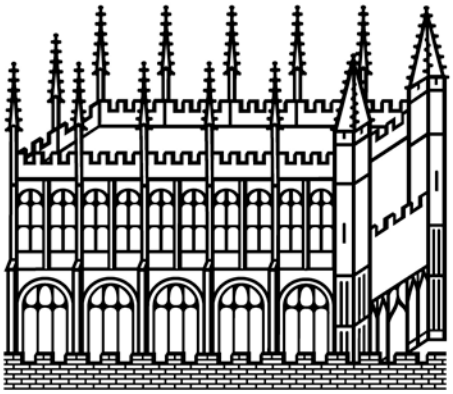

ALFORD'S LECTURES

ON THE

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

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FOUR LECTURES

ON THE INFLUENCE OF

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT,

AS THE GREAT MORAL PRINCIPLE OF

LOVE OF COUNTRY

AND

OBEDIENCE TO CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES.

BY THE

REV. HENRY ALFORD, M.A.,

VICAR OF WYMESWOLD, LEICESTERSHIRE, AND LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND HULSEAN LECTURER.

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THEATRE OF THE CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL,

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TO

HENRY BEAUFOY, ESQ., F.R.S.,

THESE LECTURES

ARE INSCRIBED

AS

A PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF HIS MANY ACTS OF MUNIFICENCE TOWARDS THE

City of London School,

AND AS

A MARK OF RESPECT JUSTLY DUE TO HIM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

naturally to a sister, as the best companion and the surest solace.

All these things, so common among us as to be set down merely to certain unaccountable propensities, are but instances of the salutary and fertilizing effects of the law of our God on our souls. Of all these states and feelings, the lower animals have only so much as may merely serve the purposes of birth and temporary nourishment. Duty, as such, it is wholly impossible that they should perform, or be actuated by moral obligation. These belong entirely to that personality with which the immortal soul of man is invested, but which the brute has not. And as this is so, then from that high attribute of man, joined as it is with direct responsibility to God, flow down to us, by the operation of the Divine law, all the distinctive blessings of our superior rank in creation.

Let us, therefore, contemplate with wonder and thankfulness the appointment of our God, who, by the commandment which enforces honour to our earthly parents, has brought us under the influence of all those affections and motives which constitute our best preparation for the trials and duties of life, and our best support in them; and which, as will hereafter be seen, give rise to new relations and obligations, fraught with the deepest consequences for the welfare and greatness of mankind.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE II.

THE LOVE AND LAWS OF HOME.

Τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα· ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ· ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται, καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.— Eph. vi. 2, 3.

1. It has been shown in the first lecture, how all the mutual relations and duties of the family spring out of the great primary law of parental authority.

2. In this lecture, it will be attempted to extend the same proof over those affections in the hearts of men which attach them to the spot where their childhood and their youth have been passed.

3. The love of home, in some degree or other, is common to all mankind. But the intensity and purity of the feeling vary considerably with circumstances and temperaments; nay, the feeling itself is not a simple, but a compounded one. It is partly to be ascribed doubtless to that constitutional attachment to place, which is so strongly observed in some even of the lower animals; partly to the universal effect of habit in engendering spontaneous action; partly, and in its higher form mainly, to the operation of the beneficent law which it is the object of these lectures to elucidate.

4. In order to establish this latter position, let

us examine the constitution and peculiarities of that which we call "home." In what does it consist? What is that word of deep meaning, that charm of power, when resolved into its elements and set clearly before us? With all allowance for the influence of local attachment, it is certainly not *mere* identity of place that constitutes home. The substance of home survives through change of situation; and the once-loved and familiar habitation may cease to be viewed with the same interest as before; nay, like other secondary objects of affection whose course is run, and their use over, may come to be regarded with indifference, or perhaps even with aversion. A new locality requires no time nor experience to invest it with the charm of home: it is as much home, in all that is really essential to that idea, the first day, as after years of inhabitation. Nor, again, is identity, or even similarity of circumstances, essential to home. There may be accession or diminution of comforts or of society; the sunshine of prosperity, or the storm of adversity: through all these the reality passes, untouched in its main features of tender and abiding interest.

5. Home is, the family in its constituted unity, existing together, complete in itself. Wherever this is, there is home, with all its duties and attachments. It is the recognized place of brothers and sisters, where they may come in and go out, not as guests, but as members. They arrive unannounced

—they have a right and a standing there. Whatever is there, is for them, in place and degree; for the body of which they are the parts, and for themselves in so far as they are bound up with the body. There they are sure to meet with sympathy, and return of the outflowing of feeling. It is not as in the wide world, where the heart must close itself up, for it finds no outlet for its yearnings; but at home is the very freedom and blessedness of social intercourse, where none envies, none despises, none is hardened; where rivalry is unknown, and selfishness unsuspected; where what is mine, is thine. At home, the very language spoken is its own; made up of a thousand remembrances and playful incidents, which have been interwoven with speech and thought. There is a history and a literature of home; its history is sometimes joyous —the onward steps and triumphs of its cherished members, the travels and adventures by which the common stock is enriched; or sometimes of a sadder mood—the remembered voice and look of some one, whose place is now vacant; or, sadder still, the moral defects and delinquencies of one or another amongst them. And the acquisition of letters and knowledge has its chronicle too; the elements of thought have, for the most part, been imported in common,—the interest in men and books has not been individual, but collective. And alas for the family which has not a *home-religion;* in which, (with, as in the former cases, all due

regard to the solemn responsibility of each individual to his God for the guardianship of that which has been entrusted to him,) there is yet common ground of thought, a community of religious feeling, a compactness of religious standing,—no violent disruptions nor oppositions,—but all, in the infinite variety of individual minds, passing onward in harmony of a deep and peculiar character, which is of, and is bound up with, home.

6. And whence springs all this? If not, as we have seen, the effect of, nor dependent on, place nor circumstance,—what is the spell which keeps together persons in whom, as in others, are all the elements of disjunction and strife? Trace each one of these phases of union to its cause, and we shall see that it is owing to the same great law of parental honour, which prescribes to each member of the family his individual duty. For home is a state constituted under certain laws, and possessing corporate unity in virtue of conformity to those laws. It is a system of subordinate planets, acted on by a central force, and owing to that central force their mutual relations and harmonious action.

