



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

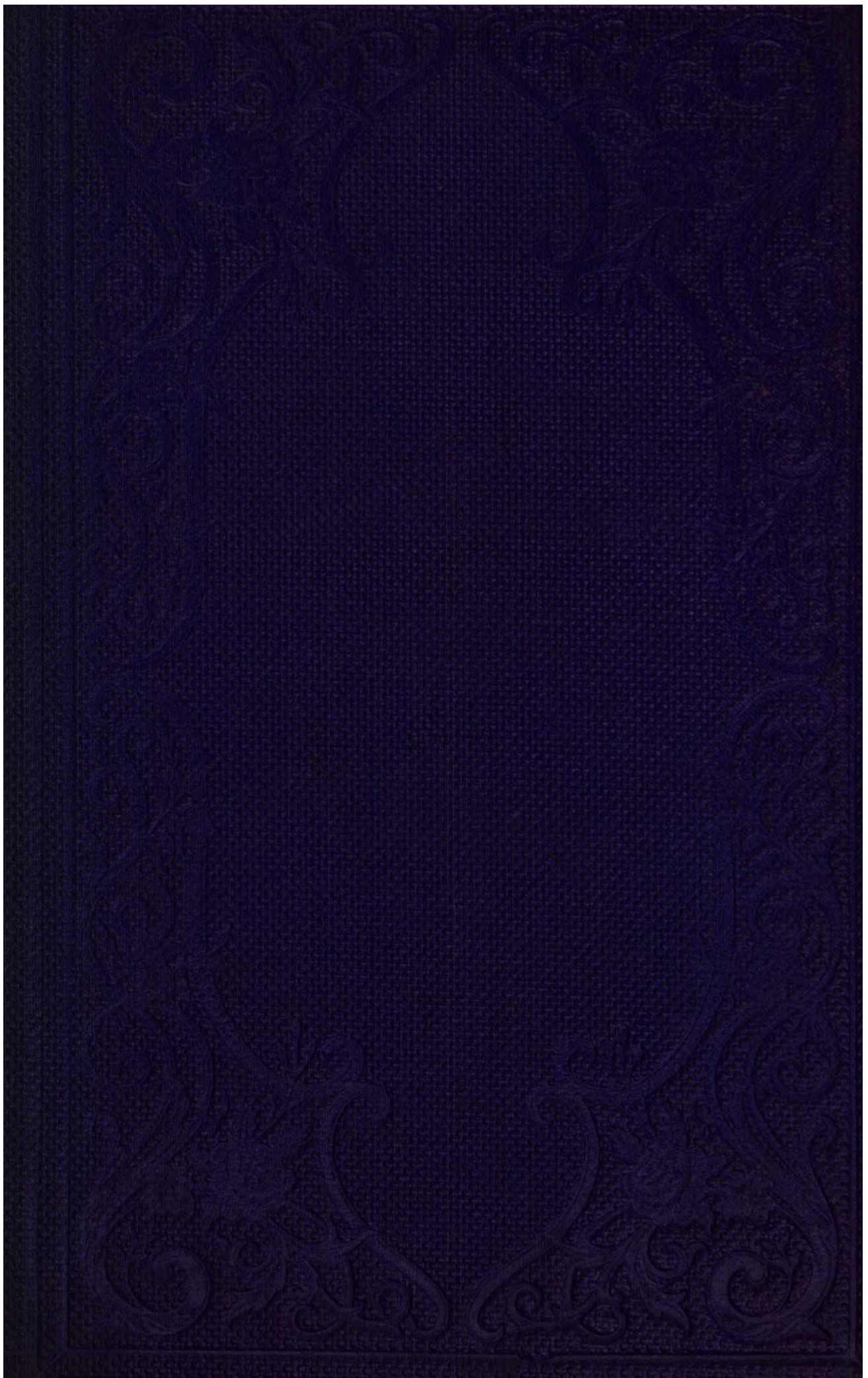
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

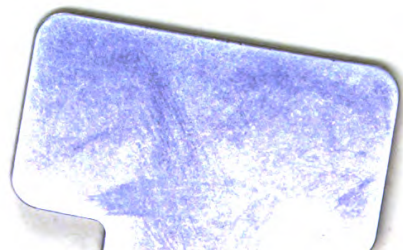
For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.





S E R M O N S
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED:

PREACHED IN THE AUTUMN OF 1863,

AT THE

EPISCOPAL JEWS' CHAPEL

OF THE

London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews,

BY THE

REV. ISAAC BROCK, B.A.,

MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

“Stand fast in the faith.”—1 Cor. xvi. 13.

LONDON:
WILLIAM MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER ROW.

—
1864.

100. 7. 25.



TO THE CONGREGATION
OF
BELIEVING JEWS AND GENTILES,
CONNECTED WITH THE
EPISCOPAL JEWS' CHAPEL
IN PALESTINE PLACE,

These Sermons,
PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND AND PASTOR;
WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER,
THAT IN THESE DANGEROUS DAYS THEY MAY,
BY THE TEACHING OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT,
BE ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN CHRIST, AND STABLISHED IN THE FAITH.

March 17, 1864.

CONTENTS.

SERMON.	PAGE.
I. Introductory.—Romans x. 10	1
II. Almighty God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth.—Gen. i. 1	12
III. The Fatherhood of God.—1 Cor. viii. 6 ; John xx. 17	23
IV. The Titles of the Redeemer.—1 Cor. xii. 3	32
V. Christ's Incarnation.—John i. 14	43
VI. Christ's Death.—1 Cor. xv. 3	55
VII. Christ's Resurrection.—Acts x. 40, 41	68
VIII. Christ's Exaltation.—1 Peter iii. 22	80
IX. Christ's Return to Judgment.—2 Tim. iv. 1	91
X. The Holy Ghost.—John xiv. 16, 17	101
XI. The Holy Catholic Church.—Eph. i. 22, 23	112
XII. The Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins.—1 Cor. x. 17 ; Acts x. 43	123
XIII. The Resurrection of the Body unto Life Everlasting.—John v. 28, 29	132

S E R M O N S
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED.

S E R M O N I.

INTRODUCTORY.

“FOR with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”—ROMANS X. 10.

I COMMENCE this evening a series of sermons on the Apostles' Creed—the Creed of our Baptism—the Creed we recite in all our public services in the sanctuary—the Creed, therefore, whose words have been familiar to us from our earliest childhood.

Some may perhaps deem such a series unnecessary, supposing that they fully understand words so often on their lips; and yet, my brethren, it is not at all impossible, or improbable, that if we only inquired more diligently into the truths conveyed by the articles of our Creed, we should find much to be learned from them, which had hitherto escaped our notice, and perhaps some difficulties to be explained which had never troubled us, because we had been resting contented with a superficial knowledge of its Articles of our belief.

The Eighth Article of the Church of England, on the subject of the Three Creeds, says, “The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and be-

lieved: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture."

The series of sermons I have commenced, will, I trust, bring out fully these "most certain warrants of holy Scripture," on which the Apostles' Creed rests, and will also, I hope, shew the *practical* influence which a belief in the different Articles of our Creed should have upon our life and conduct. The subject I have chosen is one which will serve to give us a connected view of Christian doctrine, if not in its fulness, at least in its grand outlines. I earnestly pray, that through the teaching of God's Holy Spirit, its consideration may prove profitable to us all, so that with a more intelligent and lively faith, we may with the heart believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation.

My sermon this evening must be chiefly of an *introductory* character. In entering on a subject of this kind, there are several preliminary matters demanding our attention.

I. And first, as to the *name*, the APOSTLES' Creed.—*Why* is it so called? Certainly *not* because it was written by the Apostles. It would not be necessary for me to dwell on this point, had it not been of late very earnestly maintained in some quarters, that the Apostles' Creed is so called because it was actually written by the Apostles. It has been called "The formal symbol which the Apostles adopted and bequeathed to the Church." Such a notion, together with the pretty story got up at the end of the fourth century, about each Apostle contributing his own Article to the Creed, have no foundation whatever in fact. A few considerations will suffice to prove this.

No precise form of words was left by the Apostles as the Christian Creed. Had such a formula been published by them, we should surely expect to find some notice of it in the canonical Scriptures of the New Testament. But for such a notice we shall search in vain. One or two passages indeed have been adduced as containing such a notice; one of these is 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." It has been

maintained by some, that the Apostle is here *quoting the Creed*. Compare this passage, however, with one just preceding it—chap. xi. 23: “For I have received OF THE LORD that which also I delivered unto you.” The expressions in the two verses are all but identical; and surely, therefore, the obvious mode of interpreting the passage in the fifteenth is by that in the eleventh chapter, where there is evidently *no quotation from the Creed*. St. Paul, in the fifteenth chapter, was delivering what he had received *of the Lord*; and if anything further is wanting to shew that the Apostle did not receive his faith from the Creed, we have it in his own words, in Gal. i. 11, 12: “But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” So much, then, for this *alleged quotation from the Creed*.

The other passage is in 2 Tim. i. 13: “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” On this passage one who has joined the Church of Rome says, “The Creed is delineated and recognized in Scripture itself, where it is called ‘the outline of sound words.’” Now the construction of the words of this text, in the original, completely overthrows this interpretation. For the Apostle does not say that Timothy had heard from him “an outline of sound words,” *but* that he had heard from him sound words, of which he was to hold fast *the outline, i.e.*, the great characteristic features. The word “*which*,” refers to the “*sound words*,” so that the meaning of the passage would be more accurately conveyed by translating it thus: “Hold fast the form (or outline) of those sound words, which thou hast heard of me.”

I repeat, then, we shall search the Scriptures in vain for any, even the slightest intimation that the Apostles drew up a Creed for the use of the Church. Had they done so, if nowhere else, certainly in the Acts of the Apostles we should have found some notice of it.

But this silence of Scripture respecting the existence of any precise form of words drawn up by the Apostles to be the Creed

of the Christian Church, is confirmed by the *variety* of Creeds, (differing in form though not in substance,) which we have in the ecclesiastical writings of the first three centuries. The earliest extant Creed is of that Irenæus, who flourished in the middle of the second century. As it is the *earliest* extant Creed, it will be interesting for you to hear it. It is as follows:—

“The Church, though scattered all over the world from one end of the earth to the other, received from the Apostles and their disciples the belief in one God, the Father Almighty, who made the heaven, and the earth, and the seas, and all things that are in them; and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who preached by the prophets the dispensations, and the advents, and the birth by a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily ascension into heaven of the beloved Jesus Christ our Lord, and His advent from heaven in the glory of the Father to restore all things, and to raise all flesh of mankind; that to Jesus Christ our Lord and God and Saviour and King, according to the good pleasure of the invisible Father, every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess to Him; and that He may execute just judgment upon all; that He may send the spirits of wickedness, and transgressing and apostate angels, and all impious, and wicked, and lawless, and blasphemous men into everlasting fire; and to the just and holy, and those that have kept His commandments, and remained stedfast in His love, some from the beginning, others after repentance, having given life, may confer on them immortality, and put them in possession of eternal glory.”*

The next forms of Creed which have been preserved to us, are to be found in the writings of Tertullian, who flourished at the close of the second century. He gives us the Creed of the Christian Church in three different forms of words.

In the third century we have the same variety in the forms of Creeds as in the second century. Three only have been

* Quoted in Dr. Goode's "Divine Rule of Faith and Practice."

preserved to us, differing considerably in words one from the other, and from the forms given by Irenæus and Tertullian. One of these is found in a work attributed to Origen, who flourished in the middle of the third century—a second in the writings of Gregory, Bishop of New Cæsarea in Pontus, who lived about the same time—and a third belongs to the very end of the third, if not to the beginning of the fourth century, the Creed of Lucian the Martyr, which is to be found in the works of Athanasius and in the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates.

These Creeds, (that of Irenæus and those of Tertullian in the second century, and those of Origen, Gregory of New Cæsarea, and Lucian the Martyr in the third century,) are pronounced by one, who is competent from his knowledge of the Christian fathers to speak with authority on this subject, the only Creeds that remain of the period anterior to the Council of Nice.

From this examination of the early Creeds, it follows beyond a question that there was no *precise form of words left by the Apostles as the Christian Creed*. Had there been such, there can be no doubt that it would have been religiously preserved by the Church, and recognised when a Christian teacher had occasion to deliver a formal and succinct account of the chief Articles of the Christian faith. But for the first three centuries and more, there is not the slightest indication given us, that the Apostles left such a form. Each person who has occasion to give a summary of the chief articles of the Christian faith, gives it in different words, and if more than once, does not always give the same form.

All this is further confirmed by *the silence of the Nicene Council* on this matter. Had such a form drawn up by the Apostles existed, then at least it would have been recognised. There were then no difficulties in the way to prevent its being openly brought forward, if there had been such a formula; for persecution had ceased, and there could be no reason for concealing it, especially when the Council was about to promulgate a Creed intended for the same purpose as the Apostles' Creed is supposed to have answered. The rise of heresies might have rendered some addition desirable, but there would at least

have been some respectful recognition of the formula left by the Apostles, had there been one.

The silence, then, of Scripture—the silence of all ecclesiastical writers for upwards of three centuries—the variety of the forms of the early Creeds—and finally, the silence of the Nicene Council—are more than sufficient to show that the Apostles' Creed is *not* so called, because it was written by the Apostles.

Though, however, it was not drawn up by the Apostles themselves, yet it may well be called *Apostolic*, because it contains the doctrines taught by the Apostles, and because, as the Creed of Irenæus, and other early Creeds prove, it is *in substance* the same as was used in the Church from the times of the Apostles themselves. As we come to compare it article by article with the writings of the Apostles, we shall see that it is indeed an *Apostolic* Creed.

This, however, though a sufficient reason why *we* may call the Creed of our baptism the Apostles' Creed, does not account for the fact, that it alone of all the early Creeds has come to be so designated. How is this? The Nicene Creed, the Creeds of Irenæus and others, contain Apostolic doctrine, and yet none of them ever came to be called “the *Apostles'* Creed.” How are we to account for this? How are we to explain the fact that the Creed before us alone came to be so designated?

II. In order to answer this question, we must glance in the next place for a few moments at the *history* of the Apostles' Creed. It seems, as far as we can trace its history, to have been the Creed in use in the ancient Roman Church. It appears gradually to have attained its present form; two at least of its articles not being inserted in it till the end of the fourth century—the articles respecting the descent of Christ into hell, and the communion of saints. It is not till quite the close of the fourth century, that we hear this Creed of the ancient Roman Church designated the *Apostles'* Creed. About that period this name is given by some writers of note, to this summary of the faith used in the early Roman Church, but it was only given then, as a Roman Catholic historian informs us, in the Roman Church itself. By degrees—in consequence, I

presume, of the pre-eminence of the Roman over other Churches—it got to be commonly so called. In the first instance, then, the appellation—*Apostles' Creed*—was *appropriated* to the ancient Roman Creed, by some writers of repute in the Roman Church, at the close of the fourth century. This appropriation was not long in being confirmed, owing to the fact I have alluded to; and owing also to the spirit in which the Church of Rome has acted from a very early period of her history. She has ever been attempting to obtain currency for all her rites and usages and doctrines, by calling them *apostolical*. While, however, we quarrel with the modern Roman Church for calling *her traditions* apostolical—traditions which make void the plain teaching of the Apostles—we will not quarrel with the early Roman Church for calling her ancient Creed “the *Apostles' Creed*,” inasmuch as it contains what may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture to be *Apostolic* doctrine.

Well would it have been if the modern Roman Church had adhered to her early Creed. This, alas! she has not done. Three centuries ago she promulgated a new Creed, the articles of which, instead of being in accordance with Apostolic teaching, can each one be proved to be entirely contrary to the spirit, and often to the express words of Apostolic teaching. By that new Creed, Rome has *departed from the Apostolic faith* which in her early days she held. She has ceased, by the promulgation of that Creed, to be *Apostolic*, she has become *apostate*.

III. A third preliminary question demands our attention for a moment or two. *When was this Creed first introduced into the public liturgies of the Church?* For some centuries this and other Creeds were only used at baptism. Peter Fullo, Bishop of Antioch in the year 471, ordered the Creed to be repeated in the Churches under his jurisdiction in every public religious service. In the year 511, Timotheus, Bishop of Constantinople, brought the custom into use in the Churches in his diocese. From that time, the custom became general in the Eastern Churches. From the Oriental Churches the custom was brought into the Western Churches, and first about the

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

close of the sixth century into those of Spain, Gaul, and Britain ; and from them, later still, the custom of reciting the Creed was introduced into the public service of the Roman Church.

IV. Next, as regards the *place* assigned to the Apostles' Creed in our English Liturgy. I will content myself with reading the remarks on this subject of Wheatley : " The place of it (the Apostles' Creed) in our Liturgy, may be considered both with respect to what goes before, and what comes after it. That which goes before it, are the lessons taken out of the Word of God, for *faith cometh by hearing* ; and therefore, when we have heard God's Word, it is fit we should profess our belief of it, thereby setting our seals (as it were) to the truth of God, especially to such articles as the chapters now read to us have confirmed. What follows the Creed are the prayers which are grounded upon it, for we *cannot call on Him in whom we have not believed*. And therefore, since we pray to God the Father in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, for remission of sins, and a joyful resurrection ; we first declare that we believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that there is remission here, and a resurrection to life hereafter, for all true members of the Catholic Church ; and then we may be said to pray in faith."

V. A word only as to the *position* in which the Creed is to be said. The rubric contains this direction : " Then shall be sung or said the Apostles' Creed by the Minister and the people, *standing* ;" thus, as Wheatley says, we signify our resolution to stand up stoutly in defence of our faith. As to the old customs of turning to the East, and bowing at the blessed name of Jesus in the Creed, all I have to say is, let not these things be done, if they are done, superstitiously ; and let not those who, reverencing old customs, practise them, condemn those who do *not* practise them. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ; and let us ever remember, that religion does not consist in the observance or non-observance of such trifles as these.

VI. And now a word as to the *origin* of Creeds generally, and therefore of the Apostles' Creed amongst the number. It seems to be generally admitted that the probable origin of

Creeds is to be traced to the form or confession of faith which was propounded to the catechumens previous to their baptism. In the Scriptures, such forms appear to have been very brief. Our Lord commanded that men should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and perhaps a confession in some such simple form as, "I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost," was all that was at first required. The command of our Lord, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (Matt. xxviii. 19,) may be regarded, then, as the *germ* of every ancient Creed. "Who can be ignorant," says Augustine, referring to these words, "that it is not Christ's baptism, if the words of the Gospel, *in which the Creed is contained*, have been wanting."

VII. And this, my brethren, leads me to one further preliminary matter, with which I must conclude. *What is the fundamental doctrine embodied, though not expressed in precise words, in the Apostles' Creed?*" The origin, the germ from which that Creed, in common with other ancient Creeds grew, points at once to the answer; that fundamental doctrine *is the doctrine of the Trinity*. This fundamental doctrine of the Creed is the fundamental doctrine, too, of the entire Bible. The Scriptures are the revelation of a *Triune Jehovah*: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." There is the *unity of God* proclaimed—the grand truth to which the chosen nation were to bear witness, amid surrounding Polytheism. But that *unity* of Jehovah, though a *perfect*, is not an *absolute* unity. Dr. Mensor, a converted Jewish rabbi, has very ably and conclusively shown that the doctrine of the *absolute* unity is a modern and Mohammedan doctrine.*

In that very text, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," is wrapped up the doctrine of the *Trinity in unity*. Dr. Mensor observes, that the word used for *one*, "*One* Lord," is derived from a word which signifies *to unite*; now what is *united*, though it may be a *perfect* one, cannot be an *absolute*

* "An Essay on the Doctrine of the Trinity." By Dr. M. Mensor. J. C. Ward, Birkenhead.

one. Dr. Mensor further shows, that the word used for *one* in that text, is never used to signify *an absolute one*, (for this word another term is employed,) it is used to signify a unity, formed from the *perfect union in one of two or more*. There are several passages, however, in which the three persons in the Divine unity are expressly mentioned. Many such are examined with great care in Dr. Mensor's Essay on the Trinity, to which I have referred. I will only mention one. It is one of the plainest. You will find it in Isaiah xlviii. 16. First, who is the speaker of these words? Look at ver. 12, 13: "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob and Israel, My called; I am He; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together." The speaker, therefore, is a *Divine* person. And now read I the word which this Divine person speaks: "Come ye near unto Me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me." (Ver. 16.) Here, then, we have three Divine persons—two sending and one sent. The two sending, the Lord God, even the Father, and His Spirit; the one sent, He, who throughout the Old and New Testament Scriptures is described as the *Angel* of the Covenant, the sent-one of Jehovah, even the Messiah, the Son of the Father.

In the New Testament, where the great plan of salvation is fully unfolded—a salvation in which the three Divine persons are engaged, see 1 Peter i. 2—this fundamental doctrine of the Trinity is more fully revealed. The baptismal formula in Matt. xxviii. 19, and the apostolical form of benediction in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, establish at once the equality of the three persons in the Godhead.

On the other hand, the New Testament is as clear as the Old, on the great truth of the *unity* of God. St. Paul, in opposition to the Polytheism of the heathen world, says, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none *other God but one*." And amongst the points in which all Christians were agreed, St. Paul mentions this: "One God and

Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” I do not now advance proofs of the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost; these will come as we go through the articles of the Creed. I merely wished to call your attention to what is the fundamental doctrine embodied in the Apostles’ Creed—*the doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the unity of God*—the fundamental doctrine alike of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

The way is now prepared for us to enter upon the consideration of the separate Articles of the Creed. This I purpose doing on Sunday evening next, if the Lord will.

For the present I will conclude, with a remark of a practical character. The text impresses on us the duty and the privilege of making a verbal confession of our faith. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Let us be very thankful, that the Church of England puts into our mouths an orthodox confession of faith, a truly apostolic Creed. Let us feel it to be our duty and our privilege, to join audibly in the confession of our faith in the Creed. But, brethren, let us ever remember, it is not enough for us to do this; you must not separate the second part of my text from the first. “*With the heart* man believeth unto righteousness;” and then, where faith is in the heart, the blessing promised to the open confession of that faith will follow: “with the mouth confession is made unto SALVATION.”

“With **THE HEART** man believeth unto righteousness.” Let us earnestly seek the gift of faith from God; so that with the heart we may believe in the Father who is our Creator, in the Son who is our Saviour, and in the Holy Ghost who is our Sanctifier; and then the open acknowledgment of our belief will be felt to be both a duty and a privilege.

S E R M O N I I .

ALMIGHTY GOD, THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

“IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”—GEN. I. 1.

HAVING disposed of the preliminary matters in connexion with the Apostles' Creed, which occupied our attention last Sunday evening, we are free now to enter on the consideration of the Creed itself; the first article of which runs as follows—*“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.”*

This article we may resolve into two distinct parts.

First, we have here a confession “of our faith *in God, in God as Almighty*, and *in this Almighty God as the Maker of heaven and earth*.”

Secondly, we have here a confession of our faith in *God the Father*, the first person of the ever blessed Trinity, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father, though in a wholly different sense, of angels and men.

This evening I shall invite you to consider the first part only of this article, reserving for our consideration on Sunday evening next, if the Lord will, the large and deeply interesting subject of the *Fatherhood of God*.

The part of the article of our Creed which we are now going to consider, falls naturally into three divisions. We confess in it our faith: first, *in God*—secondly, *in God as Almighty*—thirdly, *in Almighty God as the Maker of heaven and earth*.

I. *First*, then, we confess our faith in God. “*I believe in God.*” This confession implies two things: first, “*I believe in God,*” is an *affirmative* proposition; I believe that God *is*, that

God exists, in opposition to Atheists, who say that there is no God—who deny the existence of God. And secondly, “I believe in God,” is an *exclusive* proposition, a proposition which excludes from our confession of faith the notion of more gods than one; “I believe in God,” not in gods, but in God—in “the *one* living and true God,” in opposition to Polytheists and Idolaters.

The tendency of the human mind has always been towards *Polytheism*, not towards *Atheism*. Look at the “gods many” of Egypt and Persia, of Greece and Rome. Look at heathen nations now, at Hindoostan and Burmah for example; it is Polytheistic idolatry, not Atheism, which spreads its dark pall over those lands. “*Atheism* indeed is unquestionably a strange and startling and exceptional phenomenon. Faith in God is so inherent in the heart of humanity, and so essential to our reason, that many wise and good men have doubted if ever there lived an intelligent mortal so destitute of religious belief as is implied in Atheism. Addison would have told a man who gloried in this distinction, that he was an impudent liar, and that he knew it. Bacon accounted Atheism to be rather in the lip than in the heart, and thought a contemplative Atheist a prodigy, a thing unusually rare. And Dr. Arnold, in one of his letters, says, ‘I confess that I believe conscientious Atheism not to exist.’ And it does appear an incredible thing, that a man possessed of intelligence and feeling, standing amid this glorious amphitheatre of earth and sky, gazing upon its grand and lovely forms, and listening to its thousand voices of rapturous praise, can coolly deny the existence of Him who sits enthroned above the heavens. It does seem hard to be believed that one of our race can retire into the depths of his own inner nature, and familiarize himself with the wondrous phenomena of his mental existence, and yet come out of himself, and unhesitatingly declare that this great system of animate and inanimate being is without a presiding and independent mind.”

And yet such prodigies there have been, both in ancient and modern times. For what was the Reign of Terror in France at the close of the last century, but the reign of most absolute Atheism? The French Convention declared the throne of the

heavens vacant, and made a proclamation through the land that there was no God ; you know the terrific results that followed. You know how society was then reft of all its safeguards, how crime was committed without any dread of punishment, how the vilest passions of the vilest men rushed onward without restraint, how France, under the reign of Atheism, became like a troubled sea, yea, a very sea of blood. Then it was seen and felt that nations, like individuals, cannot be prosperous and safe, enjoy liberty and be at peace, without acknowledging the living and true God.

“ *I believe in God ;*” I believe that God is. Do you look, (not because you doubt the fact that God is, but rather because with adoring love you delight to trace the footsteps of the Creator,) do you look, I say, for proofs of this affirmative proposition ? then look where you will, you find them.

