, and so promote watchfulness and humility. "For if the good man of the house had known at what hour the thief

would have come he would have watched and not have suffered his house to be broken into." It is by doing the will of God ; by recognizing it in all the changes of life ; by reading in the course of this troubled world the expression of the Divine mind ; by bowing ourselves down before it, under whatsoever guise it may reveal itself ; by yielding ourselves in gladness of mind both to do and suffer it, counting it a holy discipline, and a loving correction of our own wilfulness, and by praying Him never to stay His hand till the mind of self be abolished from our regenerate being ; by these means it is thus we are changed from the shadow of a fleeting life to the abiding realities of the eternal world, being made partakers of the will of God.

I love to kiss each print, where Thou—
Hast set Thine unseen feet,
I cannot fear Thee, blessed will,
Thine empire is so sweet.

When obstacles and trials seem—
Like prison walls to be,
I do the little I can do,
And leave the rest to Thee.

He always wins who sides with God ;
To him no chance is lost,
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.

All that He blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill ;
And all is right that seems most wrong
If it be His sweet will.

We seem to want in these days a more frequent setting forth of His life as our childhood's pattern, and a looking to *that* as the groundwork of Christian teaching for our children submission. There is a very general restlessness and dislike to be guided among the young, and a corresponding shrinking, as if it were an imposing of a new yoke, on one part of the elders from enforcing, as a first principle, obedience. All training is useless without this, and all knowledge only the strengthening the power of deception in that heart, which is naturally deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. And it will be found when we have reared a people freed from catechisms, and commandments, and Church teaching, and in their place filled their minds with the science and the discoveries of modern days, we shall have let loose a tide of cultivated heathenism, which no earthly power can control. The subject before us, in its history and bearing on Christian life, and in its effects, where observed or despised, will illustrate this and prove how great a necessity for the moral and social good of society, and for the

peace and comfort of home is the law of obedience, the rule of life contained in the ten commandments. Christ the perfect man overcame sin by His holiness; by His perfect and perpetual obedience; by His spotless life, by His submissive will; and only by imitating Him can we hope to do the same. He offered Himself without spot to God, a sinless offering; the reasonable sacrifice and the spiritual sacrifice of a "crucified will." It is ours so far as we can to do the same. In His childhood, in His youth, in His manhood, in all the acts and all the sufferings of His humanity, in all that He did for sinners, and all that He suffered for them, in His loneliness and nights of prayer, as well as in the company of the worldling and the sinner; in His fulfilment of all righteousness, His worship and His acquiescence in the authority of the powers of the world, He was mastering sin by showing a perfect obedience. He worked out for us as none other could the rule of life, He taught us how life should be passed, how its cares should be met, how its temptations should be overcome, how its callings should be fulfilled, how the balance of its social order should be preserved, in a word, how to live in the world and above it, by doing the will of God.

Let us pray Him therefore to shed abroad

in us the mind that was in Christ; that, our will being crucified, we may offer up ourselves to be disposed of as He sees best, whether for joy or sorrow, blessing or chastisement; to be high or low; to be slighted, or esteemed; to be full, or to suffer need; to have many friends, or to dwell in a lonely home; to be passed by, or called to serve Him and His Kingdom in our own land or among people of a strange tongue; to be, to go, to do, to suffer, even as He wills, even as He ordains, even as Christ endured, "who through the eternal spirit, offered Himself without spot to God."

The ten commandments bring home to us the two very opposite mysteries, the mystery of sin, and the mystery of holiness. We learn from them what sin is, what it has been to the world and how it has transformed human life; we learn also how the evil thus created may be remedied, how mercy and truth have come by Jesus Christ.

In studying the rule of life we must be careful to keep in view the identity between the unwritten and the written Law of God. We must not look on the written Law as some new revelation, or God as otherwise in Will and decree than one. The mischief of separating the Will of God leads obviously to the mischief of separating the responsibility of man. Faith

and duty are thus confused, and it is found that some will act as though they supposed, and doubtless they do suppose, that we gain admittance into Heaven on easier terms by Christ instead of seeing that obedience which was an eternal law makes us know and believe in Christ, that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The result of this is the theory of "Believe only" amounting indeed to an almost entire neglect of duty and a virtual denial of human responsibility altogether. How much good an honest self-examination by the Law of God would do to many, who esteem themselves as advanced in spiritual life because they can readily use the shibboleth of spiritual talk, it is needless to say. Nothing tends more surely to the practice of humility than the strict watch over our obedience, nothing more certainly destroys sentiment nor gives us such real and true view of the Holiness of God, and the solemn nature of human life, than to study God through His revealed Law. "Hereby do we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments," and "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him."

The written law, as laid down to us in the ten commandments, carries us back to

the time when all law was unwritten and when the will of man assented and submitted happily to the Will of God. We seem to see how God was then all in all to His creature, and the rule of life unwritten, but made known in the constant communion with the Blessed Trinity. We cannot help thinking what would have been, and what might have been, but for sin. All has changed since then. Man's nature has become other than it was. Obedience, then a happiness and requiring no effort, is now a work, a task, a struggle, a fight, the ultimate result of which is often very doubtful. "In Adam all died." The beautiful world is beautiful still, as beautiful as when He formed it out of Chaos. The ever recurring seasons still supply us with what nature and natural life requires, the food of the body and the refreshment for the soul, that change without which there would be no rest. His work has not altered. Only where sin has left its deadly mark, do we see what has happened. In the calm of a summer eve, by the ever restless sea, or in the prospect of a fair landscape, in the light of the starry heavens, or in the face of an innocent child, we seem to feel how very lovely God is, and what man might have been had he fulfilled his destiny and remained innocent. He was to go on to a perfection which was to make him more

like His Creator, and at last, such was God's love for him, God the Son was to be Incarnate and raise that nature to its highest state of happiness. The condition was obedience. But obedience then was an easy task. Love was the fulfilment of the law, no law was written, for the will of man was the Will of God. Adam lost not his will, but his will was God's will,—he had no thought, nor wish, nor conception, which was not God's; wholly and entirely His. Hence when the Blessed One came in the fullness of time and took man's nature, He took it in its perfection, with a perfect will, one content to do God's Will, and the second Adam became, what the first Adam ceased to be, our example of perfect obedience.

The mystery then, which was hidden from the earliest times, and which angels desired to look into, was how God could take that nature so degraded, and how that nature could be restored. It seemed impossible to them now, that God could become man, and in proportion to their wonder at the mystery when revealed, was their joy on the night of the nativity.

It has been a prevailing tradition, and there are passages in Holy Scripture clearly harmonizing with the belief, that the fall of the angels was involved in their resisting God's purpose of becoming incarnate in

man's nature, rather than in their own. It has been believed to be the purpose of God to take, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; that He, Christ as man, in all things should have the pre-eminence; that in Him, as Man, all the fulness of the Godhead should dwell bodily; that by Him, as Man, "the Father should reconcile all things to Himself, whether they be things on earth, or things in Heaven;" that these designs of unutterable glory destined to be fulfilled in our nature, in preference to their own, awakened in them that resistance, the fruit of pride, to which scripture assuredly ascribes their fall, pride maddening those principalities and powers against God, and precipitating them against His irresistible will before which they hopelessly fell." (Carter.) Evil having thus in a certain form entered in God's creation was to be subdued by man. Adam was to keep the garden, as well as dress it; and in process of time, in a growth from strength to strength and grace to grace, man was to fulfil his mission to God's glory in the destruction of evil; and the final consummation was to be attained by the Christ taking his nature. We know how all this was changed. We know how sin entered into the world and death by sin; and what man failed to do in himself, he will at last accomplish in Christ. Had it been other-

wise ; had the unwritten law been faithfully kept, he would have been a fit preparation for the Heaven of Heavens, an abode without sorrow or pain, where God's presence was the joy of the creature and God incarnate. The perfection could not otherwise than be a foretaste of that world unseen, the city having foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God.

If then we keep this in view, we shall, I think, see the awful meaning of the institution of the law which could not give life, but which revealed the will of the Almighty. We shall see why it was so instituted, and the meaning of all the terrible surroundings. "And all the people saw the thunders and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets and the mountain smoking ; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, fear not ; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." Ex. xx. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Here was the offended majesty of God asserting Himself under His claim to be obeyed ; but how different from the calm, restful tone of Gen. ii., when the Lord God

saw everything that it was good, and when He brought the beast of the field and the fowl of the air to Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatsoever he called any living creature, that was the name thereof. And when all was harmony, and the law written only in the fleshy tables of the heart.

The voice had changed with the changed nature of man, and though loving still, though still the God who shewed mercy and forgiveness, yet He loved as one whose love had been violated and, as now, iniquity, transgression, and sin, were the marks of the creature; so pardon, and pity, and the love of reconciliation, were the attributes of the offended Creator.

The voice, once welcome, was welcome no longer, and, though a Father still, yet He was one who now asserted His authority, and who made obedience a necessity. And so the sound of the trumpet and the voice of words, and the awful surroundings that made Israel tremble, ushered in the new dispensation, the birth of a law which only the second Adam could give power to fulfil. Truly, the first Adam was made a living soul, the second a life-giving spirit.

No longer the voice which first spake to Adam and pronounced all good, that loved to call him, to talk with him, and that went forth to him as to the creature of His divine

love; that watched as the Eternal only could watch the growth of that soul and the development of those graces which He had implanted in him; that loved the sympathy of His creature, and was to him ever welcome bringing ever some new happiness, some hitherto unknown pleasure. No longer this, but the terrible voice of a just and offended God; of a Father, but a Father offended with a disobedient child. The voice now laid down a law that never could give life, nor ever bring back again what sin had lost, but which said, this do and live, disobey and die; and, as He told of the new miseries which sin had brought into the world, of the new gods, the new worship, the new profanity, the fruits of the flesh; the voice spake with terrible distinction and terrible anger. So they trembled at all the signs which accompanied the delivery of this law, and they prayed Moses to put a veil over his face, for the glory of God reflected in him was too great for them, he was no longer welcome, the shadow of the first sin had fallen on them and they would fain, if it might be, hide themselves from the face of the Eternal.

But ever and again there were heard sounds as of the old voice which Adam loved in his innocence, and which now broke out, as the sun from the darkened clouds, speaking of Him who forgiveth iniquity,

transgression and sin; and the secret, long hidden in the mind of the Eternal, of which the sacrifices were the type, began to appear. And so holy men learnt that God was providing Himself a way of reconciliation, and man, who had lost his first estate, was to be restored. So too, the mystery which the world knew not, and could not of itself know, gradually unfolded itself; in due time, Christ came.

God was manifest in the flesh. Christ became to us the end of righteousness, and the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. He and He alone, fulfilled its requirements; He and He alone, brought life and immortality to life through the Gospel; and so we learn hence how cometh the mystery of Godliness, what Christian obedience is, whence our power to obey, how sanctification and the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost are ours, for by Him and through Him are all things and He is the pattern Man and the Author of eternal salvation to all that come to God by Him. Thus it is in the power of a Holy Life and of *the* Holy Life, that the believer lives in Him, and that he, by being united sacramentally in Baptism, and in the Holy Eucharist, to Him, is enabled to walk worthy of His vocation, as being called to be a saint and to follow the rule of life in loving God with all his heart and soul, and his

neighbour as himself. Hence when the question was put to Christ, "What shall I do to inherit Eternal Life;" the answer was what is thy rule of life? Keep the commandments if thou wilt enter into Life. And He who gave the answer came to give the wisdom and strength to do it. The soul henceforth must rest upon Christ, must live in Christ, must put forth its energies through Christ, "Christ is the end, the support, the very atmosphere of its life."

Herein we see the problem solved. The law came by Moses, but Mercy and Truth by Jesus Christ. Without Him we can do nothing, with Him all things are possible. Human life being centered in Him, and the working in the Christian obedience become a possibility, holiness a delight, day by day and hour by hour, through this fitful life the Christian is sustained by Him, and is conscious of an abiding personal relationship with the Divine Master. The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. He lives in us, He thinks and acts in us, our life is in Him, our obedience in His, and so the law which could not give life, which could not promise peace, becomes through Him and by His continued help a rule which shall reach on to our great reward, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; a law undefiled converting the soul and giving wisdom to the simple.

It was He, the perfect Man, who declared to us what was to be the nature of that service which God would henceforth require of His children. It was to be not of the letter but of the spirit. It was to be no loose-fitting garment of morality which should suit the decency of the society in which we lived and fulfil the requirements of a civilized life ; but it was to enter into the very thought and intents of the heart ; the eye, the desire, the irregularated will, the conception were to be brought into subjection to the higher law of Christ. What they had said of old gave place at once and for ever to what He said. "Ye have heard" all the traditions of the elders, all the unreal interpretations of God's will must give way to—"But I say unto you."

We must keep this steadily in view in our meditation on the rule of life, and, see clearly how the law could not give life and perfect obedience became impossible, but He having opened a way and giving to all grace which enableth our weakness, giving to us Sacramental Union with Him and unceasing aid in prayer enlighteneth our blindness, helpeth our infirmities, restoreth our power,—filleteth up our wants, and is made unto us sanctification and redemption, and so we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.

Again, the law was delivered with thun-

derings and lightnings and all the accompaniments of awful majesty; the Gospel was revealed on the mount with all the accents of Mercy. *There* the Great Teacher sat, and as men mused in their hearts of Him, and drew closer and closer to Him, with every varied thought as to *who* He was and what new doctrine he was about to preach, He opened His mouth in blessings. He taught of a calm, holy, quiet seeking after God; of a self-discipline which governed the very heart and reins; of a hunger and thirst after Holiness like unto that of the sweet Psalmist, whose soul was athirst for the Living God. And so it came to pass that they learned to find in Him, the great example, the Pattern Man, how easy and yet how difficult obedience was; how easy, for all might be done by loving effort, with prayer, and faith, and self-oblation; and yet how difficult, for this that He taught was of a higher tone, and went deeper into the springs of life—the secret of the heart. Truly never man spake like this Man.

So then we learn from the commandments the mystery of sin, as S. Paul puts it, “sin revived and I died;” what never would have been but for sin became as the consequence of sin. While obedience was the very nature of Man, and Man could not be without it, and while the happiness of

Man's first estate was in this unreserved fulfilment of God's Will, and there was no law but that written on the fleshly tablets of the heart, *sin* called forth the law. To preserve the knowledge of God, the very knowledge of Him, a people must be separate, they must be taught by miracles, by a history which is made up of miracles, God must reveal Himself in a way in which they would acknowledge Him by wonders, by a mighty hand and a stretched out arm, though wearied full often, yet was he still forbearing. And there must be a written law to protect His Honour, and His Name, and His Worship; a law which should be to them the rule of life, beginning with God and ending with Him, which touched on and influenced to the full, all our relations to each other, in the world and with mankind, as members of a fold, as parents and children, as master and servants, as neighbours and friends, as citizens of the world, as men of business and traders, as children of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. All, reaching forward to the day of reckoning, when the hearts of all shall be revealed, and everyone of us shall give account of himself to God, and all shall be judged according to their works, and when God would, for the sake of Christ, accept the imperfect fulfilment of the law, and when they, who come out of great tribulation,

should wash their robes white in His Blood.

The question of obedience and of the nature of the law being settled, the next question that will arise, is, the Spirit of Obedience, viz. : what is that spirit which should mark our obedience, how shall we fulfil the law? If what we have said be so, that the written law is an expression of the unwritten and eternal law, and that this was called forth by sin, the spirit will be the same. Man was free in Paradise, he is free still. In Eden with God, he had a will, but that will was in subjection to the will, of God; he knew no restraint, he was conscious of no galling restriction, he could conceive nothing that was not in harmony with the Divine conception, and it was only when sin entered into the world and brought in another will, "Ye shall not surely die," "in the day that ye eat therefore ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil," that the desire and the spirit changed. So it is now. Man is free. Sin alone makes him a slave—he hath the awful power of willing *contrary* to the will of God and of willing *with* God; and the whole history of the world is on this wise "out of the house of bondage." This rings through it, fulfil this and you are free, for it is *I* who makes you free, *My yoke is easy*; Break this and you are slaves, and it is the devil who binds you and makes you slaves. *My service is*

perfect freedom. It is important to keep this in view throughout, for so the fancied hardship of self-control ceases.

Our mind, soul, spirit, are free to live or die, to be Christ's and being Christ's, to be God's *or not*. And so the question of free will as it affects the nature of our obedience, bears on the thorough surrender of self to Him and on what makes it acceptable to Him. We are to be His soldiers and servants to our life's end; and we are to be so of our *own free will*. Matthew must leave *his* calling and *his* world to be Christ's, the sacrifice was great but he must make it; still he could stay, he was free to do the one or the other. He made his choice and henceforth his life was one steady disciplining of the will to that of his Divine Master.

Ours must be the same. We are called from the world to the font, we renounce the world and its sins first, and then we are washed and sanctified, and then do we make that promise which is to stand good to our lives end.

And it is necessary to bear this in mind, when we think of the ultimate reward and end of life. What is that end? *Holiness*. We have to return back, so far as can, be to the innocence which has been lost, to be created after God in righteousness and true holiness, to press on to the mark, to fight the good fight, and thus free and unshackled

as the children of God, so that our work and our obedience must be the unsullied offering of free men. "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." The power, the vigour, the warmth of the Apostle's words, take only the tone of the energy of his life. The whole bears the mark of an emancipation from a thralldom which had tied him down and made him loathe himself. He writes, he acts, he thinks as a free man, and he throws all the power of a free soul and all the freshness of free thought into his life. *Christ hath made us free.*

So does Christ put before us in His parables which are a picture of life, what is the rule of life, He goes out early in the morning to hire labourers, He promises wage, He assigns them work, He leaves them free to go into the vineyard or not; He assigns to each according to his several abilities, and he may improve or hide the talent in a napkin, but if he does his best, and if when the great reckoning comes, it be found that he hath been faithful over a few things, then there will come the reward.

And if it be said that Christ calls for so much, that a Matthew must leave his business, his all, that He calls on a man to come after Him, forsaking all for Him, and puts the cross before us as the measure of our obedience, then I say, does He not give

The *Journal* is

The first part of the book is a history of the book trade in the United States. It begins with the early days of the book trade in the colonies, and then goes on to discuss the growth of the book trade in the United States in the nineteenth century. The author then discusses the book trade in the United States in the twentieth century, and finally discusses the book trade in the United States in the twenty-first century.

much? *In this world an hundredfold.* Are not the very denials of His service the highest gifts and blessings? Are not the very restraints which seem to bind so tightly the faithful servant, the actual, by a strange contrariety, *loosening* of the soul, a freeing from earth and a binding to Heaven. To rest on the love of God, so far from separating us from the love of man, is to fold us up closer in the love of all the good and the holy, to multiply friends and relatives, and brethren and sisters; to restrain the appetite, the will, the very thought, is to set free that will, and that thought, that it may be more really and truly His. The pampered body, the self-indulgent life, has no room and no energy for Him; the whole being is unhealthy and unreal; once freed from these restraints, we can give to God what God seeks, and what above all He will have, for it is what God loves, *our own selves.*

The freedom of the will being then the spirit of obedience, we are prepared to see in what sense we should interpret the commandments. What is commanded includes spirit as well as letter. There must be the hidden man of the heart as well as the outward observances. We must not be satisfied as the Pharisees of old with the mere act, we must look narrowly into the thought and intents of the heart. And so comes in *purity*

of intention which will disclose to us *our motives*. How very important these are, no one who has watched the tone of morals and the forms of speech amongst us, can for a moment doubt; how few understand, or are at the pains to weigh their motives, or to ask what they mean by their acts, and why they do them. The whole net-work of self-deceit is fabricated in the absence of this most important element in the spiritual life.

What does Jeremy Taylor say on this? "The praise is not in the deed done, but in the manner of doing. If a man visits a sick friend and watches at his pillow for charity's sake, and because of his old affection, we approve it, but if he does it in the hope of a legacy, he is a vulture and only watches for the carcase. The same things are honest and dishonest, the manner of doing them and the end of the design makes the separation."

"Holy intention, is to the action of a man that which the soul is to the body, or the form to its matter, or the root to the tree, or the sun to the world, or the fountain to the river, or the base to a pillar; for without these the body is a dead trunk, the matter is sluggish, the tree a block, the world darkness, the river is quickly dry, the pillar rushes into flatness and a ruin, and the action is sinful or unprofitable and vain.

The poor farmer who gave a dish of cold water to Artaxerxes was rewarded with a golden goblet; and he that gives the same to a disciple in the name of a disciple shall have a crown, but if he gives water in despite, when the disciple needs a cordial, his reward shall be to want that water to cool his tongue."

This is the spirit of the law. God does not lay down a law which in His infinite wisdom He knows that man cannot fulfil; so shocking a thought cannot and must not be entertained. God is love, and out of the recesses of that love came the law which was to guide man; without Holiness none can see God. Without obedience there can be no holiness, and Christ giveth both the one and the other. He giveth the power to obey and the will to choose holiness. And the once unwritten law, which is now written, becomes through Christ possible to fulfil, possible not in that all can be kept in the strict entirety of angels, but possible in that we can gain the help we need, the light to see, and the desire to perform what God hath there commanded. How different, then, does this Rule of Life seem to us! He hath thus opened a way to perfection, He hath shown how to attain to it, and the conditions without which we can never return to that state which was once ordained for us, we can never enter that house which

was prepared before the foundation of the world.

“Our salvation is not to be the price of leading a harmless life on earth, and only abstaining from what is evil. The Kingdom of Heaven is not to be so easily entered; nor will those be truly acceptable in the sight of God who only pay Him the obedience of a slave, and who observe His laws only through fear and the dread of punishment. God requires from us the love of free-will; the service of choice; the obedience of content and pleasure. God has told us that we are to serve Him by religious action and by being useful in the world; and this we must do, if we are sincere in our love to Him. Many people who mean well, deceive themselves on this point and suppose that, though they fail to perform good works, they will be saved by faith alone; that is, if they stedfastly believe, and do not commit any great sin. It would be easy to undeceive them, if they would but examine into the subject. Their error is a very dangerous one, and arises from false ideas both of God, and of themselves. They are jealous of their liberty (as they call it) and they fear to lose it, by being too jealous in the service of God; but let them search the scriptures. S. Paul says, “Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that ye are bought

with a price." We belong to God, He having made us, not for ourselves, but for His own glory; and He has an absolute right to our obedience and service. We have not (properly speaking) even the right of giving ourselves to God; for we have no right whatsoever over ourselves; and therefore, if we do not acknowledge that we belong to God, we are guilty of a sort of religious treason, and we overthrow the order of nature. The carnal proudly question the right which God has to impose laws upon us, nor that it is our part to obey them; how can we then imagine that we are saved by a barren faith, without that obedience which those laws require of us? If we had written the Gospel ourselves we should, no doubt, have taken care to adapt its precepts to our sinful deficiencies; but God did not consult us, when He ordained it to be the rule and guide of our life. He has given us no hopes of salvation but through implicit obedience to His command; an obedience which He enables us to perform by His strengthening grace; therefore the Gospel tells us that "faith without works is dead." (Fenelon.)

And so we awake to the world as we find it; we are thrown early into the hurry of life to meet its cares and temptations. It presents itself to us in its ever fitful state, at our youthful days as full of the brightest

hopes; when fresh from confirmation grace and our first communion, we seem to be girded and to be strong for the battle of life; religion is not yet wearisome to us; God is not yet the God of terror; Holiness is not yet a thing of the past; but soon, too soon alas, the changes comes; the first fall—the first fret and sorrow—the first cross and disappointment; the first awakening to the sense of our weakness, and the impossibility of standing upright, and we are discouraged, and find “a law in our members warring against the law of the spirit, that when we would do good, evil is present with us.” And here the rule of life meets us again, and will be if we will use it, our guide under the many forms temptation takes, and, amid all the complications of business, profession, pleasure, pain, work, idleness. There we see His will to us. There we learn where to get counsel and strength. There does He speak, “I am the Lord.” I, the same, infinite in power, infinite in wisdom, infinite in love and mercy. His works are as far above our comprehension as the Heavens are above the earth. The operation of His will to us, full and perfect in the least of the works of nature as in the greatest; in the lowest reptile that crawls on the earth as in the glorious archangels, who worship unceasingly before His Throne. He forgives, that He may fulfil

His everlasting promise ; He punishes, that He may vindicate the offended sanctity of His Laws.