7. For what is it which endows each member of a family with his domestic rights, of which we have spoken? It is not any claim of his own. A man cannot say, "Where I was born and bred, there I have a right to enter and be." No such plea is recognized, except under circumstances where it is otherwise recommended. The right which we pos-

sess in home is, that it is "our father's house." Here we mount up at once to the common head, from which our mutual relations are derived. And when we enter our home, it is with this as the pervading idea on our minds. Elsewhere, we were our own masters. Time and habits were at our own disposal. But when we come within the atmosphere of home, the delightful but no less recognized constraints of its laws are upon us. Elsewhere we spoke boldly, acted independently; but here respect and deference assert their present power. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is the secret of all the distinctive peculiarities and calm delights of home.

8. And in the *history* of home, how can it be for a moment severed from those who have been its founders and continuators? Looking backward over the memories of that place, bears a strange similitude to the same reflective process in the history of a race, or indeed of all mankind. First there is the mysterious period before the lives of any of the brothers and sisters, known only by legend, and with that half-real and easily-lost knowledge which results from oral and personal narration; and in all this they look up entirely to their parents; they are the links which join them to the records of history—the bridge over the gulf which separates what we *read* from what we *know*. Then passing onward, what are all the memories of infancy, but so many records of their parents' love

and teaching? What is each successive birth, carefully remembered and chronicled, but a new proof of their corporate dependence on their parents, and a new example of love and fostering care? And whence came all their knowledge of things without? Was it not by the morning lesson or evening tale—the little fragments of converse striking on the youthful ear? Whence their skill, but by imitation? Whence their discriminating power, but by the repeated cautions of those kind unwearied monitors, whose forbearance was never tired,—who never despised them for their errors, nor disliked them for their annoyances, but were ever ready to explain what was difficult, and cheer them on to new and higher trials?

9. And in the *religion* of the family more especially, are the parents inseparably connected with every associated thought and memory of home. The first tones of prayer were taught to each in the still evening, at their mother's knee. Nor could the infant thought pass by, nor the childish memory forget, that mild and gentle face, half way between itself and heaven, collecting the first scattered yearnings of devotion, before they found wing to rise into the far sublime to our Father above. At the family meeting in the glad and cheerful morning, first in accordance with the father's voice did each child, in its turn last in the prayerful chorus, lisp those simple and holy words in which our

Saviour hath taught us to pray. And from this time onward, whether it were the tale of creation, or the patriarchal history, so interwoven with home in the minds of all of us,—or the stirring examples of the chosen people,—or psalm, or prophecy, or the life and sayings and sufferings of the Redeemer,—all these have flowed to them from the same source, derived their freshness and interest from the same affectionate expounder, and are ever remembered in union with parental love and filial duty.

10. Thus is the charm and blessing of home the same great law of God, which furnishes an elevating and sanctifying power to the deepest attachments of which our nature is capable.

11. And it is in perfect accordance with these conclusions, that we find those persons ever most warmly attached to home, whose families are best and most dutifully regulated. The love of home, almost unknown among heathen nations, has increased with the propagation of our holy religion. And in those people, who have imbibed and reflected the light of that religion most purely, do we find it in the most active operation. While some languages have not even a word to express the idea, it has ever been the pride and delight of the Protestant nations of northern Europe, to be bound in affection to their *homes*. The love of home has entered into their literature and poetry, and inspired them in their struggles for freedom.

12. It will be necessary, for the purpose of the

Lectures yet to follow, to analyze somewhat more in detail the component elements of this attachment, and to show what part each bears in those feelings, which actuate mankind in other combinations, and towards other objects.

13. On regarding home with this view, we see it first as the place, in ordinary cases, of birth, and of all early recollections. The care of the mother, from whom we have received our first nourishment, is in a measure transferred in our minds to the abode where that care was bestowed. There our habits became confirmed, and our opinions grew up; there our limbs knit into strength, and our stature increased with years. There, those who are our nearest and dearest relatives in maturer life, were our constant companions. All this points to a golden age of our lives, to which we are accustomed to look back with unmixed delight. And if we may attempt to classify, according to the two parental influences, the associations connected with home, we should set down all these to the *maternal* side. They belong to home, as it is our common mother; it is our common mother, in virtue of her who there brought us forth, and tended and fed and guided us in our early days. And to this class of attachments belong properly all those strong localized interests, which exist in every man's mind with regard to his home:—all that charm, which cannot be explained in words, but which has powerful influence even over the hard-

hearted and sensual;—the very windings of the paths and groupings of the trees, the smell of the fields, and a thousand minute circumstances of a similar kind, conspire to make up that exquisite and heart-stirring delight with which we visit in after days the home of our youth.

14. And under this class I may also notice the many collateral sympathies which branch out from the main course of our home affections. To the last day of their or our lives, we lose not sight of those who have formed the accidental accompaniments and assistants of the home system; the nurse who cared for us in infancy,—the familiar faces which moved about us in childhood,—these, and others, partake of the gratitude which centres in her, whose assistants they were, and have thrown over them part of the sanctities and charities of home. The same expansive tendency may be traced in the feelings with which the neighbourhood of home is regarded. The town or village itself, insignificant as it may be, has in our view always a peculiar charm; we are pleased to see it noticed,—we delight to show its imagined superiority; it is a point on which no reasoning will convince us, no comparison undeceive us; the very cottages and walls and roads, the very streets and shops, are in our eyes as no others are. How many a wearied pilgrim in the rough ways of life has at last come to end his days at the place of his birth, long after every friend has departed from it, and the beloved

abode has passed into other hands,—but merely from the charm which it has always possessed for him above the rest of the world! How often do we see some place, to the view of a passing stranger utterly devoid of interest, to which notwithstanding its inhabitants are devotedly attached, and where perhaps the very blemishes themselves are the objects of their admiration and love! Thus do we trace the stream of home-affections, springing from the pure and holy fount of the maternal relation, winding over and fertilizing wider tracts of human feeling and action; the charm of one home extending over many; the combination of brothers and sisters in a house reproducing itself in the more extensive relations of fellow-townsmen and neighbours, and provision made by the God of love for yet further spreading effects upon our race, hereafter to be considered.