1. Look at the *wonderful consent of all nations* to which I have referred. True, some savage tribes have been discovered which *seem* to acknowledge no God, but they are the lowest possible in the scale of humanity. True (as I have observed) the highly civilized French nation in a terrible moment denied the existence of God, but quick and irresistible was the recoil ; for that same Convention which had publicly disowned the Most High, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep, was constrained to recognize by enactment the existence of God and the immortality of the soul—was constrained to restore the Eternal One to a nation’s faith and homage. These exceptions therefore do not derogate from, but rather confirm the force of the theistic argument drawn from the consent of all nations. Another objection, however, to this argument is raised. Men do not agree as regards their notion of God. True, and yet at the bottom of all variety of opinion the general idea of God remains as a fixed persuasion.

2. Look at *the proofs of design* which everywhere meet us in the material universe. *From the beginning* men have been reasoning from the evidences of design in the material universe to the existence of the Great Designer ; they have ever been reasoning from the orderly and beneficial dispositions of matter to the Divine hand which framed the whole. And this old and

beaten path is the truest and safest still. It is the argument with which the nineteenth Psalm opens: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." Nature in all her departments abounds in such evidences; astronomy, from the vastness of the field it occupies, and the grandeur of the laws and objects which it unfolds, has ever taken the most prominent position among the sciences in this matter of furnishing proofs of a Divine hand at work in the material universe. Other sciences, however, in proportion to the care with which they are studied, furnish such proofs in rich abundance, (proofs, too, which are very often more within our reach than those furnished by astronomy,) geology, botany, comparative anatomy, chemistry, with the whole array of modern sciences, can be, and have been successfully appealed to, to show that in all and every department of nature, there are *special ends* and *special adaptations* which mark the presence everywhere of an infinitely wise God.

Some timid and rather narrow-minded people have regarded with dread, and even aversion, the advancement of modern science. They thought that this advancement endangered the work of God; they had a vague fear that the cause of our holy religion would be thereby impaired. The most recent scientific contribution made to natural theology shows how utterly groundless was that fear. The masterly work on "*Typical Forms and Special Ends in Creation*," embodies some of the most recent discoveries of natural science; discoveries which, as the authors of that book show, from a wide series of facts—enables natural theology to take a great step in advance. The book unfolds the nature of the *order* prevailing in the material world, and the nature of the *special adaptations* to be found therein. It then furnishes a series of facts, drawn in many instances from *recent* discoveries of science, which give indication of combined order and special adaptation *throughout the various kingdoms of nature*. I cannot forbear reading the closing sentences of a chapter in which the learned authors sum up the argument from combined order and special adaptation.

"In civil architecture there are four principles, it is said, to be attended to;—first, convenience; second, symmetry; third,

eurythmy, or such a balance and disposition of parts as evidences design; and fourth, ornament. It is pleasant to notice that not one of these is wanting in the architecture of nature. Any one of them might be sufficient to prove design; the presence and concurrence of them all furnishes the most overwhelming evidence. Upon taking a combined view of the whole, we feel as if we have proof of much more than of the existence of law or a principle of order; we feel as if we have distinct traces of a personal God, planning minute and specific ends. We do not know whether to admire most the all-pervading system which runs through the whole of nature, through all parts of the plant and animal, and through the hundreds of thousands of different species of plants and animals, or the skilful accommodation of every part, and of every organ, in every species, to the purpose which it is meant to serve. The one leads us to discover the lofty wisdom which planned all things from the beginning, and the enlarged beneficence reaching over all without respect of persons; whereas the other impresses us more with the providential care, and special beneficence which, in attending to the whole, has not overlooked any part, but has made provision for every individual member of the myriads of animated beings."

Time forbids me dwelling longer on this interesting subject. I would glance at another field of proof. Pass on from the phenomenon of matter to those of *mind*.

3. Look at the *evidences of design presented by our own mental constitution*. In *mind* you have effect endowed with intelligence, reason, and moral sentiments. This effect, like all other effects, must have had a cause. Now, no effect certainly can possess a perfection which was not in the cause; hence we infer that the Creator of the human mind is a moral and intelligent Being. Thus the Bible teaches us to reason, "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know?"

There is one part, however, of our mental constitution, which bear *unmistakable* witness for God, yea, for a God who is holy and righteous in all His ways. You have already concluded that I refer to that mysterious part of our inner nature called *conscience*.

“It sits,” says one, “enthroned amid the other principles of our nature, and is invested with a rightful authority over them. Its voice—the voice of a sovereign judge—is heard above the tumults of passion, and the rebellious uproar of less noble propensities. And though its high behests are not always obeyed, yet its right to rule is everywhere acknowledged. It is sovereign *de jure* even where it is not sovereign *de facto*. Now let it be observed that all the authority of this faculty is on the side of righteousness and truth; that it has its sanctions for the enforcement of its utterances; that it approves the good and denounces the evil; and in the righteous supremacy of this part of our nature, we have a strong proof for the existence of a just and holy God. The authority of a law of right and wrong in our moral constitution implies a lawgiver; the setting up of a tribunal within the breast points to a yet higher tribunal in the heavens; and from the felt presence of a judge within us, denouncing wrong and sanctioning right, we infer the existence of a righteous judge over us who is at once its Author and Lord. In the supremacy of this moral principle we have strong evidence not only of an intelligent Creator, but of One who is just and true in all His ways, and holy in all His works. And this theology of conscience, as Dr. Chalmers remarks, has done more to uphold a sense of God in the world than all the theology of academic demonstration.”

4. Then look not only at *man's inner nature*, but look at *man as a whole*, and what powerful proof may be drawn from this source, that an infinitely wise God is our Creator, that the Spirit of God hath made us, and the breath of the Almighty hath given us life. Man is indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. “The human frame is the noblest structure beneath the heavens. In the exquisite mechanism of man's body, and in the primitive judgments and wondrous operations of his mind, we have the clearest indications of the Creator that lie within the range of natural theology. ‘If you want argument from *design*,’ says Mr. Morell, ‘then you see in the human frame the most perfect of all known organization. If you want the argument from being, then man, in his conscious dependence, has the clearest conviction of that independent and absolute *One*, on

whom his own being reposes. If you want argument from *reason* and *morals*, then the human mind is the only known repository of both. Man is in fact a microcosm, a universe in himself; and whatever proof the whole universe affords, is involved *in principle* in man himself. With the *image* of God before us, who can doubt of the Divine type?"

5. Lastly, the *testimony of the Bible* comes in and crowns the theistic argument. It authenticates the deductions of enlightened reason, and confirms those primitive judgments whereby we repose in the belief *that God is*, and that "He is what He is." The sublime utterance of inspiration chosen as my text for this evening, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," proves that our reasoning upwards from matter and mind, to the infinite creating mind, is true. The Bible of course (as a revelation from God) *presupposes* the Divine existence, and never formally attempts to prove it. It appeals to that very experimental evidence which is patent to the eyes of all men, as a witness *against* irreligion and idolatry—as a witness *for* the only living and true God.

So far we have considered the proposition "I believe in God" in its *affirmative* aspect; let me now add one word on this proposition in its *exclusive* aspect. We believe in *one* living and true God.

The Scriptures reveal not many gods, but *one*. The first commandment of the decalogue is, "Thou shalt have none other gods but Me." The reiterated utterance of Jehovah is, "I am the first and the last, and beside me there is no God." The teaching of the New Testament harmonizes of course with the Old. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." "Thou believest there is one God—thou doest well."

II. The second division of our subject now claims our attention for a short time. We confess our faith in God as *Almighty*. Our confessions on earth harmonize with the expressions used by the redeemed in their worship before the throne of God in heaven. Look at Rev. iv. 8: "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." It was as the

Almighty God that Jehovah revealed Himself to Abraham. Look at Gen. xvii. 1: "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." It was because Jehovah was the *Almighty God* that David felt secure under His protecting care. Look at Ps. xci. 1: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." It is as the *Almighty Lord*, able to make full provision therefore for His people, that our heavenly Father, in the New Testament, invites us to come to Him. Look at 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

"The word *Almighty*," says Bishop Pearson, "points to God's *dominion* over all, His rule and government of all." This dominion is *independent of all control*. "Who," asks the prophet Isaiah, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and shewed to Him the way of understanding?" Again, this dominion which God possesses as Almighty, is *infinite*—infinite in *extent* and in *duration*.

Infinite in *extent*. Look at the beautiful words of David in 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all."

Infinite in *duration*. The dominion of God is eternal. Therefore St. Paul calls God "*the King Eternal*;" and therefore David, in declaring the mighty acts and the abounding goodness of the Lord, in Ps. cxlv., says "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

Sovereign in its nature, far above all control; boundless in

its extent, and endless in its duration, is the dominion, and rule, and government of Almighty. Let the thought of this fill us with reverence for His Majesty; let it keep us from all murmurings against God's dealings with us. Patient submission becomes weak and sinful creatures under the hand of the *Almighty*.

III. We come now to the last division of our subject. We confess our faith in Almighty God as *the Maker of heaven and earth*.

Natural Theology, as I have already hinted, conducts by a process of inductive reasoning, to a belief in God as the Maker of the material universe, *i.e.*, of things seen, things visible. But by this Article of our faith we are summoned to believe much more than this; we are summoned to believe in God as the Maker of heaven and earth, *i.e.*, of things *invisible* as well as *visible*, *i.e.*, of every thing imaginable, God only being excepted.

Natural Theology, except in the way of analogy, will not help us here. What then saith the Scripture? Its very first word is, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Look at a few other passages which enunciate this sublime truth. Look at Nehemiah's prayer, Neh. ix. 6: "Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hadst made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee." Look at the words of Job (ix. 8—10): "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number." Look at the words of the Psalmist, Ps. xxxiii. 6: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Look at the declaration of Jehovah Himself, in Is. xlii. 5: "Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein." Again, look at Jer. x., where a striking contrast is drawn on this very point between the true and living God and the false gods of the heathen. "Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the

heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures. Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them: for He is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of His inheritance: The Lord of hosts is His name." (Jer. x. 11—16.) Turn to the New Testament. Standing in heathen Lystra, what does St. Paul say of the true God? Look at Acts xiv. 15: "We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." And so afterwards in idolatrous Athens, St. Paul declares to the Athenians the true God as the Maker of all things. Look at Acts xvii. 24, 25: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed any thing, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."

It were easy to multiply proof on this subject an hundredfold, were it needful so to do.

We believe then in Almighty God as the Maker of heaven and earth. What *practical effect* should this belief produce in us?

1. It ought certainly *to humble us*. Such was the effect produced upon David by a contemplation of God as the Great Creator. Look at Ps. viii. 3, 4: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" And yet God has been mindful of us. Mindful of us in *creation*—we are each one "fearfully and wonderfully made." Mindful of us in

providence—He watches over us from day to day, He “daily loadeth us with benefits.” Mindful of us in *redemption*—He sent His dear Son into the world to save us from hell, and to exalt us to the lost dominion over the works of His hands.

While we may well then be *humble* when we behold the greatness of God’s works, and the insignificance of man, we may well be *thankful* too, that God, in the midst of His mighty works, has been mindful of man. If you ask, Why has He been mindful? I answer, Look to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and see WHO SITTETH THERE.

2. Again—a belief in God as our Creator should lead us to *obey Him*. Thus it was with the Psalmist (cxix. 73): “Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.” God as our Creator hath a claim on our obedience. How few acknowledge the claim! Angels in heaven do God’s commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. The elements do God’s bidding. Fire and hail, snow and vapours, storm and wind, are ever fulfilling His Word. Man, alas! is rebellious. This should not be; the God who made us, whose our breath is, and whose are all our ways, has unquestionably a claim on our obedience.

3. Once more—a belief in Almighty God as the Maker of heaven and earth is well calculated to *console and strengthen us under all trials and difficulties*. See how David rested upon this help of God for security and peace. Look at Ps. cxxi. 2, 3: “My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber.” The Almighty God, the Maker of heaven and earth, is well able to keep us. Let us then commit ourselves entirely into His hands. He will preserve us from all evil, He will preserve our souls—

“Midst the roarings of the sea,
Sweet it is to Him to flee:
He is faithful, He is near,
Wherefore should His people fear.”

S E R M O N III.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

“BUT to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.”—1 COR. VIII. 6.

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not ; for I am not yet ascended to My Father : but go to My brethren—and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father ; and to My God, and your God.”—JOHN XX. 17.

LAST Sunday evening I said that the first article of the Apostles' Creed might be divided into two parts. The first, that in which we confess our faith *in God*, in *God as Almighty*, and *in Almighty God, as the Maker of heaven and earth*. And the second, that in which we confess our faith *in God as the FATHER*, the first person of the ever blessed Trinity. Last Sunday evening we considered only the first part of this article. The second I reserved for our consideration this evening. The subject, then, which is before us now, is *the Fatherhood of God*—a subject which must ever be of the deepest interest to the intelligent believer—a subject at all times important, but doubly so now, owing to the false teaching of modern days, which would eliminate from the Fatherhood of God one of its most essential elements, the element of law and justice.

The Fatherhood of God is a very extensive subject. Now as I wish to give you, if possible, a comprehensive idea of the whole, I shall not be able to dwell much on the minute details connected with it. I must refer those of you who would pursue the subject further, to various works which elucidate fully its different aspects. Such as Bishop Pearson on the Creed ; Dr. Candlish's Examination of Mr. Maurice's Theological Essays ; the late Sir E. Parry's valuable work on the Parental Character

of God; and the recently published work of Mr. Griffith, on the Fatherhood of God—a work in which you will find the Fatherhood of God in one of the most important aspects, first *asserted*, then *vindicated* from the objections to it, drawn equally from the disorder and from the order in the world, and finally *established* by the testimony of reason and of holy Scripture.

There are *three* grand aspects under which we may view *the Fatherhood of God*. *First*, in relation to *creation* at large—then in relation to *Christ*—and finally, in relation to *believers*.

I. God is the Father of all things, animate and inanimate, by creation.

II. God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in His Divine and human natures.

III. God is the Father of those who believe in Christ, by adoption.

In the texts which I have selected, you have these three aspects of the Fatherhood of God presented to your view. In the first, that in first Corinthians, you read of God the Father, “OF WHOM are all things.” There is the Fatherhood of God in relation to the whole of created things. In the second you hear Christ saying to Mary of Magdala, “I ascend unto My Father and your Father.” There you have the Fatherhood of God in relation to Christ. Christ speaks of Him as “*My* Father;” and there, too, you have the Fatherhood of God in relation to Christ’s people; *MY* *Father*, Christ says to Mary Magdalene, (and in her to all believers,) is also “*YOUR* Father.” “I ascend unto My Father and your Father.”

I. First, then, let us consider the Fatherhood of God in relation to creation at large: God is the Father of all things, animate and inanimate, by creation and preservation.

The highest of created intelligences, *holy angels*, owe their existence to God; therefore they are called in a passage, which I believe refers to angels, the sons of God. The passage I allude to is to be found in Job xxxviii: “Where wast thou,” says the Lord to Job, “when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who

laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

We have a reference to these eldest born of God's created sons in Gen. ii. 1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." And who form "the host of heaven," if not the mighty angels? God created angels; to Him therefore these principalities and powers owed allegiance. Called into existence by the creative fiat of the Almighty Father, *Him* they were bound to obey. Some humbly acknowledged, and still acknowledge this claim of God their Father; they *do* His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. But others proudly disowned this claim; and these angels that sinned God spared not; He cast them out of heaven—He has reserved them unto the judgment of the great day. Thus are we warned on the very threshold of our subject against the false teaching of those who would eliminate from the paternal character of God the idea of retributive justice.

But God is not only the Father of angels, He is also the Father of *men*, the Father of all men by creation. The heathen in the midst of their idolatry acknowledged this Fatherhood of God in relation to all mankind. You will remember how from this acknowledgment the Apostle St. Paul shows the Athenians the folly of idolatry. Look at Acts xvii. 28, 29: "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

To Adam in Eden one command of God was given, to teach man, that by virtue of his creation, he was bound to obey God. That one command was disobeyed, and retributive justice at once appeared (as in the case of the angels that fell) to be an essential element in the paternal character of God. Man expelled from Paradise—the ground for his sake cursed—the sorrows of woman—the whole creation subject to vanity—proclaim the fact, that from the Fatherhood of God you cannot eliminate the idea of retributive justice.

Blessed be God, in the case of fallen man there was what

there was *not* in the case of fallen angels, a silver lining to the dark cloud of judgment. There was a promise of mercy in store for fallen man; but of mercy, mark you, coming in the way of righteousness, coming through sin atoned for, coming therefore in a way in which the moral government of the great Father of the universe would be in no wise compromised.

But once more, God is not only the Father of angels and men, He is also the Father of *all* things, animate and inanimate. "To us," says St. Paul, "there is but one God the Father, *of whom* are all things." OF HIM, as the source of all life, as the origin of all existence, spiritual and material, of Him are all things—from those distant suns that march on their majestic way through the depths of space, down to the humblest flora that adorn some untrodden regions of our globe—from those gigantic forms that filled the earth and air and seas of the pre-adamite world, down to the tiny insects which our microscopes discover in their teeming myriads in air and water.

Of all things, by creation, God is the Father; thus wide in its embraces is the Fatherhood of God. It is wide as the universe, for—OF HIM ARE ALL THINGS. This aspect of the Fatherhood of God, leads us to think of God, (as has been beautifully shewn in a recent work on this subject to which I have referred you,) as the Intelligent Author of all things; *sustaining* all things in their individual life, as the self-existent Jehovah; *organizing* all things as parts of one symmetrical whole by His infinite wisdom; and *conducting* all things by His all-pervading, ever-active presence, through various processes of development, to their appointed ends—*ends* which in the great consummation of all things, shall be seen to have been subordinate to the accomplishment of the Divine purposes.

Again, this aspect of the Fatherhood of God, leads us not only to think of God as the Intelligent Author, but also as the Moral Governor of all things—*regarding the wants* of His creatures; *respecting the rights* of His creatures; and *requiting the deserts* of His creatures.* And finally, as we have seen in striking instances, this aspect of the Fatherhood of God leads

* See "The Fatherhood of God," by the Rev. T. Griffith, for a full consideration of this part of the subject.

us to think of God as the Righteous Judge of all things—*jealous for the authority of His law* and its sanctions; not allowing that law to be trampled under foot with impunity, by either angels or men.

Let not the current of modern thought sweep us away from this grand aspect of *the Fatherhood of God*. Let not, on the one hand, the order and uniformity that pervades the material world, tempt us to lose sight of the intelligent Author and Sustainer of this order and uniformity. Let not, on the other hand, the disorder and confusion caused by sin, or the perplexing nature of very much in our own lives and in the lives of others, tempt us to set loosely to the great truth, that, in spite of all, God is the moral Governor of all things: let us rest assured that the Judge of all the earth will do right. And finally, let not the false sentimentality of modern rationalism tempt us to forget that justice is one of the very pillars of the eternal throne—that God, if He is to be God at all, must be the righteous Judge of all things.

Thus far, then, we have considered the Fatherhood of God generally, in relation to creation at large.

II. Let us now turn to consider the second division of our subject. The Fatherhood of God *in relation to Christ*. God the Father, the first Person of the blessed Trinity, is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in His *Divine* and in His *human* nature.

This, I apprehend, is the special truth confessed in the Creed, when we acknowledge our faith in *God the Father*. The germ of the Creed, the baptismal formula, points to this as the principal aspect of the Fatherhood of God presented to us in this confession of our faith. The Creed itself, too, bears internal evidence confirmatory of this view. For after confessing our faith in *God the FATHER*, we go on immediately to confess our faith in *Jesus Christ His only SON*. The word *Son* of course points us back to the word *Father*, and determines the principal aspect of the Fatherhood of God, presented to us in our Creed.

In two senses, I have observed, God is the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; first, in His *Divine* nature; secondly, in His *human*

nature. We are approaching now some of the deepest mysteries of our faith, mysteries revealed in God's holy Word, and therefore demanding our reverent faith; but mysteries far transcending the comprehension of our finite minds. In dealing with them, therefore, it is our place not so much to investigate, as humbly and reverentially to receive what God has been pleased to reveal.

1. First, then, God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—the Eternal Word in His *Divine* nature. What says our blessed Lord Himself, in John x. 30? “I and My Father are one.” It is quite evident that in these words Christ is not speaking of Himself in His *human* nature—He is speaking of Himself in His *Divine* nature, He is asserting in unmistakable language, *His equality with the Father*. And in reference to that *Divine* nature, He speaks of God as His Father. Take another passage in connection with this. Look at John v. 26: “As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” from which we learn, that the mode of existence which the Father possessed from all eternity, He communicated and necessarily from all eternity to the Son. All created beings have their existence, their life from God, they have not life in themselves; but the Son, who is not created, but begotten, begotten *from everlasting* of the Father, hath life *in Himself*, derived certainly from the Father, but derived from everlasting. In the light of these declarations of the Word made flesh, we may understand that remarkable passage in the book of Proverbs, where, the Logos, the Word, the Wisdom of God, is speaking before His incarnation, and setting forth His eternal Sonship. Prov. viii. 22—30: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: when He established the clouds

above : when He strengthened the fountains of the deep : when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment : when He appointed the foundations of the earth : then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him ; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.”

2. But secondly, God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in His *human* nature. In the second part of the Creed our attention will be drawn more fully to this subject. I only briefly advert to it now, to complete our view of the *Fatherhood of God*. On this subject, then, let the declaration of the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin suffice for the present. “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke i. 35.)

Before passing to the third and last division of our subject, let me remind you how throughout His life Christ honoured His Father. What are His first recorded words? “How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” (Luke ii. 49.) What are His last recorded words? “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” (Luke xxiii. 46.) It was thus throughout His life, as the Gospel of St. John, above all the other Gospels, shows. It was thus after His resurrection. What were almost His first words after that event? Those which I have read you from the twentieth chapter of St. John to Mary Magdalene, “Touch Me not ; for I am not yet ascended to My Father : but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father ; and to My God, and your God.” (John xx. 17.) He honoured His heavenly Father—He was subject as man to His earthly mother. What intense sacredness of obligation does this example of Christ impart to the central commandment of God’s law, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” It is Christ-like so to do.

III. I come now to the third and last division of our subject. We have now finally to consider the Fatherhood of God in *relation to believers*. God is the Father of all those that believe in Christ, by adoption. That believers are, in this special and peculiar sense, God’s children, is evident from holy Scripture. Look at two passages out of many. Rom. viii.

14—16: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Gal. iv. 4—7: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." These Scriptures are sufficient to bring before us the *Fatherhood of God* in relation to His adopted children. I have touched now on a very large and fruitful theme. I might enlarge on the *nature* of this adoption; I might show what is *God's part* on the one hand, and what is *ours* on the other. I might point out to you from the Scriptures the *blessed fruits and consequences* of God's adoption of us as His children; how the Father feels a special *love* towards His adopted ones; how He makes a special *provision* for them now and hereafter; how He extends to them special *protection* and *guidance*; and how by a wonderful and loving *discipline* He trains them for that glorious inheritance to which, as His adopted children in Christ, they are heirs.

But all these deeply interesting and profitable subjects I must pass by now, if I am to lead you to any practical view of this entire subject in conclusion. The Fatherhood of God, especially in the close and intimate relation of that Fatherhood to believers, suggests many practical considerations. I will mention three. The Fatherhood of God calls on us to exercise towards God, *love, gratitude, and trust.*

Love.—The God in whom we have to believe is a *loving* Father. He loves us, He has created us, He has taken, and is taking care of us every day, and every hour, and every moment of our lives. He has redeemed us, by sending His Son to die for our sins; He spared not *His own Son*, but delivered Him up for us all. Our Father, then, loves us—does not love demand love in return?

Gratitude.—Let us recognize a Father's hand in all our blessings, temporal, providential, and spiritual. Let us remember that it is the living God, even our Father in heaven, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Whatever, then, be our measure of blessing, it comes from a Father's bountiful hand. Let us be thankful, then—let us be grateful to our Father for what He gives us.

Finally, *Trust.*—Will not a loving child trust in a loving earthly father? And shall we not much more trust in our heavenly Father, who has far more *wisdom*, and far more *power*, and far more *love* than any earthly father? Yea, He is *all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving*. Is He not worthy, then, of our most unreserved *trust*.

Shall we not trust Him, then, at all times? in adversity as in prosperity? in sorrow as in joy? in days of perplexity as in days when the course of our life runs on smoothly?

They are the happiest, who are the most *trustful*. In a world of sorrow, and trial, and perplexity, and anxiety, they are, depend upon it, the happiest, who can leave all in the unreservedness of trust in a Father's hand—who can say in the calmness of that full trust:

“Our times are in Thy hand,
Father, we wish them there;
Our life, our friends, our souls we leave
ENTIRELY to Thy care.

Our times are in Thy hand,
Why should we doubt or fear?
A Father's hand will never cause
His child a needless tear.

Let these thoughts, then, Christian brethren, sink down into your hearts. Every day of your lives you call God, *Father*. Does He receive from you what He has a right to expect—*love*, and *gratitude*, and *trust*?

S E R M O N I V.

THE TITLES OF THE REDEEMER.

“No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”—
1 COR. XII. 3.

WE enter this evening on the consideration of the second part of the Apostles' Creed. This part concerns God the Son our Saviour. It embraces six subjects or articles of faith, the *titles*; the *incarnation*; the *death*; the *resurrection*; the *exaltation*; and the *second coming* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The first of these will occupy our attention this evening—the *titles* of our Redeemer. “I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord.” Here you have titles which point the *work*, the *office*, the *nature*, and the *authority* of our Saviour.

I. First, you have a title pointing to His *work*. The name *Jesus* clearly has reference to this. For observe the special reason why this name was given. The reason is distinctly assigned by the angel who appeared to Joseph. “Thou shalt call His name *Jesus*, *for* He shall save His people from their sins.”

It was not at all an uncommon thing in Old Testament times to give a name as a memorial of some circumstance connected with the birth, character, or office of an individual. Thus our first mother was called *Eve*, *i.e.*, “*living*,” because she was the mother of all living; thus the child of Hagar, the bondwoman, was called *Ishmael*, “*God shall hear*,” because the Lord heard the cry of his mother in her affliction; thus the younger of Rebecca's children was called *Jacob*, “*supplanter*,” because in the purposes of God he was to supplant his elder brother *Esau*.