As regards the division of the decalogue which has been adopted amongst us, there seems to be a popular notion that the Roman Church, from their having followed that division which was in use in the time of S. Augustine, have dropped out the second commandment, and that this was done designedly, to give some authority for the use and veneration of images of which we shall speak in its proper place. This, like a great many other popular notions, is an error. Our division is the most ancient, but they too, have authority for that in use among them.

In the condensed list of the commandments to be found in their manuals of devotion, the second and the first are united and serve as one commandment, and the tenth is divided, and so the number remains unchanged. The Venerable Bede gives both methods, and in the Anglo Saxon Church there was no settled opinion in the matter, nor in our own Church in the earlier days of the Reformation.

“For instance : in the Institution of a Christian Man,” put forth by the authority of Henry VIII, in 1537 ; and again in the “Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man,” published in 1543, the

modern Anglican division is followed, whilst in the three primers put forth in the same reign, viz. : "A goodly Primer," 1535; "The Manual of Prayers, or the primer in English," 1539; King Henry's Primer, 1545; as well as in Justin Jonas' Catechism, translated or revised by Archbishop Cranmer, in 1548, we find the Roman Division or that of S. Augustine, adopted. The division, in use in the present day, appears to have been first established in the Anglican Church in 1549, when the Decalogue was inserted in the Catechism, in the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. We find the same division in the second book, put forth in 1552, when the Decalogue was first incorporated with the Liturgy." (Nixon.)

To be, as they undoubtedly are, the Rule of Life, they must be understood to mean more than they express. On this Archbishop Secker has written :—

"When any sin is forbidden in them, the opposite duty is implicitly enjoined; and where any duty is enjoined, the opposite sin is implicitly forbidden. Where the highest degree of any thing evil is prohibited; whatever is faulty in the same kind, though in a lower degree, is by consequence prohibited. And where one instance of virtuous behaviour is commanded, every other, that hath the same nature, and same reason for it, is understood to be commanded too.

What we are expected to abstain from, we are expected to avoid, as far as we can, all temptations to it, and occasions of it; and what we are expected to practice, we are expected to use all fit means, that may better enable us to practice it. All that we are bound to do ourselves, we are bound, on fitting occasions, to exhort and assist others to do, when it belongs to them, and all that we are bound not to do, we are to tempt nobody else to do, but to keep them back from it as much as we have opportunity. The ten commandments, excepting two that required enlargement, are delivered in few words; which brief manner of speaking hath great majesty in it. But explaining them according to these rules,—which are natural and rational in themselves, favoured by ancient Jewish writers, authorized by our Blessed Saviour, and certainly designed by the makers of the Catechism to be used in expounding it, we shall find, that there is no part of the moral law, but may be fitly ranked under them.”

Such, or some such interpretation, was put on the law by the devout Jews themselves. They, no more than we, depended on the mere outward observance and on the mere avoidance of the particular sin forbidden, or observance of the particular duty enjoined. All that led to the transgression were included in the former, and all that

took from the duty were included in the latter. A very slight examination of such of the Jewish writers as we have, will abundantly prove this. For example: Philo, in his tract on the ten commandments, says in speaking of the fourth commandment, "To the fourth is to be referred everything relating to festival days and sabbaths, vows, sacrifices, purifications, and every other part of religious worship." On the fifth he says, "that in the precept Honour your Parents;" are included many laws prescribing the duties of the young to the old, of subjects to magistrates, and servants to masters, and those who have received benefits to benefactors. Josephus, Book ii. sc. 17, against Apion says: "Moses did not make religion a part of virtue, but he saw and he ordained other virtues to be part of religion; I mean justice, fortitude, and temperance, and an universal agreement of the members of the community with one another; for all our actions and studies, and all our words (in Moses' settlement) have a reference to piety towards God."

So interpreted, it is easy to see how extensive and how comprehensive too, is this Rule of Life, that it embraces all our relations heavenward and earthward. We are to adore the one true God, the giver of all, and the object of our gratitude, our love, and our fear, and to adore Him alone. We

are to keep His Name, and by consequence to observe the obligation of oaths, and the sanctity of all compacts between man and man, and thus the substratum of human law and human society is laid; we are to set apart a portion of our days to worship and dedicate ourselves and our substance, to Him, thus acknowledging that holiness exalteth a nation; this is to extend to all under our care, man-servant and maiden, sheep and oxen. Our domestic relations are sanctified, and the virtue of obedience to, the powers that be enjoined. Purity, forbearance, honesty, and integrity of life, self-government of the tongue, and contentment.

There are many passages in the Psalms and the Prophets which show to us how fully the Decalogue entered into the religious life of the devout Jew, and showed the interpretation we have given to it, was the one which they received and which God intended. And it must not be forgotten, that in the scriptures quoted, it is the Holy Ghost who is speaking, and it is therefore the commentary of God Himself.

In Ps. xv; the man who shall dwell in God's tabernacle and rest on His holy hill is, "He that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and speaketh the truth from his heart; he that backbiteth not with his tongue nor doeth evil to his neighbour nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour," &c., &c; so on to the end.

Psalm : xix. 7. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." And then verse 12; "Cleanse thou me from my secret faults," and 13 and 14.

Psalm : xxxvii. 23, and 31. "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

Psalm : lxxxii. 2, 3. "Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy," and 4.

Psalm : ci. 5. "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off," &c.

"He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house," &c.

Psalm : cxix; verses of which may be taken up at random expressing the same thoughts. Thus, "Order my steps in Thy word.—The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting.—Thou art near O Lord; and all Thy commandments are true.—Lord, I have hoped for Thy salvation, and done Thy commandments.—My tongue shall speak of Thy word, for all Thy commandments are righteousness." &c., &c.

See Isaiah i. 10. 20.; lvi.; lviii. Jeremiah vii. Ezekiel xx. &c., &c.

The eternal nature and the universal application of the law was shadowed forth in the words of Moses when he recapitulated its history:—

Deut. v. "Hear, O Israel, the statutes

and judgments which I speak in your ears this day. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us alive this day. The Lord talked with you face to face out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and He added no more; and He wrote them on two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."

The meaning of this writing on two stones, seems to be according to some that the law was cut in the solid stone, and then plastered over with hard cement, so that when this plaster fell off in after ages, the engraven law would be discovered entire, and perfectly eligible; but, according to others (as is the most reasonable), the command was given to write them on cement while it was soft, with a stile, and this would remain, as is evident from the tombs about Sidon, for a thousand years. Deut. xxvii. 4.

The obvious division of the Decalogue is that which our Lord has confirmed in His answer to the lawyer. (S. Matt. xxii. 37, 39). On the one table is the duty to God, and on the other the duty to our neighbour. Of God, we are to believe in Him, in His threefold character of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. To fear Him as the angels

fear. To love Him as the Christian alone can love, as one who first loved us. To do this with all the energy of our being, with all our mind, all our soul, all our strength; devoting intellect, heart and will to His work. To worship Him in all the beauty of Holiness, and with all the devotion of a regenerate nature; to give Him thanks for His creation, for all the blessings of this life, but above all for redemption by Christ, for the means of grace and the hope of glory; to call upon Him, in all times of trouble or happiness; to honour His holy name as being sealed with His seal, as being called to be Saints; and so to serve Him truly, with the honest devotion of the life, unto the life's end. Such is the first part of the Rule of Life which we will now proceed to consider.

Need we not, then, to pray for grace to love aright, Him who is the fountain of all love, and need we not to grieve and shame at our coldness to Him who is so warm to us.

Immensity loves us, says S. Bernard. Eternity loves us. Love which passeth knowledgs, loves us; God whose greatness is infinite, whose wisdom is countless, whose "peace passeth all understanding" loveth us; and we repay Him in measure. Is it so great a return for love so great, and of one so great, that a little dust should collect

its whole self to love in return that infinite Majesty, which forecoming it in love, is seen wholly intent on the work of its salvation.

I love, I love Thee, Lord most High,
Because Thou first hast loved me;
I seek no other liberty
But that of being bound to Thee.

May memory no thought suggest,
But shall to Thy pure glory tend;
My understanding find no rest
Except in Thee, its only end.

Apart from Thee all things are naught;
Then grant, O my supremest bliss,—
Grant me to love Thee as I ought;—
Thou givest all in giving this!—*Amen.*

CHAPTER II.

COMMANDMENT I.

“Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.”

Jesus said unto him, “Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. S. Matt. xxii. 37. 38.

The first four Commandments, concerning our duty to God, are capable of being analysed thus :—

I. Who is the object of our worship
“Thou shalt have none other Gods but *Me*.”

II. What is the manner of our worship :
(i.) *In Adoration*.
“Thou shalt not make a graven image,” &c.
(ii.) *In Reverence* and all other acts towards Him.

“Thou shalt not take,” &c.

III. *The times and seasons of worship*.

“Remember that thou keep holy,” &c.

Who is This who thus speaks and insists on the love of our whole being? Who is this that claims to himself our entire submission, who will have our heart, our very selves, our all?

Who is This who sternly excludes any other being, from a share in that adoration which He will have as His own? Is this God, who paints the wayside flower and who hath never left Himself without witness, giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness; Is it He who lives among us, and whose silent, speechless Power, is visible in the growth of every leaf, in the swellings of every bud, and the rise and fall of every storm; who to the Divine Psalmist was even known in the course of Human life: “man goeth forth to his work until the evening,” “How marvellous are

thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all." Yes, but much more than this. He is to us the God who was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. We know, we can know of *no other God*, but the God of the Incarnation. It is thus He revealed Himself of old. It is thus that He speaks of Himself in the old Testament. It is thus that prophet and Psalmist are bidden to speak to us of Him, and so it is thus that He speaks of Himself here in the law given on Mount Sinai.

I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. The slavery of Egypt was ever a type of a greater slavery, *that of sin*; the passage of the Red sea a type of Holy Baptism: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The forty years' wanderings, the first penalty of disobedience, a type of human life sustained by God and full of snares and our probation. The Heavenly manna which they knew not, nor their fathers knew, a figure of that Bread which came down from Heaven, and which giveth life to the world, even Christ. The shoes waxing not old nor the clothes wearing out, a type of the Christian's sustenance above earthly necessities, and of the Almighty's care which shall follow the people of God, through life. And Canaan the land of olives and pome-

granates, the land flowing with milk and honey, which was to be the ultimate rest of the wanderers, a type of the far off land, where the tree beareth twelve kind of fruits ; and the Lamb feeds out of living water and the weary shall have their rest.

So God doth not reveal himself ever otherwise, than as the God of the Incarnation. It is the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity that is to be worshipped. The Holy Scriptures which come to us in their varied forms of history, and poetry, and prophecy, are not put together casually, and do not accidentally or by the skill of compilers form a kind of whole. They are not forced as it were into a unity which does not belong to them, but they show to us, the continued work of a single mind. *Let us make man*, not in the likeness of Angels, nor in a likeness common to God and the Angels, for there is no such common likeness, but *in our own image*. There, when the greatest of all created beings was formed, and God breathed into them the breath of life, and man became a living soul, we are bidden to read the sacred mystery and see the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost consulting about this great work. And when again the first sin was committed, we read, "Behold the man is become like one of us." Gen. iii. 22. And, in all the after promises of a Messiah, and all the ritual law,

where a remembrance of sin was made every year, and where the Jew was reminded of the sin and the sacrifice, from the Gospel preached, as S. Paul tells us, to Abraham (Gal. iii. 8), to the slaying of the Lamb and the smiting on the door post, on that night ever to be remembered, when the descendants of the faithful Patriarch, quitted the land of Egypt in haste; the same God spake in the same way, and so from Moses to David, from David to Solomon, from Isaiah to Malachi, He who claims the love and adoration of his creatures, He who claims to be the first in their thoughts, is the God of the Incarnation; the Father who called them into being, the Son who is the Redeemer; and the Holy Ghost who Sanctifies. The Ever Blessed Trinity and the Christian's God.

He who reads the commandment otherwise reads it wrongly. We are to keep it, and we can keep it, but in one way, not as Deists, not as those who simply acknowledge a God of nature, or a God who dwells in the soul of the devout; but as those, who acknowledging that Christ and the Father are one, and that the spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father witnesseth to Christ and abideth in his Church for ever; as those who hold the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

Now, when we view this command in connection with the people to whom it was first

given, we may ask what danger could there be of their forgetting the One God who had done so much for them. We know that they did so, we know that God's frequent complaint of them was that they chose new Gods, but what likelihood was there of this at the time when the law was first delivered? The memory of the wonders in Egypt was yet fresh, the miraculous sustenance in the wilderness was their daily experience, and their wonderful deliverance from bondage when they saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore was but recent, there could be surely no danger of their having another God but one.

What, however, was their history? They bore out the character Moses gave of them; they had been a stubborn and rebellious nation from the very beginning. And the more we study their story, the more do we see how morally and socially the sojourn in Egypt had degraded them. From free men they had degenerated into slaves. Having ceased to respect themselves they had lost all sense of reverence and love for the God of their fathers,—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The wondrous annals of their patriarchs. God's close intercourse with, and frequent promise to them, the nobility of their race. The future glories and future vastness of their dominion, "as the sand on the sea shore for multitude." The hope

of the Messiah and the blessed prospect which the one worship of the One God held out to them, were things of the past. They had long ceased to care for or regard them.

Some, we may judge, still retained a clinging hold on these hopes, but to the majority of the Israelites they conveyed no meaning. They had grown accustomed to another worship, the sensuous and the earthly ritual of the people whose slaves they were, had become their worship also. When we have no memory to cling to, no history to fix our creed, no care for the old paths, and when we must live only in the present, and must seek after new Gods; then reverence departs, faith fades away, and the soul is satisfied with the shadow. It was so, terribly so, with them. There was then great danger, that a multitude barely rescued from close contact with the most vicious idolatry, should fall into it again. And if the danger then was great, it would be greater by and bye. They would soon mingle among the heathen. God's mission for them, though as yet they knew it not, was to prepare the world for the Advent of Christ. They were to be His instruments in making the rough places plain, they were to be brought into contact with the heathen as their conquerors, and so they must be warned, as we know they afterwards were warned, not only not to imitate nor approve

of their habits, but to hold fast to a distinct creed of their own. God, it is well for us to bear in mind, ever repeats this warning; it is not enough, not to imitate nor approve of the ways of the irreligious world, but we must have and live out a creed of our own. We must "let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven."

"When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, take heed to thyself that thou enquire not after their God's," saying, How did these nations serve their Gods? *even so will I do likewise.* Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord which he hateth have they done unto their Gods: for even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their Gods. Whatsoever thing I shall command you, observe to do it. Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Deut. xii. 29.

The very learning of the Egyptians and their position as a nation, would serve to be a great snare to these oppressed and enslaved Hebrews, so that on all grounds there was the danger of their lapsing, even after the wonders which they had been witnesses to and of which they were the instruments had been performed on their behalf. We know what did happen, and can therefore understand, as applied to them, the first command in the Decalogue.

God alone, was the worship of Noah and the typical sacrifice kept alive the hope and promise that that worship carried with it. But so powerless are great judgments to keep their hold on the memory of man that no sooner had the memory of the flood passed away, than the abominations which called for it, were renewed. "Ancient authors relate that Ham and his posterity soon departed from the faith of the righteous patriarch, and in the true spirit of rebels, as well as apostates, sought to render themselves terrible to the worshippers of the true God, by associating together, and laying the foundation of a mighty empire, to be erected on the basis of idolatry and atheism."

How rapidly idolatry spread may be seen from the history of Abraham, who, though living some 352 years after the flood, was yet the subject of a special revelation, his father Zerah, being an idolater. So on to Laban, the father-in-law of Jacob, and so for five centuries, from the birth of Abraham to the call of Moses, the history of the world is but the history of a continued, developing form of idolatry. Egypt, the seat of art and knowledge, was the great hot-bed of superstition. The priesthood was the path to power, and the rites of which they were the teacher, interwove themselves in all the habits and business of the daily life. Thence

were its vices and follies transmitted to Greece, Greece "with fewer objects of wonder, abounded with incentives to fancy, which Egypt wanted. Hence, beside Juno, Vesta, Themis, whom they added to the principal divinities derived from the marshy banks of the Nile, every Grecian mountain acquired its Oreads, every wood its Dryads, every fountain its Naiad, the sea its Tritons and Nereids, and every river its god; the variety of the seasons produced the hours; and the Muses and the Graces were the genuine offspring of the genius of the people. Thus were Divinities so multiplied before Homer's time that nobody any longer undertook to say how many there were not."

The danger, therefore, to the Hebrews, was no imaginary one, idolatry was the necessary fruit of human depravity and the sensuous and visible is ever preferable to that which exists but to the eye of faith and is unseen. We care more to grasp what is seen than to live for the blessing of those who, though they have not seen, yet believe.

The Almighty then separated the Jews, and distinguished them in the eyes of the world by mighty miracles, but He also gave them a law, which was to be *The Rule of Life* for Mankind. They were to be the keepers of the oracles of God, and this law was delivered amid the most awful manifestations of His Presence, in a way that they

would never forget. Exod. xx. 1, 21, 23. Exod. xxiii. 24, 32, 33. Yet while Moses was absent from them and in converse with God "they made a calf and worshipped the molten image, and thus they turned their Glory into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay." They would have something which they could see, and so they illustrated in the most awful way, how difficult it is for man to live by faith. So again, Num. xxvi. 1—9. Deut. xvii. 2, 3. Joshua xxiv 20; and from time to time throughout the Judges, there is the same melancholy strain. Judges xvii 6; until the day when idolatry was publicly established and the palmy days of Israel's greatness put an end to by Jeroboam, who is handed down to the contempt of posterity, as the man "who made Israel to sin." Thus established and countenanced by all their princes, idolatry was universally adopted by the people, notwithstanding all the remonstrances against it by the prophets, whom God sent to reclaim them, from time to time, and who stood as a barrier against this growing wickedness, regardless of all the persecutions of impious Jezebel, who did what she could quite to extinguish the worship of the true God. At length this brought a flood of calamities upon that kingdom, and was the source of all the evils with which that people was afterwards afflicted, so that, after a continual scene of

tragical deaths, civil wars and judgements of various kinds, they were at length carried away captive by Shalmaneser, into Assyria." (Horne). But the history of Idolatry touches on the history of the whole human race, it is at once a curious and a sad history; it belongs to the progress of sin, and to that mystery of iniquity, which worketh still and will ever work while the world lasts among mankind. What ever form it takes the principle is the same. How soon idolatry commenced we know not. We *do* know, that once, God saw every thing that He had made and behold it was very good, and that afterward it grieved Him to the heart, when the thoughts of man were only evil continually. Van Mildet says: "There are not wanting good authorities for supposing that idolatry was introduced by the posterity of Cain, long before the death of Adam; and even, as some have conjectured, by Cain himself. . . . The reason likewise, that is assigned in Scripture, for God's destroying the old world, that "the earth was corrupt before God," and that "every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, seems to imply, not only a prodigious excess of moral depravity, but an absolute apostacy from the worship of the true God."

No danger of this kind, and in this especial way, can be ours, but our peril takes

a more subtile form and is the more difficult to grapple with and avoid. Whatever we love more than God, is to us what He and He alone ought to be, *our God*. Whatever comes between us and Him, so as to take the first place in our thoughts, and, if not wholly to engross them, yet, to influence them and give them direction, becomes *our God*. We cannot serve two masters; and *the master* of the soul is that which makes our life what it is and governs our ways and habits and doings. If men looked into their motives more honestly than is the general habit, they would find that they are too often unfaithful to Him, that they defraud Him of His due, and that all which they call pleasure, or its opposite—care, is simple Idolatry. It is but the worshipping of the creature more than the creator, and the straining every nerve for the earthly object when time passes and the heavenly is so far distant. Ask why there are so few communicants, why the faith of the many rests on a mere sentiment, why devotion is the exception and not the rule, why the power of self-sacrifice seems to be so wanting, why the very charities of life are dependant on the alms of the few, why so many have really no creed at all, and go through their life with a satisfied respectability and pass away, without having in any sense made this world better than they found it; and what is the

answer? It is, that they have chosen another god, that each hath his idol in his heart, that each is perhaps, unconsciously to themselves, breaking this first commandment, and as great an idolater as any who worshipped the golden calf or filled the house of Baal in olden time.

Our danger now, is not in believing too much, but *too little*.

On every side temptations multiply to take us away from the surrender of self to God.

Our national prosperity is perhaps the foremost of these. There is an abundance of wealth and an abundance of poverty in the land. That hard spirit of discontent and uneasiness at control which every now and then bursts forth, is but a necessary result of such a state of things. The poor are not happy, because the wealth of the rich, in too many cases, but widens the distance between class and class, and intensifies the natural selfishness of human nature. Covetousness is idolatry, the rich fool of whom the Lord tells us, and whom He calls a fool, is a type of the spirit of the age. "He thought within himself, what shall I do?" Ease, and comfort, and success, had made him forget whence came all his prosperity. And he said "this will I do; I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my

goods." All this was but of a piece with his whole career. There was no apparent wrong here, nothing but what a sensible far-seeing man would have done—make provision for increasing wealth. We are not told of him that he was immoral or unjust, or that his comforts were the fruits of dishonesty, but something further is told in awful significance, something which furnishes the clue to the whole of the man's life, that he had *no creed, no God*—but wealth. "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years to come, eat, drink, and be merry." And Christ calls this man "a fool," for he was not rich toward God. Everywhere in the Gospels, have we the same warning against the idolatry of wealth, and the snare of comforts. Everywhere are we told how dangerous it is to the spiritual man, and how it insensibly steals away the heart from Him.

Take no thought for your life
 How hardly shall they that have riches
 enter into the kingdom of Heaven
 Woe, unto you that are full, for ye have
 received your consolation What
 shall it profit, if a man gain the whole world
 and lose his own soul, or what shall a man
 give for his soul. Wealth produces wants
 hitherto unknown, creates an artificial
 society with its fashions, and its vanities, and
 its vices ; dulls and deadens the moral sense,
 and binds down the heart and affections to

that world which will one day pass away. It is hard for the wealthy to practice self-denial, and to enter into the sorrows and trials of their poorer brethren; it is hard for them, amid the luxury of fine houses, furniture, conservatories, carriages, high living and worldliness, to find time and occasion for the search after the treasure that rusteth not and which is heavenly. How impossible to some must it be to know what the apostle calls the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich yet *He became poor.*" And so one of the temptations to break this commandment and make a God of self is our prosperity. Let us anxiously watch against the pride of success, whether national or individual.

The pride of intellect which, with the advance of science and the growth of the mind, has come into being, is a kindred danger. In our days, old heresies and old attacks against the faith are revised, and so we have again to fall back on the comfort that mysteries are not revealed to the wise and prudent but unto babes. The mission of the Church, the work of the ministry, the grace of the Sacraments, the truth of the creeds, the necessity of dogmatic teaching, in a word the reality of all that touches our inner life and brings us into communion with our God, are to be submitted to Reason, and cannot be received except when modi-

fied and explained by the human mind. Perhaps it is forgotten that the end of all knowledge, is to show us how little we know, that when the astronomer has grasped the existence of new bodies, ere he has realized his newly-found treasure, he is made sensible that there are worlds yet undiscovered beyond, and that he is only at the beginning of his labours ; and so, as has been well said, "as we mount the scale of our being, we must expect an increase both of the number and magnitude of these hidden truths ; and when we reach His throne, who is the summit and the source of all, we can hardly suppose that because He has deigned to lay bare to us the secrets of His nature, and the laws of his action upon our life, that His revelation will differ from that natural world which reflects Him in that it will discard this principle of mystery. Yet when it is no longer a secret objection against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or of the Incarnation, or of the original sin, or of the satisfaction which Jesus offered on the cross, or of the efficacy of the Sacraments, that these doctrines in various ways embody, as they do, the principle of mystery ; the soul has succeeded in casting down an imagination, an intrenched fortress, which too often exalts itself against the knowledge of God, it is, so far, in a fair way to bring its whole thought into the obedience of Christ." (Liddon.)