15. But the other great division of the home-influences comprises those by which we are habituated to obedience, and subjected to a regular system of law. This,—though in a matter so complicated as the human affections, neither of the two divisions is wholly exclusive of the other,—may be designated as the *paternal* department of home. There first, and from the word and authority of a father, have we learnt that blind self-will is not to be our rule of action; there first have we found, that to act on the declared will of another, is both ordained for us by Providence, and conducive to

our safety and interest. And here let us pause, and contemplate the nature of the laws of home.

16. It is most proper, that the simplest form of laws hould first be set before the mind,—and that afterwards it should learn to appreciate all the variations and complications with which it has been affected through human infirmity and depravity. Now this is exactly the case with the laws of home. They are first presented to us as the result of an absolute irresponsible will of one caring for our good. In this their first presentation,—to doubt them, is to break them: to ask a reason for them, is to question the authority from which they proceed. In paternal and patriarchal government, the desire to benefit, and the power to judge for the best, are taken for granted: and the family alone, of all human institutions, is founded on the maxims of a state of innocency. But the government of the family cannot long thus proceed. When the faculty of observation begins its busy work in the children, they will be ready enough to perceive that there must be certain great laws, according to which the family code must be framed; and the wise father will be even beforehand with this faculty, and impress such truth on their minds with his earliest instructions. For it is a maxim in ethics, that the due appreciation of a higher moral law is the best safeguard for the observation of a lower. Thus the obedience of the family will by degrees become a reasonable service, without respect being infringed:

the mind will be prepared to *obey*, as indeed a duty bound by God on the very condition of our being, but not in inconsistency with its other necessary conditions; the foundations at the same time of allegiance and of freedom will be laid, and parental honour will go hand in hand with individual responsibility.

17. At the same time, it is not in the clear light of convincing reason that all laws and regulations can be viewed. Individual caprice, local custom, inveterate habit, as they cannot enact anything which oversteps the bounds of unchangeable right, so within those bounds can and do enact much that must be observed. The individual wish of a parent is the foundation of many of the laws of home, and as such is universally respected by the family. We thus learn to obey, not because the thing ordered is of itself right, but because the person ordering it has authority in matters indifferent. A certain part of the house is kept in privacy as the retreat of the father,—his room of business or of study. By an universal acquiescence, the members of the family comply with that his wish, and the privacy is kept inviolate. From one part of the garden, flowers may be plucked for the bouquet, or the specimen-case; in another, each blossom is to be carefully left as it grows. This regulation may depend upon no assignable reason in things themselves, but only on the will of her, whose wish in that department is beyond all question paramount. And thus like-

wise, besides the habit of compliance before-mentioned, do we learn to consult the wishes of others, without minute inquiry into their intrinsic reasonableness;—and provision is made for many of the little courtesies of intercourse with one another. For the deference paid to the wish of a parent, if yielded cheerfully and affectionately, will not stop with its first object, but will flow onward, and lead to deference, differing in degree, but the same in kind, for the wish of a brother or a sister, because it *is* their wish. And this, again, will not be confined to the limits of the family, but will operate also towards kinsmen and friends, and beyond them towards other persons in general: thus affording us another example of the unbounded richness of this fount of parental love in nourishing and refreshing the charities of the human heart.

18. In this lesser legislation of home, local custom, also, bears a considerable part. Some practice, indifferent in itself, has long been hallowed by home-usage; and thus brings with it an obligation on the members of the family. Many household customs are thus continued through the various branches—each in time becoming an independent family of its own, but all preserving remembrance and observance of that which was the habit of the common home, where all were bred. Each also, at its own foundation, becomes endowed with a set of habits of its own, all arising gradually

from the will and convenience of the parents,—all bound upon the children both by usage and by the assertion of parental authority;—and so home becomes to us the abode of a peculiar kind of life, with its stated observances, and recurring times, and customs which we love.

19. A third element in this part of our home affections, is that which has arisen from the force of spontaneous individual habit. The individual mind grows up, subject to the influences under which it is found, and forming its own path consistently with the limits within which it is enclosed. So home laws and practices set the frame-work, on which our personal pursuits, and thoughts that none else intermeddle with, are filled in. Each of us becomes an integral part of that whole, not merely in his corporate, but also in his individual capacity; acted on by, and in his turn acting on, the community. Thus home is to us the source of our personal habits, and our personal influences on one another: the place where good in one acts at the greatest advantage to produce good in another; and from which we bring away our individual character moulded and modified by practices which have been brought about in accordance with its unconsciously received teaching. Thus it is that the members of the same family have, to a stranger, not only similar lineaments of feature, but a similar cast of mind and speech; a similar way of viewing things;—a similar gait and tone;—all these having

sprung up, as parts of their personal being, under the common influences to which they all have been subjected.

20. We shall have occasion, in the next Lecture, to recur to these influences in their more extensive action on whole races of mankind; and before we pass on to that part of our subject, let us survey what has already been said.

21. We have seen the family relations all taking their obligations, and inheriting their richest blessings, from the great law of God, which commands us to honour our father and mother. In the first Lecture, the influence of these two parental relations on their individual offspring was traced, and the duties and affections of the members of the family to one another were shown to derive their sanctity from the same great central law of reverence for their parents. In this second Lecture, the corporate body, with its associations, endearments, and laws, composing that object of attachment which we call *home*, has been under our consideration; and here again we have seen that love and obedience to the parents, who are the founders and continuators of home, are at the root of all those feelings so important to the happiness and exaltation of our being.

22. So that as yet we have observed no departure from, but the closest compliance with, that beneficent law of our Creator which we enounced in the opening of our first Lecture. All the training of man from his infancy upward has been shown to

be a developing of his natural sympathies in obedience to the higher ends of his existence. The first yearnings of childish affection — the hopes and desires and pursuits of restless youth—the constraining bonds of home-affection in the maturer man—have been all shown to be in direct accordance with, and subservient to, the revealed will of God respecting him; and that revealed will has been so far proved to be no arbitrary enactment, regardless of the conditions of the being of the creature, but one link only of a wonderful chain of the purposes of Almighty beneficence.

O Lord, how manifold are thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all!

LECTURE III.

CONTENTS.

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LECTURE III.

THE LOVE OF COUNTRY.

Τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα· ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ· ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται, καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.— Eph. vi. 2, 3.