Though afterwards Jacob's name was changed to Israel, *i.e.*, "a prince of God," because at Bethel, as a prince he had power with God, and prevailed. Thus the child of Amram was called Moses, "drawn out," because in his infancy he was drawn out, and thus rescued from an early grave in the waters of the Nile. And thus the name of the successor of Moses, the victorious general who led the armies of Israel to the conquest of Canaan, was called Joshua; which is an abbreviation of Jah-oshua, which means Jehovah the Saviour. And so when He came of whom Joshua was but a type, He had a name given Him by God, which clearly indicated the nature of the work He was to accomplish. That work, as His name showed, was to be a work of deliverance—a work of salvation; but a deliverance, a salvation of a far higher and more enduring nature than that effected for Israel by Joshua. "For," said the angel interpreting His name, "He shall save His people from their sins." This did not Joshua—this did none of those saviours who from time to time God raised up for His people Israel. This they could not do. Strengthened with Jehovah's might, they effected for the chosen nation a temporal deliverance; but that was all. It remained for One mightier than they to effect, not for one nation only, but for all, eternal deliverance, deliverance from sin—deliverance from sin's condemning guilt, from sin's accursed power, from sin's eternal punishment.

And this has Jesus done. He has not only revealed the way of salvation from sin—He has also procured and wrought out Himself this salvation by His Cross and Passion—by His precious Death and glorious Resurrection. Nor is this all: from the right hand of the Father, He confers this salvation on all who believe in His name. He gives them its blessed first-fruits now in this life, in the pardon of their sins, and the purifying of their hearts; and hereafter in the life to come He will give them the full fruition of this salvation, in their complete and everlasting deliverance from all the varied consequences of sin. Well then may we call His name *Jesus*, for He, He alone, saves His people from their sins.

What a holy intensity of love should this blessed name of Jesus kindle in our hearts! It brings glad tidings of great joy

to sinners. It tells us, that unto us there is born a Saviour, that Saviour one whom God has Himself appointed to save us, that Saviour one who is Himself Divine, and who is therefore able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him.

II. I pass now from the first to the second title of our Lord, the title we so often associate with Jesus; the title of *Christ*, which points to the *offices* of our Redeemer.

Christ is the Greek for the Hebrew term *Messiah*, which signifies Anointed. In affixing this title, then, to Jesus in our Creed, we confess our faith in Him as the promised Messiah. That *Jesus* is the Christ, the promised Messiah, is, as you all well know, the grand question at issue between Christianity and Judaism. In touching upon this among other great subjects, I can only indicate some of the lines of proof, which would be taken in arguing this question with the modern Jew.

It is quite clear, from many passages of the Old Testament Scriptures, that the Messiah was promised. *That* the unconverted Jew readily admits. But it is clear also, from the Old Testament Scriptures, that *the time* in which these promises were to be fulfilled is long since past; and hence it follows, that the Messiah must have already come.

Jacob on his dying bed gave this prediction to Judah, concerning the promised Messiah—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. xlix. 10.) But the sceptre *has* departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet; therefore the Jew must admit that Shiloh, the promised Messiah, has already come. Again, it is plainly intimated by both Haggai and Malachi, that the Messiah was to come while the second temple was standing. The passage in Malachi is: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." The passage in Haggai is: "The Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

These passages prove that the promised Messiah "the Angel of the covenant," was to come while the second temple was standing. That temple has long since been destroyed, and therefore the Messiah must long since have come.

And as regards the second of these passages, (that from Haggai,) it may be asked, wherein could the glory of the second temple be greater than the glory of the first, apart from the coming of the Messiah? As far as magnificence of structure, and beauty of adornment, and visible signs of the Divine glory were concerned, the first temple was far superior to the second. Its inferiority consisted only in the fact, that whereas *it* contained the signs and emblems of the Divine glory, to the second temple came Him in whom these signs and emblems met their fulfilment; the Messiah who in His own person, is the manifested glory of Jehovah.

While these passages from Genesis, Haggai, and Malachi prove that the time for Messiah's first advent has long since past; Daniel's prophecy in Babylon of the seventy weeks, determines for us exactly the time of that first Advent. History shews us that Jesus appeared at the very time predicted in the prophet Daniel—at the time, consequently, when there was a very general expectation among the Jews of the coming of the Messiah.

Pursue this argument a step further. Look into all the prophecies in the Old Testament which concern the first coming of the Messiah, and you will find them all literally fulfilled in Jesus, and in Jesus alone. The Old Testament Scriptures tell you the *family* out of which Messiah was to come, the *place* of His birth, and the *manner* of His birth. It tells you that He was to come from the family of David, that He was to be born in David's city, the city of Bethlehem, and to be born of a pure virgin. All this you know has been fulfilled with minute exactness in Jesus. And further, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Mary the Virgin, the genealo-

gical records of the Jews were carefully preserved, and hence it could *then* be proved, as it was proved, that Jesus was the Son of David ; but supposing the Jews were to acknowledge any one now, who might claim to be the Messiah, how could they prove him to be of the house and lineage of David ? The destruction of all their genealogical records has rendered such proof impossible.

Further, the Old Testament Scriptures tell you what the Messiah was to do, and teach, and suffer. It tells you of the miracles He was to work—the heavenly teaching He was to impart to the meek and lowly—and with great minuteness of detail, it unfolds the sufferings He was to undergo ; and here again we see the prophecies of the past fulfilled with literal exactness in Jesus.

And once more, the Old Testament Scriptures intimate in several places that the Messiah, though cut off, though making His soul an offering for sin, would not see corruption—that He would be begotten again from the dead ; and these prophecies have been fulfilled, as you know, in the resurrection of Jesus, whose soul was *not* left in Hades, and whose flesh did *not* see corruption.

Such are some out of the lines of proof which we might take to convince a Jew that Jesus is indeed the Christ. This title, however, besides involving a confession of our faith in the Messiahship of Jesus, points also to His principal *offices*. For if Jesus is the Christ, the Lord's anointed, the question at once arises, to what office or offices is He by this unction of the Lord separated ? Among the Jews, kings, priests, and prophets were anointed. Jesus embraces, as the Lord's Christ, these offices in His own person—He is God's anointed King. The second Psalm speaks of Him as such : “ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh : the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set My King

upon My holy hill of Zion." Rev. xi. 15, points to the time when this shall be fulfilled: "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."—He is God's anointed Priest. Ps. cx. 4, speaks of Him as such: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." And the grand subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews is this divinely appointed priesthood of Jesus.—And finally, He is the Lord's anointed Prophet. Thus is He spoken of in Is. lxi. 1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Jesus at Nazareth claims this prophecy as fulfilled in Himself, and the whole teaching of Christ, a teaching which was with authority, showed that He was indeed the Lord's anointed Prophet.

Are we sufficiently thankful for this threefold office of our Saviour and Redeemer? Do we feel that we need Him in all these offices? Have we given ourselves to Him as the Christ of God—the anointed Prophet to shew us the way of salvation? the anointed Priest who has offered up the sacrifice of Himself for us, and who now, as our High Priest, ever liveth to make intercession for us, and the anointed King to reign supreme in our hearts now, and to bring us hereafter into His glorious and everlasting kingdom?

We cannot neglect Jesus, our Divine Saviour—Jesus, the Lord's Christ, without dishonouring the Father; for consider who Jesus Christ is? He is God's only Son.

III. This is the third title of our Redeemer brought before us in this Article of our Creed—Jesus Christ is *God's only Son*. This title clearly points to the *nature* of our Redeemer. It leads us to confess that in His nature He is *Divine*. For consider, first, the meaning of the phrase Son of God, in the minds of those who used it. It was used to *distinguish Him from all merely human beings*. Thus it was applied to Christ on the mount of transfiguration. Prophets and Apostles were

present on that mount—saints of the Old and the New Testament Church. But the voice of the Father, from the excellent glory, distinguishes Christ from either, “*This* is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him.” In the same way St. Paul, in Heb. iii. 5, 6, uses this title of Son, to show the pre-eminence of Christ over Moses. “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after ; but Christ as a Son over His own house.”

Further, the title is used to distinguish Christ from all *angelic* beings, as throughout the first chapter of Hebrews. Look especially at ver. 4—8 : “Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son? And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.”

Further, it is used to distinguish Christ from all conceivable forms of created beings, as different in *origin, degree, and kind*. Look at Col. i. 13—17 : “God hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us unto the kingdom of His dear Son who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” Mark how in this passage the Son of God is distinguished from all created beings—He is the image of the invisible God; in His Divine nature He is the exact representation and manifestation of the invisible Jehovah, “the first-born of every creature;” not the first created, but the first-born, “the first-born of every creature;” born before every creature, born before the whole

creation; begotten of the Father by an eternal generation as the Son of His love. The next two verses contain the proofs of this assertion of Christ's Divinity, and show still more plainly His separateness as the Son of God from all created beings. First, He is Himself their Creator; and next, He is their final end. This is stated in ver. 16: "all things were created by Him, and for Him." Thirdly, He existed before them all, "He is before all things;" and finally, He preserves them all, for "by Him all things consist."

If, then, the title "Son of God" was used to distinguish Christ from all human beings, from all angelic beings, and from all conceivable forms of created beings, it follows necessarily that it must be a title which equals Christ with Deity itself, a title which asserts His Divine nature. This line of argument will be confirmed, if we look not only at the meaning of the expression Son of God in the minds of those who used it themselves, but also at the meaning it had in the minds of those to whom it was addressed. How did the enemies of Christ understand it? Just look at one or two passages which will shew the meaning it conveyed to their minds. John v. 17, 18: "Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

Again, look at John x. 30—33: "I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, many good works have I shewed you from My Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered Him, saying, for a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." And so afterwards the Jews accused Christ before Pilate of blasphemy—of claiming, that is, what belonged to God, because he said that He was the Son of God

As used, then, by the Father, by Christ Himself, by His Apostles, and as understood by the enemies of our Lord, the title Son of God, is one which asserts most unequivocally the Divine nature of Christ.

And think not that in contending for the Divinity of our

Lord, we are contending for any mere barren doctrine, any mere speculative dogma; for let me briefly note some of the immense practical results which flow from the great truth that Christ is equal to the Father as touching His Godhead.

1. It is only in the Divinity of Christ, that we have *full assurance of the Father's love*. We read in 1 John iv. 9, 10: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Where is the power of this passage? Where is the wondrous love of God to man, *if* Christ was a mere man, or a created angel? But let Christ be as Scripture teaches He is, the only begotten Son of God, He who had been from everlasting with the Father, and then indeed in the gift of Jesus you have the fullest possible assurance of the Father's love; He who has not withheld His Son—the Son of love—from us, must indeed love us with a love the depth of which no human plumb-line can ever fathom.

2. Again, in the Divinity of Christ, we have the *assurance of our acceptance with God*. How know we that Christ's sacrifice is more precious than the sacrifices of the old law? or that Christ's mediation is more effectual than that of Moses? Is it not the Divinity of Christ, which gives exhaustless efficacy to that sacrifice, resistless power to that intercession?

3. And once more, it is the Divinity of Christ which assures us of our complete *victory over sin*. How shall we be led on to that conquest without a Divine Leader, without a Divine Captain? How shall we be nerved with strength in the conflict against the principalities and powers of hell, except we are assured that we are fighting under the banner of One who is mightier than they; of One against whose Divine strength the combined power of hell is but weakness?

IV. And now, let us turn to the fourth and concluding title of the Saviour in this article of our Creed. We confess our faith in Jesus Christ, God's only Son *our Lord*. This is a title which points to Christ's authority, to Christ's dominion over us. His dominion of course extends over all created things, animate

and inanimate. The word "our"—"*our Lord*," leads us, however, to consider that authority more immediately in relation to His people. Christ, it has been truly observed, is our authoritative *Teacher*—our authoritative *Ruler*—and our authoritative *Protector*. These ideas of authoritative *teaching*, *rule*, and *protection* are, I apprehend, the principal ideas involved in *Christ's Lordship* over His people. Just one word about each.

Christ as our Lord, is our authoritative *Teacher*. His authority as a teacher, appears throughout His ministry in the *manner* of His teaching. The—"thus saith the Lord"—of the prophets, is replaced in Christ's case by the authoritative—"Verily, I say unto you." That authority appears further in the claim Christ makes for Himself, *viz.*, that of being the only revealer of the Father. See Matt. xi. 27. Christ's jealousy for His authority as the supreme Teacher of His people, appears from what He says to His disciples in Matt. xxiii. 8—10: "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ." Christ Himself has appointed in His Church divers helps, He has appointed ministers and teachers, who are to act under Him, who are to teach *His* words,—woe be to them if they teach them not! who are to deliver *His* message. But—it is to *His* words, *His* message—whether coming to you from the pages of holy Scripture, or proclaimed by His ministers,—that He demands the submission of the heart and will.

Again, Christ as our Lord, is our authoritative *Ruler*. He reserves to Himself in His Church the ultimate authority in government, as in teaching. Christ as our Lord claims authority over all that we *do*. Is there, then, anything that the Lord Christ forbids, which you are indulging in? Or, is there anything which He commands, which you are making light of, overlooking, or shrinking from? Then, brethren, let me earnestly entreat of you to remember the solemn words which Christ addresses to those who call Him "Lord, Lord," and *do not* the things which He says. Remember what He shows you

will be the ruin, the utter and irretrievable ruin in the end, of those who are satisfied with such an empty profession.

But once more, Christ as our Lord is our authoritative *Protector*. The husband is the authoritative protector of his wife. So is Christ the heavenly bridegroom of His Church, His ransomed bride. He watches over His believing people with the tenderest affection—He guards them with constant care—He puts forth His arm to defend them from all evil. Amid the perils and troubles of an evil world, what a blessing unspeakable to have such a Protector as Jesus—such an almighty arm to defend as that of the Lord Christ, who has said: “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.”

In conclusion, let me ask, do we *naturally* acknowledge the authority of Christ? We are ready enough to *call* Him Lord, Lord; but are we *in heart* ready to bow to His authority? Is not this, on the contrary, the thought of the unrenewed heart, “*our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?*”—What saith the Scripture? What is its testimony on this matter? It is this: “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, *but by the Holy Ghost.*” If, then, we would not only confess with the mouth, but also acknowledge with the heart, that Jesus Christ is Lord, *our* Lord; if we would heartily submit to His authority over us as supreme, we must be taught of God’s Holy Spirit. He alone can subdue the proud independence of the natural heart; He alone can bring us in lowly submission of will to the feet of Jesus of Nazareth. And as He alone can lead us to say in heart, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” so He alone can bring us day by day to rejoice in the submission to Christ’s authority, which that question involves.

Let the Holy Spirit of God be dwelling in our hearts; and then we shall delight to learn of Christ our Lord as our Teacher—to follow Him in dutiful obedience as our Ruler—and to place ourselves evermore under His almighty guardianship as our Protector.

S E R M O N V.

CHRIST'S INCARNATION.

“THE Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”—JOHN I. 14.

LAST Sunday evening I commenced the second part of the Apostles' Creed. We considered then the first article of that part which relates, as we saw, to the *titles* of our Redeemer—titles which have reference to His *work* as the *Saviour*, to His *offices* as the *Christ*, to His *nature* as the *Son of God*, and to his *authority* as our *Lord*. We proceed now to the second article of this part of our Creed, which has reference to the *incarnation* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We confess in it, that Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord, “*was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*” We confess our faith in the mysterious doctrine of the incarnation, which St. John enunciates in our text: “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;” the doctrine which St. Paul declares as the first in order in the great mystery of godliness. “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, *God was manifest in the flesh.*”

May the Spirit of God enable us to approach the consideration of this mysterious subject with becoming reverence.

I. And first let us consider the fact itself—the *incarnation of Christ*. The fact which the Creed enunciates is not the product of theological speculation, but a *matter of history*—a matter of history authenticated to us by most certain warrants of holy Scripture. A fact, therefore, which amid all its inconceivableness, must stand as true and certain, till Scripture itself be overturned, and all the piled up mass of cumulative evidence for its Divine authority have been crumbled down and scattered to the winds.

The Word, the Eternal Logos, who in the beginning was with God, the Word who was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. The Son of God, without ceasing to be God (for this were impossible) became man.

First look at the predictions and foreshadowings of the fact in the Old Testament, and then at its fulfilment in the New.

The earliest promise pointed to a *human* deliverer, to one who was to be born of woman, and yet one who was to be mightier than Satan, for He was to be Satan's vanquisher. Thus ran the ancient promise given in Eden: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. iii. 15.) Here is the first promise of the Virgin-born; a promise which sketches in outline the features of Him who was to be man, "born of woman," and yet more than man, the conqueror of man's great enemy.

More than 2000 years after this first promise, another was given which pointed out the *nation* from whom the deliverer of mankind was to come. First to Abraham; then to his son, the child of promise, Isaac; and then to Isaac's younger son, the child of election, Jacob; was given by the Lord the promise, "In thy seed, shall all nations of the earth be blessed."

Again, a human deliverer is promised, one who according to the flesh was to be the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; one, therefore, who was come from the Jewish nation, and yet one who was evidently to be more than man, for in what mere man could all nations of the earth be blessed.

Later still, (about 1690 years before the birth of the promised seed,) a prediction is given, in which the *tribe* is selected from whom the deliverer was to come. Reuben, Jacob's first-born, Simeon and Levi, his next two sons, are passed by, because stained by flagrant sins. *Judah*, the fourth son of Jacob, in the purpose of God is selected to be the ancestor of the promised deliverer, Shiloh, unto whom would be the gathering of the people.

Six centuries and a half passed away, and then the special *family* in the tribe of Judah was designated, from whom the

promised deliverer was to come—the royal family of David. “Of the fruit of thy body,” God said to David, “will I set upon thy throne:” a prediction which, though receiving an immediate and partial fulfilment in Solomon, clearly looks on to One greater than Solomon, “the throne of whose kingdom God was to establish for ever.” Here you have a king who was to be the Son of David, and yet a king whose kingdom was to be an everlasting kingdom. The promised deliverer, then, was to be man, and yet more than man, for He was to reign for ever; He was to possess, as a later prophet predicted, an everlasting dominion, and a kingdom which (unlike all earthly kingdoms) should not be destroyed.

Three centuries more passed away, and then about 750 years before the birth of the Saviour in the reign of Ahaz, God by His servant Isaiah gave the prediction that the promised seed should be born of a virgin. “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (Isaiah vii. 14.) He was to be man, born of a virgin, and yet more than man, for He was to be called “Immanuel,” God with us—God manifest in the flesh.

A few years later, a little more than 700 years before Christ, Micah foretold the actual birth-place of the long promised Messiah. “But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” (Micah v. 2.) Again you see the two natures of the Judge of Israel. Out of Bethlehem He was to come forth,—there is the *human* nature; and on the other hand, of Him it is asserted, that His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”—there is *Divine* nature. He who was from everlasting was to become man; He was to be born in Bethlehem, born of a virgin, born of the family of David.

I have only referred you to *predictions* of the incarnation—predictions which reach over 3300 years. But in the Old Testament there are not only predictions, but *foreshadowings* also of the incarnation. It would not be difficult to prove, that every Divine appearance in olden days, was an appearance of

the second person of the blessed Trinity, God the Son, the Angel of the Covenant. And on almost all occasions the form assumed by the Son of God, when thus appearing to men, was a *human* form.

Take two remarkable instances of this. First look at the appearance of the Angel of the Covenant to Jacob: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled A MAN with him until the breaking of the day. And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with Him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with GOD and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, Thy Name. And He said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after My Name? And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen GOD face to face, and my life is preserved." (Gen. xxxii. 24—30.)

The other instance I would refer you to, is the appearance of the Captain of the Lord's host to Joshua, before the taking of Jericho: "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood A MAN over against him with His sword drawn in His hand: and Joshua went unto Him, and said unto Him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.* And Joshua did so." (Joshua v. 13—15.) This language of the Captain of the Lord's host to Joshua, is exactly the same as that addressed to Moses by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from the burning bush. It is unquestionably language which proves the *Divinity* of the speaker. This is confirmed by the title given to Him in the next chapter. The first verse

of the sixth chapter is parenthetical, for the second and following verses of that chapter tell us what the Captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua when he had complied with the request which we have just read. "The LORD * said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof," &c.

Now in both these instances you have the appearance of a *Divine* person in a *human* form, a foreshadowing of the time when the Son of God, the Angel of the Covenant, the Captain of our Salvation, should become man.

But turn now from these predictions and foreshadowings of the incarnation in the Old Testament, to their fulfilment in the New. In "the fulness of time," *i.e.*, when God's appointed time had fully come, "He sent forth His son, made of a woman, made under the law." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And how was this wondrous fact accomplished?—Exactly according to the predictions of the Old Testament. Turn we to the simple narrative of the fact in the first and second chapters of St. Luke. First read the account of the annunciation. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall

* The word here in the original, is JEHOVAH.

overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age : and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her." (Luke i. 26—38.) After this wondrous message from the angel Gabriel, Mary visits her cousin Elisabeth, by whom she is saluted as the mother of her Lord. Soon after her return to Nazareth from the hill country of Judæa, we may suppose took place the vision which St. Matthew records in the first chapter of his Gospel, the vision which calmed the fears of Joseph. Some months after comes the decree for the enrolment, which brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. And now let us, though we have often read it before, read the story of the birth of Christ in the city of David. " And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem ; (because he was of the house and lineage of David :) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them : and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you ; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child." (Luke ii. 1—17.)

Such is the story of Christ's incarnation. Such the Scripture warrant for the mysterious fact which the Creed commemorates, that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. As it was predicted so it came to pass. The Son of God became man, He was born in *Bethlehem*, *born of a virgin*, born *into the family of David*.

And now, before passing to some of the Scriptural reasons for the fact, let us dwell a little on the narrative, as given us with such exquisite simplicity and beauty by the evangelist St. Luke. Let me give you from the pages of Dr. Ellicott's "Lectures on the Life of Christ," a reverent and thoughtful comment on the narrative I have read you from the first and second chapters of St. Luke.

"What a vivid truth," says the Bishop, "speaking humanly, there is in the narrative of St. Luke. With what marvellous aptitude to human infirmity do things Divine and human mingle with each other in ever-illustrative and ever-confirmatory combinations. With what striking persuasiveness do mysteries, seemingly beyond the grasp of thought, blend lovingly with the simplest elements, and become realizable, by the teaching of the homely relations of humble and sequestered life. With what a noble and circumstantial simplicity is the opening story told of man's redemption. The angel Gabriel, he who stood among the highest of the angelic hierarchy, and whose ministrations, if it be not too bold a thing to affirm, appear to have been specially Messianic—just as those of Raphael might have pertained to individual need, and those of

Michael to judicial power—that blessed Spirit, who a few months before had been sent to announce the future birth of the fore-runner of Messiah, is now sent from God to a rude and lone village in the hills of Galilee, Nazareth the disesteemed, and to a betrothed virgin whose name was Mary. Of the early history of that highly favoured one we know nothing: yet without borrowing one thought from the legendary notices of apocryphal narrative, it does not seem a baseless fancy to recognize in her one of those pure spirits, that in seclusion and loneliness were longing and looking for the theocratic King; and that, deeply imbued as we see the virgin must have been with the letter and spirit of the Old Testament, were awaiting the evolution of the highest of all its transcendent prophecies. Rapt as such an one might have been in devotion or in Messianic meditation, she sees beside her at no legendary spring side, but, as the words of the evangelist imply, in her own humble abode, the Divinely-sent messenger, and heard a salutation which, expressed in the terms in which it *was* expressed, ‘Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women;’ and coming as it did from an angel’s lips, must well have troubled that meek spirit, and cast it into awe and perplexity.

“What persuasive truth there is in the nature of the terms in which the announcement is conveyed. To that highly favoured one, that perchance had long mused in silence on the prophecies of the Messianic *kingdom*, to her is Jesus the Son of the Highest portrayed in His *regal* glory. And how characteristic the question, How shall this be? The question not of outwardly expressed doubt like that of Zacharias, or of an inwardly felt sense of impossibility, like that of Abraham and Sarah, in the old and typical past, but of child-like innocence, that sought to realize to itself in the very face of seeming impossibilities, the full assurance of its own blessedness. No, there was no lack of faith in that question. It was a question to which the heavenly messenger was permitted to return a most explicit answer, and to confirm by a most notable example, that of her cousin Elisabeth, that with God no word was impossible, no pro-

mise that was not to receive its completest and most literal fulfilment.

“With these words of the angel, all seems to have become clear to her in regard to the wonder-working power of God ; much, too, must already have been clear to her on the side of man. With the rapid foreglance of thought she must have seen in the clouded future, scorn, dereliction, the pointed finger of a mocking and uncharitable world, calumny, shame, death. But what was a world's scorn and persecution to those words of promise? Faith sustains that positive shrinking from more than mortal trial, and turns it into meekest resignation : ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word.’

“From that time the blessed Virgin seems ever to appear before us in that character which the notices in the Gospels so consistently adumbrate, meek and pensive, meditative and reserved, blessed with joys no tongue can tell, and yet even in the first hour of her blessedness, beginning to feel one edge of the sword which was to pierce her loving and submissive heart.”

Passing by the Bishop's comment on Mary's visit to Elisabeth, and on the vision vouchsafed to Joseph, I come on to the nativity in Bethlehem. “And now the fulness of time was come.—By one of those mysterious workings whereby God makes the very worldliness of man to bring about the completion of His own heavenly counsels, the provincial taxing or enrolment of the persons or estates of all that were under the Roman sway, brings the descendants of David to David's own city. Very soon after the arrival at Bethlehem, perchance on the self-same night, in one of the limestone caverns in that narrow ridge of long grey hills on which stands the city of Bethlehem, was the Redeemer of mankind born into our world. How brief and how simple are the words that relate these homely circumstances of the Lord's nativity. How surely does the mother's recital and the mother's stored up memories come forth in the artless touches of detail. And yet with how much of holy and solemn reserve that first hour of a world's salvation is passed over by the Evangelist. We would fain

inquire into the wonders of that mysterious night, and they are not wholly hid from us. The same Evangelist that tells us that the mid-day sun was darkened during the last hours of the Redeemer's earthly life, tells us also that in His first hours the night was turned into more than day, and that heavenly glories shone forth not unwitnessed, while angels announced to shepherd watchers on the grassy slopes of Bethlehem, the tidings of great joy, and proclaim the new-born Saviour.

“How mysterious are the ways of God's dealings with men! The Desire of all nations come—the Saviour born into an expectant world—and announced to village shepherds. What a bathos, what a hopeless bathos to the unbelieving and unmeditative spirit! And yet what a Divine significance is there in the fact, that to the descendant of the first type of the Messiah—Abel, the keeper of sheep, the announcement is made that the great Shepherd of the lost sheep of humanity is born into the world! What a mysterious fitness that the Gospel, of which the characteristic was that it was first preached to the poor, was first proclaimed neither to ceremonial Pharisees who would have questioned it, nor to the worldly Sadducees who would have despised it, nor to the separatist Essenes who would have given it a mere sectarian significance, but to men whose simple and susceptible hearts made them come with haste to Bethlehem, and see, and believe, and spread abroad the wonders they had been permitted to behold.”