Surely the simple faith that said "Let us now go, even to Bethlehem, and see this great thing that has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us," and, when seen, that staggered not, at the stable, the manger, and the squalid surroundings of the King of kings, which was more precious in the sight of the Eternal, than the most exalted effort of human intellect, enlightened by the spirit of God. It is well to remember that among the future changes which shall follow the coming of the Son of Man, is said, the loftiness of man shall be bowed down; and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the *Lord alone* shall be exalted in that day."

And so with material progress, with ambition, with pride, with selfishness, these and their kindred sins become an idolatry to those who give up to them.

S. Paul's expressive words, sum up the breakers of this commandment; "they who mind earthly things." This is not following out our destiny, this is not pressing for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, this is not working out our salvation, nor giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure, this is not the knowing Christ and the being made conformable to the likeness of his suffering, to count all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. God has a right to demand, and here he does so demand the

devotion of our whole life, and if when we look around us and see how the work of life goes on with ceaseless and bewildering activity, how human progress, politics, growth of states and cities, and all that constitutes the interests of this world occupy men's minds and bring them often careworn to an early grave; we must see that God is not all in all, and that idolatry, though enlightened, is idolatry still.

We are then bidden in the first commandment :—

1. To believe. 2 Chron. xx. 20. Heb. xi. 6.
2. To fear—not as the devils but with godly fear. Deut. x. 12, 13, 20, 21. S. Luke xii. 5. Heb. xii. 28, 29.
3. To love, as children. S. Luke x. 27. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. 1 S. John v. 3.

And all that follows of necessity from hence, viz. : *Heartiness*, the giving our hearts to Him, and that freely and entirely. Prov. xxiii. 26.

Thankfulness, reverence, a belief in His presence and a practice of that presence, “I have set God always before me,” “whither shall I go then from Thy presence,” and a thorough *Trust* in Him; “whom have I in Heaven but Thee and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee, my heart and my flesh faileth but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.”

And we are warned against :—

1. All unbelief. S. John viii. 24. Ps. xiv. 1.
2. All hypocrisy. S. Matt. xxiii. 5, 14.
3. All careless indifference to sacred things.
Exod. v. 2. Ps. x. 4, 6.
4. All pride. S. James iv. 6.
5. Presumption. Job xv. 25.
6. Despair. Ps. xlii. 6, 7, 8. S. Matt.
xxvii. 3, 5.
7. Deism—Where God is regarded not as the
object of affection and worship but as an
abstraction—not as an object of living
faith but as a conception—a creed if it
can be called so in which is no heart, no
life, no love. 2 S. Peter ii. 1.
8. Polytheism. Rom. i. 23.
9. Heresy. Tit. iii. 10, 12.
10. Scepticism, doublemindedness, and
worldliness. S. Matt. vi. 24. 1 S. John
ii. 15, 17.

“He that spared not His own son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things.”

Let us cultivate with all the powers of our souls. “A frequent recollection, an attention, at least an habitual tendency, a desire for God, a loving and reverential looking of the mind and heart towards Him, an intimate language, a familiar speaking with, an universal dependance on Him, an opening of the heart, in order to consult Him in all things, to hearken to Him, to act beneath

His eye, and to turn ourselves from the busy language of creatures and of our own passions which might distract that attention we owe to Him."

"What art Thou, O my God ; what art Thou, I beseech Thee, but the Lord my God ? For who is Lord beside our Lord, or who is God besides our God ? Thou lovest, and yet Thou art not transported ; Thou art jealous, and yet Thou art void of fear ; Thou dost repent, yet Thou art free from sorrow ; Thou art angry, and yet never art unquiet ; Thou takest what Thou findest, yet didst Thou never lose anything ; Thou art never poor, and yet Thou art glad of gain ; never covetous, and yet Thou exactest profit at our hands ; Thou payest debts when Thou owest nothing ; Thou forgivest debts, and yet Thou lovest nothing. And what shall I say, O my God, my life, my joy, my holy, dear delight ? or what can any man say, when he speaketh of Thee ? and woe to them that speak not of Thee but are silent in Thy praise ; for ever they who speak most of Thee, may be accounted to be but dumb. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, that I may speak unto Thee, and praise Thy Name. Amen."

O, my spirit longs and faints,—
For the converse of Thy saints,—
For the brightness of Thy face,—
For Thy fulness, God of grace.

Sun and shield alike Thou art,
Guide and guard my erring heart;
Grace and glory flow from Thee,
Shower, O shower them, Lord on me.
Amen.

CHAPTER III.

COMMANDMENT II.

“Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth.

“Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them; for I the Lord Thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love Me and keep My Commandments.”

The first Commandment having asserted the self-existence of God and that He is one and that there is none other but He, the second proceeds to guard against any violation of His holiness. He is invisible; no man hath seen God at any time. He is hidden from the eyes of mortal men, and will be seen only when the veil of sin is removed and the new body and the newly

fashioned soul shall be ours, when man is changed like unto Christ's glorious body and is thus prepared for the Beatific vision, when being pure in heart and washed in the blood of Jesus he shall be privileged to enter into the holiest of Holies and see God. Until then, and especially now in this world of grosser sense, He will be adored as invisible and seen only with the eye of faith. So while the first Commandment fixes our belief, the second defines our adoration. The first, states *who* is the object of worship; the second, *how* He is to be worshipped, spiritually and by the soul.

The warning against attempting any representation of the Deity, or of making that which is to convey the sense of Divine Presence, would hardly have seemed declared sufficiently in the command alone, for it is over and over again repeated with awful significance. "Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold" Ex. xx. 23. And "thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images" Ex. xxiii. 24, and again in verses 32, 33. So "if thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly saying, let us go and serve

other gods; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him;" and not only so, but further, in most clear language, showing without a possibility of doubt what was God's will on this matter, "neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him; *but thou shalt surely kill him*; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people." Deut. xiii. The Israelites in their long sojourn in Egypt had become familiar with every species of the grossest idolatry. And having, as we have seen, morally and socially sunk as a people had ceased to regard idolatry as a sin. Hence perhaps the very decided words of Scripture. At any rate we know that "the Egyptian priests, with an affectation of mysterious wisdom, expressed the attributes of God, the operations of the elements, the motions and influences of the heavenly bodies, the rising and falling of the Nile, and its effects, by symbolical representations derived from the known and familiar properties of animals, and even vegetables. Thence these became, first, representations of their divinities, and, afterwards, the direct objects of divine reverence. Thus man was taught to bow down to birds, and beasts, and creeping things; to plants and herbs, to sticks and stones. Nothing was too base for grovel-

ling superstition to adore, the heavens, the earth, the air, the sea, each hill, each river, each wood, was peopled with imaginary deities ; every nation, every city, every family had its peculiar guardian gods." (Graces.) And so the worship of the eternal Father, if not the very existence of that Father, was in worship put aside altogether. The effect of this, on the Jewish nation, was witnessed afterwards in the gradual development of their peculiar apostacy from the worship of the one true God. At first, they would create symbols and images to represent to them the Invisible ; the golden calf of Aaron, the calves set up by Jeroboam, the ephod of Gideon, and the ephod, teraphim and images of Micah, were of this kind.

Jehovah was not rejected in this worship, but only hidden behind it, and a sort of imitation of the true ritual adopted, which would give the character of religion to the act and make it distinct from the grosser idolatries of other nations. The strictness of the law as to the manner of worship having been violated, the next step was to destroy the sanctity of holy places. Whereas, God had said, that He would not be worshipped in every place but only in the place where He had set His name, now they would worship on every high hill and under every green tree. They would imitate the

superstitions of other people, and when we read that the high places were not removed, but that the people burnt and offered incense in the high places, while at the same time some act of direct destruction to idolatry had been done, we understand the half reformation to point to the gradual growth of self-deceit, and that the attachment of the people to these spots could not be overcome. (Isaiah lxxv.)

The transition to a mixed worship of God and idols was an easy one after their Egyptian experience, and their association with the people of Canaan. They inter-married with them, and learned their rites; and so at last they came to worship idols without God, and the national sin led to the national punishment. They were carried away captive into Babylon. There seems afterwards to have come a change over them, and a strong reaction against the abominations of idols; for we read in later times that Pilate, bold and bad as he was, dared not persevere in his attempt to set up idols in the temple; and later still, when Petronius, the governor of Syria, endeavoured to bring the statue of the Roman Emperor Caligula into the temple, the Jews, "with one voice, declared their stedfast and deliberate resolution to sacrifice their lives, rather than consent to the profanation of their temple." Petronius sternly rebuked them, and insisted on his

own obligation to fulfil the positive commands of his sovereign. They answered, "that they were as much bound to respect the ordinances of their God; that no fear of death would induce them to the violation of their law; that they dreaded the wrath of their God more than that of the emperor." (Milman's Jews.)

There is, indeed, no sin that so degrades human nature, and encourages the most vicious propensities so much as idolatry, and, perhaps, there are few sins which have so much to be said for them. A warm temperament, a lively imagination, strong reverence, and a taste for the beautiful, will often go far towards keeping in the distance the great God, and substituting the creature of our own vivid fancy. The history of the Christian world abundantly confirms this. Notwithstanding the example and warning before them in the Jewish nation, it was quite early that symptoms of a tendency to the sin that was their ruin showed itself. The days of persecution are always days of purity. It seems as if there were ever a blessing to the season of the cross; and that when men are called upon, or expect to be called upon, to be confessors for the faith, they are the more jealous of holding it in its integrity. In the early church there was great care to avoid the sin in question. "Little children, keep yourselves from

idols," was an injunction religiously observed. We hear nothing of images or paintings in the churches; nor any accusation against the Christians by their heathen enemies, of the use of images. This, it is clear, would have followed, had the practice been general in the early church.

Petavius (*de incarnat.*) gives as a reason, why images were generally prohibited, the memory of idolatry being fresh in men's minds, and that it was not expedient to set up images in the oratories and temples of Christians. About the latter end of the fourth century there was some relaxation of this strict rule, for it is said of Paulinus, bishop of Nola, that he had the church of S. Felix painted with the images of saints, and with scripture stories, to teach the country people when they came in to the dedication feast. S. Austin speaks in terms of condemnation of those who adored sepulchres and pictures, and, as he mentions several of such, though not of the Deity, we may presume that they had begun to take a place in the worship of the time. No pictures of God the Father, nor of the Trinity, were thus early allowed in the churches. Origen, S. Ambrose, and S. Austen, who pronounced it to be an impious thing to set up an image in a church, and a more impious thing to set one up in the heart, are quoted by Petavius in confirma-

tion of this fact. Paulinus describes a painting in a church, where the lamb represents Christ, the dove the Holy Ghost, and the Father a voice only. (Deut. iv. 12.)

The council of Constantinople, 754, at which nearly 400 bishops assembled, decreed against any honour or adoration to images or pictures. But later on, the second council of Nice, 787, which was *no general council*, reversed that decree, and made one in favour of the practice. On this it will be sufficient to remark, on the authority of Dean Hook, in his Church Dictionary, that the emperor Charlemagne, being indignant at the decree, sent a copy of it to England. Alcuin, a very learned member of the English Church, drew up a protest against it, with all the Scripture authorities, and sent the same to the emperor in the name of the English bishops. This may be considered as England's rejection of the dogma. Charlemagne followed this up with four books against it, which he transmitted to Pope Adrian; and assembled a great council of British, Gallican, German, and Italian bishops at Frankfort, at which two legates from the bishop of Rome were present. After a long session, the decrees of this council of Nice were "rejected," "despised," and "condemned." This remains as a standing protest of our Church, and of the Church Catholic, against any such development of

what may have arisen in the feelings of gratitude, veneration, or a taste for the beautiful. There is no doubt that, so far as the representations of our Blessed Lord are concerned, this was certainly the case. The loving memory of Him, who had once lived among men, and been seen by them, and whose form and features more than one disciple was able with pious affection to reproduce, must have been kept alive by such pictures. I can conceive a gathering of the faithful round one of these works, and intense reality given to the description of the painter. I can understand how the famous statue, said to have been erected by the Cyrophænician woman, may have had an interest closely allied to veneration. I can understand, from the vigour and life given to Scripture narrative by an illustration, how the early Christians would realize what had been told them more completely by what was depicted before them; and so how closely the delight of such a realization would approach reverence, and even worship. But all this shows how God, who knoweth the very secrets of the heart, did well to define, in the strict sense and words of this command, *how* He would be worshipped. There are many remains of such representations of Christ. In the Catacombs, of from the second to the fourth century, the Lord is depicted as the Good

Shepherd: sometimes as of mature age, and sometimes as a beautiful youth, with flowing hair, slight, divided beard, and regular features. In the Sarcophagi of the Christian museum of the Vatican, there are sculptures of the Good Shepherd with the lost sheep on His shoulders (the original of Overbeck's beautiful conception), and of Him with a spiritualized oval face, flowing beard, and richly clustered hair; and in the sacristy of S. Peter's, at Rome, the original representation of our Lord's countenance, brought from the East to Constantinople, in the year 944, and purporting to be the genuine likeness, which once belonged to Abgarus, prince of Edessa, and which the Crusaders afterwards brought to Rome.

Eusebius mentions (Hist. vii. 18) two figures of bronze: one of the Saviour, and at His feet, another of a kneeling female form, holding a medicinal herb, which the woman, with an issue of blood, had caused to be erected before her house at Cæsarea Philippi, in memory of her miraculous cure. "It is not," he says, "astonishing that the heathen erected these figures who had received such great benefits from the Lord; for we also have ourselves seen portraits of the Apostles Peter and Paul, yea, even paintings upon tables, of Christ Himself, which have been handed down to our own times."

Of the particular likeness of the Saviour which is the original of most of the after conceptions of Him, the tradition is that Ananias, the ambassador of Abgarus, brought it back with him from Jerusalem, that it was so radiant with splendour that he could not bear to look upon it, and, according to the version which it obtained in the sixth century, this likeness was impressed by our Lord Himself, for Abgarus, on a piece of linen. There is every variety of opinion concerning these portraits. Justin Martyr (Trypho., sc. 85, 88, 100), in opposition to the Docetæ, maintains that our Lord had no personal beauty. "He had no form nor comeliness." Clement of Alexandria, adopts the same view, and also Tertullian; while S. Chrysostom, whose commentary on Psalm 45 seems to me more to the point, speaks of the loveliness and beauty of Christ, and few will dispute his words. Veronica, a Berenice, about whom the story of the handkerchief is told, was the widow of Aristobulus, son of Mariamne, of Asmonea, whom Herod the Elder, at the time of the massacre of the innocents slew, because he feared his aspiring to the crown. She possessed a palace in Jerusalem, near the old castle of the Maccabees, over against the temple. She erected during her lifetime a statue of Christ, and Abgarus from the same feeling, caused a portrait of

Him, while preaching, to be made by Ananias (John Damascene, de orth. fid. iv. 17), and this is the likeness which has descended to us, in the portraits of our Lord at Rome, Genoa, Nazareth, and Moscow. It is John Damascene, speaking of those who, in his time rejected images, declares (Epist. ii.) that they are enemies of Christianity, and act under the suggestion of the evil spirit, who grudge mankind the pleasure of looking upon the Lord's countenance, and sanctifying themselves therewith.

The pity is that we cannot stop here, but must remember how fearfully this love of the Lord's Person has degenerated in the sister church of Rome, into what our article calls "a fond thing," the worshipping of images and reliques. "I most firmly declare," so runs the ninth article of the creed of Pope Pius IV., "that the images of Christ, and of the ever Virgin Mother of God, as also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be shown to them." And in the 25 session of council of Trent, "not that there is in them any divinity or virtue, on the score of which they are to be worshipped, but because the honour which is paid to them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that, through the medium of the image which we embrace, and before which we uncover the head and

bow, we may adore Christ." And then we get the subtle distinction between *dulia* and Hyperdulia; the former being that kind of reverence due to saints and angels, the latter that reserved for the Blessed Virgin alone; and Latria for the Eternal Trinity. Such a distinction, it is needless to say, cannot exist in, if it even was understood by the mind of the common people. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to conceive any thing more painful to one's deepest feelings of reverence and love for Her who is Blessed among women, than the crowning of the Virgin, and the decorated image which is to be seen in every Roman Church. It is no lack of charity to protest against this as a breach of the second commandment.

The judgment of Scripture against this sin is very clearly written. Deut. iv. 12, 15, 16, 23; Levit. xxvi. 1; Deut. xvi. 22; Deut. xxvii. 15.

The command and prohibition extended to what would seem the most innocent of all acts. The Israelities were not "to rear up a standing image or pillar, nor to set up any image of stone, or any carved stone. They were not to bow down before it, for I am the Lord your God."

So again, Isaiah xl. 18-27; xlv. 9-21; Jeremiah x. 1-16; Habakkuk ii. 18-20; and S. Paul, Acts xvii. 16, 24-29; Rom. i. 20-32; 2nd Cor. vi. 16; 1st Thess. i. 9.

The doctrine of the Church of England, and her interpretation of this commandment may be seen in "Homily on the Peril of Idolatry," and on good works, where the kneeling before images, the lighting candles to them, the offering them incense, the going on pilgrimage to them, the hanging up votive offerings before them, circulating lying tales about them, belief in miracles wrought by them, decking them up immodestly, and the like, are condemned as a fond thing, vainly invented, and rather repugnant to the word of God.

When, therefore, we see throughout the whole of the Old and New Testament God's mind so clearly declared, that He will have no representation, even of Himself, set up as an object of worship; when we see, too, that throughout the whole of the Jewish polity, their defiance of this prohibition was looked upon as an act of wilful rebellion and blasphemous apostacy;—are we to suppose that the mind of God is so essentially altered, as to approve, in the Christian, that which He condemned and punished in the Jew? The apostles, as we have seen, did not think so; the Primitive Church did not think so. We may well be content to think and act with them, and to ask, with S. Paul, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols."

All that has been said in no way inter-

feres with the power of art to influence the soul, to create higher thoughts, and to take us out of the world of sense, and above the grosser thoughts of human life into the nearer heavens. We must ever look on art as one of the most precious gifts of God, and as one of those helps to civilization, if not to something higher than that.

So what has been said, being purely historical, and not explanatory, touches not on the right use, but serves only to illustrate the sin condemned in the commandment, and to warn against the abuse of art. Superstition is with certain minds the substitute for a creed, insomuch as art administers to superstition, so are we to regulate its use. But there is a good use; it may be a snare, but it need not be so. All representations of God are forbidden, but no other representations. The former, so far as I know, have never, but in the simplest, quaintest form, been attempted, but the latter are those of which I am now specially speaking. Against them there is no law. The purpose for which they are made is defined; they must not be made for the purposes of worship, but for all other purposes there is no prohibition. It then becomes very much a question of individual conscience, suggesting to us the way to regulate our minds, and a subject of watchfulness for all who have a great love for the beau-

tiful, and a greater reverence for the higher effects of art. I cannot see the difficulty, but inasmuch as the difficulty has exercised good men's minds, and led to the greatest extravagances, and the worst acts of Puritan bigotry, and in the sister Church (as we have seen, and had it seemed necessary for the present purpose, might have enlarged upon) led to an undoubted breach of the command, it is not well to pass it by. We cannot lay down a rule except that which is here laid down for us; the effect on each individual mind of a picture, or a statue, or a crucifix, in his chamber, above his prayer desk, or in a Church, must guide each man as to the help or hindrance they are to him. If he finds that they are becoming to him what God only ought to be, if he finds that he looks for them, and cannot pray without them, that he cannot govern his thoughts, or place himself in the presence of the unseen without their aid, then they are a snare to him, and he must, if he would keep within the limits of this law, get rid of them. Otherwise there can be no sin in the use of them.

To what dreadful crimes the hard, unreasoning, and certainly *unloving* interpretation of this command can lead men; crimes which are ever the worse when committed under the pretence of zeal for God, the history of our own country will

show. Puritan fury spared nothing. An ordinance of parliament swept away pictures, altars, fonts, crosses, images, surplices, organs ; nothing to which men could attach reverence was spared. The body of the venerable Parker was torn from its resting place in his own chapel at Lambeth Palace, and thrust into an outhouse, while the coffin was sold for old lead to a plumber. In 1648 the stained glass in S. Margaret's, Westminster, was smashed, and the monuments and tombs defaced. "With the sound of the trumpet, and the noise of several instruments, as if they had obtained a great victory," was the cross at Cheapside smashed to pieces. And what shall we say of the abomination committed in Westminster Abbey. The tombs mutilated and broken ; the stone crosses defaced ; the altar rails burnt as they stood by the brutal soldiers, who then sat down to drink ale and smoke tobacco with the Presbyterian preachers at the altar. At Canterbury, organs, robes, velvet cloths, altar rail, every thing was destroyed. On the hangings were wrought, in the finest workmanship, several figures of Christ, these were mutilated and profaned. Indeed the history of their acts at Exeter, at Winchester, at Chichester, at Lichfield, is but a repetition of profanity upon profanity, all under the guise of zeal for the Lord of Hosts. Such is Iconoclasm !

The Church has ever been the nursing mother of art, and sculpture and painting have taken different forms as the devout took the place of the sensual. "The ancient Greeks worshipped only physical beauty, and deified the human form. They drew their inspiration from the Old Mythology, and in their arts produced Apollo as the model of manly vigour, and Venus as the embodiment of female loveliness. They bequeathed this feeling to those who came after them, and studied their creations of matchless grace; and thus for ages artists may have seemed to seek their inspiration only in 'the fair humanities of the old religions.' Forming to themselves a standard of ideal beauty, they mused over it through long years of earnest toil, seeking to develop the conception, and perpetuate it in the changeless marble. Sometimes every thought and effort were concentrated upon a single statue, which was to embody his ideas of perfection. In it the artist enshrined the noble visions he had cherished, and it constituted at once the history of his own mind, and the labour of his life. But as the Christian faith prevailed and sunk deeper into the heart of the world, a higher principle seemed to be breathed into the arts, and we can trace its progress as the mediæval ages went on. Christianity gradually spiritualized and elevated the

old conception of beauty. The religious feeling became impressed upon the artist's mind, and the Madonna, with her chastened loveliness and holy associations, took the place of the "Queen of Love." (Sewell's *Holidays in Rome*.) Whatever there was that was noble and pure in the works of old, was the result of a lesser inspiration, as the strange lights of the knowledge of God, and strange yearnings after the mysteries of faith which one meets over and over again in the books of the philosophers and poets were a lesser inspiration also. And when Christianity stamped on art the impress of the cross, when men prayed for inspiration, and worked as though working for God, when they spent long years and untold labour on those noble buildings which are the witnesses to the devotion and faith of their lives, then art took its proper place, and became the handmaid to religion.

If, then, the works of art are suggestive, as undoubtedly they are ; if they serve to take the mind on to the beauties of the unseen world, and make us think more of Heaven and heavenly things than we should without them ; if their calm, holy beauty has the effect of repose on the soul which nothing else would ; if, too, they keep alive the unity of the faith, and binds us with the saints of the past, we cannot be too

grateful for their aid, nor acknowledge too readily that they are an inspiration of God.

What will be hereafter we know not, at least our notions are the crudest, and our conceptions of what Holy Writ means, are but unsatisfying; it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the things God hath prepared for them that love Him; we know nothing of what Heaven will be like, of what the occupations of the redeemed will be, of what we shall see when time shall be no more; but we do know that God will provide what is most suited to the renewed nature in the city where there is no temple, but the Lord is the light thereof. And it seems not fanciful to believe that as history, not of the world only, but of each man's life (for each man is a history in himself) will supply abundant themes for recalling the mercies of God, so music and poetry will lend their aid to sound His praises, as knowledge in its perfection; when we shall know Him and each other as we are known, will have its proper use; as the unnumbered worlds yet unexplored, and doubtless containing unexampled beauties of their own, shall enrapture the soul, and contribute to the happiness of the saints; so art, which is now so great a comfort to us, will have its place, and there will be room for the conception of the holy, and the enjoyment of the beautiful in the

new city, whose every gate is a pearl, and whose streets are pure gold, like unto transparent glass. Whatever God reveals of good is eternal, that which dies is sin ; but of the good in us, and coming from Him that cannot die, so the inspirations of painting and sculpture, which are of God's teaching, have eternity stamped on them also.