1. We now forsake the hallowed bounds and precincts of home, and the immediate action of the rules and habits of the family, and follow the man into his place in the wide world. All that has been previously treated of, is but a state of training and education for men's duties in life. But, on the other hand, those duties themselves are but training and education for the final perfect state of our being—an existence in eternity. So that what we found in the small and limited world of home, we may also expect to find in the greater world of human passions and interests. The same beneficent Providence which was observed gathering up under a high Divine law the affections and sympathies of the family, will, we may reasonably expect, continue so to act, when man has ripened into a maturer form of responsibility and energy.

2. The object of my present Lecture will be to trace this in that department of our affections, which we know as *love of country*.

3. Man has been created a social being: and it

is impossible for him altogether to divest himself of the tendency to group and congregate. As soon therefore as, being sent forth from home, he begins to make his way in the world, he finds himself a member of some society or other,—the school, or the family of his employer, or even some self-constituted association, in which the home-yearnings are, however insufficiently, yet in some measure satisfied, in the absence from home itself. And thus as he passes onward, does he become bound in attachment to the place of his new residence or employment; and parts and fragments of the love of home are bestowed on the various combinations of social union in which he is found.

4. But it is the known habit of the human mind to ascend and generalize, and of healthy human sympathies to expand themselves. Thus we find him not only *forming* combinations whereto he may transfer portions of his home affections, but naturally combining in wider union with those divisions in which God has arranged the human race. And of these, the most strikingly distinguished from one another are those of *nations*. Originally sprung, as is generally the case, from a common stock,—or where this is not so, from the fusion together of several elements into a common whole,—the nation forms a vast corporate body, bearing much analogy, in several particulars, to the family. And among the most remarkable of these are the two great bonds of union which we have already

noticed as attaching us to home,—the fact of common habitation and nourishment,—and the obedience to the same constituted authorities.

5. It is principally with the former of these, or what I have called the *maternal* side of our country's claims on us, that I am in this Lecture concerned. And I shall consider it in two points of view: first, as the mind, already prepared by home and its remembrances, finds for itself such analogy: and, secondly, as the fact of benefits received is further presented to the mind thus prepared, over and above that first evident analogy.

6. By what has been learnt at home, the practice of having a father and mother to honour has become habitual. The mind unconsciously pursues the same track to which it has been accustomed: and without definitely setting before itself such an object of search, is ever searching where its awakened sympathies may fix themselves. In friendship, neighbourhood, provincial location, man finds so many centres of union more or less pleasing, and possessing more or less of that familiarizing and endearing influence, for which he yearns. But as knowledge increases, and the glance learns to range wider around, he perceives a relation which even more than all these fulfils the idea of home, and expands it. Around him are others, born of the same race, speaking the same language, living under the same laws, fed from the same soil; in fact, satisfying almost all of the conditions under

which a family exists together in its home. Sprung from different parents, localized in different neighbourhoods,—there is yet one *common parent* of all these, and one unvarying home. Our country is our general mother, and her bounds our natural home. Within those limits, we are like the brothers and sisters of a family, not strangers, but native: not guests, but members. Whatever is there, is, in place and degree, for us: for the body of which we are parts, and for us, inasmuch as we are bound up with the body. And if the members of this greater family cannot, from its very constitution, be so closely united to one another as in its prototype, yet in all possible degrees is there the same community of interest, and sharing of advantage. As regards the rest of the world, the nation is as *one*: as regards one another, national greatness, national advantages, national success and failure, are common to all its citizens. In all these particulars does the mind, true to its original training, recognize and embrace as a great home, the common country of the whole race of which the individual forms a part. A man finds himself bound to his fellow-countrymen by a common *language*, which has grown up amidst events, and bears trace of changes, whose effects are still acting on the great brotherhood of the nation. The *history* of their country is the inheritance of all; over it their hearts have glowed,—by it their liberties have been built up: it is full of the adventures and sufferings of those who lived where

they live, and tilled the fields which yield them food, and bled for the freedom which they enjoy. It has its triumphs, and its reverses: its high deeds of honour, and its blots of shame. In all this they have one sympathy, one interest: there is none to reproach another, none to deride or depreciate: the glory of our country is the glory of all, and in her disgrace none of us can be honoured.

7. And the whole mental history of the race has most usually its unity and continuity, which makes it the inheritance of all. New inventions, new elements of thought, whether grasped by some brother of the family, or imported from some other national home, have conferred upon all common advantages, and raised the whole community in the scale of being. And the nation, like the family, has its religious bond likewise: not perhaps by exact accordance of outward profession or ritual,—but in a common religious spirit, a pervading tone and temper,—a religious standing before the outer world. For here the mind, in search of the domestic analogy, will find it followed in its exceptions, as well as its rules: in that whereas, in the family, common accord cannot break down individual responsibility, but must be found only so far as consistent with that higher law,—so here also, the collective conscience of those larger units of which the religious state is made up, must not be crushed in an endeavour after uniformity,—but accord preserved only so far as is consistent with that other and

higher obligation. Such accord however, as matter of observation, *is* found among nations, and is recognized by strangers and by themselves, in spite of the many differing religious bodies into which all free states are divided.

8. And as connected with this branch of our subject, it is curious to observe how the language of mankind, that great index of thought, has ever striven to express, in the terms for "our country," the analogy with the home of the family, considered as our father's house. Πάτρις, "patria," "patrie," "vaterland," * all bear testimony to this. We speak of "the home of our fathers:" colonies are said to spring from their "mother country:" the city to which resort is made for supply, is the "metropolis:" and by a further generalization, we speak of the earth as the "mother" of us all.

9. It is not to be supposed that this analogy is less true, or less operative on the minds of men, because it fails, when followed into the close personal relations which bound us to our earthly parents. The great power of analogy is, that of similitude in difference: the operation of a great law is then most surely demonstrated, when circumstances are not identical, but similar. Our personal wants were supplied, our personal knowledge furnished, by those whose appointed duty it was to watch over, nourish, and inform, our infant

* Our own "country," if at least derived, as supposed, from "conterrata," expresses more directly the *fraternal* relation.

being. That such is not the function of our country, except under peculiar circumstances, is a difference rendered necessary by the very nature of the case: but that we do find in our country a superintending and fostering relation, so similar to that of our parents, as to cause us to give to her the honour and love we give to them,—is proved alike, as has been seen, by the language and practice of mankind.