Around *the fact* of Christ's incarnation we must linger no longer now. As it was predicted and foreshadowed in the past, so it came to pass. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” And therefore “we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of His Mother, born in the world; perfect God, and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood. Who although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God; one altogether; not by

confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ."

II. And now let me say a few words in conclusion with reference to the *reasons*—the Scriptural reasons for the fact of Christ's incarnation.

1. Christ became man in order that He might bring man, lost and ruined man, back to God—in order that He might bring the prodigal children back into the heavenly family. This is the reason St. Paul assigns for Christ's incarnation in Heb. ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." In order that He might be the Redeemer, He must be the *kinsman*; and in order to be our kinsman, He must become man. As regards the means by which Christ as man effected this redemption, this restoration of man to God, I have not to speak now. The incarnation was the first step towards this redemption; but, as you know, it was not the last. The incarnation was the necessary preparation for the Cross, for only as *man* could Christ suffer.

2. Christ became man, in order that He might be able fully to sympathize with man. This St. Paul assigns as one reason for Christ's incarnation, in Heb. ii. 17, 18: "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."

3. Again, Christ became man, that as man He might set us an example that we should follow His steps. The example of Christ is often proposed for our imitation in holy Scripture; but of course it is only as *man*, that we can in any degree be followers of Christ. As man He shows us how to resist Satan's temptations; as man He has shown us our need of prayer, and taught us the spirit of submission in prayer; as man He has shown us the beauty of humility and meekness and purity; as man he has set us an example of diligence, of singleness of

purpose, of unselfish love, of tender thoughtfulness for the wants and feelings of others ;—in a word, as the perfect ideal of humanity, He has set us a perfect example. All that is noble in the character of man, all that is lovely in the character of woman, finds its union and perfection in the *man Christ Jesus*.

To bring man back to God—to sympathize with man—to set man a perfect example—for these among many others reasons Christ, the Eternal Word, was made flesh and dwelt among us.

And now, my brethren, let me endeavour to apply this whole subject to your hearts by one concluding question. Was the Son of God made flesh? Did He take our nature upon Him? Did He, who had been from everlasting dwelling with the Father, come and dwell among us, and dwell among us in great humility? And *can you doubt the love of such a Saviour?*

You are all ready to say—we doubt it not for one moment. Then act as those who doubt it not. *Love Him who loved you in the past, and loves you still; welcome Jesus Christ into your hearts. His love to us, demands nothing less than this at your hands and mine.*

“ Jesus, Thy love unbounded
 So full, so sweet, so free,
 Leaves all our thoughts confounded,
 Whene'er we think on Thee.
 For us Thou cam'st from heaven,
 For us didst bleed and die,
 That ransomed and forgiven
 We might ascend on high.

Oh! let Thy grace constrain us
 To give our hearts to Thee,
 Let nothing please or pain us,
 Apart, O Lord, from Thee:
 Our joy, our one endeavour,
 In suffering, conflict, shame,
 To serve Thee, gracious Saviour,
 And magnify Thy name.”

S E R M O N V I .

CHRIST'S DEATH.

FOR I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."—1 COR. xv. 3.

THE Third Article of the second part of the Apostles' Creed demands our attention this evening. In that Article we confess concerning Christ our Lord, that He "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried," and that "He descended into hell." The great subject of this Article of our Creed is *Christ's death*. I will invite you to consider, first, the *historical certainty* of that death, and then its *doctrinal significance*.

When our blessed Lord was upon earth, He said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." And "this said He, signifying what death He should die." May the lifting up, then, of a Saviour crucified, draw many hearts to Him this evening, by the mighty working of the Holy Ghost. May you and I be led by the Spirit's teaching, to feel in our own hearts more and more of the attractive power of Christ's death.

I. First, then, I invite you to mark the HISTORICAL CERTAINTY OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

Its historical certainty is made to appear in the Creed in three particulars—*time*, *manner*, and *results*.

1. *Time*. In reference to this particular the Creed says, Christ "suffered under Pontius Pilate."

Judæa at that time was a part of the Roman province of Syria, and consequently under the care of the president of that province : according to this arrangement a particular procurator

was assigned to it, and to this procurator was given, (in consequence of the suspicion that the Jews were disposed to rebel against the Roman government,) the power of life and death, so that the procurator or governor of Judæa exercised over the Jews at that time the full powers of the president of Syria.

This procurator, at the time of Christ's death, was Pontius Pilate. He was appointed by Tiberius Cæsar, and managed the affairs of Judæa for ten years, from the twelfth to the twenty-second year of Tiberius Cæsar, *i.e.*, from the year of our Lord twenty-six to thirty-six. Pilate in his official reports to the Emperor makes express mention of Jesus, and of his execution. And thus we have *external* testimony to the *time*, and so to the certainty of Christ's death.

The statement, however, that Christ "suffered under Pontius Pilate," not only determines the *time* when Christ suffered; it also points to the fact that Christ suffered as a just, a righteous man, for none bore a more powerful testimony than Pilate to the innocency of Christ. Three times did he challenge the whole Jewish nation concerning Him, "Why? what evil hath he done?" Three times did he make the clear profession, "I have found no cause of death in Him!" and at last, "When he saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." (Matt. xxvii. 24.)

It would be foreign to my purpose to enter now into the character of this Roman governor who thus declared Christ's innocence, and yet gave Him up to a death of agony and shame. Suffice it to say that he was one who acted (as many act now) against his own most solemn convictions, one who stifled the warning voice of conscience, and refused to follow its dictates. Had he only boldly resolved to give heed to the warning voice within, his name would never have held the melancholy place it does in our Creed—we would never have had to say of Jesus, that He suffered under *Pontius Pilate*.

2. But further, the historical certainty of Christ's death is made to appear in the Creed, from the *manner* of that death—

crucifixion; a mode of death the more important to be recorded, "not only," as has been observed, "because of its connexion with the end for which Christ died, but also as illustrating the wondrous way in which God accomplishes His purposes, and brings to pass things which in the judgment of men seem irreconcilable."

It was hinted in more than one prophecy in the Old Testament, that the promised Messiah was to be crucified. For example, in Psalm xxii. 16, 17: "They pierced My hands and My feet. I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me." It was distinctly predicted by our Lord, that He should die in this way. I have already referred to one passage in which Christ foretold the manner of His death. Look at another, where He interprets an Old Testament type with reference to His crucifixion: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." (John iii. 14.)

Now what seemed more unlikely than the fulfilment of these Old Testament types and prophecies, and these words of Christ respecting the manner of His death? The persecutors of Christ were Jews, and the Jews then had not the power to put any one to death. And even if they had, crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of inflicting death. Yet Christ *was* put to death, and that by *crucifixion*. How was this brought about? It was brought about, as has been observed, "by the malicious cunning of the Jews, who knowing their inability to punish Christ capitally, for what they deemed an offence against ecclesiastical law, accused Him to the Roman governor of an offence against the State, delivered Him over to Pilate as a prisoner of the State, and prevailed by clamour on that unjust judge, to inflict on Him the punishment assigned to offenders against the State—the Roman punishment for rebellion against the Roman authority, which was crucifixion." Thus the fore-ordained purpose of God was accomplished; thus the types and the prophecies in the Old Testament, and the words of Jesus which pointed to the *manner* of His death, were fulfilled.

3. Once more, the historical certainty of Christ's death is made to appear in the Creed from the *results* which followed it. He truly and really *died*, was *buried*, and *descended into hell*.

(*a*) He truly and really died. As He was truly and really man, as He was clothed with our mortal nature, so did He undergo, not an apparent, but a true and real death. Thus testifies an eye-witness, one who stood by the Cross: "When," says St. John, "Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." (Chap. xix. 30.) And to his own testimony John adds that of the Roman soldiers to the fact, that Christ was truly and really dead. They brake the legs of the two malefactors who were crucified with Christ, "but when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs." (Ver. 33.)

When we die, the soul leaves the body, and so it was with our blessed Lord when He died; the soul of Jesus left His body at the moment of death. The Creed then goes on to tell us what became of each—the body and the soul of Jesus, till the morning of His resurrection. Each was conveyed to its appointed resting place. The body was borne to the grave; the soul went to the place of departed spirits.

(*b*) The body was borne to the grave. Christ was buried—and buried in exact accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah, which foretold that the Messiah should be "with the rich in His death;" for thus runs the account given us by the Evangelist St. Matthew: "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed." (Matt. xxvii. 57—60.) And with Joseph of Arimathea there was associated in the burial of Jesus another rich man, Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night, but who had now it seems grown bolder, for now when the fondest hopes of Christ's disciples seemed all dashed in pieces; now he fears not openly to espouse the cause of the crucified Nazarene!

(*c*) And while the body of Jesus, by Joseph of Arimathea

and Nicodemus, and the loving hands of ministering, sorrowing women, was reverently buried, His soul went to the place of departed spirits—Christ descended into hell.

Mark first the scriptural authority on which we assert this fact concerning the human soul of Jesus. Turn to Acts ii. 25—28: “For David speaketh concerning Him, (Christ,) I fore-saw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance.” So far you have the quotation from the sixteenth Psalm. And now read St. Peter’s comment on these words of David: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that He is both dead and buried, and His sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.” (Ver. 29—31.)

This is the Scripture warrant for the statement in the Creed, that Christ descended into hell. It is not indeed the only passage bearing on this subject, but let it suffice for the present.

Now what are we to understand by this fact, thus taught in Scripture and embodied in the Creed, that Christ descended into hell? Certainly we are *not* to suppose, (as did Calvin,) that Christ descended into the place of torment, and suffered the pains in store for the lost. The word in the original in Acts ii. is *not* *γέεννα* (Gehenna), the place of torment; but *ᾗδης* (Hades), which, according to its derivation, simply signifies *a place unseen*. The word *hell* had originally the same meaning, being derived from the Saxon root *helan*, to cover. The word *Hades*, as used by the Greeks, by the Jews, and by the early Christian writers, embraced the *whole* realm of the departed spirits. Scripture clearly intimates that the disembodied spirit neither sleeps, nor

enters at death into its *final* state, but enters into an intermediate state to which this name of Hades is given. In that state the souls of the righteous are in bliss, enjoying the presence of Christ; and yet *not*, as is clear from Scripture, enjoying the *full* consummation of bliss which awaits them at the resurrection; and in that state the souls of the wicked are in misery, and yet not in the *full* misery of *γέεννα*, into which they shall be cast, after the sentence of judgment which shall be pronounced on them in the last great day.

Into this realm of departed spirits, then, we understand that Christ went, when we say in our Creed that He descended into hell. Which division of this realm He visited, is clear from His own words on the Cross to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me *in paradise*." It was the happy division of Hades, Abraham's bosom, where Lazarus is comforted—paradise, where the souls of the righteous are in joy and felicity; it was this part of the realm of departed spirits that the Spirit of Christ visited, in the interval between His death and resurrection.

It may be asked, why was it thought necessary to assert this fact, concerning Christ's descent into Hades, in the Creed? It was inserted, I believe, as a protest against the heresy of the Arians and Apollinarians, who denied the existence in Christ of a natural human soul. The true doctrine of our Lord's humanity, viz., that "He was perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting," was most strongly maintained by asserting the article of His descent into Hades. For whereas His body was laid in the grave, and His soul went to Hades, He must have had both body and soul.

Another, and a much more difficult question arises—What was the *object* of our Lord's descent into Hades? Had He any other object in view, than that which has been already alluded to?—the fulfilment of the conditions of death proper to our human nature. There is a passage of Scripture which I believe intimates that He had; that passage you will find in 1 Pet. iii. 18—20: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which

also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison ; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

There is an admirable sermon of Bishop Horsley's on this text, from which I will read you a few extracts, which will go to prove from this text that one object of Christ's descent into Hades, was that He might proclaim to the spirits that were there in safe keeping the glad tidings of His redemption. In order that you may understand the Bishop's comment on the text, it is necessary for me first to read you his critical remarks on it.

“ To any who will consider the original with critical accuracy, it will be obvious, from the perfect antithesis of the two clauses concerning flesh and spirit, that if the word ‘ spirit ’ denote the active cause by which Christ was restored to life, which must be supposed by them who understand the word of the Holy Ghost, the word ‘ flesh ’ must equally denote the active cause by which He was put to death ; which therefore must have been the flesh of His own body ; an interpretation too manifestly absurd to be admitted. But if the word ‘ flesh ’ denote, as it most evidently does, the part in which death took effect upon Him, ‘ spirit ’ must denote the part in which life was preserved in Him, *i.e.*, His own soul ; and the word ‘ quickened ’ is often applied to signify, not the resuscitation of life extinguished, but the preservation and continuance of life subsisting. The exact rendering, therefore, of the Apostle's words would be—‘ Being put to death in the flesh, but quick in the spirit ;’ *i.e.*, surviving in His soul the stroke of death which His body had sustained ; ‘ by which,’ or rather ‘ in which,’ that is, in which surviving soul, ‘ He went and preached to the souls of men in prison, or in safe keeping.’ ”

The Bishop's comment on the passage thus rendered is as follows :—

“ The souls in custody, to whom our Saviour went in His disembodied spirit and preached, were those ‘ which sometime were disobedient.’ The expression, ‘ sometime were,’ or ‘ one while had been disobedient,’ implies that they were recovered

however from that disobedience, and, before their death, had been brought to repentance and faith in the Redeemer to come. To such souls Christ went and preached. But what did He preach to departed souls, and what could be the end of His preaching? Certainly He preached neither repentance nor faith; for the preaching of either comes too late to the departed soul. These souls had believed and repented, or they had not been in that part of Hades, which the soul of the Redeemer visited. Nor was the end of His preaching any liberation of them from we know not what purgatorial pains, of which Scripture gives not the slightest information. But if He went to proclaim to them (and to proclaim or publish is the true sense of the words "to preach") the glad tidings that He had actually offered the sacrifice of their redemption, and was about to appear before the Father as their Intercessor, in the merit of His own blood, this was a preaching fit to be addressed to departed souls, and would give animation and assurance to their hope of the consummation in due season of their bliss: and this it may be presumed was the end of His preaching. But the great difficulty in the description of the souls to whom this preaching for this purpose was addressed is this, that they were the souls of some of the antediluvian race. Not that it at all startles me to find antediluvian souls in safe keeping for final salvation: on the contrary, I should find it very difficult to believe, (unless I were to read it somewhere in the Bible,) that of the millions that perished in the general deluge, all died hardened in impenitence and unbelief, insomuch that not one of that race could be an object of future mercy, besides the eight persons who were miraculously saved in the ark, for the purpose of re-peopling the depopulated earth. Nothing in the general plan of God's dealings with mankind, as revealed in Scripture, makes it necessary to suppose, that, of the antediluvian race who might repent on Noah's preaching, more would be saved from the temporal judgment than the purpose of a gradual re-population of the world demanded; or to suppose on the other hand, that all who perished in the flood are to perish everlastingly in the lake of fire. But the great difficulty, of which perhaps I may be unable to give any adequate solution,

is this :—For what reason should the proclamation of the finishing of the great work of redemption be addressed exclusively to the souls of these antediluvian penitents? were not the souls of penitents of later ages equally interested in the joyful tidings? To this I can only answer, that I think I have observed, in some parts of Scripture, an anxiety, if the expression may be allowed, of the sacred writers to convey distinct intimations that the antediluvian race is not uninterested in the redemption and the final retribution. It is for this purpose, as I conceive, that in the descriptions of the general resurrection, in the visions of the Apocalypse, it is mentioned with a particular emphasis, that the ‘*sea* gave up the dead which were in it,’ which I cannot be content to understand of the few persons, (few in comparison of the total of mankind,) lost at different times by shipwreck—a poor circumstance to find a place in the midst of the magnificent images which surround it!—but of the myriads that perished in the general deluge, and found their tomb in the waters of that raging ocean. It may be conceived that the souls of those who died in that dreadful visitation, might from that circumstance have peculiar apprehensions of themselves as the marked victims of Divine vengeance, and might peculiarly need the consolation which the preaching of our Lord in Hades afforded to these prisoners of hope. However that may be, thither, the Apostle says, Christ went and preached.”

The passage which Bishop Horsley has thus elucidated is confessedly a difficult one; his elucidation, however, should, I think, commend itself to the candid and reverent student of holy Scripture, and lead us to acknowledge that one object of Christ's descent into Hades was the proclamation of the glad tidings of His redemption to the spirits, especially of the antediluvian penitents, who were in the Lord's safe keeping in Paradise.

Such, then, were the *results* of Christ's crucifixion. He truly and really died; His body was buried in the grave; and His soul went to the place of departed spirits.

As to *time*, *manner*, and *results*, then, we have now seen the historical certainty of Christ's death. Let us be thankful for

the historical certainty that gathers round that momentous fact. I say *momentous* fact, on account of its *doctrinal* significance.

II. And this leads me to the second subject to which I would draw your attention this evening—the DOCTRINAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

Why did Christ suffer on the cross? Why did He give Himself up to such a death of agony and shame? Was it merely that He might give us a wonderful exhibition of God's love? or merely that He might teach us that the Son of God feels for us in our misery? Was Christ's death merely the sacrifice of self in the representative man? was it merely "the greatest moral act ever done in the world?" was it nothing more than *this*, as a cold and heartless rationalism would have us believe?

What saith the Scripture? What is the teaching of types and prophecies in the Old Testament—of Christ Himself and His holy Apostles in the New? With one voice they proclaim that "CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS;" that His death was *sacrificial, vicarious, expiatory*. Let us glance for a moment at this fourfold testimony to the doctrinal significance of Christ's death.

1. *Types*.—Old Testament types teach in the plainest possible manner, that it is "the *blood* that maketh an atonement for the soul." Throughout the antediluvian, the patriarchal, and the Jewish dispensations, sacrifices were offered—and offered clearly by Divine appointment; sacrifices which proclaimed the solemn fact, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." What did all these sacrifices point to, if not to the great sacrifice of Calvary? But take from Christ's death its sacrificial character, and then you have, as has been justly observed, "types without an antitype; shadows with no substance following; a promise without a performance; an elaborate and enormous machinery for effecting nothing. That which has hitherto ennobled those sacrifices in our eyes, is the truth which they foreshadowed. But let them have foreshadowed nothing of the kind, and they fall down at once to a level with the heathen sacrifices; nay, not merely to a level with them, as those have been hitherto regarded

by us, but they drag down to a far lower depth the heathen sacrifices and themselves together. Hitherto the heathen sacrifices, terrible distortions of the true as they so often were, yet were not without a certain terrible grandeur of their own. A ray of the glory of Calvary fell upon them, and dark as they remained, yet did not leave them all dark. They were blind feelings after the cross of Christ, passionate outcries for it; they were lies indeed, but lies which cried after the truth. But take from Christ's cross its character of altar, and from His death its character of a sacrifice, and at once the Levitical sacrifices no longer remain shadows of the true, and the heathen sacrifices cease to be remote resemblances of the same."

2. But pass from types to *prophecies*. The very first prophecy speaks of the bruising of the heel of the promised seed: while subsequent ones in the Messianic Psalms, in Isaiah, and Daniel and Zechariah, unfold with the fulness of almost historic detail the circumstances of Messiah's sufferings, and the reason, the doctrinal significance of those sufferings. The words of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah are familiar to you all; nevertheless, let me quote a verse or two from that wonderful prediction of Messiah's sufferings. Hear the Evangelical prophet proclaim the import of those mysterious sufferings: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken." (Isaiah liii. 5, 6, 8.)

3. From the Old Testament pass to the New. And first inquire of *Christ Himself*, what is the doctrinal significance of His own death? There have not been wanting men bold enough to say that there is not a trace of the doctrine of the atonement in the Gospels. It is quite true that it does not occupy the prominent place it does afterwards in the Apostolical Epistles, and for a very sufficient reason: the open and constant avowal by our Lord of His death, and of its import,

would have been an interference with the free agency of the instruments who were to bring about that death. Christ, however, when surrounded by His disciples, did on several occasions refer to His death, and to its purport. Look, for example, at Matt. xx. 28: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." The word "ransom" distinctly points to the *vicarious* nature of Christ's death. The most remarkable testimony, however, to the sacrificial nature of His death, was given by our Lord on the very night before He was crucified, when He took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is My body, *which is given for you*;" and when He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the New Testament, *which is shed for many for the remission of sins*." The Lord's Supper, then, was instituted by Christ to be a perpetual memorial of His precious death, a perpetual memorial, that in that death Christ gave His body for us, and shed His blood for the remission of our sins.

4. Once more, you have the *teaching of Christ's Apostles*. In the Apostolical Epistles, you have every variety of expression used to set forth to us the doctrinal significance of Christ's death. In our text, St. Paul says, "Christ died for our sins." In Galatians iii. 13, he says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." In Heb. ix. 26, he says, "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." In St. Peter we read of Christ, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter ii. 24.) In St. John we read, that Christ is "the propitiation for our sins," and that "His blood cleanseth us from all sin." And once more, in the last book of the sacred Canon it is a significant fact, that Christ is continually called by the title of "the Lamb," the name which of all other names points to His *sacrificial* death. The constant use of this title in a book which unfolds the future triumphs and eternal glory

of Christ and His Church, shows us that the foundation of all those triumphs and of all that glory was laid on Calvary, where as the victim Lamb, Christ died for our sins.

The length to which this sermon has extended, allows only of two very brief practical remarks in conclusion. Has Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord, died for our sins? Then verily *sin*, the transgression of God's law, is no trivial thing. Are any of you disposed to make light of sin, of any sin? Then look to Calvary. Behold in the cross the measure of sin. Learn there how God hates sin.

But again, Has Christ died for our sins? Then may our sins be forgiven. How? "*Behold* the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name, *whosoever believeth in Him*, shall receive remission of sins."

“ Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the Heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away ;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear Head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the accursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice,
To see the curse remove,
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His bleeding love.”

S E R M O N V I I .

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

"HIM God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly ; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God."—ACTS x. 40, 41.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, is the subject for our consideration to-night.

"The third day Christ rose again from the dead," such are the words in which this subject is embodied in our Creed. It is a subject second in importance to none, in the whole range of those historic facts, which form the basis of the Christian faith ; for how momentous are the issues as regards Christ, and as regards the whole Church of Christ, which gather round this central fact. Is Christ's work indeed accepted of the Father ? Can Christ really and indeed save us from our sins ? These and other such-like questions of deepest moment depend for their answer on the proof of this central fact, *the resurrection of Christ*.

How earnestly therefore should we attend to the proof which God has vouchsafed to give us, of the resurrection of His Son ; how thankful we should be that it is proof of a kind to put the fact of that resurrection beyond all possibility of doubt ; so that without fear of contradiction we may boldly say, that the fact of Christ's resurrection is established with greater certainty by the evidence God has given us, than any other fact in the whole compass of history, sacred or profane.

I referred this morning to the great loss which the whole Church of Christ has sustained during the past week. The cause of Israel has lost one of its first and ablest advocates. The cause of God's truth, as assailed by the rationalism of these

last days, has lost one of its most learned and lucid defenders ; and the cause of our Protestant Christianity has lost one of the most uncompromising and bold exponents of its principles. Verily the whole Church of Christ, and especially the Church of these realms, has cause in these days to mourn over the loss of such a man as Dr. M'Caul. But our great loss, let us remember, is his incalculable gain ; he has passed into the rest and the joy of his Lord. From active and laborious service in the Church militant, he has been called to join the ranks of the waiting, the peaceful Church triumphant. I say the *waiting* Church triumphant ; for though for the faithful departed the conflict is over, the victory won, and the blessedness of glory begun, yet for them a deeper and fuller blessedness is in store than even that which they now enjoy, a blessedness on which the whole Church of Christ shall enter on the glorious morning of the resurrection.

And that resurrection of the just is bound up with the fact to which your attention is invited this evening—the resurrection of Christ. For thus saith an inspired Apostle : “ Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become THE FIRST-FRUITS of them that slept.” And hence another momentous issue, that depends on the resurrection of Jesus—with His resurrection is bound up that of all His people.

Before inviting your attention to the proof on which rests this great fact of the Christian faith, let me observe that the resurrection of Christ was a matter foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, and foretold by our Lord Himself.

It was foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures.

First look at Psalm ii. 7, where the Messiah thus speaks of Himself : “ I will declare the decree : the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son ; this day have I begotten Thee.” And compare with this the inspired comment of St. Paul, in Acts xiii. 32, 33 : “ And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto our fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again ; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.” This inspired comment warrants us in understanding the prediction in the

second Psalm, as receiving a fulfilment in the resurrection of Christ. In rising from the dead, Christ began to live, as it were, another life, so that in reference to the resurrection of His Son, whom He had begotten from everlasting, the Father could say, "this day have I begotten Thee."

Look at another and clearer prediction of Christ's resurrection in the Old Testament. Turn to Psalm xvi. 9, 10: "My heart is glad, and My glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." You will remember St. Peter's inspired comment on this prediction, which I read you last Sunday evening from Acts ii. You will remember that he distinctly told the Jews that David in this passage "spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption." (Acts ii. 31.) St. Paul, too, in his sermon at Antioch, quotes this passage from the sixteenth Psalm, and reasons upon it as his brother Apostle had done before: "Wherefore he saith also in another Psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." (Acts xiii. 35—37.)

Again, the resurrection of Christ was frequently *foretold by our Lord Himself*. When asked by the Jews for a sign, He gave them the sign of His resurrection. Look at our Lord's words, and St. John's comment on them, in John ii. 18—22: "Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body. When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." On other occasions, when asked by the Pharisees for a sign, while refusing to give them a sign of the kind they asked, He twice

gave them the sign of the prophet Jonah—the sign of His resurrection.

And further, to His own disciples He frequently and distinctly foretold His resurrection on the third day. Look, for example, at Mark viii. 31 : “ And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” And again in Mark ix. 31, 32 : “ He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him ; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him.” Observe, the disciples understood not this saying of Christ about His rising from the dead, and this accounts for their not expecting the resurrection of their Lord.

So far, then, we have seen that Christ's resurrection was a fact predicted—predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures, and predicted by our Lord Himself. Now let us approach the proof of this great central fact of our holy faith. You may divide that proof into *direct* and *indirect* proof.

