

ILLUSTRATIONS

OF THE

HOLY WORD

1607

BY THE

2770

REV. JOHN CLOWES, M.A.

RECTOR OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, MANCHESTER

JAMES SPEIRS

36 BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON

1875



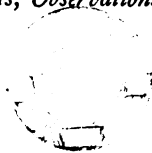
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EXTRACTED FROM

Miscellaneous Thoughts, Observations, and Aphorisms.



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ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HOLY WORD.

1. What entereth from without is said to *purge all meats*, (see Mark vii. 19,) whence it should appear, that all external influences from beneath tend to the purification of goods and truths, and it seems questionable whether purgation can be effected by any other means.

2. *Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water; and lo! the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (Matt. iii. 16, 17.) These words appear to be fulfilled in all cases of spiritual baptism, or purification from evil by the truths of God's words; the first effect of such baptism is an elevation of the mind out of and above those external principles of truth and doctrine, by which purification was effected; the second effect is an opening of the internal man or mind; the third effect is the manifestation of truth divine from an interior ground; and the fourth effect is the manifestation of good divine, or the good of love to the Lord and true charity.

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3. *And in those days He did eat nothing, and when they were ended, He afterwards hungered.* (Luke iv. 2.) It should appear from these words that in spiritual temptation there is no reception or desire of spiritual good and truth, and that the spiritual appetite doth not return till the temptation hath ceased.

4. The cry of wisdom in the besieged city is, *speaking they spake in old time, saying, Asking they shall ask in Abel [mourning,] and thereby shall become perfect.* (See 2 Sam. xx. 18.) Nevertheless the city cannot be delivered until the offender is given up; (see verses 20-22.) The case is the same in the spiritual siege. The eternal wisdom in the soul pleadeth the eternal law of divine mercy, compassion, and charity extended to the afflicted; nevertheless this of itself cannot suffice, unless the offending party, the darling lust, be delivered up and slain.

5. It is remarkable that in the Gospel according to Luke, (xxii. 17, 20,) in speaking of the passover, mention is made of the cup *before supper*, and of the cup *after supper*; probably the first cup was meant to denote the *truths leading to good*, and the second the *truths derived from good*.

6. Entrance into heaven is not at the hour of death, but at the time of conversion. *This day is salvation come into this house.* (Luke xix. 9.)

7. You wish to see God, and yet you take no delight in thinking about God: but do you know that

thought grounded in affection is the only eye whereby God can be seen, and therefore that you can never see Him only so far as you think of Him with delight? Make it but a pleasure to yourself to think of God, and you will then always enjoy the sight of Him. This was what the Lord taught His disciples, when He said, *The world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me.* (John xiv. 19.) It is to be observed, however, that no man can think of God, but from God, that is, from the light of the knowledge of God manifested in His WORD and WORKS, just as no man can see an object with his external eye, but from or by some external light.

8. The connection and relationship established between the *principal* and *instrumental* appears to be a subject which involves the most astonishing depths of divine wisdom. To note only in the cases of the two bodily organs the eye and ear as *instrumentals*, and their *principals* the light and the modifications thereof, and the atmosphere with its modifications—what human mind is capable of comprehending all the wisdom manifested in their connection and relationship? But when we take a further view of the subject in regard to the human will, as a principal, and its instrumental, the body, or still further, in regard to the divine will and wisdom as principals, the human will and wisdom as instrumentals, we are lost in the immensity of such contemplations, and can only say, *Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty.* (Rev. xv. 3.)

9. *I was also uncorrupt before Him, and eschewed*

mine own wickedness; (Psalm xviii. 23;) or, as it might be better rendered, *I will be perfect before Him, and will keep myself from mine own wickedness*. From these words it should appear that purity or perfection of the life doth not consist in a pure and perfect freedom from evil suggestions, but in eschewing, or keeping ourselves from consenting to them. In other words,—the temptation to sin is not of itself sin. Man's wickedness is not his, unless he makes it so by delighting in it; and the utmost perfection of the human character is consistent with the utmost sense of imperfection arising from the opposition made in the ungodly or corrupt nature to the better dispositions and thoughts of that part which is above corruption.

10. We may cast into the divine treasury from our *abundance*, and we may cast in from our *want*. The Lord teaches us, (Mark xii. 41-44,) that what is cast in in the latter case, is *more* than what is cast in in the former.

11. When Judas *was gone out*, (John xiii. 31,) *Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, &c.*, whereby it should appear, that under every removal or ejection of evil there is a glorification of the principles of holy truth, through a closer and more intimate conjunction with heavenly good.

12. *The disciples had forgotten to take bread*. (Mark viii. 14.) How often is this the case with all succeeding disciples! We are apt to drink plentifully with our understandings of the water of truth and

knowledge, but we too frequently forget to take the more solid and substantial principles of heavenly love and charity, for the nourishment of our wills and affections.

13. *Jesus takes a little child and sets him in the midst of the apostles, (Mark ix. 36,) to teach us, by the most significative language, that innocence is the central virtue, and that other virtues derive thence all their excellence: and He adds, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth ME; to instruct us further, that innocence is from Himself, and that He is in it, and that no communication can be had with Him but by and through this heavenly grace, and that wheresoever innocence is, there He is.*

14. *They gnaw not the bones till the morrow; (Zeph. iii. 3;) or, as it is expressed in the original, they do not pick (or make clean) till the morning, is recorded as an accusation against the Judges of Israel, because in cases of judgment they were hasty and impetuous in their own spirits, and did not wait for the light of truth to guide and direct them. The accusation stands in equal force against all who are more prompt to decide from their own spirits, than patient to wait for the decision of the Divine Spirit.*

15. *She hath done what she could; (Mark xiv. 8;) or, as it might perhaps be better rendered, she hath offered what she had, is a most high commendation from the mouth of the Eternal Truth, which yet, we must be forced to confess, is in every one's power*

alike to obtain, for who is there that cannot do what he has the ability to do, if he would but exert that ability? And yet how few perhaps will be found hereafter to have done what they could!

16. *The eyes of the servant look unto the hand of his master, and the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress,* (Psalm cxxiii. 2.) to denote that the human understanding should always have respect to use, which is the good of heavenly love and charity.

17. *Jesus sitteth in the midst of the doctors,* (Luke ii. 46,) to teach us that He is the centre of the origin of all doctrine, or, in other words, that as all genuine doctrine of what is good and true proceeds from Him, so it also points and leads to Him.

18. It should seem as if the Divine Providence could not punish man more effectually, than by fulfilling his selfish desires, according as it is written of the children of Israel, *He gave them their desire, and sent leanness withal into their soul.* (Psalm cvi. 15.)

19. A state of trial and temptation appears to be exposed to danger, and therefore to require its peculiar watchfulness, agreeably to what is recorded of the children of Israel, where it is written, *that lust came upon them in the wilderness, and they tempted God in the desert.* (Psalm cvi. 14.)

20. It should seem as if every evil lust, in such as are regenerate, tends to destroy and consume itself in a

fire of its own kindling, agreeably to what is written of the children of Israel in the wilderness, *a fire was kindled in their company, the flame burnt up the ungodly.* (Psalm cvi. 18.)

21. Jesus said to His disciples, *I have compassion on the multitude, because they have been with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat;* (Matt. xv. 32;) whence it should appear that the Divine compassion, or principle of mercy, is excited by distress.

22. *And the LORD GOD called unto Adam, and said unto him, Adam, where art thou?* (Gen. iii. 9.) Man is not where his body is, but where his affection and thought are. The divine inquiry is therefore concerning the place or state of the affection and thought, and a very important inquiry it is for every one to attend well to in his own mind.

23. Simon and his companions *beckoned unto their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them,* (Luke v. 7,) to teach us, how much we stand in need of other help than our own in the great work of salvation; but especially to instruct us, that the principles of a scientific faith, signified by Simon and his companions, can do nothing without charity and good works, figured by James and John, who were partners with Simon.

24. *I will hearken what the LORD GOD will say concerning me.* (Psalm lxxxv. 9.) These words were made profitable in an hour of great bodily weakness and mental exercise, by suggesting, that the language

of distress, spoken by the spirits of temptation, ought not to be attended to ; but that the internal ear should be open only to hear the voice of the Eternal Mercy and Truth from the great Saviour Jesus Christ.

25. *Who can count the dust of Jacob ? and the number of the fourth of Israel ?* (see Numb. xxiii. 10,) is a question, which applies, with far more force and propriety, to the things signified by Jacob and Israel, than to Jacob and Israel themselves.

26. *Every thing that may abide the fire,* is to pass through the fire, but still is to be purified with *the water of separation ; and all that abideth not the fire, shall be made to go through the water,* (see Numb. xxxi. 23,) to denote the distinct means of purification, 1st, by the good of love, and 2nd, by the truths of faith, applied to the distinct classes of men : 1st, those who are more led by the will than by the understanding ; 2nd, those who are led more by the understanding than by the will.

27. David measures with *two* lines to put to death, but with *one full* line to keep alive, (see 2 Sam. viii. 2,) to instruct us that the condemnation of the wicked is from *truth*, separated from *good* ; but the salvation of the righteous is from the full union of those two heavenly principles.

28. *They shall go out from fire, and fire shall devour them,* (Ezek. xv. 7,) is an eternal law. If man depart from the fire of heavenly love and charity in his own bosom, he must needs plunge himself into the fire of infernal love, which is malice, hatred, envy, and every evil.

29. *Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not*, (see Hos. vii. 9,) is a striking rebuke, applicable to many at this day, as well as to Ephraim of old. Few appear to be rightly acquainted with the infirmities and mixtures which have place in their intellectual faculties.

30. The effect of purging physic appears to be to increase the powers of ejection ;—the like seems true of spiritual physic, or those evil principles which are permitted to assault man in the progress of regeneration ;—if the state of the mind be such as to hate the evil, every infernal ejection in such case operates, like natural physic, to increase the *ejecting* power. (See Mark vii. 18, 19.)

31. It is in *seeking goodly pearls* that the heavenly merchantman findeth the *one pearl of great price*; but the *goodly pearls* must be *sought* before the *one pearl* can be *found*, and the *one pearl* must be *bought*, as well as *found*, before it can be possessed, (see the parable, Matt. xiii. 45, 46.)

32. The Lord saith to the Jews, *Where is the bill* [or book] *of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away?* (Isa. l. 1,) to teach them that their rejection did not come from Him, but from themselves; and therefore it follows, *For your transgressions is your mother put away*. Yes; God writes no book of divorcement; His book is a book of marriage, or holy conjunctions.