10. And in thus transferring the maternal character to our country, we recognize in her, where the case admits, those powerful associations which have in the last case been described as belonging to *home*. Local attachment is indeed not so vividly particularized, but wider spread—extended over even places where we have never been present;—as when the returning exile greets with tears of joy the cliffs of his native land. Collateral sympathy also exists with all that belongs to, or is connected with, the soil of our birth. The ship which bears her sons over the waters,—the flag on which her bearings are emblazoned,—the manufacture of her looms, or the flowers of her hedgerows, all are regarded with affection: all stir the heart of the absent with tender memories. And, as with our family home, so with our country,—we delight to extol its advantages;—to read or pronounce its eulogy:—the sky of our island, no matter how clouded,—the climate, no matter how variable, are those under which we choose to live, and to

which the traveller looks forward to return before he die.

11. So far have I followed the *subjective* part of my present branch of enquiry: that in which the mind seeks analogies with its home and home feelings, and finds them.

12. I proceed to the *objective* part; that in which I shall endeavour to show how, in our relation as members of one great national household, affections and sympathies are urged on us, extending beyond this analogy, and belonging to higher combinations of our being.

13. The idea of mutual defence, which might in an uncivilized age serve as an additional bond to the members of a family, is seldom brought out in the settled arrangements of modern society. Yet we have some modifications of it now and then occurring,—as, in the first introduction of the children into the world by their parents;—the sheltering arm extended by elder brothers over the younger, and by the whole male portion of the family, as such, over the female. We have also a vestige of it in the refuge which the abode and care of the children affords the parents in their age and weakness.

But in the love of our country, this is ever a prominent feature—that we are bound together for the common defence of our parent, and in her, of one another. In proportion as the danger of national aggression is greater than that from smaller

bodies or from individuals, is the national instinct of self-preservation more vivid. And let not this be represented to us as a mere utilitarian feeling, springing from fear of our liberties and comforts being lost to us. That the source of it lies deeper, is evident, were it only from this consideration,—that nothing can be more precious to a man than his life:—weighed therefore in the scale of bare utility, the progress of defensive operations should be, to expose to danger first everything less precious, before risking this last and best possession. Now we know that the reverse is the fact: that men are ever ready to risk their lives, which they love best, in order that their country may be defended. We must seek therefore for this, as for every other great human motive, far deeper than the shallow and unreal system of mere utility would direct us; and find in the working of that sacred law of filial duty, in which the foundations of our moral being were laid, the true solution of the self-sacrifice of the patriot.

14. And here is a direct instance of its operation, as a moral law of our nature, co-extensively with that nature itself. The question may never have been presented to a man, whether he will stand for the defence of his parents, or sacrifice his comforts for the safety of his family. The great law, however, in its other forms, has been in operation upon him; and he goes out into the world built up in accordance with its enactments. He finds himself

now in circumstances, in which self-sacrifice and exertion are required of him in behalf of his country. The claim is at once conceded:—and why? Because it is but a further and higher expansion of the filial duties, and as such at once approves itself to his mind as being legitimate. We may regard this as a noble example of the axiom with which we set out in our first Lecture,—that the natural training which our heavenly Father in his Providence bestows on us, is qualified to fit us for the higher requirements of our duty in His world.

15. But not only in the hour and presence of danger is the demand made on a man to sacrifice self for his country. The filial duty which we owe to our common mother causes us to be ever anxious for her welfare, and to look upon all her sons and daughters as having a claim on our exertions for good. The true lover of his country is he who ardently desiring to see her raised in the scale of intellectual and moral excellency, spares not himself, that he may be the means of spreading knowledge, and awakening sympathies, among his countrymen. This, although less obtrusive, is yet a higher form of patriotism, than that which stands in the forefront of fame, and deals with great and visible results. The annals of so-called heroism present to us no such bright examples, as will one day shine forth from the now unrecorded ranks of those, who have visited the sick and the prisoners, —have sacrificed comforts and property in teaching

the ignorant, relieving the destitute, and reclaiming the lost. It is in such characters as these, that we see God's great law of duty and obedience predominant over all selfish considerations; from such as these that we learn the beauty of self-devotion on behalf of our country's real good.

16. Let us however descend to the ordinary every-day life of those whom Providence has placed in the same country. It is not to be expected that every one will be found exerting his energies in any high or notable manner for the accomplishment of national good. Still there is incumbent upon each man, whatever may be his situation or means, an amount of social duties proportioned to his power for the good of his country. Are there around us those who are badly housed and insufficiently fed? Do distress and want cry for relief? Setting aside the mass of systematic deception which we are compelled to know prevails, are we persuaded that among our fellow-countrymen numbers are in indigence whom we might relieve? Then by our duty to our country, is it required of us that we "hide not ourselves from our own flesh;"* but that, as we should glow with shame if a brother or a sister were "naked and destitute of daily food,"† so our filial reverence for our country should cover us with shame at the destitution of her offspring. To repudiate such a claim as this, and walk in proud solitariness, leaving others to their fate, would be

* Isa. lviii. 7. † James ii. 15.

but to join in the question of the first murderer, "Am I my brother's keeper?"* Far differently feels the man, who coming from the domestic home in which his youth has been trained, finds his family to be mankind,—his field of labour, his country;—his duty, to do good.

17. And here perhaps we have the widest operation of this great law on man. Every one is brought under it, in place and degree. It binds together nations as great associations for mutual good. It is the foundation of true liberty: the definer and guardian of all true rights of men. For no one actuated by filial obedience to his country, will in maintaining his own rights, transgress or trench upon those of his brethren, but regard the preservation of these as a sacred duty, and the best safeguard for the integrity of his own.

Happy indeed is that land, whose children are bound to her well-being and the welfare of each other by the broad and generous action of the Divine parental law!

18. It may be allowed, in concluding this lecture, to trace some of its effects, and the disturbances of them in nations.