I. The *direct* proof, is that furnished by the testimony of eye-witnesses—“ witnesses chosen before of God,” who saw Christ after He rose from the dead. That testimony you will find given at length in the four Gospels, and the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and summed up by St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 3—8 : “ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures : and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve : after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James ; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.”

In estimating the value of this direct proof of Christ's resurrection, we must take into account three things respecting the chosen witnesses—their *number*, their *information*, and their *character*.

1. Their *number*.—Taking no count of the different companies of ministering women, and of the five hundred brethren in Galilee, to whom our Lord appeared after He rose from the dead, if we reckon only the eleven apostles, we have a *number* far greater than has ever been demanded by a court of justice, to establish a fact in the most intricate and weighty causes.

2. Then as regards the *information* of these chosen witnesses. Who were these men, who boldly proclaimed the fact, to enemies as well as friends, that Christ had risen from the dead? They were those, (mark it well,) who personally knew Christ, who had been His chosen companions throughout His triennial ministry. These men saw with their own eyes their risen Master; and heard with their own ears His well-known voice. Thus observe, this testimony, this information comes to us at first hand. We cannot sufficiently over-estimate the importance of this. There are very few facts that we can get at otherwise than at third, fourth, or fifth hand; and yet we receive them as veritable facts, without any first, or even second hand testimony, and that though very much may depend on our reception of those facts. The fact of Christ's resurrection, however, is testified to us, not at second or third hand, but at first hand; it is testified to us by men who lived at the time, and in the country where it took place; it is testified by men who had been for a considerable time the most intimate friends of Christ; and what do these men testify who thus lived at the time and in the place where Christ rose from the dead, and who had been His chosen companions? They testify that their own eyes saw, that their own hands handled the Lord of Life, after that He rose from the dead. So much as regards the *information* of the chosen witnesses.

3. And now as regards their *character*—Were they men likely to deceive us? On the contrary, is there not everything in their character to assure us that they would state the truth, and nothing but the truth? Look at their *transparent honesty*, as seen in the narratives of Christ's life, which two out of the eleven (and indeed three, for St. Mark's Gospel was written under the direction of St. Peter) have given us. There is no concealment of their own failings and mistakes, of their dulness

of comprehension and unbelief: there is an honest recital of all—nor is this all, they fearlessly relate the different occurrences in Christ's life from their own point of view, without any forced or artificial harmony.

Then mark their *eminent simplicity* and *straightforwardness* of character. They were not learned, polished men, trained in the subtleties of the schools—they were most of them simple, straightforward fishermen—sailors whose only training had been amid the winds and storms of the lake of Galilee. Whatever may be the disadvantages of a sea-faring life, it is proverbially one calculated to nurture simplicity and straightforwardness of character.

Men of such a stamp of character would not be disposed, even if they were capable, of telling anything but the simple downright truth. And in connexion with this observe, these witnesses had everything to lose and nothing to gain by their asserting the fact of Christ's resurrection.

They maintained their united testimony, though scourgings, and bonds, and imprisonment, and death, awaited them for so doing—the veracity of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection was thus put to the severest possible test.

Thus, then, when we regard together the *number*, the *information*, and the *character* of the chosen witnesses, the direct proof of Christ's resurrection is of the most convincing nature that we can well conceive. If ever human testimony amounted to the certainty of positive demonstration, it is in this instance of Christ's resurrection.

One plausible objection, however, has been raised to this testimony, and that objection is drawn from the fact stated in my text, that Christ was shown after His resurrection, "Not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God." It is argued that this *selection* of witnesses is no strengthening of the testimony to Christ's resurrection.

Now, I wish to lead you to the very opposite conclusion. I wish to show you first that this selection of witnesses strengthens instead of weakens the testimony we have to the great fact of Christ's resurrection; and further, I wish to show you that there was an eminent fitness that the risen Lord after His

resurrection should be shown only to witnesses chosen before of God.

It is quite evident, that to have seen Christ ever so often after His resurrection, would have qualified no one to be a witness of the fact, who had not such a previous knowledge of His person, as might enable him to perceive and attest its identity. Now in the innumerable multitude that was assembled to witness the tragic scene on Calvary, how many may be supposed to have had such a view of the Divine Sufferer, as might make them acquainted with His person ?

“The far greater part,” says Bishop Horsley, “not only saw Him at a distance, but, in the tumult which would attend the dismal spectacle, they would never get a steady view ; they would now and then catch a momentary glimpse of a part only of His person, which they would lose again before any distinct impression could be made. Those who saw the whole transaction from the most advantageous stations, would see the cheeks pale, the features convulsed, the whole body distorted with the torture of the punishment. Nor would the spectators be sufficiently composed, agitated as they all would be, some with horror of the scene, some with pity of His sufferings, some with joy for the success of their infernal machinations: under one or another of these emotions, none would be sufficiently composed to observe and remark the peculiarities of His person. Insomuch, that of those who saw Him now for the first time, few, perhaps, had He ever been seen by them again, would have known Him from either of the malefactors who were made the companions of His agonies.”

And if it be thought that after His three years' ministry Christ's person must have been generally well known amongst the Jews ; let it be considered on the other hand, that during the whole period of that ministry Christ was constantly travelling from place to place, that the multitudes that followed Him whenever He appeared in public, were for the most part numerous, amounting often to thousands, and it will seem improbable that the number of those could be great who had obtained a distinct sight of Christ oftener than once in the whole course of His triennial ministry. Hence it would follow as highly probable,

that very few besides His constant followers knew Him well enough to identify His person. They who had not this distinct knowledge of Christ's person, however frequent the public appearances had been after His resurrection, were not qualified to be witnesses of the fact even to themselves, and still less, therefore, to others.

“ And the few,” as the Bishop observes from whom I have already quoted, “ who might be the best acquainted with His person, still were not qualified to be *witnesses of His resurrection to the world, unless their knowledge of Christ's person was itself a fact of public notoriety*. For to establish the credit of a witness, it is not sufficient that he be really competent to judge for himself of the reality of the fact which he takes it upon himself to attest, but his competency in the matter must be a thing generally known and understood. Now this *was* the case with the Apostles. It is a notorious fact, that they could not be incompetent in the knowledge of their Master's person presented to their senses. But the same thing, although it might have been equally true, could not be equally manifest of any who had pretended to join in their attestation, from a knowledge of His person acquired in accidental interviews, of which the reality was known only to themselves. Their testimony would rather have discredited the cause than heightened the evidence; as in all cases the depositions of witnesses suspected of incompetency, have no effect but to create a prejudice against the fact which they assert, and to diminish the force of better testimony, which, left to itself, would have produced conviction.”

Thus it appears that the evidence which we actually have of Christ's resurrection, in the testimony of *the chosen witnesses*, is indeed the greatest of which the fact is capable. Public appearances could have added nothing to the testimony of these witnesses; on the contrary, by destroying the precision and definiteness of their testimony, they would rather have weakened the evidence of the fact. So that the *selection* of witnesses, and of such witnesses as the Apostles, who so thoroughly knew their Lord, and were acknowledged so to have known Him, strengthens the evidence which we have of our Lord's resurrection.

But it may be asked, Why did not Christ appear to some of

His enemies, some of whom must have known Him well enough — Pontius Pilate, for example? There was an eminent fitness, a moral propriety, in this. A word on this.

The history of the forty days shows that a marvellous change had passed over Christ after His resurrection. The *manner* of His resurrection evidences this change, for it is evident that Christ left the sepulchre *before* the stone had been rolled away from the door. His *appearances* after His resurrection are another evidence of this change. They were for the most part unforeseen, and sudden: nor less suddenly did He disappear. His *manner of life* after His resurrection is another evidence of the change.

“He was repeatedly seen,” to quote again from Bishop Horsley, “by the disciples after His resurrection; and so seen as to give them many infallible proofs that He was the very Jesus who had suffered on the cross. But He lived not with them in familiar habits. His time, from the forty days preceding His ascension, was not spent in their society. They knew not His goings out and comings in. Where He lodged on the evening of His resurrection, after His visit to the Apostles, we read not; nor were the Apostles better informed than we. To Thomas, who was absent when our Lord appeared, the report of the resurrection was in these words: ‘We *have seen* the Lord.’ That was all they had to say: they had seen Him, and He was gone. They pretend not to direct Thomas to any place where he might find Him, and enjoy the same sight. None of them could now say to Thomas, as Nathaniel once said to Philip, ‘Come and see.’ On the journey from Jerusalem to Galilee, He was not their companion—He went before them. How He went we are not informed. The way is not described; the places are not mentioned through which He passed; their names are not recorded who accompanied Him on the road, or who entertained Him. The disciples were commanded to repair to Galilee. They were not told to seek Him in Capernaum, His former residence, or to enquire for Him at His mother’s house. They were to assemble on a certain hill. Thither they repaired; they met Him there; and there they worshipped Him. The place of His abode for any single night of all the forty days is

nowhere mentioned ; nor, from the most diligent examination of the story, is any place of His abode on earth to be assigned. The conclusion seems to be, that on earth He had no longer any local residence, His body requiring neither food for its subsistence, nor a lodging for its shelter and repose. He was become the inhabitant of another region, from which He came occasionally to converse with His disciples. His visible ascension at the expiration of the forty days, being not the necessary means of His removal, but a token to the disciples that this was His last visit ; an evidence to them that the heavens had now received Him, and that He was to be seen no more on earth with the corporeal eye, till the restitution of all things.”

Now what does all this go to prove ? Does it not show that as before Christ's passion the form of a servant predominated in Christ's appearance, so after His resurrection the form of God was conspicuous. The atonement once made, Christ began to re-assume His glory. Would you now ask—why was Jesus not made visible after His resurrection to His enemies ? Would you not rather stand aghast at the impiety of the question ? How could He appear to *them*, except in the terrors of His judgment ? and the day for that had not yet arrived.

In mercy, therefore, Christ appeared after His resurrection to none but His own believing people. In mercy to His enemies, (thus granted a further space for repentance,) God showed the risen Saviour visibly “ *not* to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God.”

II. From the direct proof of Christ's resurrection let us turn to the *indirect*, the collateral evidence of the fact.

I do not refer to the testimony of the Roman guard, or the stupid lie of the chief priests, which was a tacit admission of the fact of the resurrection, or to the non-production of Christ's body—I refer to evidence of a more indirect, and therefore a more remarkable character.

1. First look at the enemies of Christ before and after the resurrection. How are we to account for the manifest change of position in relation to Christ, of the two great parties in the Jewish nation, except on the ground that the Resurrection did actually take place ?

Who were Christ's most active enemies during His ministry? *The Pharisees*—whereas, after the close of that ministry, the Pharisees often sided with the Apostles, and many of them, as we learn from the Acts, actually became Christians. But who were the most active enemies of Christ and His Apostles, after the close of Christ's personal ministry? *The Sadducees*. Read the earlier chapters of the Acts, and you convince yourselves of this fact at once. During Christ's ministry they very seldom came into collision with our Lord; they treated Him probably with supreme indifference, as a wild enthusiast; but after the close of that ministry, they appear at once as the most active and determined opponents of the Apostles. Whence this change? What cause can be assigned, which will adequately account for so marked a result as regards the Pharisees on the one hand, and the Sadducees on the other? What but *the resurrection of Christ*, which would lead the once hostile Pharisees to regard very differently the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, and would of course rouse all the slumbering hatred of the once indifferent Sadducees, who said that there was no resurrection.

2. Look at the change in the general multitude of the Jews. When Christ taught in person, multitudes sought Him, but very few believed in Him. Now turn to the Acts, and mark the change. Look at chap. ii. 41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." And look at chap. iv. 4: "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Whence this marked change? do not the facts show that there must have been some corresponding change in the position of Jesus?—some great crisis in His history, which presented Him before the public eye in a light altogether different. What was that change? His death? Nay, but what followed it—*His resurrection*. This is the fact which alone accounts for the change.

3. Once more, look at the change in the friends of Christ. In the Gospels you find them ignorant and timid; in the Acts you find them full of wisdom and boldness. What had produced this change, but the *uncontroverted, unchallenged* fact of Christ's resurrection? True, they had been baptized with the

Holy Ghost; but had Christ not risen, they would have remained downcast, and desponding, and sad, for all the rest of their lives. But their Lord and ours had risen indeed, and therefore they were full of joy and holy courage. In the teeth of the commands of the Jewish Sanhedrim, in spite of the opposition of rulers, and notwithstanding the cruel persecution to which they were exposed, the Apostles proclaimed in Jerusalem, and proclaimed unchallenged, the glorious fact that Christ had risen the third day from the dead—and when in the course of time they went forth from Jerusalem to found the Church of Christ in other lands, they preached everywhere a *risen Saviour*—and this, their uniform testimony, they sealed at the last with their blood.

Do you ask then, now, Is Christ's work on the cross accepted of the Father?—behold in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the proof that that work *is* accepted of the Father.

Do you ask, Is Christ able to save us from our sins?—behold, I say again, in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the proof that Christ *is* able to save us from our sins.

Do you ask once more, Shall Christ's people rise to everlasting life? shall those who have fallen asleep in Jesus rise again in a glorious and incorruptible body? I answer again—behold in the resurrection of Christ the pledge of the resurrection to life of His people. As surely as "Christ, the first-fruits," has been raised from the dead to die no more, so surely shall *they that are Christ's*, rise "at His coming" to everlasting life and glory.

"*They that are Christ's.*" Are you His? Can you say, "Christ is mine, and I am His!" Spirit of the living God, apply these words with power to every heart.

S E R M O N V I I I .

CHRIST'S EXALTATION.

“WHO is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.”—1 PETER III. 22.

WE have followed our blessed Lord from the cradle of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary, and from the cross of Calvary to the open grave in the garden; and now our faith invites us to follow Him from that despoiled grave to the oft-frequented Mount Olivet, and from thence to the Father's right hand above. Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord, “is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.”

Such is the teaching of Holy Writ, and in harmony with it is the teaching of the Apostle's Creed: for in that Creed we confess, that Christ “ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.” In this article of our Creed, to which I invite your attention this evening, there are, you observe, two parts; one relating to a fact *past*, the other relating to a fact *present*. “Christ ascended into heaven,” *that* is past; “Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty,” *this* is present.

Christ's ascension, and Christ's session at the right hand of the Father, then, are the two subjects which are brought before us to-night. Viewed in their necessary connection with each other, they form but two divisions of one great subject, viz., Christ's Exaltation.

I. First, then, let us consider the fact *past*, which is commemorated in this article of our Creed—Christ's ascension into heaven. You will have observed that in all my Sermons on

the second part of the Apostle's Creed, (that which has reference to God the Son,) I have referred you to the predictions in the Old Testament Scriptures, of the facts concerning the Messiah, which the Creed enunciates. I have done so designedly; first, on account of the special instruction such a way of dealing with the historic facts of Christianity affords to the many Christian Israelites who worship with us in this sanctuary; and secondly, because it is of the highest moment in these days to show all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, that the Old and New Testament Scriptures are inseparably bound together as the revelation of the same God, as the unfolding under the inspiration of the one Spirit, of the same grand system of truth. The Old and New Testament Scriptures stand or fall together. He who assails the Old Testament assails the New. He who inpuigns the veracity of Moses and the Prophets, is on the road to deny the Divine mission of Christ.

For these reasons, then, I have uniformly referred you to Old Testament predictions, and foreshadowings of New Testament facts. I shall adopt the same course this evening, as regards both divisions of our subject.

In considering the first division of our subject, Christ's ascension into heaven, I shall invite you to dwell on the fact—first, as *alluded to or predicted in the Old Testament*; next, as *alluded to or predicted by Christ*; and then, as *witnessed by His Apostles on Mount Olivet*.

1. First, then, let us refer to the allusions to or predictions of the fact of Christ's ascension in the Old Testament.

Look first at Psalm xxiv. In the third verse, the question is asked, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" The answer is, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up His soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." And who, think you, is this a description of? Who can it refer to, in all its depth and breadth, but Him of whom we read that "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth?" He, then, "the Holy One and the Just," the Christ of God, He shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and He shall stand in His holy place. Accordingly, the last four verses of the Psalm describe the triumphant

entrance of Christ, the King of glory, within the portals of His Father's home. Thousands of angels escort their returning Lord, and from them it seems the challenge comes: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." Angelic guards within enquire, "Who is this King of glory?" The celestial escort, remembering full well the victories of their King over sin and Satan and the world, over death and the grave, reply, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Again the challenge is made, the question put, and the answer returned, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory." And now the King has arrived, and through those everlasting doors He passes amid the heavenly minstrelsy, amid the jubilant songs of angelic hierarchies, to His Father and His Father's throne.

In the forty-seventh Psalm, you have another unmistakable allusion to the triumphant ascension of our Divine Saviour. Look at verse 5: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." What intelligible meaning can you attach to these words, except you apply them to the promised Messiah? who came down as God, and was made man, and went up to heaven, as "God manifest in the flesh," and who, in consequence of His deep humiliation, hath been (as the last verse of the Psalm tells us) "greatly exalted."

You have, however, a clearer prediction of Christ's ascension than either of those I have referred you to, in Psalm lxxviii. 17, 18: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." The words are so plain in their reference to the ascension of the Messiah, that even had we not St. Paul's inspired commentary on them, we could hardly doubt their application. Let us turn, however, to that inspired comment, as we have it in Ephesians iv. 7—11: "But unto

every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." He, then, that ascended, must be, as the Apostle reasons, He that had previously descended; and this can be none other than the Son of God, who came down from heaven to earth, became man, suffered, died, and rose again, and then ascended to heaven. Such, then, are the predictions in the Old Testament Scriptures of the fact of Christ's ascension.

2. Now observe, in the next place, that Christ, as He predicted His sufferings, and death, and resurrection, so He predicted, or at least alluded to, the event which was to follow—His ascension. Look at the sixth chapter of St. John. When some even of Christ's disciples took offence at His teaching on the subject of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, because they understood His words literally and carnally, He referred them to an event which would ere long render such a literal and carnal interpretation of His words utterly impossible—an event, therefore, which would prove such an interpretation to be entirely false; that event was His bodily ascension to heaven. "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" As much as to say, How will you *then* eat my flesh and drink my blood, in the sense that you are thinking of? Thus, let me observe in passing, Christ taught them, and His people to the end of time, that to eat His flesh and drink His blood is no literal and carnal act, but a spiritual feeding upon Him in our own hearts by faith.

Another allusion to Christ's ascension you have in His last discourse with His disciples. Look at John xiv. 2: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." And again, in John xvi. 28: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."

And once more, immediately after His resurrection, when He appeared to Mary of Magdala, He foretold His approaching ascension. Look at John xx. 17: "Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."

3. From the predictions of the fact, I pass now to its fulfilment. It was witnessed by the Apostles and others. It was, of course, necessary that it should be witnessed. It was not necessary that the Apostles should see Christ rise from the dead—it was sufficient for them to see Him after the resurrection; but inasmuch as the Apostles could not see Christ in heaven, inasmuch as His session at the Father's right hand was not visible on earth, it *was* necessary that the Apostles should be actual witnesses of the ascension. Let us read the record in the Word. In Luke xxiv. 50, 51, we have this account: "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." In Acts i. 6—11, we have a further account: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Forty days, then, after His resurrection, on favoured Mount Olivet, in the presence of all the eleven Apostles and others, and while in the act of blessing them, Christ was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

Do you ask, Why did our Lord ascend up to heaven? Ask rather, Why should He any longer remain on earth? He had finished His earthly work, the work which the Father had given Him to do. His humiliation was over; His death was accomplished; His victory was won. It was meet and right, therefore, that He should be received back into glory. This, however, was not the only reason why Christ should ascend to heaven. Last Sunday evening, I observed that the resurrection proved the Father's acceptance of Christ's finished work for us. The ascension of Christ proved that the Father not only accepted that work, but that He had in it an infinite delight.

In raising His beloved Son from the dead, the Father shewed that Christ had, by the sacrifice of Himself, put away sin; but in raising Him up from earth to heaven, the Father testified His perfect satisfaction with that great work of atonement.

How full of consolation, then, to those of us who are resting by faith on the finished work of God's dear Son, is this His triumphant ascension to heaven! It assures us that we are now "accepted in the beloved." That ground of acceptance is sure—but that, remember, is the *only* ground of acceptance with God. "In Christ," God pronounces us "complete," "accepted." Out of Christ, God's verdict is "Tekel," "weighed in the balances, and found wanting." Eternal results are at issue here. Examine yourselves, then, brethren, whether ye be *in Christ*.

Hitherto I have spoken of the way to Christ's exaltation, His ascension to heaven; let me now pass on to our second subject, and speak of the exaltation itself, as implied in His session at God's right hand.

II. Christ "*sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.*" Here, you observe, the tense of the Creed changes from the past to the present. All the previous facts enunciated in the Creed, Christ's incarnation, sufferings, death, burial, descent into hades, resurrection, and ascension, are past. This fact, "Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty," is present; Christ's session in heaven is going on now.

This session of Christ at the Father's right hand, you have

clearly predicted in Ps. cx. 1, where David tells us how the Lord, God the Father, addressed His Lord, God the Son: "The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." Our Lord, when brought before the High Priest, foretold that He would one day sit at the right hand of power. Look at Mark xiv. 61, 62: "The High Priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

One of the Evangelists only, St. Mark, follows our Lord with the eye of faith to the Father's right hand above. His account of Christ's ascension and exaltation is as follows: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." (Mark xvi. 19.)

The fact, however, that Christ is now sitting at the right hand of God, is constantly alluded to in other parts of the New Testament. In Col. iii. 1, we read: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" and in Heb. i. 3, we read that Christ, "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." And once more, in our text St. Peter says of the risen Saviour, that He "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him."

Besides all this direct testimony of inspiration, to the fact that Christ "sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty," have we any other testimony of a different kind? We have, and that of the most important character. The enthronement of the Son of God at the Father's right hand was signaled *by the full out-pouring of the Holy Ghost*. Christ's own words to His Apostles were these: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." (John xvi. 7.) The gift, then, of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, according to our Saviour's promise, was a testimony from heaven that our risen and ascended Lord had fully entered on His Mediatorial office, and was set down at the right hand of the

throne of the Majesty in the heavens. To the bestowal of this gift, St. Peter on the day of Pentecost appeals as a proof, that Christ was indeed thus exalted of the Father. Look at Acts ii. 32—36: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Christ "sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty." As such, Christ is in the place of honour, power, and happiness.

In the place of *honour*. See Eph. i. 21. Christ at the Father's right hand is "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

In the place of *power*. Hence Christ speaks of the Father's right hand, as "the right hand of power;" and hence we are told in our text, that "angels and authorities and powers are made subject unto Him."

In the place of *happiness*. See Ps. xvi. 11. Immediately following the prophecy of Christ's resurrection, there follows the prophecy of His exaltation to God's right hand, and what is there there? "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." From the dishonour, and weakness, and misery of His humiliation, Christ has passed now to the honour, and power, and happiness of the Father's right hand. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, by the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour."

And now, brethren, what is the great doctrine involved in this glorious fact, Christ's exaltation to the right hand of the Father? To interpret aright this fact, we must bear in mind that Christ is our great High Priest. Now in the High Priest's office, especially that most solemn part of it which he

exercised once a year on the great day of atonement, there were three stages. First, there was the slaying of the sacrifice in the court of the tabernacle; then there was the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat in the holy of holies; and finally, there was the coming forth again from the holy of holies to bless the people. The ninth chapter of Hebrews shews us, that there are these three stages in the work of our great High Priest. First, He offers the sacrifice of propitiation on the cross—He puts away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; then, having risen from the dead, He passes on with the blood of His sacrifice into the holy of holies—the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man; and finally, we are taught to look for the fulfilment of the third and last stage of His priestly office, when He shall “appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Christ's ascension to heaven, and His session at the right hand of the Father, fulfil, then, the second of these functions of His Priesthood. He “is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God FOR US,” *i.e.*, as the express words of the New Testament teach, “to make intercession” for us; and to make intercession, as the type shows, by pleading for us the merit of His finished and perfect sacrifice on the cross. Intercession grounded on such a plea is resistless, prevailing intercession.

Christ our Intercessor with God. This, then, is the great doctrine involved in this fact which the Creed enunciates, “Christ ascended into heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.”

How full of encouragement, then, to believers, is Christ's exaltation to the Father's right hand; connected, as we see it is, with His prevailing intercession in our behalf!

As our Intercessor with God, He can meet and answer all accusations brought against His believing people. Hence the triumphant question of St. Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, “who is He that condemneth?” Heaven, earth, and hell are challenged by the question. The Apostle is fearless of the result; and why? Because “Christ that died,

yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God"—“maketh intercession for us.”

As our Intercessor with God, He will obtain an answer to the prayers of His people. Hence St. Paul, after reminding us that “we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,” and that we have in Him one who can “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” encourages us to draw near to God in prayer. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. iv. 16.)

As our Intercessor with God, He is able to save His people with an everlasting salvation. Thus argues St. Paul, in Heb. vii. 25: “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Despair not then of final and complete salvation, ye who in your weakness cling to Jesus the mighty One. He is, indeed, “mighty to save.”

As our Intercessor with God, Christ obtains the pardon of our sins. Thus writes St. John: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John ii. 1, 2.) Christ shed His precious blood to cleanse us from sin, to clear us from its guilt, that is. If any, therefore, of His people sin, Christ by pleading the merits of His blood, obtains their pardon.

Once more, Christ as our Intercessor with God, is all powerful to afford us all needed help and succour. He has not only ascended to heaven—He *sitteth* in heaven at the Father's right hand, thus implying, as we have already seen, that all power is given unto Him, “angels, authorities, and powers, being made subject unto Him.” If this be so, then we may be sure that Christ is able to give to us all the help and succour that we need, in this present evil world. Are we weary of the prolonged conflict against sin? Are we giving way, under the repeated onslaughts of temptation? Are we weak, and wavering, and desponding? Then let us look up to

Jesus, who sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto Him,—let us look up to Him; let us cast ourselves in our weakness upon Him, so shall we be strong, even “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”

But, brethren, there is another side to this subject, on which I must say one word in conclusion. While Christ's intercession at the right hand of power is full of encouragement to His people, it is full of warning to those who are *not* truly His people. For them, too, Christ intercedes, and that they have been spared so long, and enjoyed so many mercies, is the fruit of His intercession. Are there some such here? Christians in name but not in heart!—planted by holy baptism in the vineyard of Christ's Church, but bringing forth none of those fruits of righteousness for which the heavenly Husbandman looks. Let such, I entreat, not slight the warning which this Lord's day should ring in their ears. This, the Sunday next before Advent, is the last Sabbath of the Church's year; shall we live to see the last Sabbath of another sacred year?