It cannot be then that the *abuse* of art to the purposes of superstition forbids the *use* for the purposes of edification.

The terms of the command assure us of this.

Thou shalt not make unto thee for selfish ends, and not for God's glory, and as an offering to Him a graven image.

Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them the object of art is not to supersede religion, but to help it, so it must not be to thee thy God.

And so it may be applied to any creation of the brain, or fancy, or whim, or desire, which not being at its outset dedicated to God, becomes an idol of the heart, and God to us: ease, comfort, luxury, fashion, worldliness, hero-worship, "whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things." The tendency of all such habits and life is to wean away the heart and affections from God, to alter the object and end of our life, to give a different tone and current to

our thoughts, to destroy the spirit of reverence, to weaken faith, and to loosen our hold on the unseen world. It is the very opposite life to the life of the saints, it belongeth to the God of this world, and as such, however carefully veiled, is gross idolatry.

And God is a jealous God. "I, the Lord thy God am a jealous God," that is, a "zealous" God, full of zeal, exacting as is His due all our worship, zealous for His own glory. (Is. xlii. 8; Exod. xxii. 28.) So it is to be noticed that *idolatry* is represented as adultery in many parts of the Prophets, where God would call Himself the Husband of His people; and the figure of Christ where He speaks of Himself as the Bridegroom, and the Church as the Bride, keeps up the same thought. His love is wounded by the loss of reverence in His people, and when they transfer their affections and their adoration to another being, the creation of their own fancy, they do not injure God's greatness, they do not mar His glory, but they wound His love, and are spiritual adulterers, unfaithful. The latter part of the commandment is a very awful and striking conclusion. "*Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, &c.*" This seems at first sight harsh, and though the latter half of the

sentence speaks of abundant mercy to a thousands generations, yet the first half is hardly softened by this which seems to contradict God's revealed character.

But is it not so? No; for here is no threat, but only a declaration of the consequence of certain sins, that if persisted in, they will lead to this result, the parent's sin will be the children's heritage; it is therefore a tender warning of what may be certainly looked for. And if it be construed into a threat, it is a threat attaching only to the most odious sin in God's sight, the sin of idolatry. It is, moreover, only a threat of temporal, and not eternal punishment, as may be seen abundantly in the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel v. 19, 20. It is one, too, which we see fulfilled in natural punishments, where the wicked and the just share the temporal punishment, but which goes not beyond this life, for in that which is to come "every man shall be judged according to his own works," shall stand or fall by what his own life has been, shall give an account of himself.

Still we must not dismiss these words thus briefly.

All evil and pain arise from sin. The original cause of all is sin, though to the person suffering it may not be an individual sin. When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, the daily evils of life, which

faithfully borne and battled with, are God's discipline, yet all come because of sin. And so it can be said of one, and one only, even Christ, that "He bore the transgressions of many," that "He, His own self, bore our sins in His own body on the tree," that "He was made sin for us, who Himself knew no sin." And thus we see the course of God's providence is to show by His punishment the course of sin. Ahab's sin brought its results in his sons' days. Ham's sin was remembered in the curse of Canaan, and when the posterity of Canaan multiplied, then sins and apostacy, they were gradually swept away from the face of the earth. Jeroboam's idolatry cut off his posterity from the kingdom. Gehazi's covetousness drew the leprosy on him and his heirs for ever. The sin of the Jews who stoned the Prophets, and crucified the Holy One and the Just, bore fruit on themselves and their children. So that as the family likeness, and family defects, and frequently dispositions, which are peculiar to a family, are transmitted from father to son for many a generation, so it is with the effect of certain sins, and notably of that sin—idolatry.

And while these are but temporal, they may be a godly discipline to those on whom they fall, and a preservative against a like declension. And, too, it is not only the

children who reap these effects, but also the fathers themselves, who are punished in the punishment of their children, as David in the death of his child. On this S. Chrysostom observes that the good health, the happiness, the well being of the children, affect the parent's life, and render that unhappy if the children lose them. And so, as Bishop Sanderson hath it, "the sum of all this is this: God punisheth the son for the father's sin, but with temporal punishment, not eternal; and with those perhaps so as to redound to the father's punishment in the son; perhaps because the son treadeth in his father's steps; perhaps because he possesseth that from his father, to which God's curse adhereth; perhaps for other reasons best known to God Himself, wherewith He hath not thought meet to acquaint us; but whatever the occasion be, or the end, evermore for his son's own personal sins, abundantly deserving them.

The second commandment forbids:—

1. To substitute any person or thing for God. God must be all in all. *Exod. xxxiv. 14-17; Isaiah xlii. 8; Jer. xvii. 5, 6, 7.*
2. Neglect of His worship, and irreverence of any kind, which takes from His honour. *Heb. x. 25.*

3. Serving God and Mammon. Attempting to keep well with both worlds. S. Matt. vi. 24.
4. Worshipping in a wrong way. Lev. x. 1, 2, 3; 2 Thes. iii. 6, 7.
5. A love of ease, worldliness, and luxury. Even worship from wrong motives. As the love of music, or taste for architecture, or the itching ears after some favourite preacher. These, and such like, virtually put aside the great object of worship.

The commandment enjoins :—

1. Thorough worship. The surrender of self to Him. 2 Kings xvii. 36; S. Matt. iv. 10; S. John ix. 31; S. John iv. 23, 24.
2. Thankfulness, which is a large part of religious life. It becometh well the just to be thankful. Ps. l. 14; 1 Thes. v. 18; Ephes. v. 20.
3. Entire trust in Him. He obeyed not knowing whither he went. Prov. iii. 5; Isaiah l. 10; Jer. xvii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 7.
4. The calling on Him at all times. Ps. l. 15; Is. lv. 6; Rom. x. 13, 14, 15.
5. The worshipping in the beauty of holiness with the best. Malachi i. 13; Acts ii. 44, 45, 46.
6. The worship of the body. 1 Cor. vi. 20; Phil. ii. 10.

In fine, we have but to meditate on the

beauty of God, and the duties of this command are not difficult to understand. What must the splendour of that face whom no man can see, and that Presence which no man can approach unto. All the beauties of this lower world, and all the costly things which are used in scripture as figures to convey to us some notion of the glories of heaven, are but the merest shadows of that beauty which is the perfection of all that is perfect. What then can be too good for Him? What gift or offering too costly for His service? What labour too hard when done to His honour? When we think of the beauty of heaven, as told us by S. John, "And He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." And again, Rev. xxi. 19-21, when we think too of the perfect state of those who shall be the inhabitants of that city, their beauty reflected from His, a borrowed light partaking of His nature and holiness, baptism attained to its highest growth, their order, their voices, as the sound of many waters, their reverence, as setting forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light; their song,

singing the Song of Moses and the Lamb, a *new* song, one taught them by God ; their unity, where there is neither barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free, but Christ is all and in all, and the glorious outbursts of the perfect harmony inspired by perfect love.

“Those are worthy, O Lord, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. For Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.” We learn some things by way of a personal application of this commandment, and what it hath to teach us.

We learn that He loveth holy places, that the marvellous beauty of heaven is in accord with His will, and suitable to His perfection ; that he who showed the pattern to Moses on the mount, and ordained to the very minutest particular how He would be worshipped, loveth to be honoured with the best we have. We are to worship in the beauty of holiness. “Holy places should so bear about them the likeness of heaven, as far as man’s skill will allow, that when we enter them we may feel that we are in a place more like those mansions of bliss than before, and that in them we are outwardly worshipping God in the beauty of holiness.”

We learn above all the devotion of self. The building may be beautiful, but the true beauty lies in the entire devotion of the

soul of the worshipper; to be wrapt up in Him, to be conscious of none but Him, to feel Him to be very near to us, and to be very sensible of that Presence. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thy honour dwelleth," so that "the world forgetting, and by the world forgot," we have passed into the land of the unseen for a brief while. This is what He loveth, this is what He seeth in the prayer of the little child, and in the worship of the old man; in the purity of the soul, that as yet knoweth not wilful sin, but to whom God is an awful, loving reality, and of the soul which hath by many prayers, by much repentance, by much washings in the blood of Christ, become as a child again. And thus, by the outward and inward reverence, by the beauty of the sanctuary and the devotion of the soul, we acknowledge Him to be our God for ever and ever, and our guide even unto death.

CHAPTER IV.

COMMANDMENT III.

"Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh His Name in vain."

Literally: "Thou shalt not lift up the

Name of the Lord thy God to falsehood, *i.e.*, Thou shalt not swear falsely by Him.

“*In vain*: That is, according to the lxx., for a light and vain purpose. It may, therefore, have both meanings, as Exod. xxiii., 1, Psalm xii. 3.

“*Will not hold him guiltless, i.e.*, will assuredly punish.”

The name of God, what is it not to us! To what does it not bring us! All that is eternal, the past, the present, the future, is wrapt up in that one word—*God*. That Name which speaks to us of heaven, of deep mysteries, and great counsels, of a creation and a gift of immortality to each of us, of a redemption and an infinite love passing knowledge, of a home beyond this world, where the happiness of the creature shall be in loving to the full extent, of renewed powers, and beholding with the eyes of purity, and adoring to the very soul, *the Blessed One*. It speaks to us of all we are and all we have, and as we utter it, in prayer, in meditation, or in praise, it is to us the assurance of all we hope for, our very strength in the time of weakness, our very joy in the time of sadness, our very medicine in the time of sickness. In that Name we trust, we make our boast, we are able to live, or we dare to die. And thus, as all feeling of holy fear and holy love belong to that Name, so we are commanded to

reverence that Name; to regard with awe all belonging to that Name; all sacred things, and places, and times, all acts of worship, all sacraments, rites, ordinances, ministry, prayer; and not to assent to trifling, to jesting, "which is not convenient;" to an irreverent use, in word or act, of what belongs to Him, and of what symbolizes His work, His acts, His love to us, not to take that Name in vain.

That Name then, is a revelation of God to man. By it is expressed Him that was, and is to come, His eternity and His nature, His oneness; for so revealeth He Himself to the Patriarchs as the *Almighty*.

And to Moses, as the great Jehovah, I am hath sent thee. "*I am.*" *The Being, the existing one*; He from everlasting to everlasting.

"The life of God is very vast. It is a thing to be thought rather than to be spoken of, nay, to be seen in the mind rather than to be thought. It is very vast. It seems to grow vaster every day. We kneel down before it in our prayers, as a man might kneel to pray on a great sea-shore. God lies before us as an ocean of infinite life. We kneel upon the shore; but behind us rolls the same great ocean. Suddenly it is at our right hand, and on our left. We look upwards, but the sky is gone. An

ocean rolls where there was sky, when we first knelt down to pray. The boundless waters stretch above us like a living canopy. The shore on which we kneel gives way. It is no shore; we are kneeling on the waters. The same eternal ocean rolls beneath us. We are hemmed in on every side by this ever-blessed ocean of infinite being. How full it is of burning life; how masterful, how soundless, how unchangeable!" (Faber.)

And so in all the glories of the temple worship, in all the places where He had placed His name, where men called on His Name from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same; in the memories of His mercies and miracles, which the history of their nation kept alive, and which the yearly festivals celebrated, so that it was an undying law amongst them, that when in after years the child should ask what was meant by the service (Ex. xii., 26), he should be told about God, about *the Jehovah*. In all these, in the worship of the year, in the daily education of life, and the books read every Sabbath in the Synagogue, *the Name* of the unchanging one should be adored and feared. But that Name attained its full excellence when revealed in and by Christ. "No man hath seen God at any time. The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father,

He hath declared Him." Men learned the Fatherhood of God. So the Name is to us the embodiment of God's tenderest relationship to us, and the expression of the unity of the Godhead, as revealed to us in the first petition of the prayer "divinely taught," the Lord's Prayer. The whole Trinity is addressed in that name, as saith Tertullian, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three *are One*. So too, when Christ gave His commission to the Apostles, and through them to the Church, all power being given to them both in heaven and earth. (S. Matt. xxviii., 18.) He bade them baptize into *the Name*, not Names, but *into the One Name*, that so all who would be united to the Divine nature must profess their faith in the one God in Three Persons. "No one can be a disciple of His, *i.e.*, no one can be a Christian, without this solemn acknowledgment: that the God to whom he belongs is both One and Three." One, for it says, "I baptize in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; not in the *Names*, but in the *Name*." There seem to be Three names, but in reality it is one name, because the Three Persons severally named are one God; and this God our God, for ever and ever." (Keble.)

And if God revealed His Name in olden times by signs and wonders, by a mighty

hand and by a stretched out arm, "He hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son." Heb. i., 2. It is Christ who saith, "I have manifested Thy Name," the greatest manifestation being the incarnation of God, for therein was seen the Heart of God, in the Divine comparison and in the power of imparted grace. He revealed what that Name is to us, and what is the power of grace which the soul of the believer gains through that Name. Hence this commandment, like the rest of the Decalogue, has a greater meaning for us. The Church is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. The baptized are the members of that Body, the devout communicant partakers of that Body, they who worship in that Body "are gathered together in His Name," with yearnings of love for Him and in union with Him, in the unity of His Church, in the obedience of His law, and for the furtherance of His glory. He is the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.

With the Jews the letter of this command has been most strictly kept. A curious passage in Josephus, chap. xii., will illustrate this. He says, Moses entreated that God "would also tell him His name, that when he offered sacrifice he might invoke Him by such His name in his oblations. Whereupon God declared to him

His holy name, which had never been discovered to men before, concerning *which it is not lawful for me to say any more.*" The letter of the commandment, indeed, but the letter only, for they ever forbore to use God's holy name on light or trivial occasions, or indeed at all. Once a year, in the great sacrifice of atonement, when the High Priest pronounced the absolution of the people, was the great name of Jehovah used. At other times, in writing and in speaking, another word was substituted.

But in this, as in other matters, they made the Word of God of none effect by their traditions. It is evident that our Lord alludes to a gross custom of peculiar oaths, in S. Matt. xxiii., 16. Jehovah's name they would not utter. To them that name had a kind of mystic power, so that they believed the true pronunciation would be revealed when Messiah came, and this revelation would be followed by great miracles. Of Christ, they say that he had got possession of the ineffable name, and so they account for His miracles. But they found out methods of evading their law, and relaxing its strictness. "They took up a custom of swearing, not by the Lord, but by other things, by other objects of esteem and veneration, as by heaven, and earth, by the temple, and by the altar; and thus they thought to evade the commandment, and to

indulge themselves in the practice of swearing, and even of foreswearing without incurring danger. Our Saviour condemns these evasive oaths, and told them that to swear by the temple was the same thing as to swear by that God to whom the temple was consecrated, and that the breach of all such oaths was no better than perjury." (Tortin.)

"He who swears, venerates, or loves that by which he swears; and in the law it was ordered that they should not swear, except by God. But the Jews who swore by angels, and the city, and the temple, honoured the creatures with the honour due to God." (Jerome.)

It cannot be wondered at that the early Christians, having the warning of the Jews before them, and being often called upon to swear before magistrates idolatrous oaths, took our Lord's words to mean that no oath of any kind is allowable.

"Of perjury," says Tertullian, "I am silent. It is unlawful *even to swear*." Clement, of Alexandria, considered it an indignity for a Christian man to be put upon his oath, and many of the Fathers doubted the lawfulness of oaths at all. Against the Pelagians, who, like the Anabaptists, Quakers, and other sects of modern times, adopted the same view, Augustine replies by enjoining as few oaths as possible, but

giving scriptural ground for the use of an oath where there is a necessity. This, I suppose, will hardly be questioned in these days, still it is as well to remind ourselves that the High Priest adjured our Lord, and that our Lord consented to what was equivalent to putting Him on His oath, He answered immediately. That His words in the 5th chap. of S. Matt. are, "Do not voluntarily put forth an oath"; but they do not prohibit an oath being taken for a solemn purpose, on a solemn occasion. An oath is a solemn appeal to God, to His Omniscience and His Omnipotence, as to Him from whom no secrets are hid, and before whom the secrets of all hearts shall one day be revealed, and so becomes an act of reverence and worship. S. Paul says, that "An oath for confirmation is to men the end of all strife." (Heb. vi., 16.) The Psalmist, that "All they that swear by Him shall be commended." (Ps. lxxiii., 12.) And over and over again is God called to witness, in the Epistles, notably in his quotation from the xcvi. Psalm, "So I swear in my wrath," when he puts forward the Almighty as taking an oath. So that there can be no question that this commandment does not forbid an oath, "In truth, in judgement, and in righteousness." Jer. iv., 2. Nay, points out the way in which such an oath may be made, viz., that the Name must not be

taken or lifted up in vain, to vanity, for a falsehood, or a light and vain purpose. Compare 1st Cor. xv., 31; 2nd Cor. i. 18, "As God is true"; xi., 10, "As the truth of Christ is in me," xii., 19; Gal. i., 20; Phil. i., 8; Rev. x., 5-6. The words of S. James v., 12, as our Lord's words in S. Matt. v., 34-37, refer to the communication or converse between man and man, and not to the solemn calling of God to witness, which, as we have seen, is an act of reverence and worship.

There are certain duties enjoined, and certain sins forbidden by this commandment.

As the name of God must be taken for all by which the Holy Trinity is known to us, and all that belongs especially to Him, and is consecrated to His service as His House, His minister, His word, His name, so the duties enjoined and the sins forgiven range under these heads.

We are bidden to reverence His name. Exod. xxiii., 21; Ps. viii., 1; xx., 1-7; xxix., 2; xlviii., 9; Ps. cix., 6; cxiii., 1; cxlviii., 5; Phil. ii., 10-11.

In a word, we are taught how to be reverent.

Perhaps the worst sign of the present day is the absence of holy fear. Our life now is a life of faith, and though it is promised that one day we shall "see the King

in His beauty, and behold the land that is very far off," yet now we see through a glass darkly, and Christ dwelling among us, and coming to us, and making Himself known to us through his ordinances, is yet visible only to the eye of faith. This is the difficulty to most men. They cannot understand the sanctity of holy places, holy times, holy ordinances, because they cannot discern Christ. Practically, their eyes are holden, and so we have to grieve over the absence of awe and fear, both in speaking and acting, which indicate the condition of thinking in the general world.

Reverence, therefore, is the exception, and not the rule. Even religious sects, and certain classes of opinion in the so-called religious world, make a merit of freedom with things sacred, and a familiarity which closely borders on a disbelief in any mystery. To speak freely of Almighty God, to take the sacred name which is above every other name, on the lips as they would that of a common acquaintance, to write with deliberate thought and expression of Him, as though He were on a level with themselves, and yet deem it no sin, nay, even suppose that thus they will win the unlettered and irreligious masses; this is a sad sign of the want of awe and fear, of a rushing wildly in where angels fear to tread. Because it is not only that we are sinners,

and, as sinners, cannot and ought not to speak familiarly of Him before whom the very heavens are not pure, and who accuses His angels of folly. But if we were angels we should not do so. The awe and the fear of heaven is over and over again shown to us, and abundantly, through the apocalypse, is the future worship of the saints white-robed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb, a worship of the deepest awe and reverence. We hear, too, the name of God either lowered to the "Divine Being," or "Providence," or "The Deity," or, on the other hand, the ineffable name *Jehovah* or *Lord*, freely used in prayers, and hymns, and conversations, when the very sound of the name causes a hush in the devout soul. And so the poison works until men will argue on the most sacred mysteries, and settle what the Almighty God must do, or cannot but do, and what may or may not be received and believed; or will tell of their conversion, of their having been pardoned, of their own souls, and God's works in those souls, just as they wou'd of the last news in the social or political world. Then it comes to pass that they will address the Holy One familiarly in prayer, that they will speak of His life, His saying, His passion, in the most commonplace way and deliberately, and often with an air of doing some great thing, and showing some superior

virtue, while they refuse to bow at the sacred name.

Is this like holy Job : "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him ; on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him ; He hideth Himself on the right hand, but I cannot see Him. Therefore, am I troubled at his presence : when I consider, I am afraid of Him." (xxiii., 8-9.) Or the Psalmist, when he says, "If I go up to heaven Thou art there, if I go down to hell Thou art there also. . . . Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me ; I cannot attain unto it." Or the holy church triumphant, "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name, for Thou only art holy ?"

Reverence arises from a sense of God's presence, and a belief in His presence. This is what we are taught in this commandment. The absence of this argues a want of faith. Against this we are warned.

2. To reverence His house. Lev. xix., 30 ; S. Matt. xxi., 12 ; 1st Cor. xi., 22.

Of the same kind as that spoken of above is the awe connected with the House of God. That is the place on earth where His honour dwelleth, and where He hath placed His name, and there the devout soul finds Him and recognises His presence.

CHAPTER V.

COMMANDMENT IV.

“Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in there is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—Ex. xx. 8-11.

Remember. Such is the key note to this commandment, and this word makes it different from the rest. The law here laid down did not take its origin here, but was founded on the creation of the world, and for its institution went back to the beginning of all time. The Sabbath had struck its roots in every soil, and cast its kindly shadows in every land. It was not like the ceremonial law which bound the peculiar people of God, but it bound all, and hence in the heathen world we meet with some notice of its institution. If the rest of the holy Sabbath (Ex. xvi. 23), in which no

manna fell, is mentioned before the giving of the law at Sinai, the rest of the seventh occurs in some of the early heathen poets, as Homer and Hesiod. The sabbatical week, the seven days interval, (Gen. vii. 4; viii. 10-12), is spoken of in the days of Noah in such a way as to leave no doubt that it was a recognised division of time. So when the law was delivered on Mount Sinai, this, the fourth commandment, was no new command, but one well known and accepted observance, and therefore commenced with "Remember." And perhaps it may not altogether be fanciful to imagine that the word had a prophetic meaning, as warning us how much of Christian holiness, how much of personal piety to a nation or individual, turns in the proper observance of this day. Here in Ex. xx. we have the first reason of God's rest in creation; but in Deut. v. 14, 15, we have another reason in the special mercies vouchsafed to the Jewish nation. God there declares that He had brought them out through a mighty hand and a stretched out arm: "Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." And so to us the rest which reminds us of the heavenly rest, and the Lord's day which speaks to us of the great triumph of Christ, and of our own resurrection, may fitly call us to a national and an individual regard for the "queen of

days," the Christian Sabbath. Is this so? Have we any reason to think that as the Passover and the Pentecost are fulfilled in the Christian festivals, of which they were the types, so the Sabbath of the seventh day has found its fulfilment in the Sunday of the Church of Christ? I think we have. Christ Himself seems to prepare men for this change when He speaks of Himself as "the Lord even of the Sabbath day," and "that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." He was about not to abolish, but to confirm, not to destroy, but to fulfil that which was made for man, *i.e.*, for mankind, and not for a particular people, was about to be made eternal by His own act, and to be henceforth in commemoration of that act for the whole Catholic Church. This was no change of the Apostles, but was the act of the Saviour Himself; an act which He in His own person confirmed after the resurrection. He manifested Himself on the first and second Lord's days in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, breathing into His Church the breath of life; He spoke to S. John, and shewed him what should be hereafter on the Lord's day;" He fulfilled the promise He had made of sending the Comforter of the Church on the Lord's day, thus marking out that day by acts and gifts which were never, and would never be forgotten. But

before we see what has been the history of the Lord's day from the time of the Apostles, there are points to be noticed in the wording of this command.

God is said to have made the world in six days. It is S. Augustine who tells us that numbers in Scripture have a mystic meaning. So the number six, denoting completeness, and seven, the rest in God, the rest which sanctifies all our works. Days too, what are they? What with Him with whom a thousand years are as one day? How can we understand them? As days in the mind of man or in the mind of God? Some have, indeed, thought that they were so in the mind of the inspired writer, but not actually days. They were periods of time which, in their coming and going, were like to the morning and evening of a day.