33. Jesus *walketh on the sea*, to comfort and succour His disciples tossed with the tempest, (Matt. xiv. 25,) and He is still seen by the eye of faith walking on the sea of every human trouble, for the same blessed purpose.

34. *The man clothed with linen with a writer's ink-horn about his loins, (see Ezek. ix. 2, 3,) may be seen, by an attentive eye, going through the city now, as well as in the days of the prophet, and his purpose is the same ; viz. to set a mark on the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof.*

35. *The ungodly is so proud that he careth not for GOD, neither is GOD in all his thoughts. (Psalm x. 4.)* The Psalmist cannot mean that the ungodly never think of God, for they find it impossible at times not to think of Him ; but still it does not follow that God is in their thoughts, because they think about God ; for it is possible to think about God, and yet not to think under His influence ; and, if we think of God without His influence, then God is not in the thought. It merits consideration, therefore, that God may be, and is, in a thought about worldly things, if in that thought God be regarded ; and He may not be, and is not, in a thought about heavenly things, if in that thought He be not regarded as its origin and end.

36. The minds of wicked men are continually in that same direction and rapidity of motion, in which the herd of swine was, after that the devils were entered into it, of which it is written, *The whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. (See Matt. viii. 32.)*

37. *To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by [in] the remission of their sins. (Luke i. 77.)* It would

appear from these words, that man attains the knowledge of salvation, or saving knowledge, only so far as he experiences a remission or putting away of evils from his heart and life through the Divine power.

38. They who would find the true wisdom figured in the parable by the lost piece of silver, must do as the woman did : 1, *Light a candle* ; 2, *Sweep the house* ; 3, *Seek diligently till they find*. (Luke xv. 8.)

39. The honey is at this day found in the carcase of the lion, as it was formerly, (see Judges xiv. 8,) by all those who have the courage and the strength to slay the lion. When any evil or error becomes a carcase, by being deprived of its life, that is to say, by not loving and cherishing it, it never fails to become the *nidus*, or nest, of spiritual joys and delights.

40. *GOD is in the midst of her, therefore she shall not be moved ; GOD shall help her when the morning appears*. (Psalm xlvi. 5.) It should appear from hence, that all spiritual strength and protection arise from God being in the midst, that is to say, exalted to the inmost or highest place in the affections or loves. Then, and then only, the morning appears in the soul, when the Sun of Righteousness thus begins to ascend, and take His place in the zenith of the spiritual firmament. In every other case it is dark night, for the ruling love at all times determines the state.

41. According to the spiritual idea, to be willing is to be able ; or, in other words, will is ability, agreeably

to the Lord's declaration, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*. The reason is manifestly this, because the omnipotence of God is in the will of good. (Matt. xv. 28.)

42. It is the wisdom, and should therefore be the constant endeavour, of the true Christian, to ascend into the region of *all-possibility*; but this he cannot do, only so far as he attaches himself to Him with whom it is written, *All things are possible*. (See Mark ix. 23 and x. 27.)

43. *How much owest thou unto my Lord?* (Luke xvi. 5,) is a solemn and profitable question, which man ought continually to be asking himself, especially in regard to those two principal debtors to the Divine Mercy, viz. the will and the understanding. It ought also to be well apprehended, that the debt owing from man to his God can never be discharged, until it be known and acknowledged, and it can never be known and acknowledged but by asking seriously the above question. It ought to be apprehended further, that in the humble and grateful acknowledgment of the debt it is fully discharged, because such acknowledgment is all the return that the Almighty requires. Therefore it is said, *Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty*; where fifty denotes a full discharge.

44. *The thistle that is in Lebanon still sends to the cedar that is in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife*; (see 2 Kings xiv. 9;) but every wise man will take heed how he cherishes such a disorderly con-

junction, remembering the wild beast which passeth by, and treadeth down the thistle.

45. Some at this day assert, with the Syrians of old, (1 Kings xx. 28,) that *The Lord is GOD of the hills, but that He is not GOD of the valleys*; that is to say, they allow Him pre-eminence and rule in high things above, but not in things below; in His own kingdom in heaven, but not in their kingdom on earth, to control their passions, and govern them by His Spirit.

46. *I, JEHOVAH, will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols.* (Ezek. xiv. 4.) From these words it should appear, that the state of every man's own heart, with respect to the love of good or the love of evil, determines at all times the manner of the Divine dealings with him, and probably also the apprehension of the man himself in regard to those dealings.

47. Some enter the temple without passing through the portico; some enter the portico without passing through the temple. (See John x. 1-9.)

48. It is a consolation to the sincere Christian, in his state of spiritual combat, to consider, and know that the adversary has no power but over the heel, the very lowest or outermost principles of his life, agreeably to the Divine denunciation, in which God said to the serpent concerning the seed of the woman, *He shall tread upon thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* (Gen. iii. 15.)

There is a difference between bruising the ser-

pent's head, and only bruising his tail ; for in the latter case, the serpent may be as lively and active as ever, whereas, in the former case, both his life and activity are destroyed.

49. There is a remarkable passage in the prophet Amos, (chap. iv. 6,) *I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places, yet have ye not returned to Me, saith the LORD ;* denoting that the church was busied in external purification, but not in internal ; she had a clean outside, but was void of heavenly good within.

50. The wise men, in worshipping Jesus Christ, open their treasures, and present gifts, &c., (see Matt. ii. 11,) to teach us, that it is always a necessary part of worship to open our interiors to our heavenly Father, and present to Him all the gifts which are there stored up, even the treasures of His grace, and return them to Him, in the devout acknowledgment that they are His.

51. The Lord saith, *When thou art bidden of any one to a wedding, sit not down in the highest place, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him.* (Luke xiv. 8.) The motive to humility here urged by Jesus Christ seems intended, in its literal sense and meaning, to suggest the salutary apprehension, that others may be more honourable than ourselves ; but in its spiritual sense and signification, it appears to teach a still more edifying lesson, by alluding to the pre-eminence of charity over all speculative principles of

faith, and insisting on the subordination of the latter to the former ; for faith is the first bidden (or called) to the wedding, in other words, man is first called to the heavenly marriage, when he is beginning to be principled in the knowledges of the goods and truths of faith ; but the heavenly marriage itself is the conjunction of those knowledges with the life of charity ; and therefore, in sitting down at this marriage feast, man ought to be apprized that charity is the more honourable, and that the law of conjunction requires that faith should give place and take the lowest room.

52. When the Lord says, *This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham,* (Luke xix. 9,) He taught us, in the plainest terms, both what salvation is and what brings it. Salvation is to have the Saviour God dwelling with us, that is to say, in us ; and it is the desire to see this God, and to fulfil His holy laws of love and charity, which induces Him to come to us. For the publican Zaccheus, in whose house the above words were spoken, it is written, sought to see Jesus, and it is written further, that *he gave the half of his goods to feed the poor, and if he had taken any thing from any man by false accusation, he restored fourfold,* by which is plainly signified, the life of charity. It is therefore an eternal law, that wheresoever there is faith in Jesus, and the life of charity, there Jesus Himself is, and wheresoever Jesus Himself is, there also is salvation, because wheresoever Jesus Himself is, there He begets His own image and likeness, which is the son of Abraham.

53. It is little considered, that there is such a thing

as spiritual money, and that every man possesses more or less of it. Jesus Christ speaks of it in the parables of the talents and the pounds, and reproves us for not using it, when he adds, *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers*: (see Matt. xxv. 27.) Spiritual money appears to be the knowledge of the truths of God's Word, and the right use of this money is to purchase the necessaries and conveniences of spiritual life, especially to procure heavenly love and charity. This is properly to put it to the exchangers, for in this case, what was mere science of truth in the understanding, by living according to it, is changed into saving and substantial good in the will and life; but as in the case of the money of this world, it is possible to make a wrong use of it, and thereby convert it into an instrument of mischief; so also it is true of spiritual money, that it may be, and is, much abused, and not being applied to its proper end—the procurement of heavenly love and charity,—becomes the means of destruction rather than of salvation.

54. Jesus Christ teaches to be *wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*, (Matt. x. 16,) whence it should appear, that the perfection of the human character arises from the combined perfections of the animal, referred to their Divine Source; that is to say, connected with Jesus Christ. Query, then, whether the perfection of the human character will not be increased in proportion to the addition therein of the perfections of the inferior creatures, and decreased in proportion to their subtraction? Certain it is, that the life of man is a compounded life, made up of an indefinite variety of

affections and thoughts ; and hence we may conclude, that the composition will be more perfect as the variety is more extended, and especially as the compounding principles are in a due proportion to each other. We may therefore not only say, *Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*, but be *strong as lions, playful as lambs, cheerful as larks, &c. &c.* ; and endeavour to unite in ourselves the distinct excellences of all the inferior creatures, which, when opened to and connected with their Divine Source, will all tend to increase the perfection of the life.

55. Jesus saith to His disciples, *If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father.* (John xiv. 28.) The reason is manifest, because, by going to the Father is meant the entering into a full and complete union with Him, in which case Jesus would not only be more present with His disciples than before, but would also be in a state to operate upon and bless them more fully. The same appears to be true respecting the external removal of other friends, as of this Divine Friend, whether the removal be effected by putting off the material body, or by any other means. If our friends are principled in heavenly good, we have cause to rejoice when, by the Divine Providence, external communication is done away, since by that means a more full and profitable internal communication is opened.

56. It is remarkable that air and water are given gratis to every one, whereas bread is only to be procured by labour, and at a price. In like manner, the

spiritual things signified by air and water, viz. truth and knowledge, are given gratis, whereas the spiritual thing signified by bread, viz. the good of heavenly love and charity, requires the labour of man to procure it, as it is written, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* (Gen. iii. 19.)

57. God is said to *know all the fowls upon the mountains*, (Psalm l. 11,) to teach us that He takes particular delight in all those intellectual perceptions and thoughts which are in conjunction with the love of Himself, and have a tendency to confirm that conjunction, by exalting at all times the life of love and charity.

58. In the sepulchre of Jesus, the *napkin that was about His head* is found *not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself*, (John xx. 7,) to teach us, that in the resurrection, or regeneration, there is a distinction made and seen between the things represented by the napkin about the head and the linen clothes, that is to say, between the interior and exterior knowledges of good and truth.

59. *Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* (Matt. vii. 7). A distinction is here made between asking, seeking, and knocking ; also between what is given, what is found, and what is opened ; from which distinction it would appear, that asking has relation to the desire of saving good, or love and charity in the will ; seeking has relation to the desire of saving knowledge,

or truth in the understanding; and knocking has relation to the communication and conjunction of both with their Divine Source, Jesus Christ.