Believers, ye who are looking to Christ, who sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, should the final summons come to some of you ere the Church completes again the cycle of her teaching, you are ready—ready for the call of your Lord and Master, ready to depart and be with Christ, for Christ is yours, and ye are Christ's.

But what of the barren fig-tree—the fruitless professor in the visible Church, when concerning him there goes forth the command—“Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?”

S E R M O N IX.

CHRIST'S RETURN TO JUDGMENT.

"I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom."—
2 TIM. IV. 1.

IT is rather remarkable that on this Sunday, the first Sunday in Advent, (without any pre-arrangement on my part,) the subject which falls to our consideration in the regular order of our course is, the coming of Christ to judge the quick and the dead. Of all Sundays in the Church's year, Advent Sunday is certainly the most appropriate one for the consideration of this article of our Creed, in which we confess that Christ, who now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, "shall from thence come to judge the quick and the dead." In the Nicene Creed we find this article slightly enlarged. In it our confession of faith in the second advent of our blessed Lord is thus worded, "He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end." This last clause, "whose kingdom shall have no end," is most appropriately added to the former, which asserts that Christ shall come "to judge the quick and the dead," because Christ's work of judgment is an essential part of His kingly office. The coming of Christ to judge will be a vindication of His royal authority, and will issue in an establishment of His authority over the whole earth.

In considering the second part of the Apostles' Creed, we have hitherto been dealing with *past* or *present* facts; we have considered Christ's incarnation, sufferings, death, burial, descent into hades, resurrection, and ascension; and we have considered further what Christ is doing now, in His session at the right

hand of the Father. But now we have to pass from the past and the present into the *future*. We have to consider not what Christ has done, nor what He is doing, but what He will do. And let us remember, that what Scripture has revealed concerning the future work of Christ, is as certain as what Scripture has declared concerning the past and present work of Christ. Do not let us suppose for a moment, that because Christ's coming to judge the quick and the dead is future, that therefore it is uncertain. Prophetic truth which God has revealed, is as certain as historic truth. As surely as Christ was born in Bethlehem, as surely as He died on Calvary, as surely as He rose again and ascended to heaven, as surely as He now sitteth at the right hand of God—so surely shall He come from thence to judge the quick and the dead.

All Christians are agreed as regards this great fact of the future; differences of opinion there are, and must be, concerning the details of the work of judgment, but as regards the great fact itself, that Christ will "judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom," there is entire agreement. Let those who make the divergence of opinion between different students of prophecy an excuse for neglecting the prophetic Scriptures; and let those, too, who may feel disposed secretly to join in the scoffing question of the last days, "Where is the promise of His coming?"—let all such, I say, bear in mind this agreement among Christians as to the great fact that Christ will come again, and come to judge the quick and the dead. Let such remember on what that agreement rests, even on the revelation God has given us in His Word. And let such seriously ask themselves, whether they ought not diligently to search the Scriptures that bear on this subject for themselves, so that they may learn, as far as God gives them light, from His Holy Word, something at least concerning that future in which we are one and all so deeply interested.

I desire this evening to invite your calm and thoughtful attention to several passages of Holy Writ which bear on *Christ's future work of judgment*. I shall have occasionally to express my own opinion concerning some of the details of this great work of judgment; I desire to do so with all deference to the

opinions of others who take different views with respect to these details. As regards the great fact, as I have already said, we are all agreed; we may not have long to wait to see the fulfilment, or at least the commencement of the fulfilment, of its details.

Let us, then, while studying the prophetic word, watch and pray, so that *that day* may not come upon us unawares.

The chief subjects to which I would invite your attention this evening, are five. First, *the Judge*; second, *the persons to be judged*; third, *the time of judgment*; fourth, *the order of judgment*; and fifth, *the nature of judgment*.

I. First, then, *the Judge*. The appointed Judge of all mankind is Christ. Hence we confess that from the Father's right hand, where Christ sits now, He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. In the Old Testament Scriptures, the Messiah is continually spoken of as the Judge, as the person who is to execute judgment and justice on the earth. It is true that in the Old Testament Scriptures the word "to judge" is generally used in the wider sense of ruling, governing, administering justice; but this wider sense in which Christ will come to judge, includes of course the more limited sense, in which I apprehend it is used in our Creed, and generally in the New Testament. The passages in the Old Testament are numerous, in which the Messiah is spoken of as the person who will judge the world—let us look at two. Psalm xcvi. 12, 13: "Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." Jer. xxiii. 5, 6: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." These passages, and many others of a similar kind, refer rather, I am aware, to Christ's righteous rule, than to the formal act of judgment; but it is quite clear that that righteous rule cannot be established till, by the pro-

ceedings before the judgment-seat of Christ, that righteous rule has been vindicated by the punishment of all those who have resisted Christ's authority, and the rewarding of those who have submitted to it.

Our Lord's words on the subject of His being the appointed Judge, are very explicit. Look at John v. 22, 25, 26: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man."

Equally explicit is apostolic teaching on this subject. Look at St. Peter's words to Cornelius, in Acts x. 42: "And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead;" and at St. Paul's words to the Athenians, Acts xvii. 31: "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." And then again in our text, look at the exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead."

From the Old Testament Scriptures, then—from Christ's own words—and from the teaching of His Apostles—it is clear, that the appointed Judge is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. I pass to our second head—*the persons to be judged*. Who are they? Scripture answers, ALL. The language of our text, which the Creed takes up, embraces all. "Christ shall judge the quick and the dead." "The quick," all those who are living when Christ comes; "the dead," all those who have previously died. This expression, then, necessarily embraces all. Other passages establish the same truth. Look at Rom. xiv. 10: "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." 2 Cor. v. 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

ALL, then, will be judged—Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Heathen—faithful and unfaithful, believers and unbelievers, living and dead; all will appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; but though all be judged, we have no Scripture warrant for saying that all will be judged at the same time. Scripture, indeed, points (as we shall see) to distinct sessions of judgment. This leads us on to our third head—

III. *When will judgment take place?*

To speak first generally, as Scripture often does, judgment will take place in the day of judgment. I need hardly observe that this day cannot, in the very nature of things, be a natural day. This great day is often referred to in Scripture. Look at Matt. x. 15: "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." 2 Pet. iii. 7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 1 John iv. 17: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of that great day."

When does that day begin? The text and other passages show, it begins when Christ comes a second time, "Christ shall judge the quick and the dead, *at His appearing and His kingdom.*" When, therefore, Christ comes again with power and great glory to establish His kingdom, then the day of judgment will begin. It is easy from Scripture to see when this great day begins, but it is not so easy to define its duration—it is not so easy to say when it ends. In fact I do not see that we have any clear Scriptural data to guide us in this matter; we have only hints of this kind. In the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, we have a session of judgment described. Now how long that session will occupy, we have no means of ascertaining. In the twentieth chapter of Revelation, we have, I believe, another and an entirely distinct session of judgment, separated from the one in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew

by an interval probably of a thousand years. But how long this session of judgment before the great white throne occupies, we have no means of knowing.

Now if we regard both these sessions of judgment as comprised within the limits of the expression, "the day of judgment," the former being as it were the morning session, and the latter the evening session, we are at any rate led to the conclusion, that "the day of judgment" must be a day of very extended duration. A thousand years, remember, is with the Lord as one day. The days of creation in the past, and the day of judgment in the future, are the Lord's days. We must not, therefore, apply to the one or the other our tiny measurements of time.

Though, however, we cannot possibly define the duration of the day of judgment, let us remember that the great fact stands out clearly proved from Scripture, that that day begins when the Lord comes. He will "judge the quick and the dead, at His appearing and His kingdom."

IV. And now I pass to the fourth point—*the order of judgment*. This is a matter surrounded with very great difficulty. I do not, however, feel at liberty to pass it entirely over. Considerable differences of opinion exist upon this part of our subject; I do not wish, therefore, to speak dogmatically, but, with deference to the opinions of others, humbly to express my own. Test them by the Word. As far then as I at present understand the teaching of Holy Scripture on this subject, the order of judgment will be as follows.

After the first resurrection and the rapture of the saints, described in 1 Thess. iv., Christ comes with all His saints. Immediately on His coming, I gather from Rev. xix. 11--21, and Zech. xiv. 1--5, takes place the judgment upon the Beast and the false Prophet, and the whole confederated armies of Antichrist assembled round Jerusalem.

Then I believe the professing Church will be judged. I see this judgment in the parable of the talents in Matt. xxv., and in the parable of the pounds in Luke xix., where the Lord cometh and reckoneth with His servants. The professing Church of Christ having been judged, His faithful people will be after

that associated with Christ in judgment. And this explains that remarkable expression in 1 Cor. vi. 2: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" and allusions of a similar kind in other Scriptures. See Psalm cxlix. 9.

Possibly then will follow the judgment of the Jewish nation, in which the Apostles are specially mentioned as assessors. "Ye shall sit," Christ said to them, "upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Then I believe will follow the judgment upon all the living nations (the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη of Matt. xxv. 32)—all the Gentiles, all who have not been included in the preceding acts of judgment, they shall all be gathered before Christ, who is seated on the throne of His glory, and dealt with much to their surprise evidently, according to their treatment of those whom Christ speaks of as "*these my brethren.*" And who are those? They might be either the Jews, who are Christ's brethren according to the flesh, or they might be those who are then with Christ on His throne, His glorified saints, who are in a higher sense His brethren. This latter view commends itself most to my own mind.

I am quite aware of the very great difficulties attending this interpretation of the judgment scene at the close of Matt. xxv. All I can say is, that I believe you will find far greater, if not insuperable difficulties attending other interpretations which have been suggested.*

So far, with the exception of the raised and glorified saints, we have had only the judgment of the quick—the judgment of the living. When, then, have you the judgment of the dead, *i.e.*, all the rest of the dead who rise not at the first resurrection? The twentieth chapter of the Revelation of St. John, leads me to conclude that this judgment of the dead will not take place till after the thousand years, the first period of Christ's reign, is terminated. Let me ask you to turn to Rev. xx. 5, 6: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years

* Let me here refer to the Rev. A. R. C. Dallas's full exposition of this difficult portion of Scripture. It will be found in a book of his, entitled—"The Prophecy on the Mount." Published by Nisbet and Co., Berners Street.

were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Then you have the permitted outbreak of Satan at the close of this thousand years, and his final overthrow described, and then in the twelfth and thirteenth verses you read of the judgment of the dead. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works."

Such, my brethren, I believe will be the order of Christ's acts of judgment. And just observe, that as the acts of what I have called the morning session of judgment usher in the millennial kingdom of the Son of Man, so the acts of the evening session of judgment will usher in His eternal kingdom, a picture of the glories of which you have in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of the Revelation.

One further subject remains, and that of the most deeply practical nature.

V. *What is judgment?* It is *not*, I believe, (with the exception of the judgment on the living nations in Matt. xxv.,) the alternative of acquittal or condemnation. That is settled at death ; while as regards those who are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord, that alternative will be settled by some being taken, "caught up" in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, while the rest are left. As regards acquittal or condemnation, that will turn, the Scriptures show in the plainest possible manner, as far as Christendom is concerned, on *the acceptance or rejection of Christ*. Are we in Christ ? then we are acquitted, for there is "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Are we not in Christ ? then we are condemned already, "for he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

If, then, judgment is *not* the alternative of acquittal or condemnation, what is it? what is it for? Look at 2 Cor. v. 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Here is distinctly stated the purpose of judgment—that purpose is to give to every one *according to their works*.

Christ's people, the parables of the talents and pounds show, will be judged according to their works. Will the sins, then, of Christ's people be remembered in the judgment? Nay, they are forgiven—they are put away for ever by the blood of Christ. But their good works will be remembered and rewarded. These good works, we have already seen, have nothing to do with their acquittal, *but they have everything to do with their degree of glory, with their rank and position in the kingdom*. He who gained ten pounds is placed over ten cities; he who gained five is placed over five cities.

On the other hand, those who have rejected Christ, are judged also according to their works; not for the purpose of condemnation—their rejection of Christ has settled that matter, but for the purpose of assigning to them the degree of suffering and punishment which will be the due reward of their deeds. If such, brethren, is the great purpose of judgment to come, how all-important is the bearing of works on our future state;—we shall all be judged *according to our works*. Now do not misunderstand this statement. We are not acquitted or condemned on account of our works: our acquittal or our condemnation rests entirely on our accepting or rejecting Christ. But the degree of glory to which the saved on the one hand shall attain, and the degree of suffering which shall be inflicted on the lost on the other hand, depend on the use or the abuse of the talents entrusted to our care. Ought not, then, that word of our Master to sink deep into our hearts, "Occupy till I come?"

And now, in conclusion, let me endeavour to fix your eyes on this great fact of the future—Christ will come again to judge the quick and the dead. How near the coming of the Judge may be, we know not; but this we know, that we must all appear

before His judgment-seat. High and low, rich and poor, young and old, ministers and people, parents and children, masters and servants—we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Do you tremble, some of you, as Felix did of old, at the thought of judgment to come? or can you rejoice in the prospect? Can you take up the jubilant language of David, and say, "Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for He cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity?" Do you shrink from in secret terror, or do you long for with holy joy, the coming of this righteous Judge? The answer to this question depends on another. Is that righteous Judge to you now a rejected Saviour, or is He to you an accepted Saviour?

If the former, you may well tremble at the thought of judgment to come; if not washed from your sins in "the blood of the Lamb," you may well fear to look forward to that great day, when "the wrath of the Lamb" shall overtake those who would not have His precious blood.

But if the latter, if Christ is an accepted, and therefore a beloved Saviour, you need not fear—yea, you should rejoice at the prospect: you should long for the glorious day of His appearing and His kingdom. When you behold "the foundations of the earth out of course," you should pray as did the Psalmist of Israel, "Arise, O God, judge Thou the earth; for Thou shalt inherit all nations."

S E R M O N X.

THE HOLY GHOST.

“AND I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him : but ye know Him ; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”—JOHN XIV. 16, 17.

WE enter this evening on the consideration of the third and last part of the Apostle's Creed—the part which concerns the third Person of the blessed Trinity, God the Holy Ghost. In the first article of this part of our Creed, to which I now invite your attention, we confess our faith in this Divine Person—“ I believe in the Holy Ghost.” All that follows is connected with this ;—the Holy Catholic Church—defining the body in which the Holy Spirit dwells ; and the three remaining articles—the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, and the Resurrection of the Body unto Life Everlasting—having reference to those fundamental dispositions of Love, Faith, and Hope, which the Holy Spirit forms and sustains in the Holy Catholic Church.

I am to speak to you, then, this evening, concerning the Holy Ghost ; concerning *His nature* and concerning *His work*. May He be with us, about whose glorious Person and gracious Work we are to speak. May He, according to our Saviour's promise, teach us all things, and guide us into all truth. And to this end may He be dwelling in our hearts, as Spirit of Life and Truth.

I. First, then, let me invite your attention to *the nature of the Holy Ghost*.

Under this head there are two things that demand our consideration—first, His Personality ; secondly, His Divinity.

1. The Holy Spirit is a distinct Person in the Godhead. “ If it be enquired,” says one, “ what we mean by the term Person, as applied to the Spirit, we briefly reply, such a distinction in the Trinity as demonstrates a separate mode of existence, to which belong personal attributes ; and yet this distinct intelligent Agent, coalescing in, and constituting in union with the Father and the Son, the One God. Because of His union with the Godhead, we ascribe to Him Divinity ; and because of His personal properties and acts, we ascribe to Him Personality.”

Mark, first, the proof of the Personality of the Holy Spirit, that arises from our Saviour's promise concerning Him in my text. The disciples of Jesus were troubled at the thought that their beloved Master was going to leave them. How does He comfort them in the prospect of His departure ? He calls on them to exercise faith in God the Father, and in Himself ; He reminds them that He is going to His Father's house for them ; He assures them that He will come again ; He tells them that His departure to the Father will enable them to do greater works than He had done ; He shews His readiness to answer their prayers. But this is not all. He promises them “ another Comforter,” who was to abide with them for ever. Hitherto He had been their Comforter, now He promises them another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who was henceforth to take His place, and to be the abiding Comforter of His people. Was the Comforter, whose bodily presence was withdrawn from His Church, a distinct Person ? This none will question—what, then, is the necessary inference ? Obviously, that the Comforter who was to take His place, was a distinct Person also. Otherwise, what is the value of this part of Christ's consolation ? The whole force of it depends on the fact asserted in the plain words of the text, that His bodily absence was to be compensated for by the actual presence of another Divine Person.

Several other promises of the Holy Spirit occur in this last discourse of Christ with His disciples, all of which imply the distinct Personality of the blessed Spirit. Look at some of these

promises. You have one at the twenty-sixth verse of this chapter: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." You have another in chapter xv. 26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me." Another is given in chapter xvi. 13, 14: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." How is it possible to understand these promises of Christ, except of a distinct Person? Who but a distinct Person could be spoken of as *sent* by the Father and the Son, who but an actual Person could be spoken of as *teaching, testifying, guiding, speaking, shewing things to come*?

From Christ's promises in St. John, turn to the Acts of the Apostles, where you have the dispensation of the Spirit begun. It is quite evident from the history recorded in that book, that from the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost acted as the Vicegerent of Christ in His Church. You find Him as such constantly directing the movements of the apostles and evangelists;—He directed Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts viii. 29: "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." And when he had instructed the Ethiopian eunuch in the way of salvation, and received him into Christ's Church by baptism, the Spirit took him away to other fields of labour, see ver. 39, 40: "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea."—He commanded Peter to go with the messengers of Cornelius. Look at Acts x. 19, 20: "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three

men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.”—He sent forth Barnabas and Saul from their ministrations in the Church at Antioch, to labour in the mission-fields of Asia Minor. Look at Acts xiii. 2—4: “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.”—He opened doors in one direction, and closed them in another. Look at Acts xvi. 6, 7: “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia; after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.” The Spirit was beckoning them away from Asia; He was leading them, as the results proved, to the mission-fields of Europe, where an abundant harvest was to be gathered for Christ.—Again, in Acts xx., the Holy Spirit is described as bearing witness, and as designating to an office, both surely personal acts. Look at verses 23 and 28: “The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.” “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.”

I might now go on to the Epistles, and the Revelation of St. John, or take you back to the Old Testament Scriptures for further and still more abundant proof of the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit; but enough, I think, has been adduced from the promises of Christ in St. John, and from the recorded deeds of the Holy Ghost in the Acts of the Apostles, to prove His distinct personality.

He who was to supply Christ's presence; He who was to be sent forth by the Father and the Son; He who was to teach, and testify, and guide, to call to remembrance the past, and to reveal the future; He who when His special dispensation began, directed the movements of Apostles and Evangelists, sending Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, Peter to Cornelius, Paul and

Barnabas to Cyprus and Asia Minor, preventing subsequently Paul and Silas from labouring in one place, and making their way plain to another; He who bare witness now to Christ's resurrection, now to the persecution which awaited His ambassadors; He who designated them to the holy office of the ministry, is surely no mere attribute, or influence, but a distinct person. Distinct from them in whom He dwells, inasmuch as He is said to bear witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God; distinct further from the Father and the Son, inasmuch as He is spoken of as another Comforter, and as one sent by the Father and the Son; distinct from them, and yet one with them in the perfect unity of the Triune Jehovah; and therefore not merely a distinct, but also a Divine person.

2. This leads us next to speak of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, as established from the Scriptures.

The *names* of Deity are given to the Holy Ghost. Look at that remarkable passage in Acts v. 3, 4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?..... thou hast not lied unto men, BUT UNTO GOD."

The *works* of Deity are attributed to the Holy Ghost.—Creation.—You find Him present at creation; see Gen. i. 1, 2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." You read of His taking part in Creation.—"By His Spirit," Job says of the Lord, "He hath garnished the heavens;" and more particularly you are told of His taking part in God's crowning work, the creation of man. "The Spirit of the Lord," says Elihu, "hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."—Again, the revelation of the unseen and the future, which is clearly a work of Deity, is attributed to the Holy Ghost. The inspired Scriptures, wherein the unseen and the future are revealed, are from Him.—"For," we read, "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 21.)

The *attributes* of Deity are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. ETERNITY, see Heb. ix. 14: "Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God." OMNISCIENCE, 1 Cor. ii. 10: "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." OMNIPRESENCE, Ps. cxxxix. 7: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" SOVEREIGNTY, 1 Cor. xii. 11: "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

Further, for the Holy Spirit a *Divine authority* is vindicated, see Matt. xii. 31, 32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." For whom, except a Divine person, would so lofty a claim be made?

And once more, to the Holy Ghost a *Divine equality* of power, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son are assigned. Like them He is author of eternal salvation, see 1 Peter i. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."—Like them He is the Divine person to whose service we are consecrated in holy baptism, see Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—And like them He is the source whence all spiritual blessings flow, see 2 Cor. xiii. 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." With this accumulation of evidence before us to the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, who can doubt that He is indeed, as the fifth article of our Church expresses it, "of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father, and the Son, very and eternal God?"

This article of our holy faith is, (as I observed in speaking of the Divinity of our blessed Lord,) no barren theological dogma;

it is fraught with most important practical results, as we shall see when we come to speak on various parts of the work of the Holy Ghost.

II. To this other division of our subject, then, let me now invite your attention—*the work of the Holy Spirit*. Few larger and more important subjects could well be named than this. If I am to give you in the short space of time that remains anything like a comprehensive idea of the whole, (so far as I am able,) it is evident that I must touch very lightly indeed upon the details, and endeavour to give you a general outline merely of the Holy Spirit's work.

First, you have the Holy Spirit's work of *conviction*. This our Lord refers to in John xvi. 8—11: "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." This is the Holy Spirit's great work upon unbelievers. He convinces them of sin, the sin of sins, the like to which there is none to be compared in magnitude—unbelief, the sin that rejects Christ. He convinces them of righteousness, even the righteousness of Him whom the world despised and crucified as a malefactor; a righteousness established by the fact that He is gone to the Father. He convinces them of judgment; He shows them by the monitions of conscience within, that they are under the law and government of God, and that they are accountable to Him; that there is a judgment to come, at which they must give account of the deeds done in the body; the certainty of this judgment being seen from the fact, that already the prince of this world was judged. This threefold work of conviction, begun in a state of unbelief, the Holy Spirit carries on and deepens evermore in the heart of a believer.

Further, you have the Holy Spirit's work of *giving and sustaining life*. He is, as we confess in the Nicene Creed, "the Author and Giver of life." The new birth, which is the first dawn of spiritual life, is from Him. It is distinctly traced up to His agency and power. In John i. 13, the children of

God are described as those who are born, not of " blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ;" and in the third chapter of St. John, they are described as those who are " born of the Spirit." And as the Holy Spirit first gives life to those who are by nature " dead in trespasses and sins," so He, by means of God's ordaining, sustains and strengthens that life. Hence He is called the " Spirit of Life." When we draw near to God in private prayer, when we read His Holy Word ; when we come up to the sanctuary and join in the public worship of God, when we gather round the Table of our Lord, it is the Holy Spirit alone, as " the Author and Giver of life," that can make these blessed means of grace, channels of spiritual life. See you not, then, how needful it is to maintain strongly the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. If He be not God, He cannot give life, for that is solely the work and gift of God ; if He be not God, He cannot sustain life either, for that too is the prerogative of Deity.

Passing from the Holy Spirit's work of conviction and quickening, let me come to speak of the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, as indicated by the words of the text : " I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him : but ye know Him ; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv. 16, 17.) From these words it appears that the main object of the Holy Spirit's work is *to supply the place of Christ during His bodily absence, by a real indwelling in the soul*. Christ had told His disciples that He was going away, going to His Father's home, from whence in due time He promised to return. But in the mean while, *i.e.*, during His session at God's right hand, He promised them one who was to supply His place, even the Spirit of truth. And how was He to supply Christ's presence ? Our Lord's words show—by a real indwelling in the hearts of His people. Observe the closing words of ver. 17 ; of the Holy Spirit, Christ says, " He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Here is something present and something future. The objective pre-

sence of the Holy Spirit was then enjoyed. He was then *with* the disciples, because He dwelt in Christ, who was full of the Holy Ghost; but the subjective presence of the Holy Spirit was still future. "He shall be *in* you." Here is the real indwelling of the Holy Ghost promised by Christ, as a compensation for His departure out of this world unto the Father.

This indwelling of the Holy Ghost was predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures, where you find it placed in close connection with Christ's ascension to heaven. Look at Ps. lxxviii. 18: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." If we connect this prediction with the words of Christ in the text, we shall have no difficulty in seeing in it, a clear prediction of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

From this indwelling of the Holy Ghost in believers, flows all the rest of His work; because He dwells in believers, he testifies to them of Christ, takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto them; because of this real indwelling, He teaches them all things, and guides them into all truth; because of it He glorifies Christ, shews us our nothingness, and Christ's fulness; so that with St. Paul we can say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and with him, too, we can rejoice that "Christ Jesus is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" and with him, too, we can exclaim, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Again, the Holy Ghost, because of His indwelling, sanctifies believers. Not only is He holy in Himself as the Father is holy, and the Son is holy; but as "the Spirit of holiness," He is the author of all true holiness in Christ's people. Negatively, by enabling them to overcome sin. See Rom. viii. 13: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Positively, by enabling them to live to God's glory, to adorn their Christian profession by all holy graces and dispositions. These come from His indwelling influence.

Hence believers are said "to walk after the Spirit," to be "led of the Spirit," and "to mind the things of the Spirit;" and hence the holy graces of the Christian life are all called "the fruit of the Spirit." See Gal. v. 22, 23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Again, because the Holy Ghost dwells in believers, He is their Helper in prayer. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. viii. 26.) Hence, in Eph. vi. 18, believers are exhorted to pray always "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit;" and in Jude 20, they are exhorted in a similar strain: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God."

And once more, because the Holy Ghost dwells in believers, He comforts them. He is the Comforter in consequence of this real indwelling in the souls of Christ's people, He is thus in a position to comfort believers, where comfort is most needed; He bears witness with their spirits that they are the children of God; He applies to their hearts the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Holy Word; He enables them to realize the deep preciousness of Jesus; He shows them, as the Spirit of adoption, that God is their loving Father, and that all His dealings with them are in great loving-kindness and in tender mercy. In these and other ways the Holy Ghost, by His indwelling, is able to comfort the hearts of the people of God. Blessed are they who in a world of trial, and care, and anxiety, and disappointment, are comforted with the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

From all I have said concerning the work of the Holy Ghost, you will have perceived that His work is as necessary to our salvation as the work of Christ. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot come to Christ. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Without the Holy Spirit we cannot abide in Christ. "If any man have not the

Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." How momentous, then, the question which this subject should press on every heart—have I the Holy Spirit? True, you cannot be sensible of His presence by any bodily sensations, but you may infer whether you have the Holy Spirit or not, by looking for His blessed fruits in your lives, and by seeing in what light you regard Christ, whom the Holy Spirit loves to glorify.