S. Augustine considers the creation to have been instantaneous, and that the days were the portions of time which the angels understood as revealed to them. He holds that the word *day* is used before the creation of the sun, and is generally in Scripture a period, "as the day of the Lord," "the day of vengeance"; while S. Chrysostom considers the language to be adapted to the infirmities of man. But we must see that days are certainly meant, and these natural days, or why the evening and the

morning ? and that the six successive periods are of the same character and length. There is nothing to contradict the discoveries of astronomy and geology in the fact that the after creation was God's work in six successive days, which periods He chose for man's benefit, makes the rest of the seventh day also for man, if we keep in mind that the earth was before that without form and voice, a confused mass, full of living creatures, which have no existence now, and the stars and heavenly bodies existing but not affecting our earth, until God on the fourth day decreed it should be so. We have but to believe in the power and love of the Eternal to find all things possible.

Then He rested on the seventh day. What is that rest ? How could God rest ? God made all, and after all things created He made man, and then He rested. He rested in Himself, and in that rest wherein He was before the world was made. And He hath left a record of that rest to us as a promise of the eternal rest, that rest which remaineth to the people of God.

And that rest is a significant act, for it is on the seventh day and *He sanctified it*. He marked out that day beyond all the other days. That day had a peculiar holiness of its own ; and so man hereafter, in keeping that day as He had at first enjoined, should receive holiness and sanctification.

It should be hereafter a sacrament to the world, and a sign between the world and God, "That they may know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them." "Consider the last expression of sanctifying. God made the light, it is not said that He sanctified it. He made the firmament, it is not said that he sanctified it. He made the earth and the sea; He made the sun, moon, and stars; He bade the fowls, the fish, and the animals to come forth from air, water, and earth; but it is not said of any of these that He sanctified them. We come to the seventh day, when he rested, and *then* it is added that He sanctified it. God, through His own rest, hath sanctified our rest, for there will be our full sanctification when, with Him, we shall rest without end." (Williams.)

Nothing can be more clear than the utterances of the Divine will afterwards on this holy day.

"Everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death. For whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people." Ex. xxxi.

Blessed is the man "that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it." Is. lvi. 2; so Amos viii. 5; Ezek. xx. 11-13; and Neh. xiii. 17-18.

The Sabbath was Adam's first day in the new created world, He who was made in

the image of God, and was then innocent, was bidden to keep that day for holy rest and meditation. To him was assigned his daily work, when toil and work were a pleasure, ere sin had changed the face of all things, and besides the hours of work, were also assigned the times and seasons of worship. And what Adam was taught of God he taught to his descendants, and they to those who came after them. So that when Moses reminded the Israelites that "to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord," he did so as of an institution which was of ancient days, but which their negligence and long sojourn in Egypt had made them disregard. After the law was promulgated, and the old command revived, it was transmitted from parent to child, and only when neglected did it become a sore judgment to them. After the captivity came repentance, and the Sabbath was more strictly observed, for they refused to defend themselves on the Sabbath day. 1 Mac. i. 32-38.

Later on, Ptolemy Soter "entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, under pretence of offering sacrifice, and took possession of the city without resistance from the Jews, who did not on this occasion dare to transgress their law by fighting on the Sabbath day."

When we come to Apostolic times, we

have it very clearly stated that the early Christians kept the day of the resurrection as the day of rest. "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, being ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight." Acts xx. 7. The weekly offertory, which was ever a part of Divine service, is ordered by S. Paul to be collected on the Lord's day. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." And S. John introduces the vision of the Apocalypse by saying that he was "in the spirit on the Lord's day," (Rev. i. 10), speaking of that day as one well-known and observed by Christians in his day, for otherwise the expression is unintelligible. But we learn from Ignatius, who lived in the second century, that the common name for the first day in the week was the Lord's day, which he enjoins Christians to keep, not as the Jews, not to Sabbatize, but lead a life agreeable to the Lord's day, as having a risen life. Sometimes it is called *Sunday*, as in the apology of Justin, martyr, where he says, "We all meet together on *Sunday*, on which God, having changed darkness and

matter, created the world, and on this day Jesus Christ, our Saviour, arose from the dead." And when it was objected to the Christians that they worshipped the sun, Tertullian replies, that they made Sunday a day of joy, but for other reasons than the worship of the sun, which was no part of their religion. When writing to the Christians, he distinguishes the day from the Jewish sabbath, calling it the Lord's day, so that it is evident that both terms were used of the same weekly festival.

In one of the laws of the younger Valentinian, the words occur, "Sunday, which our forefathers have rightly and customarily called the Lord's day."

Irenæus says, "The mystery of the Lord's resurrection, or the Paschal festival, ought to be kept only on the Lord's day." Origen distinguishes between the Jewish Sabbath and Sunday by saying, "That manna was first rained down from heaven on that day, and not on the Sabbath, to show the Jews that even then the Lord's day was preferred before it."

It is sometimes called the day of bread, because it was the general custom of the Primitive Church to meet for the breaking of bread, and receiving the holy communion on every Lord's day throughout the year. So do we learn from S. Chrysostom, which will suffice here to establish the use of the

early church, and to speak for the continued observance and obligations of that day.

As the Church grew, so the influence of her festivals was felt and acknowledged. Constantine ordered that Sunday should be reverently observed, that no prosecutions, pleadings, nor law business, should be carried on on that day; the very pagans of his army were charged, upon the Lord's day, to go out into the fields and pour out their souls in prayer. The Emperor Theodosius forbid not Christians only, but Jews and Pagans from holding games or sports on the Lord's day, and appointed all Sundays in the year to be days of vacation from business, and of general rest. Nor was it alone from business and the ordinary employment of life that men abstained, but it was equally strongly put forth that the Lord's day must not be a day of pleasure in the worldly sense of the word. Those who advocate in these days a general secularising of Sunday, and on the score of the freedom of intellect, and the relaxation of brain, and a great deal more of that kind of argument, would dispense with altogether the obligation as to the religious observance, would do well to learn from S. Chrysostom and others what view the saints of early times took of this question. He objects in the most vehement manner to

such a view of the Lord's day. They must not, because they are delivered from secular cares, pay no regard to spiritual things, such as sobriety, modesty, and hearing of the word of God. They must avoid what is contrary, serving their belly, indulging drunkenness, stuffing themselves with meat and delicacies, and spending their time in banquettings and pleasures. All this, he adds, agrees with the character the prophet gives of such people, "the harp, the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of His hands." Is. v. 12. So speaks Theodoret and Cyril, and others, calling such practices, as well as the games on this day, the conventions of Satan.

At the same time the true nature and position of Sunday was put forward. It was not a fast. The ancient Church was very strict in observing the stated fasts and festivals; but no fast was ever permitted on the Lord's day, not even in Lent, when the Lord's day was still a day of refreshment. Tertullian says that they count it a crime to fast on the Lord's day, and he remarks that the Montanists, though more rigid than others in observing their fasts, yet omitted the Lord's day throughout the year. S. Ambrose reckons a fasting on the Lord's day as tantamount to a denial of the Lord's

resurrection. Epiphanius observes that the true ascetics of the Church never fasted on the Lord's day; no, not in Lent, because it was against the custom of the Catholic Church. Several councils pronounced decrees on the same question, so that it is abundantly evident how much the early Church esteemed the Sunday, and how important it was considered to guard it against what in later times became the excess of Puritanism, or its opposite laxity and freedom of all restraint.

The day was marked by peculiar observances and greater ceremonial. A custom is mentioned by some of the Fathers as very general, of praying standing, and of never kneeling on the Lord's day. Penitents were to kneel, but communicants and the faithful to stand. It was the day for the general attendance in the worship of God. About this the conduct of the early Christians is in striking contrast with the habits of these times. There was no remaining at home under pain of excommunication unless sickness, or a great necessity, or banishment, prevented. Care was taken that the Holy Sacrament should be conveyed by the deacons to those who were sick and in prison, that so far as might be, they might share in the public worship. Justin Martyr's account of the day will abundantly prove this.

“On the day called Sunday, all that live in city or country meet together, and the writings of the Apostles and prophets are read to them, after which the bishop or president of the assembly makes a discourse to the people, exhorting them to follow the good things they have heard. Then we all rise, and make common prayer, and when prayers are ended, bread and wine and water are brought to the president, who prays and gives thanks with all possible fervency over them, the people answering, Amen; after which, a distribution of the elements is made to all that are present, and they are sent to the absent by the hands of the deacons.”

In days when persecution was strong, and the laws against Christians meeting together were very severe, yet these meetings were held, though at the hazard of life. They would meet ere it was light on the Lord's day, and sing their hymns to Christ. They met in stealth and in fear, and were often surprised and seized, and fearfully punished, for Eusebius tells us of one of the heathen judges who burnt a whole city of people in Phrygia, together with their Church, where they were met together to worship God, but they never forsook the assembling of themselves together. The Church was stronger, and purer, and holier, as being tried by fire, as being nailed to the Cross of her Lord, and

suffering at the hands of her enemies even as He suffered. The custom, too, of observing the vigil of the Lord's days shows how important they regarded it, and in greater churches and cities the custom of having two sermons to which men resorted with great diligence, is also to be remembered.

S. Chrysostom praises the people of Antioch for their zeal in coming to the preaching, and S. Augustine, S. Basil, and others, likewise speak about it. The words of the great preacher are well worthy of being quoted here, as well for those who regard the sermon as the one means of grace, as for those who speak of the independence of the human soul, which gives them the option of either attending or neglecting public worship. Amongst other matters, he says, when some would have excused themselves from the prayers in Church on the plea that they could pray at home, but as they could not hear a sermon at home they could come to that, not to prayers only. "You deceive yourself, O man; for though you may pray at home, yet you cannot pray there in the same manner as you may in the Church, where there are so many fathers together, and where the cry of your prayers is sent up to God with one consent. You are not heard so well, when you pray to God by yourself alone, as when

you pray with your brethren. For there is something more here, consent of mind, and consent of voice, and the bond of charity, and the prayers of the priests together. For the priests for this very reason preside in the Church, that the people's prayers, which are weaker of themselves, laying hold on those that are stronger, may together with them mount up to heaven."

The laws against recusants, and any who absented themselves from public worship, were very stringent; if it occurred for three Lord's days successively, the offender was excommunicated. The same punishment was inflicted on those who, while they heard the scriptures read, and the sermon preached, refused to join in prayers, or receive the Holy Communion. It may well be considered whether we have in this particular, as in much else which affects the due observance of God's worship, improved on the habits of early days. It may well be asked whether the opinions or the practice of our time do not bear a striking and painful contrast to eager love and devoted service of those who lived nearest the apostolic age.

So far, then, have we seen that the rest of the Lord's day is a Divine institution. God sanctified a portion of time not for Himself, for all times and seasons are alike holy to Him, but for man, for man's happiness,

man's comfort, man's moral and social, and above all, man's spiritual improvement. Thus Adam rested, and thus Abel by faith, and Cain by habit, the habit taught him in his childhood, offered sacrifice "at the end of the days." "The end of the days" meaning, undoubtedly, the end of the six days of labour, or on the seventh day sanctified by the Almighty. We have seen how throughout the world's history, not the history of the Jews only, this rest was acknowledged, and when He came to fulfil the law it cannot be doubted that by appearing repeatedly amongst His apostles on that day, by the descent of the Holy Ghost on that day, the change from the seventh to the first was also of Divine institution. We have seen also that in the early ages of the Church, (and that is sufficient for its antiquity, its general acceptance being sufficient proof for later times), great stress was laid on the proper observance of Sunday. From all which we conclude that we can only receive the commandment as it is declared to us to be binding as an essential act of Christian practice on all who hoped to be saved.

The question *how* to observe it is surely not one of much difficulty. The devout soul never finds it hard to know how to do what God requires, or how assent to what He loves. His service is ever to the loving

heart the most perfect freedom. The right object is surely *that* we should set before us. We should ask what was the object of this institution? The answer would be to save man from himself, and to give him time, set time, for spiritual work. In a word, God made the Sabbath of old, and Christ sanctified His day of resurrection in the new covenant for the soul of man. It is a rest *from* labour, and a rest in God; it cannot be spent with profit if without worship, nor if the day be unmarked by some heavenly work. True enough all our days must be dedicated to God, whatsoever we do must be done for the Lord Jesus; but there are times when we can escape from the toil and anxious care of this our bodily existence and can be with angels and arch-angels, and all the company of Heaven, within the sanctuary of the Most High. There can be no rigid rule laid down, such as finds favour with some puritan minds, for all rules must depend much on the particular sphere of life, and the particular condition of the soul of the man himself. Work that is necessary for one becomes a sin in another, but it is surely binding on masters and employers to give every facility to their servants, and to see that that facility be so used, for communion and worship, and religious exercises on that day. "We will be glad and rejoice in it," for

“the Lord’s day being a remembrance of so great a blessing, must be a day of joy, festivity, spiritual rejoicing, and thanksgiving; and therefore it is a proper work of the day to let your devotions spend themselves in singing and reading Psalms; in admiring His person; in sending portions of meat to them for whom nothing is provided; and in all the arts and instruments of advancing God’s glory, and the reputation of religion; in which it were a great decency that a memorial of the resurrection should be inserted, that the particular religion of the day be not swallowed up in the general.

“Good Lord make us mindful of our duty, that as we often hear how we ought to walk, and to please God, we may continue to do so unto our lives end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

And we cannot doubt that God, having so fashioned the body and mind that they require rest, provided the weekly rest for the moral and social good of His creatures. The ceaseless toil of body, and the constant wear and tear of mind, which now brings so many to a premature grave, and increases insanity, gives but little time for the work of the soul. All this is of the earth earthy, and, but for the Lord’s day, which now cannot be set aside, amid the greed of wealth, the

worldliness of trade, and the struggle to outrun in the race of life, there would be no cessation and no rest. But God does not intend man for this drudgery: He has higher ends and aims for him, so the Sundays as they return call to mind those ends and aims, and take the thoughts to higher things. It is impossible to conceive a state of society, still less a world without this. And as if He would never leave us without a witness to His Presence for blessing and for judgment, He has ordained that a man's life and a nation's prosperity, should turn on the obedience to this ordinance. "The Sabbath well spent" and its consequences, is as true of the one as it is of the other. The house, the family, the habits of the individual, and the institutions and character of a people are both dependent on their obedience to this law. Let us hear the words of one who has emancipated himself from the thralldom of a sister Church, and though he has not left her communion yet, has ceased to submit to all her obligations, —Father Hyacinthe. The picture may be somewhat highly coloured; we may wish as we read his words that they were literally true, that as a nation we were all that he thinks and believes us to be, but the general thought is the same.

"I have had the pleasure of visiting London. I never shall forget the emotion

which filled me at the sight of that city, like the ancient metropolis of the seas, of which the prophet speaks: 'the woman that sitteth upon many waters.' And in those mighty floods I saw no vision as of the abyss, but only a vast and solemn equilibrium, as it had been the majesty of a throne rocking and yet stable. There she sat, the great empress of the seas, giving law to isles and continents, stretching afar over things and peoples, not, like those of old, the rod of oppression, but the beneficent sceptre of her riches and her liberty. And I heard the din of her vast industry, and through the streets there poured the living sea of men and vehicles. Then, by and by, there dawned a day which was like the days of my childhood, a day such as public life in my own land has not now to show, a day which was not like other days. No noisy wagons now in the streets; no throngs hurrying to business. The giant machine that had been roaring and thundering the day before had suddenly stood still as if before the vision of God. The great movement of British industry was hushed, and in the streets I saw nought but families going their way, calm and cheerful, to the place of prayer; I heard nought but the sweet chiming of Protestant bells, that remember that they once were Catholic, and wait the day when

they shall be Catholic again. Let no one say, 'England is an aristocratic and feudal power; her Sabbath rest is one of those relics of the middle ages which the breath of modern progress will soon have swept away.' I look across the ocean, and there again I find this Anglo-Saxon race clad in like grandeur under forms the most unlike What I ask is, not the enforcement, but the liberty of the Sabbath. Liberty through the Sabbath, and the Sabbath through liberty! Yes; I say again, the liberty of the people through the Sabbath, and the observance of the Sabbath through liberty!"

We cannot too carefully guard this our national treasure, nor as members of the Church too jealously watch its sacred influence, for as surely as righteousness exalteth a nation, and sin is an offence to any people, so surely to relax the strictness of the fourth commandment is to take the first step in a national decline. Lose this, and the sun of the nation's prosperity is set for ever.

The command therefore enjoins :—

I. The keeping of the Lord's day.

The keeping of it as a day of rest, and for the good of the soul, as a day of religious observance. This to extend to all under our care and influence, to the members of the household, to the guests and strangers

in the family, and to those employed in whatever capacity.

Deut. xxxi. 12, 13; S. Matt. xviii. 20; Heb. x. 25; Neh. xiii. 15, 16; S. John xxi. 25; S. John xx. 19, 26; Acts i. 3; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; S. Matt. xii. 1, 11, 12; S. Mark ii. 27.

II. The observance of Holy Seasons.

By these the faith of the disciple is kept alive, and the regular teaching of the Church year after year is carried on. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, as well in the great festivals, when the mighty works of God and Christ and the Holy Ghost are set forth, and one by one the articles of the Christian's Creed established, as in the lesser festivals when they who shone like lights in the world, and adorned the doctrine of God in all things, speak to us of the triumphs of faith, when they tell us how they fought the good fight, and subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, out of weakness were made strong. It is not difficult to see the great advantage and the great help that there is in this teaching. There is nothing irregular or desultory, nothing left to the mere whim or invention of the minister, but all is provided. The ox and the fatlings are killed, the banquet is ready, and the guests are bidden to the marriage. In Christ there is one mystical body, the

visible and the invisible, the past and the present, are all one in Him. They borrow their light from Him, and they bring us very close to Him. "The experience of every day acquaints us, (God be praised for it!) with numbers, whose faith and obedience, whose purity and truth, whose self-denial and charity, proclaim them to be no less genuine patterns of the saintly life; servants of the same master; heirs of the same promises; runners in the same heavenly race, where all may win the same imperishable crown."

III. The consecration of all time to Him.

"Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." To do all for Him, and heartily as unto Him; to set Him always before us, and keep ever uppermost the right motive so as never to be ashamed, and ever to be improving the talent; this is the consecration of life. This we cannot fail to do if we keep well in mind that of which the Lord's day is the type, even the rest laid up for the people of God. Everything preaches eternity to us; in the varied forms that life takes of sorrow, disappointment, weary contest with sin and uphill labour for holiness, in the joys that last so short a time; the work that satisfies not, and the season when the grasshopper is a burden, we learn to echo David's prayer: "Oh, that I had the

wings of a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest."

Oh, what the joy and the glory must be,
Those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones
see ;

Crown for the valiant, to weary ones rest,
God shall be all, and in all ever blest.

CHAPTER VI.

We come now to the Second Table, which concerns our duty to our neighbour. We are here taught how, as Christians, we should demean ourselves in our relations to the world in which we live. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them in the world"; we are taught what are our duties to each other, and how to perform them, so that we be perfect as He is perfect. The last six may be analysed thus :—

I. We are directed in the duties of our several relations :

1. The natural : as parents and children.
2. The spiritual : as priest and people.
3. The civil : as kings, and those in authority and subjects.

4. The domestic : as masters and servants.

II. We are forbidden to do any injury :

(a.) In deed.

(b.) In thought or desire.

COMMANDMENT V.

“ Honour thy Father and Mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

The words “Father and Mother” in this command are to be taken in their widest sense, and include all who stand to us in the light of parents. It speaks of our duty to kings as the nursing fathers of their people, “to the king as supreme”; to magistrates, “who bear not the sword in vain,” to the spiritual parents and governors, our Fathers in God, who care for our souls as they who shall give account; to the masters of families, who should so act as parents to their servants, remembering that they have a master in Heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with Him; in a word it teaches us to keep well in mind the relationship of responsibility belonging to all “whose authority respectively over their children, subjects, people, and servants being very great, it was thought proper to secure it not only by the laws of the state, but also by the laws and spiritual censures of the church.” (Bingham.)

In the very earliest times the father was the head of the family, and the priest of the household. His word was law, and his control all but absolute over all who belonged to him. And this seems to have been looked upon as sacred, and with the patriarchy to be as the law of God. It was a trust on the part of the parent, which was rarely, if ever, violated, and the perfect submission to the will of the Father is illustrated in the conduct of Isaac when led to what seemed a sacrifice of his life.

Under the old Roman law, borrowed perhaps, and adopted from the early Bible times, the child was held to be the property of the parents; he could be sold and even killed under certain conditions. Children thus ranked with the property of the parent, and were subject to the consequences of the law of debt, just as all else belonging to the debtor. "His Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." S. Matt. xviii. 25, where Christ alludes to the custom well known to those who heard Him.

The long sojourn in Egypt had doubtless affected the regard of the Jews for this law of their fathers, and it became necessary to renew it, and put it first among the several duties of their life. What they had seen done to the children by the Egyptians, they,

when left to themselves, would possibly imitate, and so the sacredness of the tie of parent and child was placed among the other holy things which were to be kept pure and undefiled, and on the keeping of which rested the continuance of God's favour to them for ever.

"That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

All this seems natural enough to us, but it was not so in the beginning of things, nor to the nations of the world. The weakest part of the religious life of barbarian nations is to be found in their social ties. The position of the mother and the children, and especially of the former, will show where, in the scale of civilization, and consequently of religion, a nation is. Where the wife and children are the slaves of the head of the family, where they simply act as helping to the wants and pleasures, there is no religion and no God. The Hebrew mother was an object of respect and love, for the promise of the Messiah kept alive the hope in each mother that she might be the favoured one marked out by prophecy and secured for her a place which, under no other system but that of Christianity, could be hers. The Parent still represented the Heavenly Father, and the family on earth that of heaven. So the law was very strict as to any breach of this command.

Compare such passages as Exod. xxi. 17; Deut. xxi. 18; xvii. 2-5; Lev. xxiv. 16; where the disobedient child is reckoned with blasphemers and idolators. 2 Tim. iii. 2, where the most pestilential state of society is prophesied.

It was among the sins and hypocrisies of the time, that our Lord as the Light of the World, exposed that methods of evading the strict letter of this command had been invented. In S. Matthew xv. 1-6, He speaks with horror and indignation at the false teaching on this subject. "*It is a gift,*" that is, an offering, consecrated to God. I have dedicated what might have been for your use to God, and so now, without sacrilege, it cannot be applied to your use. Besides, *it will be most profitable to thee* as being so dedicated to God. They had invented a means by which a selfish son could evade the law and refuse to succour "his parents, and still seem to be doing an act of piety to God."

And He who came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law, who threw a flood of blessed light on all the law of God, and taught us the power not of the letter but of the spirit, in His own person exemplified what a good child and an obedient son should be.

"He went down to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."

What a volume of teaching is comprised

in this one sentence, and how difficult it is to take in the great mystery of this great and continued obedience. All the lowly offices and duties which belong to a humble household, all that is required of a boy where each member of the family must do their share to contribute to the general support, to what a depth of submission must He have stooped, to what degradation must He not have condemned Himself for our instruction.

"I am struck with astonishment at these words," exclaims Bossuet. "Is this, then, the sole employment of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God? All His occupation, all His exertion, is to obey two of His creatures; and obey them in what? In the meanest exercises, in the practice of a mechanical craft. Where are they who complain and murmur, when their employments are not adequate to their capacity, or, to say more truly, to their pride? Let them come into the house of Joseph and Mary, and let them there behold Jesus Christ. . . . O Pride, be thou broken at this sight. Jesus, the son of a carpenter, a carpenter Himself, is known by this occupation, without being spoken of, as having any other office, or performing any other action."

"It is to Him," says S. Bernard, "that all the angels are subject; it is He whom

principalities and powers obey, and yet He submits to Mary, and meekly fulfils her orders. Not only does He submit to Mary, but likewise to Joseph, because of Mary. Let us here admire two things, and let us choose between them. That which should cause us the more astonishment, whether it be the profound lowliness of the Son, or the excellent dignity of the mother; but both are alike worthy of our veneration. That a God should obey a woman is unexampled humility; that a woman should command a God is dignity at once sublime and unequalled. Learn then, O mortal man, to obey."