60. *Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores,* (Luke xvi. 21,) is a beautiful figure, to teach us how we ought to treat the errors and infirmities of our brethren, (which are their spiritual sores,) with gentleness and tenderness, endeavouring by that means to heal them as far as possible: for if an unclean animal act thus by instinct towards the corruptions of man's body, how much more ought man, under the influence of reason and religion, to conduct himself with a similar affection of kindness towards the corruptions of the mind or spirit?

61. *Whose image and superscription hath it?* (Luke xx. 24,) is an important question, extending to every object in creation, and which requires a most deliberate and serious answer, before we can possibly fulfil the laws of the eternal justice, by *rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to GOD the things that are GOD'S.*

62. *Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water: and, lo! the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of GOD, &c. &c.,* (Matt. iii. 16, 17,) to teach us that, in our spiritual purifications, we ought to rise as rapidly as possible out of the lower principles of truth, by which we have been cleansed, into the higher principles of heavenly love and charity, which are the ends of

purification ; in which case a communication with heaven and its life is opened, and we are admitted to a perception of heavenly truth in our understandings, and the fruition of heavenly goods in our wills, through conjunction with the Divine Human [principle] of the Lord.

63. *Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend ; yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.* (Luke xi. 8.) We learn from these words the necessity of co-operation with God, in order to receive the blessed things of His love and wisdom. In other words, it is not enough for our admittance into heaven that God is willing and desirous to admit us ; but we also must be willing and desirous ourselves to admit into our hearts, our understandings, and lives, the principles of heavenly life, which are of heavenly love and wisdom, otherwise the will and desire of God are of no effect. The love of God, in short, can only profit us so far as it excites us to re-love Him, because the love of God can only profit us so far as it effects our conjunction with God, and without re-love there can be no conjunction. It is said, *He will rise and give*, to teach us, that God must first arise before He can give ; in other words, He must be exalted to the highest place in our regard, otherwise we can never become receptive of His mercy and truth.

64. When Elijah was asleep *under the juniper-tree in the wilderness, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.* And he looked, and, behold,

there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. (See 1 Kings xix. 5, 6.) The same effects have place under the juniper-tree (the state of spiritual trial) at this day, and every pious sufferer is made sensible of them in his own mind, though he may not with his bodily eyes either see the angel who touches him or the cake and the cruse prepared for him.

65. It is written, (in Psalm cxliv. 5,) *Bow thy heavens, O Jehovah, and come down;* whence it should appear, that the Lord's descent to man, and His presence, operation, and abode with him, are always in connection with the heavenly or angelic host, as the Lord intimates in another place, where He says, *When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.* (Matt. xxv. 31.)

66. It is written in the same Psalm, (verse 1,) *Blessed be the Lord, my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight,* to instruct us, that it is a great blessing to be initiated into spiritual combat, which is a combat against our corruptions, and especially against the evils of self-love and the love of the world. An important distinction is also pointed at between the hands and the fingers, likewise between warring and fighting, to lead us to reflect further on the distinct principles from which we are to combat, viz. the principles of heavenly love and charity in the will, which are here called my hands, and the principles of heavenly truth and knowledge in the understanding, which are called my fingers; for, as the fingers of the hand are but continuations and derivations of the hand,

so the principles of heavenly truth and knowledge in the understanding are but the continuations and derivations of the principles of heavenly love and charity in the will. We learn further, that the combat is not complete, until we both war and fight, in other words, until we oppose the powers of darkness by the united powers of heavenly love and of heavenly truth.

67. It is written in the Book of Amos, *Thus he shewed me, and behold the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in His hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, A plumb-line. Then said the Lord, behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel.* (chap. vii. 7, 8.) The plumb-line here spoken of appears to be a representative figure of the rectitude of the Divine Law or Word, in its direct tendency upwards, towards the Lord, according to which it was designed that man should build his spiritual house. The necessity of keeping the eyes perpetually open to such rectitude is expressed in the significant question, *Amos, what seest thou?* For until we come to attend to the objects of spiritual sight, which is spiritual thought, it is impossible we should ever discern clearly the rectitude of the Divine Law. The further necessity of admitting such rectitude for the regulation of our hearts and lives, that is to say, of our loves and affections, is forcibly expressed in these words, *I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel*; for in the midst denotes in the will or love.

68. A state of spiritual trial and temptation is beau-

tifully described in the history of the prophet Elijah, when he fled from the face of Jezebel, and *went a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper-tree, and requested for himself that he might die.* (1 Kings xix.) The angel touching him on the occasion is a striking figure also of the protection still afforded by the Lord through the angelic ministry in a similar state, as is likewise the *cake baked on the coals, and the cruse of water at his head.* It is remarkable that the angel touched the prophet twice, and on the first occasion is called simply an angel, but on the second the angel of Jehovah, denoting, that protection and deliverance in states of spiritual exercise is twofold, viz. from truth and from good, and that the deliverance is not complete until the conjunction of those two principles is effected. It is then that the soul is enabled, like Elijah, to go in *the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, until it comes unto Horeb, the mount of God;* for then it is gifted with the power of a divine patience to endure the whole process of the temptation, by which it is conducted to the full regeneration, or the full conjunction of heavenly love and heavenly wisdom.

69. Adonijah, in asking for a wife, excited his brother's resentment, and lost his life, (1 Kings ii. 13-26,) and so it frequently comes to pass at this day, that the pursuit of a favourite gratification, if not grounded in deep submission to the Divine will, proves the destruction of spiritual and eternal life.

70. There is no power in heaven or earth which

can effectually subdue evil and misery, but the patience of Jesus Christ ; and every evil or misery which comes upon man, seems intended to call into exercise that divine virtue, by convincing man that of himself he cannot endure it, and that none else but Jesus Christ can enable him to endure it. It is therefore written, *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*, (Psalm lv. 22) ; and if this precept be fulfilled, the burden is not only removed, but becomes the blessed means of effecting a closer conjunction of love and of life with the removing power, than could have been accomplished without it. Quarrel not, therefore, with the appointed means of thy purification and salvation, but, if evil and trouble disturb, seek refuge in the patience of the Great Saviour, and thou shalt be safe.

71. Jesus Christ says, *Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, &c.* (Matt. vi. 19, 20,) to teach us, not only a lesson respecting temporal riches, but also respecting eternal. For the treasures here spoken of, in their internal spiritual meaning, have respect to the knowledges of heavenly things revealed in the Word of God, the great law respecting which treasures is, that they should not be laid up in the earth, or the outward memory only, but that they should be deposited in the inner man, or heaven, so as to operate upon the will and the understanding, by inclining the will to love God above all things, and by enlightening the understanding with the light or wisdom of that love.

72. The altar of testimony, built by Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, on the other side Jordan, was not an altar for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifices, but for a witness. (See Joshua xxii. 28.) The same is true of the thing represented by that altar, viz. external worship, which is not properly worship, but a witness ; for all true worship is internal, or of the internal man ; and external worship, which is of the external man, only testifieth or witnesseth.

73. When man is admitted to the *feast of fat things, the feast of wines on the lees ; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined*, (Isaiah xxv. 6,) he then experiences also a removal of *the face of the covering cast over all people, and of the veil that is spread over all nations*, as described in verse 7 of the same chapter, for then his understanding is opened to see through the surfaces of all things, and contemplate their infinite contents within, which before were hid from his eyes, at the same time that his will is opened to a communication and conjunction with every order and degree of good, whether in earth or in heaven, from the lowest to the highest, which before also had been unperceived and unenjoyed.

74. *The oil must be beaten, [or bruised,]* (Exodus xxvii. 20,) in like manner as corn must be ground, before either can be fit for use ; to instruct us, that the good, figured by each, must be clearly and distinctly seen, and thus particularized, by examination in the understanding, before it also can be serviceable for the support of spiritual life.

75. *The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them,* (John xvii. 22,) is a declaration which proves that there is such a thing as heavenly or spiritual glory, as, every one knows, there is such a thing as earthly or worldly glory. It proves further, that the heavenly or spiritual glory comes from Jesus Christ, and is the effect of the reception of His Word in the heart and life. And it proves yet further, that heavenly glory is of the internal or spiritual man, as earthly glory is of the external or natural man. But how few, alas! discern the incomparable pre-eminence of the former glory above the latter!

76. When the Divine image and likeness are formed in man, then everything is pronounced very good, (see Genesis i. 31,) to instruct us, that the principles of man's life, previous to reformation and regeneration, howsoever excellent and heavenly they may be, are yet defective in that qualification which is necessary to give them their true value and importance, viz. the qualification derived from the humble, thankful acknowledgment on the part of man that they are not properly his own, but Divine gifts. When this acknowledgment is made from the heart, then what was good is pronounced and becomes very good, because it is at once more acceptable to God, and more beneficial and blessed to man.

77. In the regenerate mind, as in the court of Solomon, there are distinct principles answering to the several officers, as described in 1 Kings iv. 1-20. Thus there is a priest, scribes, a recorder, a commander

of the host, priests, one over the officers, the principal officer, the king's friend, the governor of the household, and a chief over the tribute, together with *twelve officers over all Israel, which provide victuals for the king's household*. To comprehend these distinctions is angelic wisdom, and is consequently the most edifying of all contemplations, since it leads to a more minute and distinct apprehension of the several innumerable principles constituent of the GRAND MAN, or heaven, and constituent also of each individual mind, which, by regeneration, is restored to the image and order of heaven and its Lord.

78. *Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, [bitter in soul,] gathered themselves unto David, (1 Sam. xxii. 2,)* to instruct us by the most lively figure, that the followers of the true David, Jesus Christ, are always of this description, and that none are really gathered to the incarnate God, until they feel something of spiritual distress, spiritual debt, and spiritual bitterness of soul.

79. The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria, (2 Kings xiii. 17,) is always shot, whensoever the spiritual bow and arrows are taken, *and the king of Israel makes his hand to rise upon the bow, and puts his hand upon it, and the prophet puts his hand on the king's hand, and the window is opened eastward;* (verses 15, 16, 17;) in other words, whensoever there is a conjunction of truth and good from the Lord, in the truth and good of doctrine derived from his Holy Word, and the

understanding is thereby opened towards the Lord's Divine Humanity.

80. King Solomon gave unto the Queen of Sheba, not only *all her desire whatsoever she asked, but also what he gave her of his royal bounty*, (1 Kings x. 13,) to instruct us, that the Lord grants all the petitions of His children, not merely according to the measure and extent of their wishes and apprehensions, but according to the measure and extent also of His own infinite and most adorable mercy and love towards them.