If you have not the Holy Spirit, remember it is through no unwillingness of God to give you this precious gift—the promise of His dear Son is, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 13.) Ask, and ye shall receive—seek the promised gift, and you will obtain.

But if you have received the Holy Spirit, take heed, I beseech you, that your life more and more corresponds with so great a gift. Take heed that ye grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by any thoughts, and words, and actions inconsistent with your high and holy vocation. Let us rather cherish His influences. Let us seek to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Then will prayer be more delighted in; then will the Word be more prized; then will holy ordinances be more enjoyed; then, above all, will Christ be more precious.

S E R M O N X I.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

“AND hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”—EPHES. I. 22, 23.

THERE is no article of our Creed about which more misconception prevails, than the one we are to consider to-night—the Holy Catholic Church. And misconception on this subject of the Holy Catholic Church, has been attended with consequences the most sad. It has been the fruitful parent of error of very opposite kinds. It has led some to join the ranks of the Church of Rome on the one hand, while on the other hand it has led others to leave our own Scriptural Church, and to form themselves into little companies of separatists, from which they hoped, (but as results have proved, in vain,) to exclude all hypocrites, all false professors.

Such seceders on both sides do not seem to understand the nature of the Holy Catholic Church, and the conditions of its present existence. It is all important, therefore, that we should endeavour to arrive at clear ideas on the subject of this Article of our Creed. And this, my brethren, it is impossible to do without carefully observing the distinction which Holy Scripture draws between a visible Church, or an aggregate of such Churches, and the Mystical Body of Christ, “the Church which is His Body.”

First, then, let me invite your attention to this distinction—let me show you that it is a Scriptural, and not a fictitious one, as Romanists and others allege.

The ordinary acceptation of the word Church in the New Testament, is that in which it denotes either a single congrega-

tion of Christians, or an aggregate of such congregations under a common government. That this should be the most frequently occurring meaning of the word, was to be expected from the fact that the Apostolic epistles are addressed for the most part to local Churches, and are chiefly taken up with expounding the duties of Christians as members of such visible societies.

Under this head the word Church is sometimes used to denote a company of Christians small enough to meet in one house; as in Rom. xvi. 5: "Greet the Church that is in their house," the house of Priscilla and Aquila. This little company of Christians is again referred to in 1 Cor. xvi. 19. A similar little band of Christians is mentioned in Col. iv. 15: "Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house."

More commonly the word Church under this head of a local society, denotes the whole body of Christians in a particular city or place; as in Acts viii. 2, where we read of "the Church which was at Jerusalem;" again in Acts xiii. 1, where we have "the Church that was at Antioch;" again in 1 Cor. i. 2, where we are told of "the Church of God which is at Corinth;" and so continually in the Apostolical epistles, most of which, as I have said, were addressed to local Churches; and so, too, throughout the second and third chapters of the Revelation of St. John, where we read in succession of "the Church of Ephesus," "the Church in Smyrna," "the Church in Pergamos," "the Church in Thyatira," "the Church in Sardis," "the Church in Philadelphia," and "the Church of the Laodiceans."

Under this head, too, the word Church in its plural use sometimes denotes the aggregate of different congregations of Christians in a particular district or province; as in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, where we read of "the Churches of Galatia;" and again in the nineteenth verse of that chapter, where mention is made of "the Churches of Asia,"—the different congregations or societies of Christians in that proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. In Gal. i. 22, we read of "the Churches of Judea;" and 2 Cor. viii. 1, of "the Churches of Macedonia," of which doubtless the Churches at Philippi and Thessalonica were the principal.

In all these cases—the Church in a particular house, the Church in a particular city or place, and the Churches in a particular district or country—in all these cases, I say, the word Church is used to signify one or more Christian societies; societies consisting of those who by baptism had embraced the Christian faith. It needs very little acquaintance with some of these different societies to perceive that they were, as all visible Churches must necessarily be, of a mixed character, consisting of good and bad, of true and merely nominal Christians. Our Lord's epistles to the seven Churches of Asia prove the mixed character of these different societies of Christians; while our Lord's parables of the wheat and tares, the net which gathered of every kind, and the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish, foretell that of this mixed nature would be every visible Church, and therefore the whole aggregate of such visible Churches, to the end of the present age. The parable of the tares, indeed, forbids any separation of the wheat from the tares till the end of this dispensation. The express command of the Son of Man is, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Those who have separated from a visible Church, "in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance," in the hope of forming among themselves a congregation of Christians, from which the hypocrite and the nominal professor shall be entirely excluded, seem to have forgotten this command of our Master. Though, however, they have forgotten the word of the Lord, still that word stands true even as regards themselves; amongst those bodies of separatists, the enemy has sown a great multitude of tares.

I have drawn your attention now to one, and that the ordinary acceptance of the word Church in the New Testament; in this acceptance it denotes one or more Christian societies—societies which, as we have seen, are necessarily of a mixed character, embracing wheat and tares, good and bad, wise and foolish; those who are united to Christ by a living faith and sanctified by His Spirit, and those who, though bearing the Christian name, are yet destitute of living faith in Christ, and of His sanctifying grace.

I will now draw your attention to the other New Testament

acceptation of the word Church, in which it denotes the mystical body of Christ ; this, though not so common as that to which I have already referred, is far too frequent and too important to be overlooked. We shall find that the language of the inspired writers, and especially of St. Paul, in speaking of the Church in this latter acceptation, is such as to establish a broad line of demarcation between it and every other.

In this sense we find the word Church used in that remarkable passage in Matt. xvi. 18, where our Lord, commending St. Peter for his noble confession of faith in Himself, as “ the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and shewing the transcendent importance of the truth Peter had confessed, says : “ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Local societies of Christians may and have succumbed to the assaults of the powers of darkness, but Christ’s Church, founded on Himself, the Son of the living God, can never be overcome—against it the gates of hell shall never prevail. In all ages Christ has had a company of loyal and loving people, who have held fast His truth, and not denied His name.

In this latter sense we find the word Church used all through this Epistle to the Ephesians. First in my text, where the Church is described as Christ’s body—God having raised Christ from the dead, set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, and “ put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” (Chap. i. 22, 23.) Again, in chap. iii. 10, where the Apostle tells us that it is the purpose of God to make known “ to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God.” Under the title of “ the body of Christ,” the Church is referred to in the fourth chapter. Again in the fifth chapter, the word Church is evidently used in this latter sense, of the mystical body of Christ. Look at the twenty-third and following verses : “ The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church : and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." In the same sense you find the word used in Col. i. 18: "And He is the Head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." Again in 1 Tim. iii. 15: "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." And so, once more, in Heb. xii. 22, 23: "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

The language by which the Church is described in all these passages of Scripture, proves that the object which was before the inspired writers was something very different from that denoted by the expressions, "the Church at Jerusalem," "the Churches of Galatia," "the Church of the Laodiceans," and so on. The appellations "the body of Christ," "the temple of the living God," "the bride, the Lamb's wife," (an expression implied in Ephes. v., and actually given to the glorified Church in Rev. xxi.) these appellations, I say, are never bestowed on a local Church, or a collection of local Churches, as such.

And what do the passages in which the word Church is used to denote Christ's mystical body imply, as regards the members of that body? What, to go no further, does the very figure of the body imply, as regards those members? "The Church which is His body." If the Church in this sense is Christ's body, who then are its members? Clearly those only who are really united to Christ as their Head. Surely there are no limbs of Satan in the body of Christ. No, brethren, those who can of a truth say "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," are true believers only. There is no mixture here of good and bad, as in all visible Churches. The mystical body of Christ, then, to quote the words of Hooker, "consisteth of none but only true Israelites, true sons of Abraham, true servants and saints of God."

The distinction, then, between a visible Church, or an aggregate of such Churches, and the mystical body of Christ, "the Church which is His body," is one clearly marked in Holy Scripture. It is a distinction of the highest importance in dealing with the whole subject of the Church; "for," as Hooker observes, "for lack of diligent observing the difference, first between the Church of God, mystical and visible; then between visible sound and visible corrupted, sometimes more sometimes less, the oversights are neither few nor light that have been committed."

Before passing on, let me say a word on this latter distinction to which Hooker refers—the distinction between visible Churches, some of which are "sound," others of which are "corrupted," some more, some less. Our own national Church in her nineteenth article gives us a definition of a sound visible Church; according to that definition it is, "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." In our own beloved Church these requirements are fulfilled—faultless (even in the estimation of her most attached members) she is not, especially in the exercise of discipline and government; but though in these matters falling short of the Apostolic Churches, in her in any rate "the pure Word of God is preached," and "the Sacraments duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance." This is not the case in the Church of Rome. She has made void the pure Word of God by her traditions, and corrupted it by her novel doctrines, while Christ's holy Sacraments she has defaced and mutilated by her superstitious ceremonies, and unwarrantable alterations and additions. Rightly, then, does the Article from which I have quoted thus conclude: "As the Churches of Jerusalem, and Alexandria, and Antioch have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith." When so many visible Churches have erred, we have reason to be very thankful that God has cast our lot in one which holds fast Christ's truth, and protests against error; a Church whose teaching leads

us not away from, but to Christ; a Church, therefore, whose teaching will tend through God's blessing to our edifying in the mystical body of Christ.

This brings me back from this digression to the important distinction which I have been endeavouring to impress upon you from the teaching of the New Testament, between a visible Church, or an aggregate of such Churches, and the mystical body of Christ, "the Church which is His body."

Apprehending clearly this Scriptural distinction, you will understand the nature of the Holy Catholic Church, and the conditions of its present existence. The Holy Catholic Church is the body of Christ. It is not any one visible Church, or the aggregate of such Churches. How indeed could any visible Church, or collection of visible Churches, be propounded to us as an object of faith, as the Holy Catholic Church is in our Creed?

And here let me advert to a mistake which Protestants, both in speaking and writing, continually fall into. They speak of the Church of Rome as the Catholic Church, and of Romanists as Catholics. You have often heard and read language of this kind. Those who use it, however, do not remember the concession which it involves, a concession which is all that Rome can possibly desire. To call the Church of Rome the Catholic Church, is equivalent to saying that she is the only true Church, out of which there is no salvation. None of you believe that; why, then, use language which implies it?

Neither the Church of Rome, nor the Church of England, nor the Church of Scotland, nor the Greek Church, nor any other visible society of Christians, nor the collection of such societies throughout the world, is the Holy Catholic Church. That Church is "the Body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Where, then, are the members of the Holy Catholic Church to be found? The answer to this question will lead me to say something concerning the conditions of its present existence. First, then, many of the members of the Holy Catholic Church are in glory; they have entered into their rest; they form the part of the Catholic Church which is called Triumphant. The rest are still

in the conflict, and they form the part of the Catholic Church which is called Militant. These are but two parts of one great body, one united Church.

“ One family, we dwell in Him,
 One Church, above, beneath,
 Though now divided by the stream,
 The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
 To His command we bow ;
 Part of the host have crossed the flood,
 And part are crossing now.”

And as to these latter members of the Holy Catholic Church, who are still militant here on earth, where are they to be found? They are to be found in all the visible Churches of Christendom. They are to be found necessarily in greatest numbers in those where “the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinances ;” for there the teaching is such as to lead men, through God’s blessing, into living union with Christ. But who shall venture to say, that even in the most corrupt of visible Churches there are not some in whom the Holy Ghost dwells; some whom the Holy Ghost has led, in spite of surrounding error, to lay hold of Christ as their living Head; some, therefore, who, notwithstanding the false teaching of the visible Church to which they belong, are very members incorporate of Christ’s mystical body? All such, wherever they are found, who are united to Christ by a living faith, and sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, are members of the Holy Catholic Church.

Are you, whose great privilege it is to belong to a Scriptural visible Church, members also, by a living faith in Christ, of that Church which is His body? Has the teaching you have received within the favoured borders of our own national Church led you, through God’s blessing, to Christ? This is the great question; for your salvation, though it is undoubtedly furthered by the purity of the external communion to which you belong, does not depend on that, but on the finished work of Jesus, and

your personal interest in that work, through an appropriating faith.

So far, then, we have seen that the Holy Catholic Church is the mystical body of Christ; that its members, therefore, are all Christ's true and faithful people, partly triumphant and partly militant. One further matter calls for a few remarks. To this body alone belong those marks of a true Church which Rome claims as exclusively her own. Two of these marks we have in the Apostles' Creed; the other two you will find in the Nicene Creed. These marks are, *Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity.*

None of these marks does the Church of Rome possess. She has not the true *unity* which St. Paul, in Ephes. iv., describes as the unity of the body of Christ, even "the unity of the Spirit," which is kept in the bond of peace. Try the Church of Rome by the points of Christian union which St. Paul enumerates in Ephesians iv., and you will find her wanting. "One faith," for example. Has she always maintained "one faith?" Is the faith she holds and teaches now, the same as that held and taught at Trent three hundred years ago? or, to make the contrast still more obvious, is it the same which she held and taught in her earlier and purer days? Has she not added to that ancient faith, articles contradictory to the Word of God? contradictory, therefore, to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints?" Nor is this all. History shows that often for long series of years, external unity even has been wanting, to say nothing of that inner unity which St. Paul shows us is the characteristic of Christ's body.

Neither does Rome possess *sanctity*. Much of her authorized moral teaching is anything but holy. Is not God's law the standard of holiness? What, then, are we to say of the holiness of a Church which in Ireland, Italy, and elsewhere, deliberately omits the second commandment from her catechisms? Besides, are not the greater number of the members of the Church of Rome, in common with those of other visible Churches, anything but holy in their lives?

Again—the Church of Rome is not *Catholic*. Roman is particular, Catholic is universal; it is a contradiction in terms,

therefore, to speak of the Church of Rome as Catholic. Apart from this, her novel Creed stamps her as the most exclusive Church in the world. That Creed, which embodies all her false teaching, concludes thus: "This is the true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved." By that article, she would exclude from the possibility of salvation all who deny the Creed of Pope Pius IV., a Creed unknown to the early Churches, and every article of which is contrary to Holy Scripture. A Church which does this, instead of being Catholic, is the most sectarian and exclusive of the Churches of Christendom.

Neither, lastly, is the Church of Rome *Apostolic*. The Creed to which I have referred, shows that she has departed from "the faith once delivered to the saints." Once, indeed, she was Apostolic in doctrine; but the decisions of the Council of Trent, and the Creed of Pope Pius IV., have indelibly stamped her with the brand of apostacy.

To the Church which is Christ's body, alone belong these four marks to which Rome has evidently no claim. The mystical body of Christ has true *unity*, even "the unity of the Spirit." The Holy Ghost dwells in each member of the body, and unites each to Christ the living Head, and in Him to each other. Further, the mystical body of Christ is *holy*. Its Head is holy, its members are holy, they are all justified by Christ's blood, and sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Further, the mystical body of Christ is *Catholic, i.e.*, universal; because it embraces all true believers, those triumphant in glory, and those still militant on earth; those in our own Church, and those in all other communions.

And once more, the mystical body of Christ is *Apostolic*. All its members continue in the Apostles' doctrine and in the Apostles' fellowship, even in that blessed fellowship of which St. John writes: "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

The one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, then, is Christ's body—God's family of adopted children—the Lord's enclosed garden, where grow trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified—the temple of the living God, built of lively stones on the Rock of Ages,

builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Or to refer to one more Scriptural figure—the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is Christ's Bride, His lowly earth-born bride, whom He will, when He comes in the glory of His second advent, exalt to sit down with Him on His throne, and invite to share with Him the glories of His everlasting kingdom.

Are such the blessed prospects of the Holy Catholic Church? Who, then, will not earnestly pray, that through faith in Jesus, we may be each one "very members incorporate" in Christ's mystical body? Who will not fervently offer up as his own, the prayer of St. Ambrose: "Make us, O Lord, to be numbered with Thy saints, in glory everlasting?"

"Bride of the Lamb! awake, awake;
Why sleep for sorrow now?
The hope of glory, Christ is thine,
A child of glory thou!

Thy spirit through the lonely night,
From earthly joy apart,
Hath sighed for one that's far away,
The Bridegroom of thy heart.

But see, the night is waning fast,
The breaking morn is near;
And Jesus comes with voice of love,
Thy drooping heart to cheer.

This earth, the scene of all His woe,
A homeless wild to thee,
Full soon upon His heavenly throne,
Its rightful King shall see.

Thou too shalt reign;—He will not wear
His crown of joy alone;
And earth His royal Bride shall see
Beside Him on the throne.

Then weep no more, 'tis all thine own,
His crown, His joy divine;
And sweeter far than all beside,
He, He Himself is thine."

S E R M O N X I I .

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

“FOR we being many are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread.”—1 COR. x. 17.

“To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.”—ACTS x. 43.

LAST Sunday evening I showed you, that the Holy Catholic Church of the Creed, is the mystical body of Christ ; I showed you that it is not this or that visible society of Christians, but the whole company of Christ’s elect : the whole body of His loyal and loving people, partly triumphant in glory, partly militant here on earth. The members of this Church, which is Christ’s body, enjoy amongst themselves, “the Communion of Saints,” and possess, in their relation to God, the deep blessedness of “the Forgiveness of Sins.”

To these two articles of our Creed I would invite your attention to-night, reserving for our consideration on Sunday evening next, if the Lord will, a subject which will not be inappropriate for the last Sunday of the year, the closing article of the Apostle’s Creed—the Resurrection of the Body unto Life Everlasting.

I. First, then, I invite you to consider the privilege enjoyed by the members of Christ’s mystical body among themselves, “THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS,”—“we being many,” the Apostle says, “are one bread, and one body.”

On what is this communion of saints founded?—The body in which it exists shows at once the foundation on what it rests—that foundation is union with Christ. The members of His body are all united to Him as their living Head. He is

to them all the source of life, and light, and love; united to Him, they are united to each other; not in any hollow alliance which may be the result of compromise, but in that real and living union which springs from their possessing a common centre of attraction, a common object of faith, and hope, and love. On this union with Jesus, then, rests the communion of saints; and as it rests on union with Jesus, it is easy to see that it flows from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. It is one of the blessed fruits the Holy Spirit produces in that body in which He dwells—the Holy Catholic Church. The Holy Spirit who unites us to Christ, unites us to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Further, wherein does the communion of saints consist? What are the constituent elements of this common union? Let us turn to Ephesians iv. 4—7, and read there the several points of union amongst all Christ's people: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." In these matters, I apprehend, consists the communion of saints. They form, as we have already seen, "one body," even the body of Christ, of which they are the different members. They are all animated, as we have also seen, by "one Spirit," even the Holy Spirit of God, who dwells in each member of Christ's body, and continuously imparts to all the life of the living Head. They are all cheered by "one hope," the hope of being with Christ for ever, the hope of being made like Christ in the resurrection; the hope of a bright and glorious future, through the all-sufficient merits of Jesus. They all own "one Lord," even the Lord Christ; to His commands they bow, His glory they desire, for His coming as the Lord of lords they wait, and watch, and pray. They all hold to "one faith," even "the faith once delivered to the saints," the faith taught by Holy Apostles, the faith contended for by blessed martyrs, the faith enshrined in the pages of Holy Writ;—they all acknowledge "one baptism," even baptism in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one baptism

by which they have been received into covenant relationship with God as their Father ; and therefore lastly, as God's adopted children, they have all "one God and Father."

One God—who is "*above* all," as the omnipotent Jehovah, the mighty ruler of all things.

One God who is "*through* all," pervading all space by His presence and providence, guiding the stars in their mighty orbits, and giving life to the tiny grains of seed in the soil, controlling alike the little insect that lives and dies in an hour, and the glorious angels that adore before the everlasting throne, protecting the sparrows of the air, and numbering the hairs of your head.

"One God and Father," who is "*in* you all"—in all His adopted children. The mighty God, whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, dwells in the hearts of His people. In this one God and Father of all, all the members of Christ's body believe ; to Him they are all united by adoption, they are all children of His family. Such, then, are the multiplied and mighty bonds of union between the members of the Holy Catholic Church—such are the constituent elements of the blessed communion of saints. The Catholic Church gathered out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, is one body, all the members of which are united to Christ their living Head by faith, and in Him to each other. Through this body is diffused one quickening, energizing Spirit. All its members, too, are cheered by the same blessed hope beyond the life that now is. Further, they are united in the harmony of peace and love ; by the bond of a like allegiance, they all own one Lord ; by the bond of similarity of Creed, they all hold one faith ; by the bond of sameness in the initiatory Sacrament, they all acknowledge one baptism ; and lastly, they are all brought into covenant relationship with one God, the Father of all, and their Father by adoption, whom they believe to be above all, as the self-existent Jehovah ; through all, by His all-pervading presence and all-protecting providence ; and in them all, making His abode in their hearts by His Holy Spirit.

There are, as we are all painfully aware, external differences

which, in the present state of things, keep the saints of God from visible union; but still those deep and mighty bonds of fellowship to which I have referred, prove that the communion of saints, even in the present divided state of visible Churches, is a blessed reality. How we ought to long for the day of its full realization, when all the glorified saints from every age, and every land, and every Church, shall be gathered around their returning Lord. "In that glorious assembly," says one, "Christ, the King of kings, shall be the centre of all attractions, the out-flowing fountain of all joy. The happy and glorified saints shall fix their steady and adoring gaze on His Majesty, and shall reflect His likeness, without the least tarnish or drawback. Not a selfish feeling shall spring up in that vast multitude, not a discordant note disturb the perfect union of that vast assembly. God shall be all, and in all to His children in that day, and they shall mutually rejoice in each other's happiness. One mind and one holy service shall pervade that kingdom. We shall love our God with a perfect heart, and we shall love all the glorified Church with the highest degree of affection to which sanctified creatures can reach."

Till the day of the Lord shall usher in this full and complete manifestation of the communion of saints, let us each one strive to realize it more and more, especially round the Table of the Lord; let us remember that in that Holy Communion we are not only shewing forth Christ's death till He come, but shewing also that we are really one with Christ's faithful people throughout the world, that though many, we are, as partakers of that one bread, one body. Realizing this, we shall be more ready to enter into the spirit of that catholic prayer of St. Paul, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Realizing this, we shall be more ready to show love to Christ's brethren, wherever we may find them. And this love to Christ's brethren in all communions, this readiness to recognize in a true believer everywhere a brother beloved, is quite consistent with the deepest attachment to our own national Church, and quite consistent, too, with the conscientious conviction that in the Church of England we have,

both in respect of Apostolic doctrine and also in respect of Apostolic order, the purest of all the visible communions of Christians in our own land.

So far I have been speaking of the communion of the saints on earth ; but is there not a communion of the saints on earth with those who have passed into their rest? Scripture, I believe, teaches there is. In a passage I referred you to last Sunday evening in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, we find this language addressed to the Church of Christ militant here on earth : “ Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.” (Ver. 22, 23.) “ Ye are come to the spirits of just men made perfect.” These words clearly imply that there is some kind of fellowship or communion between the saints on earth and those who have entered into their rest. There is a community of interest in the same kingdom, a community of relationship to the same Head ; a community in trustful love, and all the great features of holiness ; and a community, above all, in the great object of hope. The Church on earth is waiting, waiting for her Lord ; the Church in rest is waiting too, waiting for the day of the Lord’s appearing. With that advent are bound up the highest hopes of Christ’s Church, whether militant or triumphant. The struggling saints on earth look forward to that advent, because then they shall see Jesus, then the conflict shall be ended in victory, then we shall all be changed, this mortal shall be clothed with immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruption. The saints in rest, too, look forward to that advent, because then they shall receive the glorious resurrection body, then their happiness shall be perfected, then they shall come with Jesus, to possess with the living saints the kingdom, and to reign with Him for ever and ever.

There is a community in interest, in relationship to Christ, in love and in hope between the saints on earth and those in rest. Beyond this Scripture does not, I believe, warrant us in advancing. And how does Holy Scripture guide us practically

to apply this doctrine of the communion of the saints on earth with the faithful departed? By such thrilling words as these, "Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

While, however, in relation to one another, the members of the Holy Catholic Church, whether militant or triumphant, enjoy the communion of saints, in relation to God they possess the deep blessing of the forgiveness of sins. This is the other subject to which I would invite your attention this evening.

II. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. Who shall estimate the greatness of this blessing? When we think what must be, according to God's Word, and the judgment of an awakened conscience, the inevitable consequences of unforgiven sin, we wonder not at that exclamation of rapturous joy with which one of the Psalms of David opens, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

I stay not to prove that we all *need* this great blessing. I stay not to prove what every man, woman, and child here admits, that we are all sinners, all guilty before God, and all therefore needing forgiveness. I pass on to show how this great blessing is to be obtained. It is possessed, I have said, by the members of Christ's body. Those who are in rest possess it in full, all their sins are forgiven, they are all for ever blotted out, and they rejoice in the consciousness of their complete and perfect pardon. Those on earth possess this blessing, but they need its daily renewal on account of daily sins; they possess this blessing, though they do not all, through some weakness in their faith, or through some other cause, realize their full and present enjoyment of it. Well, how did the saints in glory obtain this blessing? how do saints on earth obtain it now from day to day? can Christ's appointed ministers bestow it upon them? They can, as the ambassadors of Christ, proclaim with authority the terms of pardon, as Peter did to Cornelius; they can point out the way of forgiveness; the way in which alone forgiveness is to be attained at God's hand; but the blessing

itself they cannot bestow. This is God's prerogative, for "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him." But now the question recurs, how can the great blessing of forgiveness be obtained from the Lord our God? Scripture reveals but one way. Old and New Testament Scriptures alike proclaim, that "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;" that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." But what blood can make an atonement, what blood can avail to effect the remission of sin? What blood can purchase the great blessing of forgiveness? None, so teaches Holy Scripture, none but "the precious blood of Christ," the heaven-provided, heaven-appointed Lamb. Look at a few passages in the Word. Rom. iii. 24, 25: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Ephes. i. 7: "In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Heb. ix. 11—14: "Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" 1 Peter i. 18, 19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Once more; 1 John i. 7: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Such, then, is the efficacy of Christ's blood; through the shedding of it there has been obtained full and free remission of sins. It is for us simply to believe that the atonement has been made; it is for us to come in deep penitence and true faith to Christ's cross, to look to Jesus bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, putting away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, and forgiveness, full, free, everlasting forgiveness is ours. Hence the blessing of forgiveness is connected with faith in Christ. Look at St. Peter's words to Cornelius in the second verse of my text: "To Jesus give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) Look at St. Paul's words to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Thus the question has been answered; thus you have learnt from God's Holy Word how the unspeakable blessing of the forgiveness of sins is to be obtained. And now a most important practical question arises out of this part of our subject in conclusion: Have you obtained the great blessing of the forgiveness of sins? Are your sins forgiven, or are they unforgiven? This is not a question which you can lightly set aside. What if unforgiven you die? what if you die in your sins? or what if unforgiven the Lord should find you in the day of His appearing? what in either case would become of you then? Not having come to Christ, and laid your sins on Him the sin-bearer, you will have to bear them yourselves; you will hear pronounced upon you, by Him whose blood you set aside, whose sacrifice you treated with indifference and neglect, and perhaps scorn, you will hear, I say, pronounced upon you by Christ, the righteous sentence, which will assign you your portion in the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. But why will ye die? why will any one of you go on living in the misery of unforgiven sin? why, when God is ready to pardon? why, when Christ has purchased full and free forgiveness? why,

when God's ambassadors earnestly entreat you to come to Christ's cross, to obtain that pardon? why, when God's Holy Spirit is willing to apply to your hearts even now, that precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin?