And as at the beginning of that suffering life wherein obedience was the master power, the obedience of the perfect man, so was it at the close, amid all the agony of the crucifixion, and the shame and sorrow at human sin, when men were crying out against Him, and with the hate of demons casting words in His teeth, He remembered His mother. She who bore Him, and so was blessed above women, the virgin undefiled, and to whom He had been subject for thirty years, was very dear to Him. Her grief went to His soul, and the thought of Her rose uppermost in those crowd of thoughts and cares at that dread hour: "Jesus, therefore, when He saw His mother, and the disciple standing by,

whom he loved, saith unto His mother, 'Woman, behold thy son!' Then saith He to the disciple, 'Behold thy mother.' And from that time that disciple took her to his own home." And what did that word mean, "home?" Not, as S. Augustine saith, to his own property, but to his heart, to his own kind offices of filial affection.

It is S. Cyril who so beautifully points out to us the tenderness of this charge to the beloved disciple. If we might use such a word which with us is so expressive of the nature of human affection, we should speak of the *thoughtfulness* of the Lord for His mother. He knew how the sword had pierced through her own soul, and He knew what was yet to come, and so forgetful of self and His own sufferings, He *thought* of Her, and gave expression to the love of that *thought* in the charge to S. John. It is so that S. Cyril speaks of this circumstance. "Our Lord, seeing the great trial that it was to His mother, and the great offence which the Cross of His Passion might be to her, and, as God, knowing the deep thoughts with which she was troubled, committed her to the beloved disciple, as being so furnished with Divine wisdom that He could best explain to her the depth of that mystery."

Here doth He afford us His own example that, although we are to hate father and

mother in comparison with God, yet that, notwithstanding, in doing so, we may give our earthly parents the strongest proof of affection and duty.

Thus S. Chrysostom : " Though other women were standing by, yet He mentions none but His mother, teaching us the greater debt which is due to mothers. As when our parents stand in our way concerning spiritual matters, we ought not to know them ; so when nothing of this kind prevents us, we are to afford all things to them, and to prefer them to every other."

And S. Augustine observes that from His Cross, as from the chair of the teacher, the Lord would instruct us in the great lesson of filial piety.

The early Church very strictly carried out this command. Children could not be received into monasteries nor marry without their parent's consent. The sacred right of the parent was guarded most jealously, and very severe censure pronounced against disobedient children. So that on this part of the law there can be no question.

Equally so was it understood to refer to conduct towards superiors, things, and magistrates, and those in authority, about which in the infancy of the Christian Church there would necessarily arise many points of conscience, where those who governed were for the most part heathens.

It was the glory of the Christians that they never broke the laws of the state; the emperor under the old Roman law stood as God. To the Christians he was God's minister for the punishment of the evil doer, and for the praise of them that do well. So that to despise the laws of the state was held to be a kind of sacrilege, and punished accordingly.

"A Christian," says Tertullian, "is no man's enemy, much less the emperor's; knowing him to be the ordinance of God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole Roman empire may be in safety to the end of the world. We worship the emperor as much as is either lawful or expedient, as one who is next to God. We sacrifice for his safety, but it is only to his and our God, and in such a manner as He has commanded, only by holy prayer."

The fourth council of Carthage forbids any seditious person to be ordained, and couples such with usurers, who were held in contempt, and the avengers of injury.

Submission to the spiritual authorities; the parents and governors of the Church next became the duty of the true Christian. He saw in them God's appointed guardians of his Lord; he esteemed them very highly for their work's sake. They represented to him his soul, they were to him the ambassa-

dors of the great king coming with gifts and blessing, and words of comfort and peace from the Eternal. They ministered about holy things, they delivered holy messages, they handled and blessed the Bread of Life, they admitted into the kingdom of Heaven, they pardoned, reprov'd, strengthened, aided, advised, gently led the young, and were to men in their office and their lives the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ. Therefore, the laws were very severe against any who despised the decrees of the Church, or transgressed the rules and commands of the holy Bishop; the councils of Antioch, Carthage, Toledo, and others, pronouncing formal excommunication against such. It is Ignatius who says, "He that despiseth the ministry is an atheist and irreligious man, and a despiser of Christ." And when we think of these words, though at first they startle by their awfulness, yet we see that what he meant is so. To despise the office is to despise those means of grace which that office was instituted to dispense, and by which men are reconciled to God. It is to say we have no need of them, we can be saved without them, we can, in a word, do without Christ. So that in despising the office which God hath established, men despise God's work and are "despisers of Christ."

There is, then : I. The duty commanded of loving and honouring parents.

Deut. xxi. 18-21 ; Prov. i. 8-9 ; S. Matt. xv. 4 ; S. Luke, ii. 51 ; Eph. vi. 1-4.

And succour them : Gen. xlvii. 12 ; S. Mark vii. 10-13 ; 1 Tim. v. 4.

And the opposite of parents caring for and studying their children.

Col. iii. 21 ; Titus ii. 4-8.

Here difficulties present themselves ; we may be asked, can obedience be required to those whose lives are the reverse to what children have a right to expect ; can respect be a duty where the conduct of the parent can only cause sorrow and disgust ? Where there is a bad home, where drink and dissipation, where oaths and profanity are the daily experience of the child, where the truths he has learnt at school, and the prayers he has been taught, and all that has been set before him as the object of his reverence, are despised, what is the child to do ? Where is the boy to go for advice ? Where is the girl to seek strength ? amid the fearful contradiction between what they know the command teaches and what they feel the parents deserve. Alas ! that it should be so, that any should be found in a Christian country so to repudiate their responsibilities and to forget what He meant when He told of the stone about the neck of the father or mother who caused His

children to sin ; but we must face the difficulty, which is one of daily occurrence. And as we speak of it we cannot fail to see how wonderfully God hath provided for the possible loss of respect and affection that a bad parent may justly dread. There is to the very worst yet a clinging on the part of the child, and a hiding of sins he or she feels they must condemn, and a jealousy of words said in condemnation by others, and to the very last a treasure of love which, while one wonders *how* it can be, yet as one wonders, seems to tell of a higher power at work, and a holier influence silently drawing souls to Himself. We can have no fear as to the right decision being made by a good child. The better the child is, the more able will he or she be to take the right path, and retain that filial respect which, if the life of the parent does not warrant, God certainly commands. For be it remembered that no text frees the child from this ; no text tells us that the child may decide to cut himself loose from the parent's just due because that parent fails in his part of the duty. Neglect or contempt of a parent is never to be excused on that ground. The father's shame is no glory to the child. Nor again are the infirmities of temper, the querulousness of age, and the failings of that time when the "grinders are few, and the grasshopper is a burden," any excuse

for relaxing the strictness of the command. These difficulties are the child's cross, which it is often well to bear in youth; rightly borne they strengthen the powers of the soul, which are never so strong as when tried; they increase patience, encourage prayer, promote endurance, and keep alive that gentleness and that meekness which are the direct teachings of Christ. And it has been well said by some one that we owe to our parents that life which makes it possible for us *to live with God and His angels in Heaven*, and this alone is an undying debt of gratitude. As there is no law which frees a parent from the duty of supporting and bringing up his children, so there is none that frees the child from that duty of loving and honouring where there seems so little, and may be so little, to love and honour.

- The growth of things in these later days is so rapid that old landmarks and old prejudices are fast disappearing, and we are no longer what we were. Men rise out of the position in which they were born, workmen become masters, wealth increases, and with wealth habits of expense and manners alter. On everything, indeed, is the stamp of change, and on some things not for the better. There is a sad forwardness in the young, and a want of respect for the aged, which augurs ill for the future. Lev. xix.

32; Job. xxxii. 4; and 1 S. Peter v. 5, might well be wiped out of the Book so far as many of the young people are concerned. Present teaching in secular matters is in advance of the old, and boys and girls of sixteen know more, or think they know more, from the free access they have to books and the increase of prints, than their fathers and grandfathers did at twice their age. Again, parents who began in humble life and have risen to wealth and position, set out their children in a new sphere, and these latter full early take their flight and esteem themselves better than their fathers. Yet for all this no advance in manners, no change of habit, no new customs, no rise and success in life, no new lights and new learning can erase that which was written once on stone and for ever, that the child must honour the parent that his days be long in the land which the Lord his God giveth him.

Akin to this comes the question of education, which is the parent's responsibility. Should we not bear in mind that education is the training of the soul for Heaven, and so it is not of the first importance that certain scraps of knowledge be imparted, but *it is* that the child should be trained up in the way he should go, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Hence right principles, good habits, all the sound duties

which will last beyond the wear and tear of time, should be the parent's first teaching. To fear God and keep His commandments, which is the whole duty of man; to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; to be good churchmen and Christians; to be taught as soon as they shall be able to learn what the Church orders; to be good citizens, and members of a social community, to understand and practice their duties as such: these are the foundation stones on which as much learning as need be may be built, but without which the whole fabric, however costly and startling to behold, is but a pack of cards, which the first untoward wind will destroy. Many years ago, among other fine things, it was said by the Rev. W. Sewell, of Exeter, than whom no man had better authority to speak on the subject of filial obedience and reverence: "Is it the end, and not the beginning, of the discipline and education of men? And when the child is placed in his own home, and sees all the faults, frailties, infirmities, and weaknesses of his parent, what is there, then, to prevent the destruction of all filial reverence? Is not this a case that occurs every day? But give that child instruction, place him in the school of the church, let him learn that his parent stands for him as the symbol and representative of God, and that though he be a

human being, yet his offices, functions, and relations are so sanctified that even when the child sees him, in a moment when human nature is most degraded, *he is bound to close his eyes, go away backward, and pray God to forgive his parent.*"

2. To obey rulers and magistrates.

Titus iii. 1; 1 S. Pet. ii. 13; Rom. xiii. 1; 2 S. Peter ii. 10; and teachers, Prov. v. 10-13.

The same principle applies here. It is the keeping well in view the family principle that makes submission to the powers that be delight and not a burden. The powers that be are ordained of God, so speaks the command of God; this is God's voice: am I not a man, and have I not an equal right to the position and means which I see in the hands of others; all should be equal, liberty and equality; this is man's voice. And the fearful scenes which we in our days have witnessed in a neighbouring land, under the name of liberty, and which were but a repetition in all the hideous refinement of civilized atrocity of scenes in a past age, is an answer to which of these voices it becometh the Christian to obey. If there be no subordination there is no religion, and if there is no religion the social tie is broken, and there is nothing but ruin. The true Christian alone is the true patriot, the best soldier and citizen is he who is at

once the soldier of the Cross and the citizen of the city of God.

And this extends to all ranks. The Christian servant will regard his master as his parent for the time being, and the master not forget the responsibility that he has incurred in being the head of a household. The one will be obedient "unto his master according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not with eye service. Eph. vi. 5-7. The other will forbear threatening, remembering that he hath a master in Heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with him." Col. iv. 1

1 Tim. v. 17; Heb. xiii. 7-17; Gal. vi. 6; 1 Thess. v. 12-13; 1 Cor. ix. 13; Rom. xii. 16; Titus ii. 4-8; Eph. v. and vi.; Col. iii. and iv.

In all this there is but one modification. Obedience to God is the first law; therefore all obedience must be "in the Lord." Acts iv. 19; v. 28-29, 41-42.

And while punishment is threatened to the disobedient children, Prov. xx. 20; Ex. xxi. 17; Deut. xxi. 18; we can carry in our hearts the concluding promise of the command, and look for the glorious recompense to the reverent and dutiful child.

"Resting implicitly on the promises of God, we may cast an almost prophetic glance beyond the grave, and regard him

as one of those chosen ones to whom it will be given, to dwell for ever in that better land of which the earthly Canaan was but a type and shadow."

CHAPTER VII.

COMMANDMENT VI.

"Thou shalt not kill."

Sin brought death into the world, death in a thousand ways, but from one cause, human passion, the hatred that Satan had sown broadcast in the world, that which was part of himself whose hate is eternal.

"Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man ; but many shapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal ; yet to sense
More terrible at the entrance, than within.
Some, as thou sav'st, by violent stroke shall
die ;
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth
shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear ; that thou may'st
know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark ;
A Lazarhouse it seem'd ;

The command therefore regulates the human passion, and sets before us the dignity and holiness of the human body in forbidding that it shall be destroyed. For this is the force of the law : the body is a sacred thing, dedicated to as it is made by God, and so the power of life and death can only be His, and except within certain limits was never given to man. He may not destroy what God hath claimed as His own, for in the image of God made He man.

Quite early is the law made known to us. Amid the awful horror which the first murder created, and of which in these days, when we are familiar with crime, we can have no conception, when Cain had by his own act brought into the world a new calamity, death ; when, as we may conceive, though his hate was intense, he knew not what he did, or what exactly would follow ; when he gazed with a dull dread at all his act had brought forth, and when, too, in the sullen doggedness of his temper, he had denied that he was his brother's keeper ; we read, "*The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. . . .*"—Gen. iv. 10, 11.

And as time went on, when the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and the

imaginations of his heart was only evil continually, we may judge that this sin, a contempt of human life, and a free indulgence of human passion, was amongst the chiefest. For after God had blessed Noah, and placed him in the new world, He solemnly gave the law about human life, and the distinction drawn between man and beast was retrospective as well as for the future. The words had doubtless reference to past lawlessness, against which Noah and his posterity were warned. For while every beast of the earth, and every fowl of the air, and all that moveth upon the earth, and all the fishes of the sea were delivered into his hand, yet "surely your blood of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man," Gen ix., was said of human life. And the general horror of the murderer which we find in the Gentile world may be traced to this law.

With the Egyptians, slave life was counted cheap, and Pharoah's cruelty in slaying the male children may be looked upon as an indication of the contempt in which they held the lives of their captives, and of the power an unprincipled and despotic king would have over them.

This being one among the many sins to which by long usage the Israelites had become accustomed it was the more necessary to re-ordain the old law, and place it among the duties of the second table. The more so, perhaps, as the people whither they were going were accustomed to human sacrifices. Thus Lev. xx. 2, "Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech ; he shall surely be put to death : the people of the land shall stone him with stones." And Deut. xii., "Take heed to thyself thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God : for every abomination to the Lord, which He hateth, have they done unto their God ; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their Gods." The appointment of cities of refuge for one who slew another accidentally, while a provision of mercy, still keeps in view the severity of God on this crime ; for though protected so long as he was there, and so long as he kept within the city, yet he was an exile, and should he venture beyond the boundary no money nor influence could save him, "he shall surely be put to death."

In the early church the abhorrence of this crime was very great. Murderers were always exempt from the general pardon which was granted on an Emperor's birth-

day, or at Easter, and murderers and adulterers were those who were especially denied the protection of the sanctuary. The law of Constantine was that "If any one hasten the fate of his parent, or son, or any the like relation, which goes under the name of parricide, whether he attempt it privately or publicly, he shall not be punished with the sword, or with fire, or with any other common death, but be sowed up in a sack with serpents and other beasts, and be cast into the sea or a river, as the nature of the place will admit : that he be deprived of the use of all the elements as long as he remains in being ; that he may have neither air to breathe in whilst he lives, nor earth to receive him when he is dead." And the Church punished all murderers alike by the spiritual sentence of excommunication.

No less severe was the Church on the kindred crime of suicide. It is not difficult to conceive the despair of Judas or the disappointment of Ahitophel, or the sullen unbelief of a Saul, ending in self-murder. Where men have no faith, where either by an unsuccessful career of crime they are on the brink of an exposure to that world which has hitherto been all in all to them, where having no hopes beyond this life, all hope *in* this life appears dead, we can understand suicide. And where indeed

there may be no belief in a future state, and, as seems to be no uncommon error in these days, a thought that after death annihilation ensues, and that there is nothing beyond, we can conceive the overwrought brain, as well as the morally abandoned being giving up to despair and taking life away.

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them. . . .

To the Christian, however, who believes as he is taught, that here we have no continuing city, but must seek one to come, that patience, endurance, trust, and manfully fighting with the opposition of life, is the training for that Heaven which by Christ is called a resting place, and by the apostle a Sabbath, to cut short that life is to lose all. Not thus acted the saints who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, out of weakness were made strong; nor thus does it become any to be weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not. Job iii. 20, 22; Phil. i. 21.

To such the Church always denied Christian burial. If any one, says the first council of Braga, bring himself to a violent end, either by sword, or poison, or a preci-

pice, or a halter, or any other way, no commemoration shall be made of him in the oblation, nor shall his body be carried to the grave with the usual psalmody. The story is given of one Hero, an Egyptian monk, who was tempted by Satan to cast himself into a deep well, presuming on his good deeds to be preserved alive; the abbot Pafuntius could hardly be prevailed upon not to reckon him among the excommunicate, and deny him the privilege of being mentioned in the oblation for those who were at rest in the Lord.

To cut and wound themselves, or in any way mutilate the body, was also reckoned among the offences against this law, and was punished by excommunication for a length of period, proportionate to the degree of sin. Constantine would have no criminal branded in the face because that was formed after the Divine image, and must not be disfigured.

The sin of duelling, which was once so common among us, exhibiting in the strongest way the moral cowardice of human nature, has happily passed away. Anger, enmity, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness still remain, and it must be remembered are all a breach of this command. And as charity fulfils the commandment, so every breach of charity offends against it. By keeping this in view we shall under-

stand what is meant by unrighteous and righteous anger. Our Blessed Lord speaks of being angry with a brother without a cause; and S. John, of a hatred to a brother, which causes the sin of murder in the heart, but there were times when Christ showed righteous anger, as when He made the whip of small cords and drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple, as when He was much displeased with His disciples, and when He denounced woes against the Scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites; and the apostle S. Paul tells us, in Ephes. iv. 26, to be angry and sin not, so that anger in this sense is just. To be indifferent to sin, never to be moved to indignation at any outrage against God, is a sign of indifference to all truth, and is an unrighteous feeling. Anger, like other feelings used for God's honour, and controlled by the highest discipline, may be most useful for His work. God has given it to us for a good purpose; like the sword of the magistrate, it is to be used to uphold virtue and condemn vice, and so has been called "one of the bonds by which human society is held together." By it, vice receives its due punishment and virtue is vindicated in the eyes of the world.

S. Chrysostom says, "We have anger implanted within us,—not in order that we may insult our neighbours, but that we may

reclaim the sinner, and in order that we may not be insensible. Anger is like a stimulus applied to us in order that we may gnash our teeth against the Devil, and in order that we may be vehement against him : not in order that we may fight one another. We have arms given us, not that we may war against each other, but that we may use them as a panoply against our enemy. Art thou passionate? Be so against thine own sins, rebuke thine own soul, lash thine own conscience, be a vehement and severe censor of thine own faults. This is the use of anger. For this purpose it was implanted in us by God."

The distinction here drawn shows how necessary caution is in the use of anger, and how easily we may, while indulging in secret temper or dislike, deceive ourselves into the belief that our cause is just. It should be well understood whether our position is such as will admit of righteous anger being shown without harm to ourselves or others. A child or a servant can scarcely use it against a parent or a master, a layman cannot with the same freedom as a priest ; whether our cause be a right one, and we may not be in error, as when a servant or a pupil be overblamed for a fault, or without due investigation, and perhaps wrongly ; and whether we are quite free from the same sin on our part, and so able

freely to blame another. "Why beholdest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, and considerest not the beam which is in thine own eye." Excessive blame, intemperate language, hasty correction, remove, entirely out of the law of righteousness, the anger which may have a just cause, and do harm to the person blamed. We must not be angry without cause, and when the cause arises we must pray that we sin not. Anger alone is criminal, which is against charity to myself or my neighbours; but anger against sin is a holy zeal (S. Mark iii. 5), and are efforts of love to God and my brother, for whose interest I am passionate, like a concerned person; and if I take care that my anger makes no reflexion of scorn or cruelty upon the offender or transportation to myself, anger becomes charity and duty. And when one commended Charilaus, the king of Sparta, for a gentle, a good, and a meek prince, his colleagues said, "Well, how can he be good who is not an enemy even to vicious persons?" Jeremy Taylor.

Let us not forget that the greatest harm is done to the cause of Christ by religious cowardice, and that for a Christian to see a sin committed or hear a shameful expression used, or shameful tale told, without rebuke, is to make himself a partaker of the sin, and to help on the devil's work in

the world. So that there are occasions when real anger is also real charity.

But the sins of passion and temper, hatred, and uncharitableness, are condemned in this command, and, as now, so ever were a bar to the Holy Communion. The law of the Church was that all who partook should be of one heart and of one mind, be in charity with all men.

“The communion was a symbol of love and charity, and the covenant of peace and unity, and a great uniter of men’s hearts and affections. Therefore, all who visibly wanted these necessary qualifications, were thought unworthy of that venerable mystery, and accordingly obliged, by the discipline of the Church (till they were so qualified) to abstain from it.” Bingham.

The question of war has, from the very first ages of the Church, troubled men, and reasonably so. For if we argue from the effects of war, and from what we see it to be in God’s word, an instrument of His judgment, and, therefore, a calamity and a curse, we may well hesitate to pronounce an opinion upon even its lawfulness. The orphan’s tear, the widow’s plaint, the virgin’s dishonour, the poor man’s desolation, — cities sacked, villages burnt, hearths and homesteads wasted, thousands sent to their account unprepared, and to satisfy it may be human ambition, and to acquire a few

acres of territory; these and such like which are ever the result of the shortest war, may well cause the Christians to ask whether this is following that divine Master who bade us "visit not evil," and said, "that all who take the sword shall perish with the sword." Still we know that God "calls Himself the God of the armies of Israel"; that He especially laid on the Jews the task of exterminating the nations of Canaan, and slaying man, woman, and child; that S. John Baptist did not advise the soldiers who came to him with the question, "and what shall we do?" to desert their companies and cease to be soldiers, but only to do their duty and be content with their wages. That while the Blessed Lord ever commands meekness and gentleness, and forgiveness of injuries, He yet leaves no injunction against war, but receives the centurion and blesses his faith, while He heals his servant. So the history of the infant Church has a Cornelius whose alms and prayers are accepted with God, and over and over again does S. Paul use terms which belong to human warfare as types of the spirital warfare, hence we must conclude that there are occasions, such as when the aggression of the strong is to be resisted, and the weak to be defended, when war is lawful, nay, even required, and when amid all that too plainly assures him of the

devil's power in the world, the Christian soldier may yet do his duty, and if he die at his post may not fear of losing his eternal reward.

Of the judicial power and capital punishment it is hardly necessary to speak here except that as God's instrument the magistrate and the judge bear not the sword in vain. Roman xiii. 4.

We are then forbidden by the sixth commandment :

I. To use personal violence, to nourish revenge, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness. In a word, all sins against charity are here condemned.

S. Matt. xv. 19 ; S. Mark vii. 21-23 ; S. Luke iii. 14 ; Eph. iv. 26, 31-32.

II. And while it is a calamity and a curse, yet it may be justifiable and no breach of the command.

S. Luke iii. 14 ; 2 Tim. ii. 4.

And we are enjoined to practise the opposite virtues of meekness, gentleness, forbearance, and returning of good for evil. This, doubtless, is the most difficult of all duties, inasmuch as it contradicts the impulse of the natural man ; but for that reason alone, if not for a host of other reasons, we are called upon to see how it is the adornment of saints. S. Paul can make no greater appeal than to the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and it is Christ who

bids us learn of Him, who is meek and lowly of heart, for so shall we find rest for our souls, and that the meek shall inherit the earth. It is He who, in His own Divine Person, hath set us an example how to practice this great virtue, and how to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. So meek, so gentle was He, that, led as a lamb to the slaughter, He was dumb, He opened not His mouth. The rude, coarse, and brutal soldiery, the poor craven-hearted Pilate marvelled that though they spared not their insults, He answered not a word. He who thus, and ever through His troubled life, endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, bids us "learn of Him." Learn of Thee, O Blessed One, who willed to be bound as a slave "in order to give us new proof of Thy love. Thou hast willed to suffer this unworthy treatment to give us an admirable example of gentleness, and to fulfil that prophecy of Isaiah, 'He was sacrificed, and because He willed it.'" S. Bernard.

"If thou art despised," says Pinart, "insulted, or wronged, take heed that thou give not way to anger, but follow the precept of the apostle, and recompense to no man evil for evil. Carefully avoid every sort of contest and dispute; and in order to do this, defer readily to the opinion of others, and do not contradict them. Sacri-

follow thy tastes, inclinations, and pleasures, rather than be obliged to contend with thy neighbour. If duty and charity should sometimes oblige thee to contradict others, let it be always with the greatest discretion. Be ever ready to forgive those who aggrieve thee, and show to them a countenance cheerful, open, and smiling."