81. *Silver was nothing accounted of in the days of king Solomon*, (1 Kings x. 21,) because in the church triumphant, when the full purification and regeneration is effected, and all spiritual combat ceases, through the harmonious conjunction of goodness and truth, the principle of good is exalted to pre-eminence, and in this case truth is made good, and is no longer regarded as anything in a state of separation.

82. In the great spiritual famine or desolation in the regenerating mind, though one child be *boiled and eaten*, yet the other is *hidden*; (2 Kings vi. 27-29;) in other words, though all the knowledges and perceptions of truth are desolated, yet the will and affection of heavenly good still remain, though in a concealed state.

83. The *axe's head* [or iron] always *falls into the water*, when it is *borrowed*, (see 2 Kings vi. 5,) be-

cause truth, signified by the iron, always separates itself from good when it is received on the authority of others, and not on its own authority. But the same iron is always made to swim when the true prophet is supplicated, and he casts a stick into the water, (see verse 6,) because by such supplication conjunction of life is effected with Jesus Christ, and through the communication of the good of heavenly love and charity from that great and holy God truth is elevated above all falses both of persuasion and of life.

84. The Lord says to His church, *Let them come near, then let them speak*, (Isa. xli. 1,) to instruct us, that we are never qualified either to speak or think aright but so far as we approach to, and consociate ourselves by our best affections with, the Infinite and the Eternal, from whom alone comes all that is wise in thought and excellent in speech.

85. In the regeneration of the human mind *every valley* is said to be *exalted* (Isaiah xl. 4,) and also to be *filled*, (Luke iii. 5,) because every lower principle of life is brought into conjunction with the higher, and thereby with the highest, which is the Lord Himself, and in that conjunction it is replenished with all celestial love, wisdom, and blessedness.

86. In the regeneration, also, the *crooked is made straight, and the rough places plain, [or smooth,]* (Isaiah xl. 4; Luke iii. 5,) because the human will, or love, being restored to the order of heaven, is no longer in

an oblique direction downwards, but continually elevated in a right line upwards, towards the Supreme Good ; at the same time that the human understanding finds all its asperities smoothed and corrected by the soft and gentle influences of celestial love and charity.

87. It is written of the Lord, that *when He perceived that they would come and take Him by force to make Him a king, he departed again into a mountain Himself alone,* (John vi. 15,) from which words it appears, that He resisted the temptation to dominion or rule in the principle of truth, which is a King, by retiring into His own divine principle of pure mercy, love and innocence, which is a mountain ; exhibiting thus a most instructive and edifying example to all His followers, who may be exposed to the same temptation.

88. *When certain Greeks were desirous to see Jesus,* (John xii. 20, 21,) and for this purpose applied to Philip, and when Philip told Andrew, and both Andrew and Philip tell Jesus, Jesus answered them, saying, *The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified, &c. &c.,* to teach them that the glorification of His human nature, by uniting it with the divine, was all that could be seen of Him, and all that was worth seeing, being what properly constituted Himself, and what alone ought to be called Himself.

* 89. It is written in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, (chap. lv. 13,) *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-*

tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off. The fir-tree instead of the thorn denotes good in the place of evil ; the myrtle-tree instead of the briar denotes truth in the place of the false ; to be to the Lord for a name, denotes the quality of good, as being of divine origin ; and to be for an everlasting sign, denotes the quality of truth, as testifying or bearing witness to good ; that shall not be cut off, ought to have been rendered—that there may be no cutting off, and thus denotes, that where good and truth from a divine origin are there no destruction or excision can be.

90. The Lord teaches us to pray, *Remit to us our debts, as we remit to our debtors,* (Matt. vi. 12,) in order to instruct us, that we come into the grateful acknowledgment, consequently into the discharge of the immense debt we owe to Him, in proportion as we come into the grateful acknowledgment and consequent discharge of the immense debt we owe one to another ; for the natural man supposes all mankind to be his debtors, and, as he is blind respecting his obligations to his Heavenly Father, so is he equally blind respecting his obligations to his fellow-creatures. But the Lord would remove this blindness, by reminding us how infinitely we are indebted both to Him and to each other ; and that we discharge the former debt, so far as we remit the latter, by considering ourselves as indebted to our neighbour, rather than our neighbour as indebted to us.

91. *If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle,* (Judges xiv. 18,) is an eternal law

respecting the discovery and revelation of every mysterious truth ; for the heifer here spoken of has relation to affection, and to plough with it denotes a preparation of the mind accordingly ; and truth is always manifested in proportion as there is a sincere and affectionate love towards it, and a consequent application to the study of it.

92. Jesus Christ says, (John xii. 31,) *I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto Me*, whence it is manifest, that in His ascension-glory He exercises an attractive power on the minds of men to bring them to Himself. This attractive power, if it be supposed to operate without resistance, must of necessity draw all human minds into itself, so as to absorb them totally in itself, and thus annihilate their own proper life and action. To prevent this mischief, it is wonderfully provided that the proprium (or selfhood) of man should possess a repelling power, whereby it is capable of co-operating with the Divine attraction in such a manner, as still to preserve a life and activity proper to itself, whilst at the same time it can be the subject of the reception of the Divine life and activity. This case may be illustrated by that of the sun and the planets, for if the latter did not possess a power of repulsion, they would inevitably be drawn into the sun's vortex and consumed ; whereas by virtue of the combined powers of attraction and repulsion, they are preserved in the perpetual order and regularity of their revolutions. In like manner, man becomes a subject of revolution in the Divine order, whensoever he yields himself up to the Divine attraction, in such a manner, that the repel-

ling power of his own proprium, or selfhood, may be overcome, but not annihilated.

93. *As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff,* (1 Samuel xxx. 24,) is an eternal law of the Divine Order, to instruct us, that to watch over and secure the spiritual goods already attained, is equally blessed and acceptable to God, as to extend our conquests, and thus to multiply our goods.

✓ 94. It is said of Aholibah, by which is figured Jerusalem, or the church, that she *shall pluck off her own breasts,* (Ezekiel xxiii. 34,) denoting the destruction of all heavenly love and charity; but how few consider, that inordinate self-love, and the love of the world, perpetually lead to the commission of the same atrocity.

95. It is a remarkable instance of the Divine mercy, forbearance, and compliance, that Jesus attended to the entreaty of the wicked spirits, who *besought Him that He would not command them to go out into the deep, but would suffer them to enter into the herd of swine,* (Luke viii. 30, 31, 32; Matt. viii. 31, 32;) thus consulting and providing for the comfort even of the most infernal, so far as is consistent with the security of His own children in His own heavenly kingdom.

96. Jesus Christ, speaking of His second advent, describes it by *coming in His own glory, and the Father's, and of the holy angels,* (Luke ix. 26,) to instruct us,

that in His Divine Humanity, which was then to be made manifest, is contained all the fulness of the divine good, or love, and of the divine truth, or wisdom, in complete and perfect union, and that from Him proceeds the divine operation of those eternal principles, which is always in close conjunction with the angelic heaven.

97. The interiors of the regenerate mind are formed from and by the Holy Word, which makes as it were a heavenly garden in the intellectual principle, in the midst of which garden is still to be seen the tree of life, agreeably to the description given in the book of Genesis, (chap. ii. v. 9,) whilst a river still *goes out of Eden to water the garden*, as it is described at verse 10.

98. It is the folly of a dangerous and defiled self-love, to lead its unhappy votaries to estimate themselves from themselves alone, without any regard to their connexion with other beings out of and above themselves; but it is the wisdom of a pure and heavenly love, to lead its blessed children to estimate themselves, not from themselves alone, but from their connexion with others—especially with the great Father of their being and all His angelic host. Whilst, therefore, the votaries of self-love, in setting limits to their talents, and faculties, and happiness, by confining them within the narrow boundaries of their own contracted intelligence, are envious of another's excellences, and soon drain and exhaust the small store of their own attainments, their virtues, and their joys; the children of heavenly love, on the

contrary, by enlarging the sphere of their mental treasures, through an appropriation of the excellences, and energies, and blessedness of all other beings with whom they stand connected, enjoy a perpetual and inexhaustible fund of intellectual property, and possession, and bliss, and thus experience in their delighted bosoms, not only a deliverance from all the malignity of envy, but also a happy fulfilment of the Divine promise, *He that overcometh shall inherit all things.* (Rev. xxi. 7.)

99. The Lord, in speaking to Peter, (John xxi. 16, 17,) twice says, *Feed My sheep*, because the first sheep denote those who are in the good of love and charity, and the second those who are in the good of truth or faith.

100. Jesus Christ says to His disciples, *The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and believed that I came out from God*, (John xvi. 27,) to instruct them, that, by virtue of their conjunction of life with Him by love and faith, they had conjunction of life also with the Eternal Father, or the Supreme Divine Good, who was one with Him.

101. When Jesus Christ said to Simon, *Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed My*

feet with ointment. (Luke vii. 44, 45, 46.) He meant to point out the striking difference between a mere speculative faith, which is without the affection of heavenly good of love and charity, and a genuine evangelical faith, which is ever united with that affection. For He plainly declares, that the former faith effects no purification of the natural man, signified by giving no water for the feet ; neither hath it any conjunction of love with Jesus Christ, signified by giving Him no kiss ; neither doth it open a communication of the internal man with the good of the Divine Love and charity, signified by not anointing the head of Jesus Christ : whereas, the latter faith, it is declared, operates both to the purification of the natural man, and its conjunction of love with Jesus Christ, and its communication with the good of the Divine Love and charity, signified by washing the feet of Jesus Christ with tears, by kissing them, and anointing them with ointment. May this difference ever be attended to in the church ! and, for this purpose, may the divine question be considerably weighed, *Simon, seest thou this woman ?*

102. It is written in Amos, (iii. 7,) *Surely the LORD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets ;* from which words it is manifest that the Lord, in His most adorable mercy, is ever disposed to make known all His divine operations unto mankind, and that the writings of the prophets contain a history of those operations. It is manifest, also, that at all times the Almighty must needs have His prophets on the earth, to whom He revealeth His secret, since we are compelled to suppose that the Divine operations

are ever new and various, according to the state and requirements of His Church. Jesus Christ therefore testifies, *Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes,* (Matt. xxiii. 34,) alluding, doubtless, to future, not to former, prophets. ✓

103. The children of Israel, as they were commanded, proclaimed liberty to their servants, but afterwards *they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids,* (Jer. xxxiv. 8-12,) a striking figure of all those who proclaim in themselves the law of spiritual liberty, but afterwards become entangled again in the bondage of selfish and worldly attachments.