Some, I would hope many of you, have obtained this great blessing of forgiveness. Seek its daily renewal, tarry ever near Christ's cross, be ever looking to Jesus who bare your sins, so that you may walk from day to day in the blessed light of pardon, and enjoy continually peace with God, through the blood of the cross.

One word more. Ye who possess this great blessing of the forgiveness of sins, live as God's forgiven children; learn at that cross where your sins have been forgiven, to hate and to forsake sin more and more. Let the cross of Christ teach you sin's exceeding hatefulness in God's sight, let it teach you how God abhors what many are disposed to make light of.—Learn there, too, as you see your daily need of pardon, to be more humble; let that daily need teach you to walk humbly with your God.—Learn there also to forgive others, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—And above all, learn at Jesu's cross to love Jesus with an ever deeper love. Think what you would be without Christ—think what you owe to His undying love—think over the great blessing of the forgiveness of sins which you owe to His precious blood—and thus surely our dull hearts will be stirred up to love Him more who so loved us.

S E R M O N X I I I .

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY UNTO LIFE EVERLASTING.

“THE hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”—JOHN V. 28, 29.

I CLOSE this evening my course of sermons on the Apostles' Creed. The last Sunday of another of our earthly years, is an appropriate season for my doing so : for the subject of this closing sermon is one eminently suited for such an occasion as this. Brought as we are, through the good hand of our God over us, to the last Lord's-day of 1863, we are reminded of the rapid flight of the years of this mortal life, and as we think of one and another who have been taken away during the past year, we are reminded that here we have no continuing city, that change, and decay, and death, are written on all things earthly.

It is well, then, at such a time, to have our thoughts carried on beyond the grave to the resurrection of the body—beyond this present mortal life, to that everlasting life which is to come—that everlasting life which the resurrection morning shall usher in, in all its fulness and in all its brightness.

I am to invite your attention this evening, then, to the last Article of the Apostles' Creed, in which we confess our faith in “the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting.” The two clauses of this closing article of our Creed, are but two parts of one whole—the latter clause defining *the* resurrection of the body to which the Creed refers, even that resurrection

which is unto life everlasting. We confess our faith, then, in the Creed, in the glorious resurrection, "the resurrection of the just," for their resurrection only is a resurrection unto life everlasting. Of this resurrection, therefore, I shall chiefly speak to-night; though I shall have occasion to refer, by way of contrast and warning, to the resurrection of the unjust. Both are spoken of by our blessed Lord in the solemn words of the text: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The chief subjects to which I would draw your attention this evening are five:

I. *The symbolizations of the resurrection in nature.*

II. *The intimations and the announcements of the resurrection in Holy Scripture.*

III. *Different circumstances connected with the resurrection.*

IV. *The nature of the resurrection body.*

V. *The results of the resurrection.*

I. First, then, as introductory to the Scriptural handling of the subject, let us consider the symbolization of the resurrection in different departments of nature.

"All nature," says one, "is a parable and prophecy of the resurrection—nothing on earth is fixed and stagnant; nothing in space or time is absolutely unvaried, stationary, and quiescent. Winter is followed by spring, which soon gives place to summer, soon to make way for autumn and winter anew. The germ bursts out in the flower and the fruit, ere long to grow up into plants and trees again. The moon passes from youth to age in a few short days, to become new as before. The waters ascend in vapours to the heavens, from whence they come down in rain, to flow back to their native ocean once more. If generation is succeeded and supplanted by corruption, corruption is itself removed and expelled by generation. Nothing is ever lost or perished, or utterly abolished. Yon aged sire of the forest may be sinking into decline, and hastening into decay, but his youthful progeny never fail to succeed him, and to repair his loss; they force their way from the mouldering

trunk, or burst out of the fallen stems, and maintain the name and honours of the family; the sun and rain may hasten his decomposition and insure his dissolution, but they stimulate the production of his numerous and prolific offspring. Out of the waste and wreck of nature are extracted the life and sustenance of the human family. Animal remains and vegetable deposits fructify in the soil, to supply new stocks and propagate fresh races. The death of one plant is the life of another, and oftentimes of a greater and better; so that corruption, we see, is even now the progress to incorruption—mortality is the herald and harbinger of immortality. By what God is doing now, we may learn what He will do hereafter. If death is the forerunner and pledge of life in this world; much more in that which is to come.”

The time of the year, however, in which nature presents to us the most abundant symbolizations of the resurrection, is without doubt the spring. Then we have numerous examples of life emerging from apparent death. The trees which have remained bare all through the dreary days and nights of winter are re-clothed with leaves, and flowers, and fruits in the joyous spring time; while ten thousand forms of vegetable and animal existence start into new life, as it were, under its genial influences. Spring time, too, presents us with marvellous development of structure, and changes of condition in the organized world. Enveloped in his silken shroud, the chrysalis has passed the winter months in some obscure spot; but in spring he bursts from his prison house, endowed with new life and beauty, and new capacities for enjoyment. The small unattractive seeds, which have lain buried in the furrows, which have there decayed and died, have sprung up into plants of varied form and structure—plants oftentimes clothed in a beauty surpassing even that of the glory of Solomon—plants that deck that lately barren landscape with a wondrous loveliness. Verily, with this annual resurrection taking place in spring, and with the constant progress everywhere around us through death to life, we are, I think, justified in regarding all nature as “a parable and a prophecy of the resurrection.”

II. But pass we now from these symbolizations of the

resurrection in nature, to the intimations and the distinct announcements of the resurrection in Holy Scripture.

And first let me shew that the resurrection was a part of the faith and hope of the Old Testament saints. Abel's early death was a standing testimony of another and a better life. The Lord loved Abel, and yet how brief (as far as we can learn) his earthly life, how cruel his end. In the face of such a sad loss, would Adam and Eve be left without the supporting and cheering hope of the resurrection, when the wrongs of God's people in the life that now is, would be more than compensated for in the everlasting life to come? Doubtless, Adam understood the meaning of the Cherubic symbols at the East of Eden. They told of man redeemed and Paradise regained; and thus they (to say nothing of the symbolization of nature) would preach to Adam the doctrine of the resurrection.

Enoch was the preacher of truth and righteousness in his day, an oracle of life and immortality to the old world. He announced the coming of the Lord with the ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all. This solemn announcement of a judgment to come, could not be separated from a resurrection to judgment. Enoch's translation, also, was an audible voice from God to man, proclaiming everlasting bliss and glory to the righteous, in language which could neither be unheard nor mistaken by the world before the flood.

Very early in the patriarchal age following the flood, probably before the time of Abraham, lived Job, the patriarch of Uz. In his words we have not a mere intimation, but a distinct announcement of the resurrection of the body, an announcement which we shall not do wrong in regarding as the echo of the teaching of the early patriarchal Church. In Job xiv., two distinct changes which pass over man are referred to. First in the twentieth verse, where Job speaks thus of God's dealings with man: "Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away." There the word change has the force of disfigure—this is the change of death. The other change is referred to in the seventh and fourteenth verses: "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease." "All the days of my appointed time will I wait,

till my change come." The word in the fourteenth verse for "change," is the same as that used in the seventh verse for "sprout again." The word has the force of revive. Here is the second change from death to the resurrection life. And now let us read the thirteenth and two following verses, remembering the force of the word "change" in the fourteenth. "O that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past, that Thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands." What a clear announcement have you here of the resurrection! In the thirteenth verse Job prays that God would remember him in the grave; in the fourteenth verse he asks the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" In other words, "Is there to be a resurrection of the body?" This question Job answers in the affirmative. "All the days of my appointed time," (the set time in the grave spoken of in the preceding verse,) "will I wait, till my change come," my reviving, my living again. "Then," *i.e.*, when that set time has come, "Thou shalt call"—all that are in the graves shall hear His voice—"and I will answer Thee." The Son of Man shall not call in vain then, any more than when He stood by the grave of Lazarus; all that are in the graves "shall come forth."

The other distinct announcement of the resurrection in the book of Job you are all familiar with; you will find it in the nineteenth chapter: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." (ver. 25—27.) These words are too plain to need any comment.

Abraham, the father of the faithful, showed his faith in the resurrection, by believing God's promises to him respecting the land of Canaan, and by offering up his son Isaac, the child of promise, he in whom his seed was to be called. He accounted, such is the inspired comment, "that God was able to raise him

up from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure."

Moses showed his faith in the resurrection, by his language in the ninetieth Psalm. The third verse can hardly be understood, except as referring to the resurrection. There you have the two changes indicated. First, "Thou turnest man to destruction;" there is the execution of the sentence—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Then God says, "Return, ye children of men;" there is the recall—the returning to life, after the turning to destruction. The interval between the two may be thousands of years, but what is this to the Lord! "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

David in the Psalms shows continually, that the Jewish Church in his days cherished the hope of the resurrection. Let one reference suffice. Look at Psalm xvii. Contrasting himself with the men of the world, who have their portion in this life, he says in verse 15: "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Is not this in exact accordance with Apostolic hope? Look at Phil. iii. 20, 21: "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that is may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

For another distinct announcement of the resurrection, turn to Isa. xxvi. 19: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for Thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." And for another turn to Dan. xii. 2: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Besides all these distinct announcements, however, which show clearly enough the faith and hope of the Old Testament saints respecting the resurrection, there are a great number of promises, such as "the meek shall inherit the earth,"—"the righteous shall have dominion over them (the wicked) in the

morning," which imply a belief in the resurrection, when these promises shall receive their fulfilment.

Let us glance now at the teaching of Christ and His Apostles regarding the resurrection. Here none will question the distinctness of the announcements made. I need not therefore do more than call your attention to them. Look at two or three out of the many found in the pages of the New Testament. First, in my text, you have the solemn announcement of the general resurrection by our Lord Himself. Then look at the words of His greatest Apostle, when defending himself before Felix, in Acts xxiv. 14, 15: "This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." These words not only show that the Apostles, but also that the Jews generally believed in the resurrection; a belief easy enough to account for in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures to which I have referred. Take two other solemn announcements of the resurrection; one given us by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv: "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." This refers, I believe, to those that have fallen asleep in Christ, before His second coming. The other given us by St. John in Rev. xx. 13, refers to all the rest of the dead: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works."

Old and New Testament, then, alike distinctly announce this great fact of the future, the resurrection of the body.

III. I pass now to our third head, which has reference to various circumstances connected with the resurrection of the dead.

1. First, *who* will raise the dead? Christ in our text distinctly tells us that He will Himself raise the dead; He who stood at the grave in Bethany, and there spoke the commanding word, "Lazarus, come forth!" shall at the last day, by His mighty voice, call the sleeping millions of the dead to life.

2. Secondly, *who* will rise? All—so Christ announces in the text, “all that are in the grave shall hear His voice,” wherever their graves may be, in populous cities or deserted wildernesses, deep in alpine snows, or deeper still in the unfathomed waters of mighty oceans, all shall rise, from the tiny infant who only lived an hour, to Enoch’s first-born son, who lived his nine hundred and sixty-nine years; all shall rise, from Abel, the first who passed into the world unseen, to the last who shall die in the closing hours of the millennial reign, all shall rise.

3. Once more, *when* will the resurrection take place? Christ’s people shall rise when He comes again. Look at 1 Cor. xv. 20—23: “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” There is nothing here about the resurrection of the rest of the dead. They that are Christ’s shall rise at His coming; this is the first resurrection. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.” This is the resurrection to which St. Paul prayed he might attain; this is the resurrection which is generally described in the Greek Testament, not as *ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν*—the resurrection of the dead generally, but as *ἀνάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν*—the resurrection *from amongst* the dead.

But what of all “the rest of the dead?” when do they rise? Turn to the clear statement in Rev. xx. 5: “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” Language has no meaning if this does not teach that between the first and second resurrection, there is an interval of a thousand years; a priority in the resurrection of the righteous dead of this and preceding dispensations, and the resurrection of all the rest of the dead, is implied in other passages of Scripture, but here the interval between these two resurrections is distinctly stated. In the light of the more extended statement in Rev. xx., we must understand the briefer statement of our Lord in the text. Our Lord does not indeed say that there will be an interval between “the resurrection of life,” and “the

resurrection of damnation ;” neither, however, does He say that there will not be an interval ; nor does the word “hour ” prevent our believing that there will be an interval between the two resurrections—the word simply means season, or time. “The time is coming, when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice.” The whole time of the millennial dispensation may well be called the time of the resurrection, seeing that its beginning and its close shall witness a mighty raising from the dead.

IV. I must hasten on now to the fourth division of our subject—The nature of the resurrection body.

1. First, Scripture represents the *germ* only of the resurrection body as proceeding from that laid in the grave ; and further, Scripture represents the resurrection body as greatly excelling our present body. Look at 1 Cor. xv. 35—38 : “ But some man will say, How are the dead raised up ? and with what body do they come ? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die : and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain : but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed His own body.” The Apostle’s analogy shows that it is only the germ of the resurrection body which proceeds from that laid in the grave. “ The early writers and apologists for the Christian faith,” it has been observed, “ could not understand how there could be a resurrection without the reviving of the former body of dust and ashes ; nor how the earthly body might be refined and sublimed into ethereal purity and incorruptibility. Here modern science and later discoveries come to our aid, and evince that this body of ours consists not of the mere dust and ashes of the grave, but combines with them richer ingredients, purer essences, subtler extracts, finer spirits, which admit of purification without limit, are capable of refinement and sublimation without end. These are, therefore, the real materials for the resurrection. These compose the true ground and root of our resuscitated nature ; these are the seed and germ of our resurrection body. If dull, fetid vapour, even thick black smoke, may in the twinkling of an eye be changed into bright and burning flame,

and illumine all around it, to what excess of lustre and beauty may the pure essences, or refined extracts of our mortal nature, be transformed by the coming of the Son of Man in His glory? Potent as the living flame bursting from the clouds above, fleet as the winged arrows of light, the rarified and risen body of incorruption will become the fit shrine of the hallowed spirit. Many, however, cling to the fanciful theories and ruder notions of earlier times. Following in the wake of venerated antiquity, they teach with the learned and pious Beveridge, that ‘at the sound of the last trump, the dust of each human body shall immediately gather itself up, and haste away every particle of it into its proper place again, so as to make up the self-same body as before.’ What a paradox! The Gospel teaches no such folly, utters no such absurdity. A body of dust and ashes would be alike divisible, corruptible, perishable. The original threat and curse would still remain on it: ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’ All that can be fairly inferred from Holy Writ is, that the present body is somehow the germ of the future body; that at the call of the Son of God, the one shall spring from the other, as the stalk or crop from the seed sown, as the tree from the root in the ground, as the shoot from the bud. But if the full grown oak of the forest far surpasses the acorn, if the branch greatly excels the feeble bud in germ, from which it has shot up into height and strength and beauty, if the rich and golden harvest is better than the poor diminutive seed or plant in the ground, how much more shall the new and risen body of glory and beauty excel the old, dull, clay structure of time, and surpass the vile dust and ashes of the tomb?”

2. Further, note the *characteristics* of the resurrection body. It will very greatly excel, we have already seen, our present body. Some of the particulars wherein it will excel, are given us by St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv.: “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (Ver. 42—44, 53.) Such are some of the

characteristics of the resurrection body of the righteous. It is a spiritual body ; the word spiritual stands in opposition here to natural or carnal, and implies that the resurrection body will be entirely devoid of anything that is gross, sensual, or earthly. Further, it will be an incorruptible, and therefore an immortal body. It will be endowed, too, with power, power in comparison with which all our present powers are but weakness. And finally, it will be a body clothed with glory, a body " fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body."

As to the characteristics of the resurrection body of the wicked, we have no distinct information in Scripture. But this we may lawfully infer from the terrible doom awaiting the wicked after the resurrection and the judgment ; it will be an incorruptible body, a body rendered capable of infinite and everlasting suffering. " As to the possibility," says one, " of the wicked dwelling with everlasting burnings, which some have so much doubted and denied, it is the natural effect, the immediate result and necessary consequence of the unutterable foulness and impurity of their unrefined bodies. Have we not in nature, even at present, substances not to be burned up, nor consumed, nor annihilated in the hottest flames ? A handkerchief of asbestos has been thrown into a blazing fire, and remained for hours in it without any perceptible change, or observable loss of its size, bulk, and weight. But to come nearer home, to touch at once the subject in hand, have we not corruption incorruptible daily before our eyes in the chemist's laboratory or the smelter's yard ? What is the *caput mortuum* in the crucible, or the dross or refuse in the furnace, but a pregnant living instance of it in the present world, as well as an apt earnest and striking prelibation of it in that which is to come ? It has been severed from and deprived of all that is really useful and valuable in its nature and composition ; it is no longer good for anything ; it is but dregs, dross, refuse, waste, corruption, and such it for ever remains. Fire can make no alteration, can produce no effect or impression on it ; no possible heat can change it, or destroy it—it is corruption incorruptible. What a fit emblem and just prefiguration of the vile corrupt bodies of those who have transgressed, whose worm dieth not, and whose fire is not

quenched!" Well may we pray, with such a doom awaiting those who live in sin, those who reject Christ as their Saviour, "From Thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation, good Lord deliver us."

3. I pass from these characteristics of the resurrection body, to notice one other point in connexion with this part of my subject of some little importance, and that is the question of *personal identity*. Philosophy shews us that the identity between the present and the resurrection body cannot possibly be an identity of particles. Holy Scripture incidentally confirms this testimony of philosophy, and shews us further that this identity cannot consist either in identity of organization. "Flesh and blood," we are told, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But though our present organization will not exist in the resurrection body, this does not imply that there will be no organization; nay, the perfect and exalted character of that state would rather teach us, that the future organization will be far more exquisite and wonderful than the present, and hence it would be strange indeed, if there should not be more marked peculiarities by which each individual should be clearly known from all others.

God, who gives to each his own body, will preserve the personal identity of each, both among the saved on the one hand, and also among the lost on the other hand. And this leads naturally to the question of *mutual recognition*. Such recognition there must be, personal identity being preserved.

Recognition among the saved. By intuitive knowledge, the saints of God in the resurrection shall know those whom on earth they knew not. "Shall we," asks one, "know the angels, and not know the saints of God? Shall we know the angel Gabriel, and not the faithful Abraham? Shall we not behold patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, Enoch and Moses, and John Baptist and the blessed Virgin? Shall these be to us (to speak like heathen men) as nameless spirits and unknown shades; or shall they not be revealed in all the fulness of that mysterious individual perfection which we now by faith believe and celebrate? Yes, of a truth, they that have 'come from the east and the west,' to 'sit down

with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven,' shall not fail to know them in that day. Surely we shall say, 'Lo, there is he that never saw death; and there the man greatly beloved; and there, she that sat at the feet of Jesus; and the woman that stood behind Him weeping; and the disciple that lay on His bosom at that last sad supper; and there is he that thrice denied his Lord, and then wept bitterly; and there is the glorious Apostle, through whose preaching and martyrdom, we 'sinners of the Gentiles,' were bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and there are they, that in the first age trod the purple path to a palm and crown; and they that age after age followed the Lamb, in sanctity and pureness: I have heard of them by hearsay, but now I see them each one face to face, as though I had lived and conversed with them in the days of the flesh. And if we shall know them whom we have not seen, how shall we not know them whom we have seen? Shall we recognize the objects of our faith, and not know the objects of our love? Shall we know those, of whose presence our imaginations have wrought in vain to shape so much as an outline, and not know those with whom we companied through the long years of our earthly sojourn; whose form, and bearing, and speaking, and looks, and every visible movement, are interwoven with our very consciousness; who are so knit to us, as to be all but our very selves? Such indeed is the hope of the Gospel, and the faith of the Catholic Church. Let no man defraud you of your joy. We shall meet again even as we parted—yet not altogether; there shall be no more tokens of the fall, no more lines of sorrow, no furrows of tears, no more distress, no more changes, no more fading, no more death; but all shall be fair and radiant, and full of life, as in Him that said 'Behold, that it is I Myself.'"

But if there will be recognition among the saved, there will be also (fearful prospect for the wicked) recognition among the lost. "Awful as the thought must be, we may not doubt that even in the outer darkness, they that have sinned together shall be conscious of their common anguish; and they that have tempted their fellows in condemnation, shall look in horror on the prey they have destroyed; and all the long-drawn

consequences of their evil life shall be unfolded to their sight, in the misery of those who have fallen by their guilt: and in the kingdom of sorrow and spiritual wickedness, remorse, and revenge, and hate, and horror, and despair, and the implacable strife of wills that on earth consented to do evil, shall kindle and multiply the torment of lost souls; each one reflecting another's agony, and making more intense the piercing energy of pain." Recognition, then, there will be, both among the lost and among the saved.

Shall there, then, be mutual recognition among the saved? and shall we remember those whom we miss from that blessed company? Will not the consciousness that some are wanting embitter even the bliss of the resurrection? Will the fellowship of some we love, fill the heart which yearns for those that appear not in glory? "These," it has been truly observed, "are hard reasonings, and too entangled that we should unravel them. What shall we say, then? God has not drawn up the veil, and we cannot pierce its folds. We may give indeed some sort of answer, but we cannot allay the unrest which these misgivings breathe into our minds. Let us, however, consider that God recognises all, both them that are saved and them that perish. He loves them beyond all love of ours, and His bliss is perfect; in the resurrection we shall be made partakers, as of His will, so of His bliss; and both in us shall be perfect too. This must be answer enough for the understanding; and until we know even as we are known, faith must make answer to our hearts."

V. There remains one other division of our subject, at which I can only briefly glance in conclusion—the results of the resurrection. On both sides, to the just and the unjust, to those in Christ and to those out of Christ, the results will be *enduring*.

To the righteous, to those who are Christ's, the glorious result of the resurrection will be life everlasting. This everlasting life—begun now, for "he that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life,"—enjoyed in fuller measure by those that sleep in Jesus,—shall burst forth in the resurrection into its full and complete development. Everlasting life "with the Lord"—everlasting

life in the full enjoyment of the purchased inheritance—everlasting life in—

“ Jerusalem the glorious!
The paradise of joy!
Where tears are ever banished,
And smiles have no alloy.”

Everlasting life in—

“ That sweet and blessèd country,
The home of God's elect,
That sweet and blessèd country,
That eager hearts expect.”

But, on the other hand, to the wicked, to those out of Christ, the terrible result of the resurrection will be everlasting death in body and in soul,—everlasting death with the devil and his angels,—everlasting death in that lake of torment, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

How solemn the question which this subject speaks to all! In what resurrection shall I have part? in that to everlasting life, or in that to everlasting death? Are you in Christ, or are you still out of Christ? On this turns the answer to these solemn questions. God has brought us to the last Sabbath Evening of another of our earthly years. Ere the last Sabbath of the next year comes round, the message will have come to some of us, “Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live.” Are we ready for that summons?—Are we ready for a still mightier summons, when “all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man,”—and when all the living shall be changed, either into incorruptible glory or into incorruptible dross? Have we laid hold each one of us by faith on Jesus Christ, as our all-sufficient Saviour? Can we look up to Him and say, each one in the language of personal appropriating faith, JESUS “LOVED ME, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME?” If so, then is all well; then we can look forward, “in sure and certain hope,” to “the Resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Prayer.

“ Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity—we give Thee hearty thanks for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear ; beseeching Thee, that it may please Thee, of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom ; that we, with all those who are departed in the true faith of Thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“ Jerusalem the glorious !
 The paradise of joy !
 Where tears are ever banished,
 And smiles have no alloy ;
 The Lamb is all thy splendour,
 The Crucified thy praise ;
 His laud and benediction
 Thy ransomed people raise.

With jasper glow thy bulwarks,
 Thy streets with emeralds blaze ;
 The sardius and the topaz
 Unite in thee their rays ;
 Thine ageless walls are garnished
 With amethyst unpriced ;
 The saints thy golden fabric,
 Thy corner-stone is CHRIST.

Thou hast no shore, fair ocean !
 Thou hast no time, bright day !
 Dear fountain of refreshment
 To pilgrims far away !
 Upon the Rock of Ages
 They raise thy holy tower ;
 Thine is the victor's laurel,
 And thine the golden dower.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Jerusalem the golden !
 With milk and honey blest ;
 Beneath thy contemplation
 Sink heart and voice opprest ;
 I know not, Oh ! I know not
 What joys await us there ;
 What radiancy of glory,
 What bliss beyond compare !

They stand, those halls of Sion,
 All jubilant with song,
 And bright with many an angel,
 And all the martyr throng :
 The Prince is ever in them,
 The daylight is serene ;
 The pastures of the blessèd
 Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David ;
 And there, from care released,
 The shout of them that triumph,
 The song of them that feast ;
 And they, who with their Leader
 Have conquered in the fight,
 For ever and for ever
 Are clad in robes of white.

Oh, sweet and blessèd country,
 The home of God's elect ;
 Oh, sweet and blessèd country,
 That eager hearts expect !
 Jesu, in mercy bring us
 To that dear land of rest ;
 Who art, with God the Father,
 And Spirit, ever blest.