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice : and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. iv. 31-32.

CHAPTER VIII.

COMMANDMENT VII.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

The master-thought of this command, which is God's protection against human selfishness, of the purity and chastity of the Christian home, is the holiness of the Body. We are temples of the Holy Ghost. A temple is a building consecrated to the service of the Most High, filled with holy things, and devoted to a holy purpose; to use it for common objects is to profane it, and to dishonour Him whose abode it is. So with the Human Body. Christ hath

purchased this great gift, the gift of holiness, which is not of ourselves, but which cometh from and belongeth to Him. We will come unto Him, and make our abode with Him, "God the Holy Ghost dwells truly and really in the hearts of the faithful. He is their Life, He unites them to Christ, and is the source of all graces, comfort, life, and fire of love. "The world cannot receive Him because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." And so He is to us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, for He dwelleth in us. And these gifts are summed up in the one gift, which is even God Himself, *Love*, God is Love, and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him. So does S. Paul speak of the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts, not *given* to, but shed *abroad* in our hearts, as showing the profusion of it. That gift then, which is the greatest possible, He hath given; not heaven, and earth, and sea, but what is more precious than any of these, and hath rendered us angels from being men, yea, sons of God, and brethren of Christ. But what is this gift? The Holy Spirit. He hath shed abroad the full fountain of His Blessings. So over and over again our position "as members of Christ," as baptized into one

Body, and partaking of one spirit, as being one Body, and one Bread, as dwelling in Christ, and Christ in us, as having received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, as having the spirit of His son sent forth into our hearts, is spoken of; by all which expressions we know that one and the same truth is meant. We know that we are of God, that the spirit of God dwells in us, that Christ is in us, that the spirit of the Father is in us, and that being in Christ, in the spirit, we are the temple of God unless we be reprobate. A wondrous mystery of love and an awful truth.

“Weigh well,” says S. Gregory, “dearest brethren, what a dignity that is, to have in the dwelling-place of the heart the presence of God.”

“Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,” said God to Moses, “for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

What place must that be, how sacred, wherein is His very shrine, and where the Holy Trinity dwells through the spirit.

This, I repeat, is the master thought of the command; we are to consider the holiness of that body which is the Temple of God. We are to consider what it must be to defile that body, what a very misery sin must be when brought into the very Presence of God. For a soul washed in the Blood of Jesus to choose sin, to be impure, unchaste,

what can be more awful, what more sickening? So does God bid us consider the sacredness of our bodies, and not commit adultery. All sins of impurity are forbidden here, and all the opposite virtues enjoined. The command is, "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul," and on the ground that we are "members of Christ" and "temples of the Holy Ghost," and that "God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness."

It is to be observed that the first seven of the commandments seem to stand on a somewhat higher footing than the rest, in that the penalty attached to breaking them was the severest possible, nothing less than death. To worship a God, or own another God than Jehovah, was death; to blaspheme, to break the sabbath, to be disobedient to parents, to commit murder, and so with this command to commit adultery, was to incur the punishment of death. It will be seen that the sanctity of the nature of man is indissolubly bound up in the Holiness of God. The relations of parent and child, of man with man, as of the family who own but one head, and whose life is derived from one source, is thus very distinctly laid down. We must bear this in mind, that we may see the sin of a breach of this command, and that we may understand how fatally society has erred in palliating or condoning the sins of the flesh.

In the heathen world it was otherwise. No check was placed on the free indulgence of the passions, and no special sacredness attached to the marriage vow. They, to use S. Paul's word, were on this point past feeling, and gave themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; but, he adds, ye have not so learned Christ. The Egyptians were great sinners in this particular, and the command was made the more significant, and the penalty perhaps the more severe, to show what was the mind of the Eternal, and to warn Israel not to copy the vice to which they had been for so long accustomed.

And of the mind of the Eternal there could be no question, for the history as well as the teaching of the Bible speak in no doubtful words of this point.

The contest of good with evil has from the very first been between the pure and the impure. The sensual habits of the antediluvian world are particularly mentioned, and Noah, the preacher of righteousness, stands out as a lonely witness to purity in a surrounding of evil. Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, which conversation brought down the fire from heaven, and the sins of the Canaanites against which Israel was warned, and into which whenever she fell God de-

livered her up to her enemies, were those of impurity and incest. Phinehas, the priest, is praised for his zeal, and Balaam, the false prophet, given over to the contempt of posterity; the one boldly grappled with the sin, and the other showed by his crafty counsel the power of the sin. Later on, we have Elijah, the man of God, in his lofty asceticism witnessing against the impurity of the worship of Astoroth. And so through the troubles of Manasseh until we come to the days when Christ proclaimed a new Gospel to a sinful and adulterous generation. And what was this new gospel? Even that the very thoughts and intents of the heart are to be watched and governed, and kept in subjection, as well as the actions. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, "Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart." And so He nipped the sin in its bud. He struck at the root of the disease by condemning the cause, the desire, and thought of the heart, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Throughout the epistles there is but one warning, and that with the same motive in view, that Christians are members of Christ and temples of God. To the Corinthian Church, which was peculiarly affected by this kind

of sin, S. Paul writes, "Flee fornication neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 9-10. And "he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." And in verses 18-20, he gives the reason, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Having here, as in the third chapter, reminded them that they are temples of the Holy Ghost, and that whosoever defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy. So to the Thessalonians he speaks of the will of God being their "sanctification that ye should abstain from fornication, for God hath not called us unto uncleanness but unto holiness." To the Ephesians, "Fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. For *this* ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

To the Colossians, that in such sins "The wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

To the Galatians, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

To the Hebrews, "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge"; and so, too, S. Peter. 1 Peter ii. 11; 2 Peter ii. 9-10.

And the future of the sensualist is yet

more fearfully depicted by the beloved disciple, who was taken up that he might see the things which should be hereafter; he tells of a lake of fire and brimstone, and a second death (Rev. xxi. 8), and of a heavenly Jerusalem, without which, that is, those shut out and hopeless, "are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremonger, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. xxii. 15. Such is the language of Him who hath also said that the pure in heart are Blessed, for they shall see God.

Very severe were the rules of the early church on the subject of impurity, going so far even as to deny communion in the hour of death, as may be seen by referring to Bingham, bk. xvi., chap. x., where the whole matter is fully discussed.

Whence then, in the face of Bible teaching and the voice of the church, has this vice of impurity such power? There are influences at work in modern life against the influence of the Holy Spirit, and these which are so often fatal to those who surrender themselves to them cannot be passed by.

First in order is the literature of the present day. Amid much that is good there is an infinite amount of what is fatally evil. Men have run to and fro, and knowledge has increased, and herewith a hungering

after what is sensational and exciting to the passions, hence too much of what is produced in the pages of magazines and in the shape of three-volume novels touches so closely on the region of the forbidden, and panders so much to a heated imagination, that it is difficult to know where the mischief of such reading ends. "There are books, and very popular books too, in which, notwithstanding their refinement, a delicate taste recognises a taint which cannot but corrupt the purity of the soul. There is an unwholesome curiosity in some directions about sins of which it were better to know nothing." I don't think that we are a whit behind the last century in the impurity of our literature, we have attained the point of concealment, but this only makes the poison the more deadly.

Next are the amusements, which are scarcely less to be condemned. No one can honestly recommend the drama as a moral agent, no one can say, as we ought to be able to say, that to see a play is to learn a great moral lesson, nor can we say that the means provided of social entertainment in the casinos and saloons of our towns are such as will give rest to the mind and, as a change of thought, do good to the spiritual man also. Not so. It is impossible to recommend them to the young, nay, our first duty, by way of checking the

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beginning of evil, is to advise that amusements of this kind be avoided altogether.

Then there are the habits of modern life, which are so different from the simple taste of a former age. We are no longer satisfied with what were luxuries once. All things have advanced, and we live fast in these times. Hence the danger. The young, as soon as they become conscious of their existence, awake to a very different state of things to that which they read of in former times, and quickly become alive to what their elders have only reached in later years. The effect of this is painfully apparent. Precocity, forwardness, a copying not of the best models, but of the worst, and of the most popular, around them ensues, with what result the vicious state of modern life will show. What, indeed, is the life of great cities? What are the temptations awaiting the young which make parents tremble and hesitate, and sacrifice what is clearly their interests before they will expose their children to them. "The seaport place, the garrison town, the permanent camp set up on some bleak common, because it affords space to manœuvre troops, what hellish scenes of lust, intemperance, and murder do not these engender! Surely there can be no doubt that Christians are bound to recognise impurity as one of the especial evils with which in these times the Church has to wage a conflict."

Then the overcrowding in cottages and rooms in town and country, and the vast population gathered in so many centres of industry, where manufacturies have grown up, and where the spiritual provision has not been made to meet their wants, and so a very crowd of evil habits and evil associations work against the teaching of such lessons as purity, and modesty, and self-respect.

Society, by the way in which the man and woman are respectively treated, adds its portion to the general difficulty in social improvement. The thief, the swindler, the murderer, meet their just due at the hands of law and human opinion. Not so the seducer. He becomes no outcast from society; he is still received, and his conduct is no barrier to his advancement, and no apparent loss to his reputation. Instead of loathing and avoiding him and until very evident repentance, and, so far as possible, restitution has been made, he is received, and if in a high position among men, at least he meets with nothing to remind him that he hath sinned against the Holy Ghost, and destroyed what he can never restore, the purity of a woman's soul. On the other hand the woman bears her shame wherever she goes, *that* is never forgotten and by society, never forgiven. "The height from which she has cast herself is so dizzy, the blow so stunning, the degradation so

complete, that we are tempted to despair of one by her own choice so utterly cut off and out away from us. Her spiritual life, we argue, must be extinct. In the old familiar home they never mention her name; even the edge of parental affection is blunted; her sisters are taught to forget her; her brothers proscribe her memory. She is abhorred of her acquaintance. Friends pass by on the other side. Her own sex shrink from her instinctively. Men dread to risk their reputation by recognising her. And we may not wonder at it; for even the commissioned minister, who is sent for that very purpose, in Christ's stead, and in Christ's name, to find the lost sheep, to call back the aliens, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God, even he, the Lord's priest, too often, and as I venture to think, too scrupulously, hesitates here. He fortifies himself behind some text of scripture. "Can the Ethiopian change her skin? Is she not working out all uncleanness with greediness? The spirit is quenched within her: resisted and so fled—hopelessly, irrevocably fled. She is literally and in its truest sense 'an abandoned woman.' I will not waste my strength in a vain attempt to bring living water out of the barren rock." Alas! but for the love of Jesus who took to Himself the soul of the penitent woman, she would be lost—lost.

Have we not heard the bridegroom is so
sweet,
O let us in tho' late, to kiss his feet,
No, no, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

We see no remedy for this, but the upholding the sanctity of the marriage tie, and the purity of an English home. What has made England so socially superior to many nations is this : the home life, and the home habits, and the home affections of the people. Much of late years has been done to destroy this, and it has been done by attempting to make marriage a civil contract. The great blow was struck in the Divorce Act. Against our Lord's own words, than which nothing one would fancy could be plainer, in S. Matt. v. 31, 32 ; xix. 3-12 ; S. Mark x. 2-12 ; S. Luke xvi. 18 ; and S. Paul's injunction to the Corinthian Church, 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11, 39 ; it is decreed that not only may there be a divorce, but also a re-marriage, so that S. Paul's words on the typical nature of marriage, Eph. v., have no meaning. After this we cannot be surprised at the attempt to legalize incest by promoting marriage with the deceased wife's sister. Nor can we wonder that with many who wish to hide their shame, or lower the marriage state, the ceremony at the Register Office is preferred to the blessing of the Church. While

such things are, and carry with them an appearance of authority, the morality of our English homes is greatly imperilled. Let us hear the words of a Dissenter on the marriage tie. "If I refuse to marriage the name of a sacrament, it is not because I deny the sacredness of the institution ; but partly to preserve a separate name for Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are ordinances absolutely peculiar and unique ; and partly because the religious mystery, with which that description invests it, appears to me to remove the institution of marriage from the region of human affections and delight, as though that region were unblessed with the light of the Divine presence and approbation. The relationship of marriage, beyond all others, unfolds within us that perfect and self-sacrificing love, which is the crown of God's perfections, and by the love and care of children, to which the sacredness of marriage is indispensable, we are formed to the image of God's fatherhood." Dale.

Meanwhile blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God ; they *do* see God, for they have God very near to them, and in them ; they find in the life of the Church, in prayer, in sacraments, in the glory of the sanctuary, in the love of God's house, and in the beauty of holiness, that God is indeed very precious. They see Him in the

tranquil pleasures and the natural affections of home, in the innocence of childhood, and in the glory of old age, and as unto the pure all things are pure, the disciplined heart, the regulated thought, the quiet endurance, as seeing them that is invisible, are joys which the world cannot give nor take from them. And things present are a type of things to come, who shall tell what an apostle could not describe of the vision of God face to face, of the company of the blessed, and the King in His beauty, with whose likeness when they awake up they shall be satisfied. *That* hath yet to be known, but such is the reward promised to those who are pure in heart, and keep themselves unspotted from the world.

What then hast thou to do with impurity, who art the dwelling place of the all holy God ?

“Thou mayest not feel nor know His presence, yet in each passion thou by His grace quellest, each temptation thou by His grace resistest, each prompting to which thou by His grace hearkenest, each groan for past sin thou by His grace utterest, each act of love thou by His grace doest, He will be more and more present to thy soul. For on our use of grace He bestoweth more grace, and grace is the presence of the Comforter, “Whom He will give you that He may abide with you for ever.” It is His own

Presence, who became Man that men might become partakers of Himself and His Divine nature, who, of all, saint or penitent, is the everlasting joy of all His redeemed." Pusey.

We are forbidden to sin against Purity:—

1. In act of whatever kind. Gal. v. 19, 21 ; Eph. v. 5 ; Rev. xxii. 15 ; Heb. xiii. 4.
2. In *thought*. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 18 ; S. Matt. v. 28.
In *word*. Eph. iv. 29 ; Col. iii. 8.
3. What is immodest in conduct. Isa. iii. 16 ; 1 S. Pet. iv. 3 ; Eph. v. 4.
4. As being (a.) Members of Christ. 1 Cor. vi. 13 ; Eph. v. 30.
" " (b.) Temples of Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. vi. 19 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16 ; 1 Thess. iv. 7.
" " (c.) As those who shall rise again.

We are also commanded to be *temperate* in all things.

Temperate in eating, temperate in drinking, temperate in sleep, temperate in speech, temperate in pleasure, temperate in affection. To keep our bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity.

We cannot speak too strongly against the vice of intemperance, nor of the effect on the whole being of those who addict themselves to it. This vice supplies all the temptation which may otherwise be lacking ; it fills our prisons, our workhouses, and our lunatic

asylums. It destroys all spiritual influence, and counteracts most effectually the work of the Church. Family ties are broken, decency outraged, debts contracted, married life made wretched, and every crime which belongs to human nature committed, not to say the sacrifice of human life, which has been estimated at 50,000 persons every year, may be laid to the charge of intemperance. As it affects all classes of society, and cannot without the greatest injustice be ascribed to the working classes and the poor, it is the more difficult to deal with, and will only be dealt with effectually by keeping in view, and impressing on the young, the Baptismal vow, and that all such sins are a loss of grace, our offence against that body which is God's temple, and that God, whose temple we are. It is good to *avoid temptation* and fly all occasions of sin, for many have fallen through presumption. To set a watch over the senses; to avoid idleness; to practice fasting and self-denial; to be careful of the company we keep, and above all to be humble, for, says S. Bernard, "We can only obtain and preserve chastity by the means of humility." Be much in prayer, for great victories are gained on our knees, greater victories than the timid heart and the weak faith can have any conception of, and it is He who ever liveth to make inter-

cession, who hath promised freely to give whatsoever we faithfully ask.

Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Help me to drive away all sinful thoughts, to conquer every sinful desire ; and so pierce my flesh with the fear of Thee, that this bosom enemy being overcome in me, I may serve Thee with a chaste body, and please Thee with a pure heart and mind, and may at last through Thy merits be admitted into that blessed kingdom, where nothing that defileth may enter. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

COMMANDMENT VIII.

“Thou shalt not steal.”

This Command governs our dealings with each other and is God's sanction to the use of His gifts ; here He tells us that property is an institution of His own, and, like all other of His institutions, must be regulated by His law. We are in no sense masters of our own means but stewards only, and this is the light in which, from the highest to the lowest, Scripture ever places us. It is important to keep this well in view, and one

of the distinctive marks of a Christian people, as almsgiving is of a Christian Church, is the integrity of their dealings. The Egyptians, with whom the Jews sojourned, as well as other heathen nations, held theft as a very venial offence, only to be reprobated when discovered. We are here called upon to imitate God's justice, and to lay down as one of the first principles of a Godly education that we must be true and just in all things. That to be so is not so easy as may at first appear to the guileless mind, will be seen as we try to expand this by no means easy direction. Society presents to us the first difficulty, we are indeed members one of another, we are by our very necessities dependent on one another; the wants of human nature have created commerce, and the demand and supply have created competition. Competition again calls into play the grosser parts of our nature, and cunning and superior skill in overreaching others, the temptation to gain, by dishonest means, and by dishonest rapidity, that which does not seem to come otherwise; all this and the misery attached to the abuse of God's gifts, to the selfish luxury or grasping of one class, show too plainly that if this command was necessary for the Jews it is doubly so for ourselves.

God warns us here of the danger of the

love of the world. He speaks to us as those who have certain blessings, for the use and abuse of which we are to account, and He here assures us that we shall have to account for them; that just as it will be asked how we have kept the law of charity and the law of purity as the disciples of that Master, who was love and purity itself, so will it be asked, what hast thou done with thy talent? how we have kept the law of integrity and justice.

And the warning which this command carries with it calls on us to consider what is the curse and what the blessing attached to the possession of the goods of this life. We are assured that there is a curse attached to them, and it is S. John who tells us that "if any man love the world the love of God is not in him," (1 John ii. 15,) that there is a fearful power in things which are not in themselves sinful of hindering the love of God.

So again, while it is lawful to possess wealth, and while wealth properly used is a power in the world for good, yet it is also written (1 Tim. iv. 10) that "the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

This will be obvious when we think it out, though, indeed, it is sufficiently apparent to

any one who studies the life that is going on about him.

God hath made us for Himself, and He alone can satisfy the soul, or be to the soul the real object of affection. Whatever would assume the first place in our hearts will virtually dethrone Him. We have made *new Gods*, and the whole intention of our being has altered. Apply this to the subject before us. A love of the world, an overcare or anxiety for the things of this life, weakens the love of God in us; religious affections are weakened, and all that energy which should be given to God is diverted in another channel. And so the world will thrust itself unbidden, but as if of right, into all our thoughts and acts. Men are carried away with the stream, instead of breasting it. They become weary of holy duties; not only times and seasons are neglected, but at last the plainest duties themselves. There is a time for all things but for Heaven. Reading, meditation, self-examination go first, and then by degrees, by little and little, attendance on the Holy Sacrament, church-going, private prayer, and the love of God is virtually gone. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man. Then the moral nature is diseased, and even the broadest distinc-

tion of right and wrong are destroyed, and a fearful lot of self-imposed and self-created miseries follow in their train. Disappointment, bitterness, fear, and uncertainty, sleepless nights, and anxious days, tell of the ruling passion. When the love of God has left us, what is there, what can life or the best position of the world offer? The South Sea islander, who dreads an invisible power, he knows not, and who can find in the created image of his own fancy no being to love, is not more lonely than he who, having been taught this command by one to whom he owes all things, flings it aside for the worship of that which will fail him in the day of adversity, and which can never satisfy. "I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces:—I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem;—and whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them: and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." Eccl. ii. 8-11.

All dishonesty of act or principle is condemned by this command. In the early church great care was taken to define the duties of property, and the offences against it. S. Augustine, in the distinction which he draws between greater and lesser sins, puts theft first among those heinous crimes

for which men must do formal penance, though he states cases in which it was impossible to enforce the proper discipline. Under the head of restoration of what has been lost he tells a remarkable story of one who found a bag of money and publicly advertized it. The true owner claims and receives the bag and offers a tithe to the finder. The latter declines the gift. On this the offer is reduced a half, but again refused. "Upon which the man in anger cast down his bag, and said, I have lost nothing. If thou wilt receive nothing of me, I have lost nothing. What a brave contention, what a prize, what a strife and noble conflict was this where the whole world was the theatre and God the spectator. At last the man is subdued by mere importunity, and prevailed upon to accept what was offered to him; but he immediately gave it all to the poor, and would not carry one shilling of it home with him to lay up for his own private use." This story illustrates the strict morality of those times which were nearest the days when men counted not that aught was their own, but sold and laid the proceeds at the Apostle's feet.

So all protection of the sanctuary was denied to those who refused to pay their just debts or who broke an engagement, promise, or contract. To remove a landmark (Deut. xxvii. 17), to exact more than

what was due, to afflict the widow and the fatherless, to fill prisons with the innocent, to evil entreat persons with stripes, famine, or hard bondage, to gain a cause unrighteously, to give an unjust judgment, to practice usury, and oppress the poor, all fell under the same law. And of those who, while doing this, would yet offer alms, S. Chrysostom says, "God will not have His altar covered with tears, Christ will not be fed with robbery, such sort of sustenance is most ungrateful to Him; it is an affront to the Lord to offer unclean things to Him; He had rather be neglected and perish by famine (in His poor members) than live by such oblations. The one is cruelty, but the other is both cruelty and an affront likewise."

Forgery, horse-racing, calumny, by which a man's goods were gotten from him, breach of trust and tricks of trade, were especially condemned. Pliny says that it was one part of their solemn business every Lord's day to bind themselves with a sacrament or an oath, not to commit any wickedness, theft, robbery, adultery, not to falsify their word, not to deny anything wherewith they were intrusted, when they were required to deliver it up again. And S. Augustine classes frauds in trade among such crimes as murder, adultery, and fornication. Tertullian among such sins as blasphemy,

idolatry, apostacy, murder, and the like, which defile the temple of God and disqualify men for Christian Communion. "With such an one no, not to eat."

To buy stolen goods or to hide a thief was held to be guilt of the same kind as the theft itself. S. Augustine and S. Chrysostom comment on the words, "When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him, as the same thing as committing a robbery." Idleness and gambling, the latter as bringing many to ruin and encouraging perjury, lying, cursing and swearing were on the same ground prohibited as breaches of this law. The council of Eliberis separates all gamblers from Communion. "If any Christian play at dice or tables, let him be restrained from communicating; but if he leaves off and amends, after a year's penance, he may be reconciled."

We are forbidden by this command:—

1. *To waste as spendthrifts* the means God hath given us. All prodigality, therefore, which shelters itself under the name of generosity is condemned. While we are not to be anxious about the morrow, for the morrow will care for the things of itself, we must be careful, moderate in our expenses according to our means, and not beyond them agreeable to our station, and not above it remembering that if a man provide not for his own he is worse than an infidel.

2. To gamble or attempt to get by gaming an advantage over another. Betting and such like unhealthy inventions of the devil to overreach another and gain money at any risk are contrary to what is fair and unjust, and so offend this law.

3. *Fraud and cheating* of all kinds, whether depreciating an article with a view to buying or puffing it for the purpose of sale. It is to be feared that in this age of excessive advertising and excessive cheapness the bargains gained are at a loss of character to both buyer and seller. And the phrase which one hears often in the market place, "no friendship in dealing" is an offspring of the same spirit.