19. In the immense variety of personal dispositions, it is not to be expected that all the denizens of a country should think alike, or be actuated by the same class of desires, in promoting her welfare. As the occupation of each places him in a certain

* Gen. iv. 9.

line of action in life, so in that line of action will his efforts for his country run. And those collateral endeavours, which are not exactly in the main routine of his employment, will as a matter of course be shaped by it, and follow in some measure its direction. And when many persons, of the same or similar pursuits and interests, hold commerce and interchange of thought in a free country, it is to be expected that community of feeling and object should form a bond of union between them. Add to this the many links that unite men, from family connections, or local interests, or private friendship, and we cannot be surprised at the formation of *parties* in free states. Parties, however, are fully consistent with all dutiful obedience to our country, and all intelligent and devoted service of her. The great principles of ruling mankind for their good, are not, in our present state of imperfection, so clear, but that the different views respecting them require mingling together, and mutual counteraction: and such is the wholesome result, when party differences and conflicting interests subsist in subordination to the great all-comprehending law of our country's love—when we remember, that we have all one mother; and that however our interests may seem within certain limits to be different, yet there is a higher and wider sense, in which they are identical. It is only when this is forgotten—when men cannot lift their view above the narrow precincts of their own party,—in other words, when

party degenerates into *faction*, that it becomes really injurious to a state—the brothers and sisters are at variance with one another—and the spectacle becomes that of the house divided against itself, which cannot stand.

20. The great principle of our country's love may also be interfered with by exaggerated ideas of the immutability of party sentiments. The loving and intelligent son will study with care the circumstances of the family, and ascertain by what course he may be the instrument of the greatest good. If, on such examination, and in the course of such watchfulness, it appears to him that his sentiments or his course of action require modifying,—that the time for a certain set of actions or feelings is gone by, and the day for the work of another class of energies is dawning,—then will he not cling in pertinacity to what he once thought and avowed, merely because he did so,—but he will have moral courage to aim higher, in his obedience to the great law of his Maker, than at the mere approval of those around him, or the equivocal praise of having stood still while Providence has moved onwards; and will boldly avow, and earnestly cast himself into, the new course of action thus marked out for him. Hence—by this intelligent and manly service of our country—is it, that most great beneficial changes have taken place in political constitutions. The two great elements of free states usually are, those who advocate change too sweepingly and too soon,

and those who resist it too pertinaciously and too long. Let only each of these be actuated by a generous and manly love of their country,—and when the providential opening for change arrives, the one will confess himself ready to adopt it, as a means of that conservation itself of which he is an advocate; the other will be content to abate somewhat of his reforming zeal, and accept the moderate practicable proposals of his rival. And thus, wholesomely matured by opposition and retardation, the proposed improvement makes its way into the constitution, not as the crude scheme of an innovator, but as the ripe conviction of all; and a new common ground is formed, on which fresh opinions and fresh interests may grow up,—and future and still higher struggles may be maintained.

21. Thus we see the Divine Law working upon mankind in many departments of human action, and in all of them fruitful of good. We have now tracked it some way from its source, and followed one main stream into its minute and fertilizing branches.

22. Our next Lecture will lead us to trace the other great division of its operations, in 'obedience to constituted authorities.'

LECTURE IV.

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1. Duty of simple obedience in the family, 2. in the state. 3. The former a preparation for the latter. 4. Beneficial effects of this. 5. Limitation of absolute rule more necessary in states than in families, but a counterbalance to the popular love of liberty wanted, 6. and found, in filial reverence for constituted authorities, 7. and paramount subjection of the individual to God. 8. Many enactments cannot be judged of by the *subject*, from his narrow sphere of vision. 9. Many the result of custom—its importance in the permanence of institutions. 10. Effects of national laws on national character, 11. illustrated in the love of truth which distinguishes the English character, 12. in the appreciation of solid good, 13. and the religious mind of England. 15. The source of these in the English home. 16. The permanence of our institutions, a fulfilment of the *promise* accompanying the commandment. Lesson to be learnt from this. 18. Recapitulation. 19. Concluding address on the extreme importance of this great law of God.

LECTURE IV.

OBEDIENCE TO CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES.

Τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα· ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντλὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ· ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται, καὶ ἔσῃ μακρχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.—Eph. vi. 2, 3.

1. THE only prescribed duty of man in his uprightness, was an act of simple obedience. And in reviewing the state of the family, we have already seen that the same simplicity of enactment pervades its code. There can be no doubt that simple obedience, if everything else were pure and free from taint, would be the highest state of the moral being. And therefore the law of God commands us to *obey:* leaving it for us to discover the many complications and limitations of this duty entailed upon us by the entrance of sin and selfishness into the nature of man.

2. In the wider and maturer relations of men, the same simple law is carried onwards. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers."* And the descent and delegation of all power from God is, in the same place of Scripture, set before us. We have Him as the highest Power, the great Father of all:—those who exercise power on earth,

* Rom. xiii. 1.

are His deputies, acting for Him. And therefore to each of these, in his place and constituted office, obedience is due.

3. Now the first lesson of all this is given to us in the admirable constitution of the family. There the father stands visibly in the place of God; and all the feelings of reverence which we have described in the second Lecture, are spontaneously given to him, in virtue of his place as father.

4. This theocratic constitution of the family, answers, in its relative place in human life, to that imperfect state in which the chosen people were, by similar training, prepared for the maturer age and duties of the perfect man in Christ. In this preparatory stage, the *habit of obedience* is learnt. And this is of immense importance. When a man is habituated rather to obey than to disobey, it becomes easier for him to be a good citizen than a bad one: his natural place is under the laws of his country, and he renders a cheerful and steady compliance to their requisitions. Thus by the parental relation and the obedience due to it, is the way prepared for the wider duties of subjects to the laws and institutions of their country.

5. Following the same train of thought as in that part of the second Lecture which treated of this subject, we remark, that if in the family there were certain prescribed limits of right and wrong, which the paternal will cannot overstep, much more are these noticeable and important in regulating the

governing powers in the state. In the family, mutual love, and the very affections of nature, operate as some safeguard against oppression and selfishness: but in the state, these ties are much weaker, rivalry stronger, and every temptation to transgress strict justice increased. In free countries therefore, the history of constitutions has been principally the record of the limitations of the governing will to certain conditions necessary to be observed for the securing of impartial justice and the good of all. But it cannot be denied that in the course of such limitation, some counterbalance is needed to the ardour and enthusiasm of minds pursuing the reality, or the phantom, of liberty. The multitude have ever been easily stirred to assert real or imagined right. Golden prospects have been unfolded before them, and energies awakened which, if suffered to make their way unchecked, would result in the overthrow of rights more precious than those for which they are striving.