104. What is said of the church at Jerusalem, is equally true of the members of every other church of the Lord, where it is written, *I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets on thy hands, and a chain on thy neck; and I put a jewel on thy nose, and ear-rings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown on thy head;* (Ezekiel xvi. 11, 12;) for, these ornaments are the goods and truths of the Word; the bracelets on the hands are the divine powers thence derived; the chain on the neck is the communication and conjunction of interior and exterior truth; the jewel on the nose is the perception of good and evil, of truth and error; the ear-rings in the ears are attention and practical obedience of life to the dictates of truth; and the beautiful crown on the head is wisdom from the Lord and His Word ruling and blessing the whole mind and life.

105. In the Revelation it is written, *These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;* (vii. 14;) from which words it is manifest that by the blood of the Lamb is not to be understood the material blood of Jesus Christ, but His spiritual blood, which is the divine truth of His most Holy Word; for material blood is red, and it is absolutely impossible that any robes can be made white by washing in it.

106. It is written in the 107th Psalm, v. 28, *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses;* in which words it is remarkable that trouble is expressed in the singular number, and distresses in the plural. It may not, perhaps, be easy to discover the whole mystery of wisdom involved in this mode of expression; but one thing is evidently implied by it, viz., that whensoever man, out of a sincere heart, applies for Divine relief under the pressure of any single trouble, he is sure to be delivered from multiplied distresses, and that, for this plain reason, because sincere and devout application and supplication to the Lord of heaven and earth never fails to open communication with Him; and communication leads to conjunction; and conjunction with Jesus Christ involves in it a sure deliverance. Thus it is an eternal law of the Divine Order that if one evil, or one hell, be opposed from a true heavenly principle, all evils and all the hells are opposed at the same time.

107. Every regenerate person is like Lazarus, the

brother of Martha and Mary, whom Jesus Christ raised from the dead, (John xi. 43, 44;) for he also is raised from the *death of sin, and out of the grave of his own corruptions*, and set at liberty to live the new life of faith and love, through the resurrection-power of the same incarnate God.

108. In the proportion in which any man is enabled to say to his heavenly Father, from the ground of an interior perception, *All mine are Thine*, (John xvii. 10,) in the same proportion he is enabled also to say, from the same perception, *All Thine are mine*: in other words, so far as man acknowledges from a humble and grateful heart, that all his property, both mental and corporeal, is GOD's more than his own; so far also it is given him to perceive, to his utter astonishment and most complete gratification, that, according to his capacity of reception, all the most blessed things of God are his, viz. the Divine love, wisdom, providence, grace, and protection.

109. There appears to be an equilibrium of joy and sorrow necessary to constitute the perfection of human happiness, for, if either preponderate, the happiness is proportionably diminished. Man can as little bear an excess of the one as of the other, and each seems intended as a counterpoise to the other, to prevent that excess. Thus, the deepest afflictions and trials are rendered, under the Divine Providence, subservient to the best purposes of blessing, by checking the intemperance and thoughtlessness of man's natural delights, and thus making them spiritual, by connecting them with their Divine Fountain. Hence come

those vicissitudes of trouble and of peace, which chequer every one's life; the trouble being designed by the Eternal Mercy to lead to a purer peace, and at the same time to render it more full, by bringing it into conjunction with that divine peace, of which Jesus Christ speaks, where He says, *My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth.* (John xiv. 27.)

110. *Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself,* (Hos. x. 1,) are awful words, to denote the state of those in the church who do good works from a principle of selfish and worldly love, and not of heavenly love. In this case the vine is called empty, because not filled with the love of God and neighbourly love; for vine denotes the spiritual principle of truth or faith in the church, and truth or faith is always empty, except when it admits the life of love and charity from Jesus Christ to fill it, by submitting itself to the government and guidance of that life.

111. Another character of perversion in the church is described by the same prophet in these words, *They make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt,* (Hosea xii. 1,) by which words is signified that the rational principle is exalted to pre-eminence above love and charity, and that thus love and charity are degraded amongst mere scientifics.

112. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid,* (Hos. xiii. 12,) describes a most unhappy and defiled state of the church, in which evil is confirmed

by false persuasions, and is thus concealed so as not to appear evil.

113. *As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head,* (Obad. v. 15,) is the awful law of retaliation, operative in the eternal world, by which it is ordained that all evil, meditated against and done to another, shall ultimately recoil on the head of its contriver and perpetrator.— Most awful consideration! It is however most consolatory to know, that according to the same law, whatsoever good is done or intended to another, from a pure love, ultimately returns, in full measure, into the bosom of him who intended it.

✓ 114. Evil appears to be separable from man to an indefinite degree, and in proportion to the distance of its removal is the nearness of its opposite, good; in other words, heaven approaches as hell recedes. Evil is first separated by noting and abhorring it as sin against God, and the distance of its removal is increased by every repeated act of combat against it, till at length it is removed to the degree, expressed in these words of the Eternal Truth, *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He set our transgressions from us.* (Psalm ciii. 12.)

115. Jesus Christ says, *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,* (Luke xix. 10,) in which words, it is evident, a distinction is made between seeking and saving; the former term having

relation to exploration by truth, and the latter term to deliverance by good.

116. In Psalm cxlviii. 1, we are exhorted to *praise the Lord from the heavens*; to instruct us, that all our power to praise Him is from that source, and that merely from ourselves we are not able to praise Him. The same observation will extend to our prayers, and to every other religious duty.

117. There is an exact and beautiful correspondence, if it could be seen, between the Word of God and His works, as manifested in the visible creation, and that for this reason, because the works of God are effects, wrought by and from His Word, as it is written in John, *All things were made by Him*, (the Word,) i. 3. The works of God, therefore, are the body, of which the Word of God is the soul.

118. There never was a night which was not succeeded by a morning; nor was there ever a winter which was not succeeded by a summer. This is a most consolatory consideration to those who are distressed in the night and winter of spiritual trial and trouble. (See Psalm xxx. 5.)

119. Jesus Christ speaks of a two-fold resurrection, namely, a resurrection to life, and a resurrection to damnation, or, as it might more properly be rendered, judgment, (see John v. 29,) and adds, that they who have done good shall come forth to the former, and they who have done evil shall come forth to the latter;

where, by the resurrection to life, is meant the conjunction of love and wisdom, or of charity and faith; since nothing can properly be called life but such conjunction; and, by resurrection to judgment, is meant the separation of wisdom from love, or of faith from charity, for all judgment and condemnation cometh from such separation.

✓ 120. Hiram, king of Tyre, was dissatisfied with the cities which Solomon gave him, and he called them the land of Cabul, which means displeasing or dirty; (see 1 Kings ix. 11, 12, 13;) because Hiram is a figure of the scientific man, who at all times, and in all places, makes light of the doctrinals of good and truth, represented by Solomon's cities, and accounts them as vile in comparison with his own sciences.

121. *I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass Thine altar, O LORD.* (Psalm xxvi. 6.) To wash the hands in innocency, signifies to be purified by faith in the Lord's Divine Humanity, or by truth derived from it, and in connection with it. And *so will I compass Thine altar, O LORD,* denotes conjunction thus effected with the Divine Humanity; to compass signifying to be in the circuit or circumference, and to compass the altar of the Lord, therefore, denoting to be in the circuit or circumference, of which the altar of the Lord, or the Divine Humanity, is the centre.

122. It is written in Luke, *Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say unto him, Lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his*

journey, [out of the way,] is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him, &c. &c. (chap. xi. 5-11.) The first friend here spoken of is the Lord, as to the divine good of His love, and the second friend is the Lord, as to the divine truth of His wisdom. Accordingly, the first friend is supplicated for bread, or loaves, and the second is said to come in his journey, [out of the way,] because bread, or loaves, denote the principle of heavenly good, and to come in a journey denotes the principle of heavenly truth; for whilst man is in truth, or knowledge, without the good of love and charity, he is, as it were, on a journey, the end of which is the attainment of that good, and conjunction with it. The design of the parable then is to teach, that when man is instructed by the knowledge of the Eternal Truth concerning his own nothingness, and his want of heavenly good to set before his Divine Friend, he is then led to His Heavenly Father, in the true spirit of prayer and supplication, to have his wants relieved, by attaining the good of love and charity; in which case his Heavenly Father communicates the desired good, which He cannot do until it is desired; in other words, until there is a reciprocal application for it on the part of man. It is therefore written, *Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth;* to instruct us, that God dispenseth the good of His love to man according to this eternal law, that man shall first feel a want of it, and thus be led reciprocally to desire it, since otherwise it would be no blessing to him. The expression is remarkable, *He will not rise and give him, and again, He will rise and give him, and seems*

intended to teach us, that the Lord cannot give or communicate to man, the good of His love, until He be suffered to arise in man ; in other words, until man exalt Him and His love in his will and affections, as the supreme good. The forbidding reply also is singular, which the friend from within makes to the application from without, and which is thus expressed, *And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed ; I cannot rise and give thee.* These words are spoken according to the appearance, as it is presented to the natural man, in his first addresses to his Heavenly Father ; for the appearance in such case is, that his importunity is troublesome, that the door of communication is shut, and can never be opened ; that divine things are so immersed and confounded in natural things, as to be inseparable, and thus, that there can be no elevation of the former things out of the latter, consequently, no communication between them. The true penitent, however, is not to be repelled by these discouraging appearances, and accordingly, through the strength of that penitent desire, which the Father of Mercies inspires, he persists in his application, and at length obtains, (as the parable expresseth it,) as many as he needeth ; in other words, a full communication and conjunction with the Lord, in the goods of His love and truth and operation. Such is the weighty instruction contained in this divine parable.

123. *Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind.* (Psalm xviii. 42.) These words, it is manifest, have relation to evil, or to evil spirits, which the Lord combated and subdued. To beat them small

has reference to their exploration in the understanding, for as good, or good spirits, cannot be admitted into the life, until they are well examined by truth in the understanding, so that their nature and quality may be known ; in like manner evil, or evil spirits, cannot be expelled, until they also are explored as to their nature and quality. As the dust denotes that they were accounted infernal, since evils can never be separated from man until they are so accounted, and thus man becomes acquainted with their defiled and condemning properties. Before the wind, denotes under the blessed influences of the Divine Spirit of Good and Truth, inasmuch as the dispersion of evils, or of evil spirits, is not of man, but of the Lord in man.