4. To practice what is unfair and dishonest. Such are the mushroom speculations and bubble companies of the day. Such are the great undertakings and huge failures of firms and the commercial dishonesty in banking and breaches of trust which have involved hundreds in one miserable ruin. We have no right to deny the fair day's wage for the day's work (S. James v.), or to expect those who work for us, and whose labour is essential to our comfort, to be content on a wage which will not give decent food and raiment, nor to feel satisfied that they who have been faithful in their service should not share in the prosperity of their master. On these the Apostle tells

that we have to remember that we have a Master in Heaven. Nor on the other hand can the servant avoid the sin here condemned if he or she wastes that time for which they are paid or connives at, if not actually commits, petty frauds under the deceit that what is taken will never be missed or may be considered a perquisite. God has a word here for the tradesman who falsify their accounts or who adulterate their goods or give short weight, for a just balance is His delight. Whatever, indeed, in howsoever slight a degree offends the truth and justice of God, evading a tax, for tribute must be paid to whom tribute is due, or avoiding a debt or incurring liabilities we are unable to meet, for we must owe no man anything but to love one another; taking advantage of another's simplicity and using our own superior knowledge to their loss; breaking a trust committed and such-like are of one and the same character, thefts, and "Theft is punished by Thy law, O God, and the law written in the hearts of men which iniquity itself effaces not (Augustine)." *Exod. xxii. 1-12; Prov. vi. 31.*

5. There is, however, a species of robbery which has many defenders, but which cannot be otherwise than classed as the worst of all the crimes condemned by this commandment, that is, robbing God's Church. In this I would include the appropriating

funds left for a holy purpose as for the education of the poor in the principles of the Church or providing that the Church Catechisms shall be taught for ever in certain schools or the giving of alms or clothing or the general maintenance of certain communicants in a parish; funds dedicated to God with a pious belief that they would be faithfully administered and be regarded as sacred yet now perverted to other uses under the plea of expediency or of the original object having failed. Such, too, is the sweeping away of Church rates and the constant efforts which promise in the end to be successful to deprive the Church of her most precious heritage the care of the poor. "Will a man rot God?" Church-rates, Church-yards, tithes, and then the Church itself, and when this is done we shall land in a Communism which shall literally be a barren land where no water is. The day perhaps is far distant when this result may be attained, and the hearts of the English people too sound in the love of the Church of Fatherland to permit it, but we have lived to see the calm steps in sacrilege taken, and it behoves us jealously to watch lest we be spoiled of all that yet remains to us. As regards robbery of the Church, Blunt observes in his quaint way "that the devil's corn goes all to bran." The receivers of the plunder at

the reformation rarely prospered, and it is served by Sir H. Spelman, about the year 1616, that on comparing the mansion houses of twenty-four families of gentlemen in Norfolk, with as many monasteries, all standing together at the dissolution, and all lying within a ring of twelve miles of semi-diameter, he found the former still possessed by the line as descendants of their original occupants in every instance, whilst the latter, with two exceptions only, had flung out their owners again and again, some six times over, none less than three, through sale, through default of issue, and very often through great and previous disasters." Lev. xix. 13, 35, 36; Titus ii. 9, 10; Prov. xx. 10, 14, 17; Lev. xxv. 14; Ps. xxxvii. 21.

The opposite virtues of justice and integrity in all our dealings are enjoined. As stewards of God's gifts we are to be faithful, and while exact and honest in our use of money are not to forget to be ready to give, willing to distribute, laying up a treasure in Heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal. The especial duty of giving to God as God hath prospered us is laid down.

If thou hast no money yet thou hast mercy (S. Luke xii. 42, Acts iii. 6), and art bound to pity the poor and pray for them, and throw by holy desires and devotions

into the treasure of the Church; and if thou doest what thou art able, be it little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms or the charity of prayers, a cup of wine or a cup of water, if it be but love to the brother or a desire to help all or any of Christ's poor, it shall be accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not. For love is all this and all the other commandments and it will expend itself, where it can; and where it cannot, yet it is love still, and it is also sorrow that it cannot. (Jeremy Taylor.)

On the question of giving and of the blessing which abundantly comes to the liberal heart, there can be no doubt, for if thou cast thy bread on the waters thou shalt find it after many days; but a word may here be said on the rule which God seems to lay down for us. The "Judicious Hooker" says: "Ten being the number of nature's perfections (for the beauty of nature is order, and of number ten the highest we can rise unto without iteration of numbers under it), could nature better acknowledge the power of the God of nature than by assigning unto Him that quantity which is the continent of all she possesseth?"

Abraham gave tithes of all to Melchisedek (Gen. xiv. 17, 20). Isaac also paid tithes. Jacob's vow was the tithing of all that he had (Gen. xxviii. 20, 22). Tithes

were the rule under the Mosaic dispensation (Ex. xxiii. 15, Num. xviii. 24, Lev. xxvii. 30, Deut. xii. 6); and the neglect of this duty is denounced by Mal. iii. 9, 12, as the threatening of a curse, while to the fulfilment of it is promised that all nations shall call men blessed, for "ye shall be a delightful land saith the Lord of Hosts." Our Lord's example and His teaching confirm the ancient rule (S. Matt. xvii. 24, 27, xxiii. 23); and His declaration, about the righteousness that is the justice and rectitude of the Pharisees who gave largely, in verse 23, seems to settle the matter. Whatever be the justice of comparing, as some well meaning people do, the cost of an iron-clad with the income of our Missionary Societies, or the expense of an ordinary season in London to those whose duty it may be to spend it there with what is given in alms or for religious purposes. There can be no doubt that we fail terribly in this respect, that men do not give to God what God has a right to, and does, require. We are surely bidden to put by as God hath prospered us, and are surely told that we cannot be just or honest if we rob Him and do not pay to Him what is His due. Observe the beauty of 2 Chronicles xxx. Assuredly to do good and to distribute we must forget not, for with such sacrifice God is well pleased.

Whatever, Lord, we lend to Thee,
Repaid a thousandfold will be ;
Then gladly will we give to Thee
Who givest all.

To Thee, from whom we all derive
Our life, our gifts, our power to give ;
O may we ever with Thee live
Who givest all.

CHAPTER X.

COMMANDMENT IX.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

It is here as the God of Truth that the Eternal speaks to us of the power and of the need of truth. It is also as the God of love that he calls on us to remember the royal law of charity and tenderness to another's faults, and to be careful to see that we are without sin ere we presume to cast the stone. From the blessed peace of the inner sanctuary of Heaven He teaches us the secret of peace on earth, the government of the tongue. There where He is all is harmony, and the voices of the angels, as they rejoice over the recovery of penitent souls and sing the eternal song of praise to Him that was, and is to come follow out the order

of His will when He made the tongue and taught Adam how to use it. But here on earth all is discord, and the abuse of this precious gift of speech has required a law which shall regulate its use and make it contribute to the happiness of man. Speech is, indeed, one of God's most precious gifts. Let us think how much of the pleasure of human life depends in the mutual intercourse and communion of thought, on the delight of conversation (using the word not in the scriptural sense, but in the language of common life), and the higher we ascend, and the nobler use we put that to, how more exquisite is the enjoyment, enabling us to read each other's souls and know each other's inner life and be to each other in some sort what He is to us. For in the tenderness of human sympathy, in the loving consolations which are administered in the chamber of sorrow, in the sweet converse about holy things and in holy places we become sensible of another Presence not our own and another voice, even that which spake as never man spake. Let us think of *how* He spake, of the effect His words and His language had on the minds of those who heard Him so that they said we have heard strange things to-day, of how when He opened the book and read and then closed it and spoke they wondered at the gracious words which came out of His mouth. Let

us think of the many many ways in which He made known the ever-changing feelings of His soul and His thorough oneness with the nature of man. How He spoke as a child and they marvelled at the wisdom of His answers, and how as a child in His obedience He bent in word as in deed to His earthly parents and grew in wisdom and in favour with God and man. How He used that speech as a weapon of power against the spirit of evil and opposed the Truth of God against the eternal lie. How He communed with His Heavenly Father, and, though on earth and among men and having left the visible presence of God, He yet was for ever with Him, and spent whole nights in prayer. How He opened His mouth on the Mount and revealed by the use of speech, enchaining the hearts of the multitude who came together to hear Him, the new law, the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. How He soothed the fevered anguish of the sufferer, comforted the widow, forgave the penitent, instructed with the words of life the ignorant, rebuked and confounded the hypocrite, wept over the lost and prayed for His murderers; and speech was the instrument divinely used of making the eternal word known to mankind. We shall thus see how tremendous the issues of good and evil are in the use and abuse of this gift. If Christ sighed when He gave to the dumb

what He asked all-knowing what a perverted use men made of this blessing, and if when He would strengthen the disciples He promised them a tongue which their enemies should not be able to gainsay nor resist, He told us that life and death were in the power of the tongue, and that the law of perfection was the government of speech and the use of it for the glory of God. What the "tongues of angels" are we know not any more than what was the language which God taught Adam in Paradise, but keeping steadily in view that here we have a warning against evil speaking, lying, and slandering, we can infer from the many many passages in scripture about the tongue that there is a blessed use and a holy language which may not be very different from the words spoken in Heaven by the Host of God.

The tongue of gentleness with its power to soothe, the words of the eloquent with their power to influence for good and awaken higher thoughts and kindle to higher aspirations. The words of prayer and praise which bring us into the very courts of Heaven, a mother's voice,

"The same that oft in childhood solaced me,"
the preacher's words, voices that have come to us in seasons of sorrow, trial, sickness, loneliness, and have soothed the rebellious

spirit and calmed the troubled heart, tell us something at least of the kind of words which are used above and of the speech which belongeth to beings of another and better world.

But there is a warning as of S. James iii., "The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, such things ought not so to be."

"Speech is the rudder that steereth human affairs, the spring that setteth the wheels of action on going; the hands work, the feet walk, all the members and all the senses act by its directions and impulse; yea, most thoughts are begotten, and most affections are stirred up thereby, and it is itself most of our employment, and what we do beside it is, however, guided and moved by it." (Bull.)

It is not difficult to see how the tone of a man's life is raised or lowered by his habits of speech. It is easy to *speak* what would cause so much disturbance to *do* . Words are soon said, cause little sorrow afterward, are soon forgotten; while acts remain and are to be accounted for here at the bar of public opinion at least. Hence those who

would be deterred by the consequences of an act hastily uttered in speech. Words flow on without thought, rash, ill-judged and ill-considered, crude and ungenerous opinions are uttered, disputes and arguments entered into, most positive statements made, and as the fire kindles the match in dry summer weather, so strife and bitterness, which may take a lifetime to allay, follow on the abuse of this most tremendous power.

There is first among the sins of the tongue false witness. Thou shalt not answer (so runs the Hebrew) as a false witness against thy neighbour. And so Lev. xix. 16, as a merchant or a trader, in ill reports, that accursed merchandize which sinks the ship that carries it and ruins the merchant who charters it. On this sin the ecclesiastical laws of the Church were very severe. The false witness was to do penance for his crime for five years, provided it was not in the case of death, in which case the criminal was to be excommunicated to the last.

Lying. "As for lies I hate and abhor them." The lie which is an invention and an offspring of the devil, so that Christ calls him the father of lies, a liar from the beginning, is a distinct offence against the God of Truth. So whereas Truth is the expression of the Divine Nature, a lie is the breath of the evil one which blights and withers whatever it passes on. So it is

written that they have no place in Heaven or in the Lamb's Book of Life who "love and make a lie." It is at once the most mischievous and contemptible of vices. So David speak of the man who shall dwell in God's tabernacle as he that speaketh the truth from his heart.

Detraction. As 2 Cor. xii. 20; S. James iv. 11; 1 S. Pet. ii. 1; S. Luke iii. 14, xix. 8; Ps. lxxii. 4, cxix. 134. As opposed to that charity which thinketh no evil and believeth all things, opposed too to that spirit which would rather conceal a fault than exaggerate or make the worst of it. S. Augustine wrote on his table he that loves to lessen the characters of the absent shall know that this table is no place for him. And so strict was he in seeing this rule carried out that he would rebuke his fellow bishops and most intimate friends when they transgressed it.

S. Paul places this sin of slander as one of those sins which shut out from the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. v. 11, and 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; so S. Matt. v. 22, Eph. iv. 31, Col. iii. 8, 1 Pet. iii. 9. Akin to this is wilfully *misconstruing* men's words and actions, either concealing the truth or stating a fact in such a manner that all extenuating circumstances are carefully put out of sight. So too making injurious, uncharitable and ungenerous reflections on others, showing the

faults, hiding the virtues, and while the beam is in their own eye exposing the mote in another's eye. One half of the conversation of ordinary life is made up of the reflections on others, and much of the pleasure men take in such other's society would be lost were they to avoid free judgment of their neighbours. But it is written "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour him will I destroy."

Rejoicing in another's misfortune. The arrow, says S. Jerome, never fixes itself in a stone, but bounding back strikes him who shot it. So let the detractor learn while he sees thee unwillingly listen, not easily to detract.

It is, indeed, a miserable spirit to disguise a fact which would benefit or attribute a motive which would injure another, to distort the truth so that it ceases to be the truth, to exaggerate for the sake of self-importance or to extenuate a sin, to be inaccurate and from a loose habit of talking or a fatal craving after popularity in telling what is called a good story, to talk for the sake of talking and fritter away time and words in empty nothings, to give way to the habits of society and revel in the news of the day, all this while it lowers fatally our moral tone brings us within the warnings and penalties of this command. If a man bridleth not his tongue his religion is vain,

life and death are in the power of the tongue, by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. How good, then, is that constant guard of which the Psalmist speaks when he says I have steadfastly purposed that my mouth shall not offend, I said I will take heed to my tongue, I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me, Ps. 39.

False testimonials or if not actually false so far so as that under the plea of good nature we have closed our eyes to faults which we know the person we recommend to have and so have injured another to whom we have given the recommendation. It is to be feared that as a lie is thought little of among the poorer classes, so this which is but another species of fraud is too prevalent among the upper classes. The defect from the truth as well as the excess is equally a lie. We cannot be too careful on this head.

The Gospel must speak aloud in the Salons and say "lie not one to another." Make not the intercourse of life, which should be based on human sympathies, be means of cultivating a system of organised deception where words are used to conceal and misrepresent thoughts to create suspicion, to propagate scandal. The Gospel must speak aloud in the market place, "lie

not one to another." Make not trade a system of fraud and delusion, where each article is different from what it pretends to be, where a glittering outside covers hollowness and worthlessness within." (Maurice.)

And how carefully we should guard our speech on the most sacred subjects, the uneasiness on the holiest mysteries which marks the present day abundantly shows. The bitterest expressions are often used, fierce contention carrying us back to the covenanters of past time, epithets and terms the most uncharitable as well in conversation as in newspapers, while all things call to patience and quietude and prayer.

So we are taught the wonderful power for holiness, which the practice of silence has. To talk much, to throw oneself into the ordinary customs of society, and use the tongue for the empty nothings, or worse for the gossip, of life is to weaken the soul. We become vulnerable, are easily moved to overstep the bounds of truth, to be uncharitable and unreal, to speak for the sake of speaking, to forget the Presence of the God of Truth and the one object of an existence. Blindness comes over us and we fail to see what a waste of precious moments is this and what evil we are doing. But to be alone with God! Oh, my God, what is this? To be like the Baptist often solitary, like Christ long hours in lonely communion

with the Father. *And yet I am not alone.* No,—in crowds, in the busy hum of men, in the company of the world we may be alone, but with God *never*. This, then, is what God calls us to do frequently, to retire from the world and be alone with Him. So shall we take in floods of light and streams of love, so shall we get new strength from Him and new knowledge of self, and as He rose from prayer refreshed and with so beautiful a countenance, *so awful in its beauty that men fell backward when He said "Let these go; I am He."* So shall all who seek these occasions of loneliness and find God in them rise with the calm beauty of peace to meet the enemies of their souls and bear the cross which shall assure them that they are His disciples.

"O solitude! wherein are formed the living stones of which the city of God is built. I will not be weary in so delicious a wilderness, because I shall find the secret, without quitting it, of walking in Paradise."

"Let us embrace solitude as being the mother of prayer and of aspiration; and there let us exercise ourselves in the knowledge of God, and of ourselves, and we shall rid it of all weariness."

"He who reads, who prays, who meditates, calls Jesus Christ to be near him, and he is never less alone than when alone."
(S. Bernard.)

His eyes sees no dangerous objects to seduce the heart; his ears hear neither calumnies nor perilous words; the tongue can but speak to God alone; and thou knowest how many sins these three organs occasion. Love solitude, then, since it delivers thee from these conflicts, and that besides this, it is the abode of peace and virtue, the death of vices and the life of the spirit. (Avrillon.)

CHAPTER XI.

COMMANDMENT X.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor anything that is his."

This is the command of rest. Rest and peace are the reward to the mind stayed upon God, and God here teaches us contentment. God will provide. I shall lack nothing are the words of the sweet Psalmist, who in the power of the living God withstood the enemy of Israel. Here will I rest, for I have a delight therein, to know that God is our God, that His eye never sleeps and His love never grows cold, to know His Power and our own weakness and without

reserve to place ourselves, all that we are and all that we have into His hands and come weal, come woe, accept our position as of His ordering and our troubles as of His sending and therewith to be content; this is to fulfil this command. Rest, blessed word! Come to me all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We hear that voice at the Holy Eucharist when we are very near to Jesus; we hear that voice in the quiet of prayer when we kiss His feet and touch His garments; we hear that voice in the hurry of life and the dreary cares of business when we arise from the receipt of custom and go out of the haunts of men after Him; we hear that voice when there is a breaking up of the dry sod of the heart and loving drops of the Precious Blood soak into the cracks and fructify the hitherto fruitless soil; we hear that voice when the desire of our eyes is taken from us or sorrow entereth our dwelling, and He would show as the power of His love by the touch of His Cross; and we hear it in the dark hour of death when the soul would flee away and be at rest, and it ever speaks the same, of peace only in Him. So the command here calls us away from the love and desire of earthly things, and bids us be content, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. Wherever we look we see failure, specula-

tions, plans which have promised so well and been so much approved, enterprises undertaken with the fairest prospect of success, falling to pieces, failing; one only amongst all we see never knows of failure and he is the religious man, the man whose mind is stayed on God. With them all is success, growing success; the talent increase, the position advances, he goes from strength to strength and from grace to grace, he is calm where others are troubled, to him life is a time for work and growth, and all things lead on to life's reward the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Here, then, God speaks to us to let the things of the morrow care for themselves, and to go forth into the wilderness of life as His people once went forth into the wilderness, and morning after morning, and night after night, came to Him to be fed with the manna which they knew not but which He provided. If we have given up all to Him we need not fear, while the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest, summer and winter shall never cease. The hail sweeps over the crops, the famine desolates the land, pestilence stalks abroad, clouds lower, and through the darkness there seems no ray, no light, no hope, yet to the child of God God is very near, and that which speaks so tenderly makes itself heard above all, "Fear not, little children, it is your Father's good

pleasure to give you the kingdom." "Fear not, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Our heart, says Augustine, knoweth no rest until it attaineth unto Thee.

We are to avoid covetousness.

The marvellous change that was now to happen to Israel after his bondage was full of danger to them. By no power of their own they were to go in and possess the good land, the land promised to their fathers which flowed with milk and honey. They were to be free and rich and a powerful people, and houses, lands, cattle, all was to be theirs, and so the danger was great of coveting with an evil covetousness what was not their own and wilfully seizing the property of another. Hence the circumstantial wording of the command and the enumerating the class of objects which would meet their eyes and excite their desire, but which must not be coveted or used but when God made them their own.

Covetousness is in scripture characterised as idolatry, and so the first and last command meet for what a man makes the object of his life, and the end of his life is to him God. So God abhorreth the covetous, Ps. x. 3; and Ps. cxix. 36, "In the iniquity of his covetousness I was wrath and smote him." "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house that he may set

his next on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil." And Christ warns us "Take heed and beware of covetousness," S. Luke xii. 15, S. Matt. xxiii. 25, etc., etc.

From this sin Balaam, the man whose eyes were opened and whose longing was for the death of the righteous, lost his rest. Elisha's servant in the very atmosphere of holiness and Judas yet nearer to the very God. Achan, who troubled the Israel of old, and Ananias and Sapphira, the infant Church, are examples of the same miserable vice. This greed and desire to overreach another, this uneasy fretting and jealousy at another's prosperity, has been one of the sore trials in human life. Its effect on the spiritual nature is most fatal. It spreads a dullness over the soul which makes men insensible to the wants of others, and forget that to do good and distribute are acts with which God is well pleased. The covetous are selfish, illiteral, uncharitable, grasping, and discontented. Knowing nothing of the miseries of others they are at the least cross or failure of their own wishes too irritable and faithless. No enlargement of the heart, no yearning to their brethren, no loving anxiety for the happiness of their fellow men, but all for self, whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things. Is. v. 8, xxvi. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11; Eph. v. 3-5; Col. iii. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 17.

Lord make me contented and thankful, and well pleased with that portion Thy providential love has allotted me, and to acquiesce in Thy choice as best for me. Forgive me, if I am unreasonably ambitious, it is only of Thy favour; forgive me, if I am unsatiably covetous, it is only of Thy fruition; forgive me, if I am perpetually discontented, it is only because I cannot love Thee more." (Ken.)

The life enjoined here is that of which Job xxix. 11-16 is the picture. We are bidden to work out the work of God in our several stations, to believe that we are placed where we are by Him and for His work, and that by labouring to fulfil our mission in our station we shall do faithfully His will, *but not otherwise*. The command is whatsoever thou doest, do it with thy might and do it heartily. And so industry in our callings, application in our business with a firm trust in Him will make this world a preparation for a better. It is only thus that we can be honest and be happy. If we trust not God for provision we shall cast about for unlawful means and fraud and deceit will be our rule, the light in us be darkness; but if we trust in Him our happiness is certain for (Hab. iii. 17) whatever may happen, whoever in the race of life may get before us we shall always be content, knowing and accepting with love,

as we know, that God's will is best. It has been well said that by doing our duty in the state of life in which it has pleased God to call us we shall be best qualifying ourselves for a higher place should the providence of God call us higher. There are no cares which we cannot and ought not to rest in God. There is no envy or jealousy which becometh a member of Christ. Let us believe in our mission in the world and we shall have no difficulty, whatever our station, in seeing the way to fulfil it. All nature teaches us this, for He hath by the flowers of the field first made known to us what His care for us is.

They comfort man, they whisper hope,
Whene'er his faith grow dim ;
For who so careth for the flowers,
Will care much more for Him.

—Phil. iv. 6 ; 1 Tim. vi. 6.

S. Paul's life was of the hardest, and yet what a tone of joyous trust runs through all his epistles ; everything turns to gold, he could thank God for all things, the presence of friends or the news of their well being, the prospect of a journey or the thought of more labours and more suffering, all alike spoke to him of the end of his being to live was Christ, to die would be gain.

2 Cor. xii. 15 ; Phil. iii. 7, 8 ; 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12 ; Eph. iv. 28 ; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

It is thus that the curse of labour becomes removed, and by keeping well before us that we must work while it is day ere the night cometh when no man can work, that idleness is not only a sin but the root of all discontent, that while we wait the precious hours and moments are passing and the work is still undone, that He is watching and to Him shall we have to give an account of the talent used or abused, that we preserve a contented spirit and prepare our hearts for change. Thus that we shall if the Lord come in the second or third watch be found ready. Thus that we may hope, however, far short we fall of what we ought to be and what we might be, to hear the voice of the Beloved say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

So then "Fear God, and keep His commandments, says the preacher, for this is the whole duty of man." We cannot do all as we would; we must ever be sensible of the struggle between the law of the spirit and the law of the flesh. Now and then, alas! too too often we fall away, and in many things offend all; but the voice speaks still, onward! onward! press on for the mark of the prize, "I will never leave thee or forsake thee," and "My grace is suffi-

cient for thee," and "My strength is made perfect in weakness." Onward, then, in trust, for He hath said "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to Him." In the wilderness of life there is now want; there is the sacrament of love to feed thee, the water of life to refresh thee, the message of peace to encourage thee, the Presence of the Holy One to comfort thee, a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; multitudes are with thee partakers of the same grace and pressing onward to the same end, angels around thee ministering to such as are heirs of salvation and the land flowing with milk and honey before thee. Learn, then, to gird the loins and grasp the staff and go bravely, and while you whisper to yourself at all seasons the words of the Divine Psalmist, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will feel no hurt," fail not to pray often and humbly.

Lord have mercy upon me and write all these Thy laws in my heart, I beseech Thee. Amen.

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