6. This wholesome corrective is found in the reverential spirit with which the good citizen regards the institutions of his country. The same decorum of approach, and the backwardness to judge rashly, actuate him, as if he had to remonstrate with a parent, and endeavour to change his commands. Amidst such an endeavour, and till the change is effected, obedience is the rule and habit of his life. While sensible of the inconveni-

ence, and even perhaps of the injustice of the law for the amendment of which he strives, he views it as part and parcel of those venerable enactments, which time may have deprived of their applicability to present circumstances, but cannot deprive of his respect and deference.

7. In the midst of this influence of reverential feeling for his country's laws, the good citizen can never forget that great Father above, who is the source of all law, and who has set up the greatest of all constituted authorities in the individual conscience. The very detachment from his earthly parents, and mingling with the great family of mankind, cast him more immediately, as a rule of life analogous and succeeding to the code of his home, upon the will of God, as declared and known respecting him. Set as he is to act for himself, becoming probably himself the parent of a household, here must he look for his guidance, and the pattern on which he must rule. The declared will of God, as written in His word, and impressed on the tables of the heart of man, is the great law of the whole human family. And thus, while the denizens of a free state are themselves both enforcers and obeyers of the law, are they led, on the one hand, to regard *law* as the result of the Divine will respecting them, —the condition under which Providence has placed them,—and on the other, are prevented from servile compliance to that, whose true service, like that of its Author, is one of perfect freedom. Thus again,

as in the case of the family, will the foundations of allegiance and liberty be simultaneously laid; and honour will be given to whom honour is due, while at the same time each man, as a citizen, no less than in his more private capacity, is regardful of the account which he must give of himself to God. Blessed indeed is that state, whose members have been so diligently and lovingly trained in the bosom of their homes, as to go forth to her service in the world with this happy combination of feelings: who are ever ready to bow down to the will of their common earthly parent, but in the light and liberty of the children of a Father who is in heaven. Blessed that land, whose citizens are "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;"* able to advise, but reluctant to reproach; subject to her laws, not for wrath, but for conscience sake.

8. As however in the legal constitution of the family, so in that of the state, it is not every enactment, which can be viewed in the clear light of convincing reason, and approved to every individual conscience at once. All are not qualified for thus judging: the private individual, leading his life in a small sphere of observation, ignorant of the wider bearings of principles, and the complications of human actions which must be provided for,—cannot form a rational judgment which is worthy in all cases to guide him. Such was exactly the case with the child in his subjection to the parent. The

* James i. 19.

parent's superior knowledge, and more extensive experience, claim a recognition in the mind of the child, and ensure that being obeyed, which does not at the moment approve itself to the obeyer. And so it ought to be, and is, with the good citizen. Knowing that the laws of his country are of wider application than he can appreciate, this sufficient reason overbears the subordinate objection, and he yields a compliance from persuasion that it is best, coupled with filial reverence for the enacting authority.

9. Again, as in the family, custom, sometimes national, sometimes local, has great influence in state enactments. Arbitrary as certain portions of them may seem when abstractedly considered, they have the prescriptive right of usage,—a right of all others in civil matters not to be lightly regarded. For it is in these minute anomalies, these intricate interlacings with the habits of individuals and families and parishes and provinces, that much of the permanence of institutions consists. Centralize and simplify them all, and though a better account may in theory be given of them, and some present trouble spared, yet they will rest upon one prop only, and may be overthrown by one blow:—whereas now they have ten thousand roots struck deep among the daily lives of the people, and thence deriving security and stability. Thus do these enactments of custom bring with them not only the reverence with which family usage is

regarded, but also a valid reason why they should be upheld and obeyed; and the good citizen and loyal son of his country joins in his mind both these motives in his compliance with them.

10. In following out the analogy with our former account of home-habits and institutions, we now come to speak of the formation of national character by means of civil and political influence. As in the family, so here, the individual characters of the various units of a nation, growing up under the same general regulation and customs, acquire a similarity to one another, easily discernible to one of a foreign stock. Many elements, it is true, go to make up this similarity. Identity of climate,—the prevalence of one fashion of dress,—and the same types of physical weakness and strength, give a general outward likeness to the citizens of one country: while the possession of a common history, language, and literature, ensures a certain coincidence in practical views of life, the conduct of thought, and the formation and direction of taste. But that part of the national character which is beyond comparison the most important,—the moral and religious elements of likeness between the citizens, is owing almost entirely to the identity of political constitution, and the common spirit of the nation's laws.

11. Hence is found, if I be not mistaken, that openness of heart and love of truth and honesty, which distinguish (and may they ever distinguish)

the character of our favoured people; because we have been trained in filial obedience to institutions whose foundation is in their simplicity of dealing between man and man;—because the decision of our country's laws is unattainable by bribes, and inevitable by tortuous dealing;—because in her proceedings all care is taken to arrive at truth, and all boldness shown in acting on it. Nor, I think, is this a point on which mistake can easily be made; for any one who observes the state of men's minds in this country, will see, that in the midst of almost unparalleled differences of opinion and divergences of lines of action, there is a vast and wonderful accordance in deep love for these just and venerable principles, on which rest the foundation of our liberty and greatness. Hardly ever has any one of them been really in danger, but the gratifying spectacle has been presented of the leaders of party casting aside civil strife, and uniting in the true and dutiful utterance of the ancient cry, "Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari."

12. And hence also I believe springs that just appreciation of solid good, in contradistinction from the tinsel of what is merely apparent, which nobly characterizes the English mind. In all our venerable institutions, the end proposed is, the real good of the governed. Our country has shown the true care of a parent, in withdrawing the gaudy toy which may lure, or the sweet bait which may corrupt her children, and giving them instead, the precious

though sometimes unattractive form of real and substantial good. Add to this, that our national life has grown up amidst the pursuits of commerce, —and the plain matter-of-fact temper of men of commerce has left its impress on the laws, which that life has evoked and sanctioned. This character may perhaps cause us to rank lower than some other nations among the masters of imaginative art:

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
> Credo equidem:—vivos ducent de marmore vultus:

but it has made us, in all those securities of freedom, on which the exercise of art depends, the pilots and patterns of the world. Thus it is, that the sanguine theories of the ancients on political liberty have here first become living realities: that the mere adventitious has been discarded, the false glitter contentedly sacrificed;—and the time patiently awaited, when the great order of Providence has placed the coveted advantages fairly and permanently within our grasp.