124. *The apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith,* (Luke xvii. 5,) from which words it would appear, that faith is a principle capable of increase, and that it can never be so full and perfect, as to be incapable of receiving greater fulness and perfection. The same, of course, must be true of every other Christian grace and virtue, and consequently, the Christian life is to be regarded as a continually progressive life, and this in such a manner, that the point of purification, of growth, and of perfection, at any time attained, is to be considered only as a point to set out from, for the attainment of a higher state, not as a point to rest in, as if no higher state were attainable.

125. Jesus Christ calls Himself the True Vine, and His Father the Husbandman, and adds, that *every branch in Him which beareth fruit, His FATHER purgeth it,*

that it may bring forth more fruit, (John xv. 1, 2,) from which words it appears that man is capable of indefinite purgation, or purification. No one, therefore, can pretend to say that he has attained a state of absolutely pure good, which is incapable of further purification; for none but the Lord Himself ever attained such a state of good. It is wisdom to make this acknowledgment, and to be content to submit to the means of purification which the Lord hath appointed, from a conviction, that if we were to stand still in any state of good already attained, we should defile it, and it would thus become like the manna in the wilderness, when it was kept till the morning, concerning which it is written, that *it bred worms and stank.* (Exod. xvi. 20.)

126. Jesus Christ said to the Pharisees, who told Him of Herod's intention to kill Him, *Go ye, and tell that fox, behold I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected,* (Luke xiii. 32,) to instruct us, that from eternity it has been, and to eternity it will be, His divine purpose, to deliver man from evil and the powers of darkness, to gift him with all heavenly goods and truths, and thus to introduce him into heaven, or to an eternal conjunction with Himself. This purpose too is the purpose of every follower of this Incarnate God, only with this difference, that the follower opposes evil and the powers of darkness, not in his own strength, but in the strength of his Divine Lord, from whom also he is gifted with all heavenly goods and truths, and introduced into heaven.

127. Esau must ever be in the desire to *slay his brother Jacob*, (Gen. xxvii. 42, 43,) because to slay, in the internal sense of the word, signifies to deprive of life; and the good which is represented by Esau, must of necessity seek to destroy the life of truth, which is represented by Jacob: inasmuch as the first life of truth is not life, but rather death, whilst selfish and worldly loves are in some degree of connection with it; nor doth truth properly receive life, till that connection is broken, and it becomes vivified, by conjunction with essential good. To slay, therefore, here properly denotes to vivify.

128. The Teraphim of Laban are always to be found in the tent of Rachel, though concealed from Laban himself, (see Gen. xxxi. 34, 35,) because by the Teraphim of Laban are signified and represented the truths in which he was principled; and all truth properly belongs to the internal affection by and from which it is received, which internal affection is represented by Rachel. Truth, therefore, properly belongs to man, only so far as he is in the internal affection of it for its own sake; that is to say, for the sake of the end to which it points, namely, heavenly good of love and charity, and thus eternal conjunction of life with the Father and Fountain of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

129. It appears from the history of Rachel, the wife of Jacob, that in bearing her second son, Benjamin, she suffered more pain than in bearing her first son, Joseph; for it is written on the former occasion, that

she *travailed and had hard labour*, (Gen. xxxv. 16,) and also that she called his name Benoni, or the son of my sorrows. Query,—whether this is not always the case in the regeneration of man, when the medium represented by Benjamin is to be formed and produced? And query, further, whether more or less of this medium is not formed and produced in every state of spiritual trial and temptation? For Benjamin, we are instructed, is a figure of truth conjoined with good, in the rational or internal man, which truth is called the spiritual of the celestial principle, and truth cannot be so conjoined with good but by the labour of temptation. Joseph, on the other hand, is a figure of the internal or rational man, from which truth is derived, which good is from a celestial origin, and therefore brings with it no labour, unless whilst Benjamin is produced, in other words, whilst truth and good are conjoining.

130. In a state of much spiritual darkness and trial, consolation was given, and deliverance effected, by the following words, powerfully impressed on the internal man, *Said I not unto thee, That if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?* (John xi. 40). Thus is the word of the Most High at all times near, and at all times mighty, to dispel the spirits of darkness and sorrow, and in their place to introduce the blessed angels of heavenly light and comfort. Glory be to the Most High!

131. Jesus Christ said to Peter, when he had smitten the servant of the high priest, *Put up thy sword into*

the sheath; the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? (John xviii. 11,) to instruct us, that under severe trials and temptations, we ought not to use the sword of truth by the exercise of austere judgment, either on others, or on ourselves; but rather to submit ourselves to the Divine will and providence, by drinking deep of its dispensations, be they ever so apparently painful, distressing, and perplexing.

132. It is written concerning our Lord's crucifixion, that *in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid,* (John xix. 41,) to denote that the garden of heavenly intelligence and wisdom is always in the centre of a good man's spiritual sufferings, and to denote further, that in that garden is a principle of resurrection to newness of life and blessedness; such being the spiritual idea suggested by a sepulchre. *Wherein was never man yet laid,* denotes that the divine truth never enters that sepulchre, to exercise its resurrection-power, but after crucifixion, or the process of severe trial and temptation.

133. How few examine, or think it necessary to examine, according to the spiritual idea, in what direction the wind blows. We set vanes, or weather-cocks, on our houses, and on the steeples of our churches; but where is the wise man to be found, who doeth the same with his spiritual house, and with the steeple of his spiritual church? Yet we must be forced to confess, that if it be of any importance for man to be

acquainted with the influence, whether of good or of evil, of truth or of error, in his own mind; then it is of equal importance to set up a spiritual vane there, since every such influence is a real wind, either from the kingdom of light or from the kingdom of darkness. How awful, yet how just, in this instance, is the divine rebuke, *Ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times.* (Matt. xvi. 3.) For the signs of the times properly denote the spiritual states of the church, and of all its members; and to discern them is to note them, thus to note the influences of good or of evil, so as to discover which are most prevalent, either generally or individually.

134. *The arrow of the LORD's deliverance,* (see 2 Kings xiii. 17,) though it appears at times to move slowly, yet never fails in the end to hit its mark. Indeed its appearing to move slowly is but an appearance, grounded in the imperfection of man's judgment, whilst the reality is, that its motion is the most rapid of all motions, because urged by the most active of all principles, the divine mercy and loving-kindness. The difference in this case between the appearance and the reality, is the same with what is expressed by Jesus Christ, in those seemingly contradictory words, that GOD *will avenge His elect speedily, though He bear long with them.* (Luke xviii. 7, 8.)

135. It is written in the Book of Psalms, concerning the Lord, that *He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names,* (Psalm cxlvii. 4,) where it is evident, that by calling the stars by their names,

is to be understood the discernment of their respective qualities, whether they be regarded in their natural or spiritual signification. It appears then, from this passage, that the stars have various qualities ; and since there is every reason to believe that they are all of them so many suns, which are the centres of as many systems, in which systems there are revolving earths, or planets, we are hence further authorized to conclude, that each sun in the universe has a quality peculiar to itself, which distinguishes it from every other sun ; and not only so, but that the earths revolving around it have also qualities which distinguish them from all other earths. Each solar system then, according to this idea, has its peculiar quality, which distinguishes it from all other systems ; and thus all the solar systems in the universe, collectively, with their combined qualities, are so many varied theatres, created for the display and manifestation of the infinitely varied qualities, perfections, and excellencies, of the Infinite and Divine Architect.—Most edifying reflection !

136. It is written in the 37th Psalm, *v. 30*, that *the mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment*, in which words, it is evident, a distinction is made between the mouth and the tongue, also between speaking and talking, and likewise between wisdom and judgment. The distinction, in these several cases, is grounded in the distinction between interior thought and exterior thought, or between thought derived from the will and understanding united, and thought derived from understanding only ; or, what amounts to the same, between thought

originating in faith alone, and thought originating in charity and faith combined. The mouth then, as being a more interior member than the tongue, is applied to express interior thought ; whilst the tongue, as being an exterior member, is applied to express exterior thought. Interior thought, again, is said to speak, and is called wisdom ; whilst exterior thought is said to talk, and is called judgment.

✓ 137. There is a spiritual telescope, as well as a natural one ; and in proportion as man is gifted with intellectual sight, derived from the Word of God, or the Eternal Truth, in the same proportion he forms and perfects his spiritual telescope, because in the same proportion he extends the sphere of intellectual vision, by virtue of which he is enabled to discover numberless objects, which had before been invisible, and to see things near, which had before seemed at an immeasurable distance. The importance and benefit, then, of the spiritual telescope, may here be clearly discerned, since by bringing the great realities of the eternal world near to us, it renders them at the same time more affecting, and thus increases the power of their operation, both on our wills and our understandings. For what is seen at a distance is usually as uninteresting as what is not seen at all ; and therefore Jesus Christ perpetually inculcates the edifying lesson, that the *kingdom of heaven*, or *the kingdom of God, is at hand*, or *near* unto us. Thus Jesus Christ, by declaring to us the Truth, supplies us with the blessed materials for the construction of our spiritual telescope (Matt. iii. 2).

138. It is written in the book of Genesis, *And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die;* (chap. xlv. 28.) But how much more may the Christian talk of his *enough*, whilst he can say of Him who was figured and represented by Joseph, Jesus my Saviour is yet alive; and whilst he can lift up his eyes to see Him in His Divine Humanity, as the resurrection and the life of all that is good and wise and blessed in angels and men, and thus as the sure Deliverer from all death, darkness, and misery.

139. It is written in the book of Psalms, *Our soul is brought low, even to the dust; our belly cleaveth to the earth,* (xlv. 25,) to denote the extreme depression of spiritual life, both as to good and truth, which are respectively signified by the soul and the belly.

140. It is written concerning the vine brought out of Egypt, that *she sent out her boughs to the sea, and her branches to the river,* (Psalm lxxx. 10,) to denote the extension of spiritual truth to the scientifics of the natural man, and to the reasonings and conclusions of the rational man.

141. It is not possible for man to attain unto any higher state of spiritual perfection, than what is expressed in these words, well understood, and spoken from the depth of a humble and contrite heart, *My soul doth magnify the LORD, and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my SAVIOUR.* (Luke i. 46.)

142. May not the Christian church at this day be properly called *Ichabod*, having lost her glory in consequence of not acknowledging the supreme and sole divinity of her Lord and Saviour, in His glorified or Divine Humanity. (See 1 Sam. iv. 24.)

143. Solomon's intercessory supplication at the dedication of the temple, (1 Kings viii.) when viewed in its internal or spiritual meaning, appears to relate to the following cases:—

1st,—Intercession for those who offend against the laws of charity, and are in danger of being confirmed in such offence,—verse 31.