13. Of these elements, the love of truth for itself, and the power of discriminating between show and substance, is the distinguishing character of the *religion* of our people compounded. For here again, amidst all the infinite variety of individual minds and religious communities, it cannot be denied, that there is a national character, pervading as such, the religion of our country; that the piety of the English mind is distinguished,

as was the tendency of the English Reformation, by its veneration for purity and truth wherever found—its clear and decided protest against hypocrisy, want of earnestness, and corruption;—and its constant search after, and appreciation of, that which is really and substantially good, to the neglect of that which only professes and seems to be so.

14. That these national characteristics are often exaggerated and misdirected, is only to be looked for from the imperfection which attends all human excellency, and by which every one of our best treasures becomes in turn a source to us of temptation and trial. I speak of them here in their temperate and legitimate exercise, as illustrations, in the case best known to my readers, of the position which I am endeavouring to make good.

15. I should be wanting however to the most solemn portion of my argument,—I should only be idly gazing on the pure stream, when I ought to be climbing to the fountain-head,—did I not trace this manly and honest character, this mixture of the ardent love and keen discrimination of truth, to its origin in the affectionate discipline of our English homes. There it is, in the first and simplest action of the parental law, that we are taught to breathe the pure air of truth: that we find falsehood to be a foul and loathsome thing, and learn to abhor it in all its forms. There it is, under the teaching voice of a father, and the

watchful eye of a mother, that we first are practised to sever the realities from the shows of things, —and, as a part of the discipline of Truth, to seek and find, not that which attracts, but that which satisfies.

16. And in all which we have been just now reviewing, may we see the "commandment with promise" making good its divine pledge, and fulfilling its benignant end. If it be attached as a promise to the honour of father and mother, that "thy days shall be long in the land,"—then surely the fulfilment of such a blessing must be sought, not only in the lesser and lower benefit of long life on earth to the dutiful and affectionate son, but also in the greater and higher grant of endurance, through the shocks and storms of earthly change, to the institutions of those nations, whose laws and habits are found most in accordance with this divine enactment. And if we believe that the English home is peculiarly the fountain of English institutions, and the foundation of English greatness;—if we see in our own land a notable example of the truth of the position of these lectures, that the law of filial obedience is the great moral source of love of country, and obedience to existing institutions:—then may we find, in the unexampled permanence of those institutions, the fulfilment of the divine promise. Once and again has society in our land been shaken to her foundations, and the destruction of our political fabric seemed imminent. But once and again

has He in whose hand are the hearts of the children of men, re-established our feet upon the rock, and ordered our goings.* Begun in ages too remote for the penetration of historic search, hallowed by many a name of piety and greatness, coming down to us not weakened but purified by revolution and reformation, — still do our venerable institutions speak to us, not with the voice of antiquity only, but with the irresistible call of justice and everlasting right. And still, being founded on the parental relations, and the process of the laws of God, have they ever an imperishable pledge of duration and stability.

17. Let only the great law of filial honour be obeyed among us in its direct and primary enactments :—let English parents not relax the hold of

* Little did the Author imagine, in writing these words on February 22nd 1848, that they were so soon to receive another, and that perhaps their most remarkable illustration. The course of awful events, which a few days after that time burst forth from the secret counsels of Providence, has, in its operation on our own country, severely tested the stability of our institutions and their hold upon the hearts of our people. That they have withstood the shock, is I believe, under the Divine Blessing, mainly to be attributed to the indigenous root which binds them to the social soil, as being the genuine offspring of the English home, and the historical measure of the nation's progress. It is this principally (speaking always under the same humble acknowledgment of a Protection beyond our own) which has distinguished us from those nations whose free institutions were imported, not indigenous: the result of system and not of spontaneous growth.

The effect of all that has happened in this country must, in every well constituted mind, be to give additional force to those obligations whose operation has proved so salutary, and additional value to those national characteristics which have borne us through the hour of trial.

healthy discipline, nor English homes lose their character of purity and sanctity,—and whatever changes may yet be in store for us in church or state, all that is truly valuable will be preserved to us. Better foundation cannot be laid for the conduct of a free and a loyal people, than by the obedience of that law of honour and liberty, which reigns in the Christian household:—nor safer measures taken for the endurance of the eminence which we enjoy among the nations, and the liberties which we love, than by persisting in that course of duty, to which the promise of their permanence is attached.

18. Thus have we, in these four lectures, followed the dealing of Providence with men, from their first introduction into life, till we have seen them engaged in the duties of citizens, and fulfilling their part in the stir and progress of mankind. We have shown, that throughout this their course, the first great law, which subjected them to their earthly progenitors, continues to operate upon them: first in their family relations, then as they are members of a greater community, the state. Its beneficent action has never been suspended,—its power for good never proved to be insufficient; but among all the complications and incidents of individual and associated life, we have discerned this golden thread interwoven, which binds us to the throne of God. Rich in treasures of blessing, it sanctifies our affections, chastens our ardours,—suggests

means of good, and ministers strength to effect it:—provides for us support in infancy, guidance in youth, counsel in manhood, solace in age:—unites families, societies, cities, states;—nay, spreading wider than these, binds together all mankind as the children of one heavenly Father, in obedience to Him, and charity one to another. By this relation it is, that the glorious restoration of our nature in Christ is expressed to us: outcast before,—we "have received the adoption of sons:" we are made "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ:" and the great promise of the gospel covenant runs thus,—"I will be to them a Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

19. What remains then, but to press upon all who may read or hear these lectures, the imperative necessity which binds them to move in harmony with a law, which God hath so intimately interwoven with all His dealings with our race for good. If you have followed me with any degree of interest through my argument, you have seen the obedience and love of home reproduced in the various loyalties and sympathies of man's outer life—the source of happiness to individuals and nations. As then you desire your own happiness, and the welfare of your country, be *your* home one of obedience and love. Let the sacred law of parental honour rule in your lives; let not the word of a father pass unheeded, nor the presence

of a mother's love be forgotten. Thus will you best serve God in your station in life, by serving Him first and most earnestly in obedience to that command, to which He hath annexed His promise of blessing.

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