2ndly,—Intercession for those who are overcome by their natural evils, in consequence of not trusting in the Lord,—verse 33.

3rdly,—Intercession for those who have closed up their interiors against the admission of heavenly truth, in consequence of not believing in the Lord and His Holy Word,—verse 35.

4thly,—Intercession for those who are in the desolation of good and truth, by suffering those heavenly principles to be wasted, through evil and false persuasions, and are thus brought into spiritual imprisonment,—verse 37.

5thly,—Intercession for those who are destitute of divine truth, and yet are desirous to be instructed in it,—verse 41.

6thly,—Intercession for those who are in temptation-combats,—verse 44.

7thly,—Intercession for those who transgress against the divine laws of love and charity, and are thus

brought into spiritual captivity, and yet have not confirmed themselves in such transgression,—verse 46.

The intercession of Solomon in all the above cases implies the intercession of the Divine Mercy, and a gracious declaration that divine aid is near and at hand to all those who fall under the description of penitent supplicants in any or all of those cases.

144. It is written in the Psalms, *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes*, (Psalm ci. 3,) to denote that the Lord never looks at what is contrary to Himself, and to His kingdom, but only at what is in agreement with Himself, because derived from His own divine love and wisdom, according as it is written in another place, *The eyes of the LORD are over the righteous*, (Psalm xxxiv. 15.)

145. *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly*, (Psalm cvi. 6,) is a passage expressive of the different kinds and degrees of opposition, on the part of man, to the laws of the Most High, *sinning* having respect to evil in the will, or love; *committing iniquity*, to evil in the understanding, or thought; and *doing wickedly*, to the joint effect of both, in producing disorderly works, or perverse conduct and conversation.

146. It is written in the Book of Psalms, (lviii. 3,) *The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies*; but it ought to be written thus, in agreement with the original Hebrew, *The wicked are alienated from the womb, they have*

wandered from the belly, speaking a lie; denoting their departure from all good, signified by the womb, and from all truth, signified by the belly.

147. In the Book of Judges, we read a remarkable history respecting the Ephraimites and the Gileadites, and how the latter *took the passages of Jordan before the former; and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over, that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth, for he could not frame to pronounce it right.* (Chap. xii. 5, 6.) In the original Hebrew, the term shibboleth signifies an ear of corn, and the term sibboleth means a burden, or what is heavy. The spiritual or internal meaning of the passage, therefore, appears to be this, that the Ephraimites, who on this occasion represent the intellectual principle of the church, in its perverse state, called the ear of corn a burden; in other words, they viewed the principles of heavenly love and wisdom, which were represented by the ear of corn, as burdensome to bear, in consequence of the evils into which they had immersed themselves. It therefore follows, *Then they took him, and slew him, at the passages of Jordan,* (verse 6,) to denote that all spiritual life thus perished, and consequently, there was no introduction into the church, of which introduction the river Jordan was a figure.

148. That the 119th Psalm relates to the Lord, and to His fulfilment of the whole Word as to His Hu-

manity, till His Humanity was made the Word, and that it is not to be understood as having reference to David only, is plain from verse 74, where it is written, *They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me*; and it is still more evident from verse 79, *Let those that fear Thee turn unto me*; for why should they who fear Jehovah turn unto David, unless by David is to be understood the Lord, as to His Humanity made divine?

149. That man's obedience will be always proportioned to his sense of the divine love and mercy, is manifest from these words, *Quicken me after Thy loving-kindness, so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth*. (Psalm cxix. 88.)

150. Mention is made in the Gospel of an *innumerable multitude gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another*. (Luke xii. 1.) Such is the multitude of thoughts in the human mind, until they be arranged, and thus brought into order, by regeneration from the Lord. *They tread one upon another*; in other words, each, in seeking to be first, and to exalt itself into pre-eminence, would degrade the other, that so it may rise by the other's fall; whereas in the regeneration, when the order of heaven is restored, every thought knows its proper place, and never infringes on that of another, because each has respect to, and is under the control of, the same blessed end, namely, conjunction with the Supreme, through entire submission to His divine will and wisdom.

151. *The mouth is said to be filled with laughter, and*

the tongue with singing, (Psalm cxxvi. 2,) because laughter denotes the affection of truth, and singing denotes the truth itself, which is the object of that affection. Hence it is evident that all the parts of the human body are significative, and that the mouth is significative of a more interior principle than the tongue.

152. The Lord's Prayer has relation,—first, to the introduction of heavenly order into the several degrees of the human mind,—secondly, to the nourishment of the life of order in each degree,—thirdly, to the expulsion of the several degrees of disorder,—and fourthly, to the glorification of the devout and humble soul, consisting in the grateful acknowledgment that all heavenly order is from Jesus Christ, because all love and wisdom, or all good and truth, are from Him, and are His. When, therefore, it is said, *Father of us, that art in the heavens*, the words have reference to the inmost degree of man's mind, which may be called the divine degree, because Jesus Christ has there His inmost residence, infinitely above the cognizance of man. Again, when we pray, *Hallowed be Thy name*, the words have reference to the celestial degree, or that degree in which the divine love, with all its graces and blessings, is made manifest. When we pray again, *Thy kingdom come*, the words have reference to the spiritual degree, or that degree in which the divine wisdom, with all its holy truths and their delights, are made manifest. In like manner in the petition, *Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in the earth*, the words have reference to the natural degree, or that degree, in and by which the purposes of heavenly love, and

the counsels of heavenly wisdom, in the superior degrees, are brought into operation. When again we pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*, it is manifest we pray for the nourishment and support of order and its life in every degree of the human mind and body, acknowledging such nourishment and support to be from God, thus from reciprocal conjunction with Jesus Christ. In the three following petitions, namely, *Remit to us our debts, [or sins,] as we remit to our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, the degrees of disorder are noted, with supplication for its removal; remission of debts [or sins] having relation to the commencement of such removal by the light of truth, which first makes debts and sins manifest; whilst temptation has relation to the combat between what is true and what is false, whereby a further removal is effected, and thus at length deliverance from evil, which is the entire subjugation of self-love, takes place, and completes the eradication of disorder. A difference therefore is made, between the remission of sins and deliverance from evil, because sins have reference to acts of disorder in the external, or natural man, and these are remitted whensoever they are seen by the light of truth to be offences against God; whereas evil has reference to the internal defiled source from whence those sins are produced, which is nothing else but selfish and worldly love; and deliverance from evil is effected, whensoever truth in the understanding is conjoined with good in the will; in other words, whensoever man not only knows his duty, but loves and delights to do it. Here therefore follows the conclusion, which is the soul's glorification, consisting in the humble and grateful acknowledg-

ment, both in heart and life, *Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory*; in other words, *Thine is the all of love and of wisdom, of goodness and of truth, both in heaven and the church.* For the soul of man is glorified, in proportion as it gives glory to God; and it gives glory to God in proportion as it acknowledges in heart and life that every good and perfect gift is from God, or from the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. By this glorification, therefore, is effected a return to God of all that the soul has received, and receives from Him, whereby is effected a free and full circulation of divine and heavenly life from God to man, and back again from man to God, which is the great end of man's creation, redemption, and regeneration, the grand design of the Revelation of God, and the important ground and reason of every act of prayer and praise, and also of every act of obedience to the divine precepts of love, purity, and charity. (Matt. vi. 9-13.)

153. It is written in Psalm lxxiii. 9, concerning the wicked, *They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth*; where to set their mouth against the heavens, means to oppose, in heart and life, all the interior things of heavenly love and wisdom; whilst, their tongue walking through the earth, denotes that their thoughts are employed merely about such external things as regard themselves and the world.

154. The Lord saith to Peter, after washing his feet, *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter*, (John xiii. 7,) to instruct us, that in

every state of purification, signified by washing the feet, we are ignorant of its uses and end, and remain so whilst the process continues ; nor can we discover them until the process is ended, and we are made sensible of the heavenly good to which it has conducted us. The same is true of every trial, trouble, and cross, which we are called to endure in our Christian course, because the suffering, with which it is attended, never fails at the time to close the interiors of the mind against the light of heaven, and therefore we cannot discern the blessing to which it conducts us, until the suffering is past, and the interiors are again opened to admit heavenly light and its love.

155. In the song of Hannah, (1 Sam. ii. 6,) it is written concerning the Lord, that *He lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill*, because by a beggar, according to the spiritual idea, is meant one who supplicates the Almighty to supply his spiritual wants ; thus by a beggar, abstracted from personality, is meant supplication grounded in want ; by a dunghill again, according to the same idea, is meant ejected, or separated evil ; for a dunghill, spiritually considered, is nothing else but a collection of such evil. When therefore it is said, that *the Lord lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill*, it is the same thing as if it had been said, that there is a power of elevation, from and to the Divine Being, in all supplication which is grounded in repentance of the heart and life ; since by such repentance, all evils are ejected, separated, and collected into the spiritual dunghill, which is hell.

156. It is written in the 68th Psalm, verse 14, *When*

the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon; but the word white is an interpolation, and therefore, it ought to be omitted; and then the passage reads thus, *It was as snow in Salmon*, to denote that as snow melteth before the sun of this world, so kings, or all false principles of life and doctrine, are scattered at the approach and presence of the Sun of Righteousness.

157. The Word of the Lord is compared to rain and snow, coming down from heaven, (Isaiah lv. 10,) because by rain is signified spiritual truth, which is appropriated to man; and by snow, natural truth, which is as snow whilst only in the memory, but becomes spiritual by love, as snow becomes rain-water by warmth. (See Ap. Exp. 644.)

158. In the parable concerning the ten servants, to whom the Lord gave ten pounds, (Luke xix. 12, and following verses,) the charge delivered by the Lord on the occasion is, *Occupy till I come*, or as it might be better rendered, *Take the management till I come*; thus instructing us in the proper application of all our talents, and the grand end towards which that application ought continually to be directed, which is no other than the coming of the Lord; not any future coming, either to judge the world or to destroy it, but His present coming, to establish in our hearts and lives that kingdom of purity and peace, of which it is written, *The kingdom of God is within you*.

159. It is written in the Gospel according to Luke,

that the Lord, *being in an agony, prayed more earnestly,* (xxii. 44,) or, as it might be rendered, more intensely, from which circumstance we learn, that the intenseness of the Lord's supplication, or of the force by which His Humanity applied to the Divinity in itself with a view to perfect union, was not always the same, but was subject to variation, and this probably according to the violence of assault from the infernals. Query, —whether this is not also the case with man, so that the intenseness of his prayer varies in like manner, according to the force of temptation from the powers of darkness?

160. To chew the cud is a distinguishing characteristic of a clean human mind, as well as of a clean beast, because, in reference to the former, it implies an interior reception of truth, in consequence of meditating on what is heard and read, and thus admitting it into a higher or interior region both of the will and understanding. For if truth be only heard and read, and not well masticated by serious consideration, it remains in the memory only, and cannot entertain the life; thus it resides out of the man, and not in him, inasmuch as the memory is only an outer court of the human mind, useful indeed as a storehouse for the first reception of truths, but only sparingly useful, so far as the received truths are afterwards called forth for examination, and exalted into an interior region, by reflection and profound exploration of their origin, meaning, and end. (See Deut. xiv. 6, 7, 8.)

161. It is a great and blessed thing to receive a

crown of celestial wisdom, and thus to have dominion over the lusts of selfish and worldly love ; but it is a greater and more blessed thing, to *fall down with the four and twenty elders before Him that sitteth on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever, and cast the crown before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power, &c.* (Rev. iv. 10, 11.)

162. When the sun apparently sets, he is at the same time in the act of really rising ; and when it is midnight, instantly morning commences. The same is true of the Heavenly Sun, and also of the spiritual midnight and morning. (See Psalm xxx. 5.)

163. It is written of the sun in the 19th Psalm, *That he cometh as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race,* (verse 5,) to denote the ardency of the divine love, and the power of divine truth, operative in promoting the instruction, regeneration, and final salvation of mankind.

164. Again, it is written of the true believer, (Psalm cxxviii. 6,) *Thou shalt see thy children's children and peace upon Israel,* to denote the fruitfulness of good and truth in the regenerate mind, to endless generations, all tending to establish a greater fulness of divine peace.

165. In Psalm cvii. verse 6, we read thus, *Then they cried unto the LORD [Jehovah] in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses ;* and at verse 13, *Then they cried unto the LORD [Jehovah] in their*

troubles, and He saved them out of their distresses; and at verse 28, Then they cry unto the LORD [Jehovah] in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses; in which passages a distinction is made between trouble and distress; also between delivering, saving, and bringing out of. For the original Hebrew term, here rendered trouble, signifies to bind close; and the original term, rendered distress, signifies to compress; and the original term, rendered delivered, signifies to shelter; and the original term, rendered saved, signifies to save; and the original term, rendered bringeth them out of, signifies to bring forth, or out of. From these considerations it would appear, that the word trouble has respect to the principle of evil, and is therefore in the singular number; whereas the term distresses has respect to the falses of evil, and is accordingly in the plural number. To deliver, to save from, and to bring out of distresses, may therefore properly denote the various processes and degrees by which the falses of evil are removed from man; deliverance, or shelter, having relation to the first insemination of divine truth in the understanding, by which the falses of evil are first assaulted and shaken; whilst saving from, has relation to the implantation of heavenly good in the will, by which the same falses are further combated and conquered; and whilst bringing out of, has relation to the entire removal of those falses, in consequence of the joint operation of good and truth.

166. Jesus Christ says, *He that cometh to Me, and heareth My words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like to a man building a house,*

who diggeth, and deepeneth, and layeth the foundation on a rock, &c. (Luke vi. 47, 48,) from which words we learn the three requisite qualifications to become a Christian ; the first is, to come to Jesus Christ ; the second is, to hear His words ; and the third, to do them. The first therefore relates to the will, the second to the understanding, and the third to the life ; for it is the will which comes, the understanding which hears words, and the life which doeth, or operates. Such a Christian therefore is likened to the builder of a house, only with this difference from a literal builder, that his house is a spiritual house, and consequently the digging, the deepening, and the laying the foundation on a rock are spiritual acts—digging having relation to inquiry after truth, deepening to the inquiry after spiritual or interior truth, and laying the foundation on a rock, to the grounding all on divine truth, or, what amounts to the same, on the Divine Humanity of the Lord.

167. Moses, in his charge to the children of Israel, appeals to two convincing proofs of divine government over them, the first of which is thus expressed, *Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?* The second is expressed in these words, *Or hath God assayed to go, and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?* (Deut. iv. 33, 34.) Thus it would appear, that the two surest evidences of the divine government of the Almighty

over the human race, are, first, the revelation of His divine word, and secondly, the effect of the reception of that word, in separating between goods and evils, so that goods may be elevated into heaven, and evils cast down into hell.

168. As on the sixth day of creation God said, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, (Gen. i. 26,) so He has been saying and doing every day since, and in every moment of every day. For what is it to make man, but to create a corporeal, sensual, natural, and rational being, capable of becoming spiritual and celestial, by the reception of the divine wisdom and love? And is not God perpetually in this act, by giving life and growth, first to the foetus in the womb, and afterwards to the corporeal man, when produced from the womb, then to the sensual, the natural, and rational man, and lastly to the spiritual and celestial man?

169. Jesus Christ saith to His disciples, at the time when He was about to be taken away from them, as to His external presence, *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you*; (John xiv. 27;) thus instructing us, that there are two kinds and degrees of peace, the first resulting from the knowledge of the truth, as manifested in the understanding, and the second resulting from the conjunction of that knowledge with the heavenly good from which it is derived, thus, its conjunction with the Lord Himself, when it becomes operative in the will and life. The first, therefore, is comparatively external peace, as coming more from

without, by seeing and hearing ; whereas the second is internal peace, because coming from within, through divine communication, and is therefore emphatically called by the Lord, *My peace*.

170. *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; [it is] engraven on the table of their heart, and in the horns of your altars.* (Jer. xvii. 1.) By these words is described, that idolatrous worship was so deeply rooted in the Jewish nation that it could not be eradicated. That it was so deeply in-rooted, as to be incapable of eradication, is signified by the sin of Judah being written with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond, and being engraven on the table of their heart, and in the horns of their altars ; the false principle which was in-rooted, is meant by being written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond ; and the evil which was in-rooted, is meant by being engraven on the table of their heart, and in the horns of their altars. (Ap. Exp. 391.)

171. It is written in the 144th Psalm, verse 15, *Happy is the people whose GOD is the LORD* ; in other words, whose truth is good ; since God, according to the spiritual idea, denotes divine truth, and Lord, according to the same idea, denotes divine good.

172. The births of the two sons of Joseph, namely, Manasseh and Ephraim, are significative and representative of two very interesting states of regenerative life. For Manasseh, in the original tongue, means forgetfulness, and was a name therefore applied to

denote Joseph's forgetfulness of the evil which he had suffered, previous to his exaltation in the land of Egypt. (See Gen. xli. 51.) Ephraim too, in the original tongue, means fruitfulness, and was accordingly applied to denote Joseph's *fruitfulness in the land of his affliction*. (verse 52.) When the mind, therefore, in the course of regeneration, is brought to a state of internal peace, which leads it to forget its former disturbances, it then arrives at the state signified and represented by the birth of the former; and when, by this peace, it is rendered fruitful in goodness and truth, it then arrives at the state signified and represented by the latter.

173. It is written in Psalm iii. v. 3, *But Thou, O LORD, art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head*. The connected sense of the passage appears to be this, that the Lord, as a shield, protects man from all infernal evils, and, at the same time, gifts him with spiritual truth, here signified by glory, and thus elevates his ruling love to the possession of an eternal good, signified by lifting up the head.

174. Solomon saith to the Lord, *I am but a little child; I know not how to go out, or to come in* (1 Kings iii. 7). Such is the confession of every child of wisdom. He acknowledges his own comparative littleness, in the view of his Heavenly Father's greatness, and that of himself he has no knowledge, either as to the right conduct and government of his external or his internal man.

175. Many people, at this day, are in a similar situation with Zaccheus, the publican of old, concerning whom it is written, that *he sought to see Jesus who He was, and could not for the press, [or multitude] for he was little of stature,* (Luke xix. 3.) For it is no uncommon thing with man, to be influenced with a strong desire to acquire some knowledge of the Great Saviour, which knowledge is an intellectual sight of Him, when yet he is unable to acquire it, by reason of the press, [or multitude,] not of other men like himself, but of the disorderly and disturbing crowd of his own selfish and worldly imaginations, which crowd, on account of his own little stature in heavenly wisdom, he has no power to over-look, or rather to look above. It is possible, however, that men of this description, like the above publican, may be influenced by the spirit of charity, and that therefore, notwithstanding the small stature of their intellectual minds, in regard to knowledge, they may be acceptable in the sight of that God who looks at the heart, more than at the eyes, of His children (1 Sam. xvi. 7). To all such, therefore, it cannot be doubted, will, sooner or later, be addressed the consolatory language, with which the blessed Jesus announced His acceptance of the favoured Zaccheus, when He said, *This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.*

176. The regenerate mind is as a consecrated ark, into which man, like Noah and his family of old, enters, and where he is shut in by the Lord Himself; (Gen. vii. 16;) so that, notwithstanding the going and re turning of the waters of trial and temptation, he is

elevated above them, and finally finds rest on the mountains of Ararat, especially when the figurative dove comes to him in the evening, with an *olive leaf plucked off* (Gen. viii. 11). For what can this olive leaf plucked off mean, but some small portion of the truth of faith, grounded in the good of charity, which, in the regenerate mind, survives all trouble, and is a convincing proof that the waters are abated from off the ground?

177. Jesus Christ speaks of a two-fold regeneration, when He says to Nicodemus, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD; and except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD* (John iii. 3-5). For to see the kingdom of God, has relation to the regeneration of man's understanding; and to enter into the kingdom of God has relation to the regeneration of the human will. To see the kingdom of God has relation, therefore, to man's reception of the light of the divine truth, which is absolutely necessary, to conduct him to the higher reception of the divine good. But to enter into the kingdom of God, has relation to man's reception of the purity of the divine good, which is the final blessed consequence of a dutiful obedience to the light of truth. This latter regeneration is accordingly called a birth of water and spirit, because water is significative of truth, and spirit is significative of good, and both united are figures of the eternal conjunction, or marriage, of those two principles, by virtue of which marriage, man not only sees, but enters into, the rest which remaineth for the people of God. The subject is of the first interest and importance.

178. In the institution of the Holy Supper, when the Lord delivers the bread to His disciples, He uses two terms, *Take, eat*, (see Matt. xxvi. 26,) the first having reference to the understanding, the second to the will; for, with the understanding, man takes spiritual food, which is the Word of God, or the Lord's body; and with the will, he feeds upon it, or eats it, by incorporating it into his life.

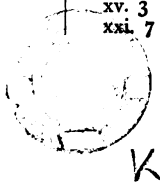


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