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ART. I.—CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.

BY THE EDITOR.

IF one were to judge from the contest that is now going on between Christian faith and unbelief, the books and articles that are written on the subject, and the intense interest that is felt in the discussion, he might suppose that Christianity is contending for the first time to establish its claims before the world. It would seem as if that contest was not passed through nearly eighteen centuries ago when Christianity confronted heathen religions and heathen civilization, and through the great struggle with persecution overcame the opposition by martyrdom, and also gained the victory in the literary contest over the learned unbelief of Greece and Rome. The contest can hardly be said to have been opened during the Middle Ages, for though the Church had to contend with various forms of error from time to time it was conceded throughout the nations of Christendom that Christianity is the only true and absolute religion, having divine authority for its foundation. Those were ages of faith. Even the long struggle with Mohammedanism was a contest between two religions claiming both alike to be of supernatural origin. It was not a contest with infidelity, but with a false religion.

It cannot be denied that a different age in this respect has opened upon the world since the Reformation. Under the influence and protection of the freedom of thought and speech

ART. III.—THE SUPREME EPIPHANY; GOD'S VOICE OUT
OF THE CLOUD.*

THE Gospel lesson for the sixth Sunday in the Epiphany period of the church year reads as follows :

“ And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them : and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here ; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them : and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.”—MATTHEW xvii. 1-9.

It lies in the conception of the church year that it should be a movement, answering mystically to the life of our Lord, first in himself and then in his spiritual kingdom. His incarnation, or coming into the world, could have no reality except in such form ; it must be a continuous progression, after the manner of all human life, which could become actually complete only through successive stages of development, all finding their full sense at last in its general conclusion. So much is signified at once by his human conception and birth ; as it is confirmed also by all the notices we have of his infancy and

* An essay which may be regarded as the continuation in some sense of our article on *Sacred Hermeneutics*, published in the last number of this REVIEW.

childhood. There was a true human unfolding of his life in the world from the beginning, which appeared both in his physical and in his spiritual nature. As a child, we are told, he "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ;" and as a youth, subsequently, it is added, "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." There was nothing apparitional simply in his humanity, in the way imagined by the ancient Gnostics. And this implies a great deal more than mere substantial, outwardly historical manifestation, reaching from the manger to the cross. It supposes necessarily the comprehension of the end of such process, in the universal movement of the process from the outset. In other words, the life of Christ in the world cannot be viewed as a real, and not merely imaginary life, if it is thought of as an external contrivance simply on the part of God, to make room for the object of his coming into the world regarded as something different from the proper actuality of the life itself ; as when it is said, for example, that he must be a man, in the way of necessary preparation to take upon him the sins of men and to die thus the accursed death of the cross. His humanity could not be in this way, we may be very sure, a mere theatrical platform for what it may be supposed to have thus instrumentally accomplished in the end. Aside from all theories of the Christian redemption otherwise considered, one thing ought to be most perfectly clear ; it must hold fundamentally and essentially, first of all, in the living fact of the incarnation itself ; and there also, first of all, in the direct intrinsic power of this fact, as a single movement triumphantly brought to pass by the arm of our Lord himself, through the entire course of his mundane life. In the days of his flesh, it is said, through prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered ; and being thus made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him (Heb. v. 7-9). Thus it was, and thus only, that the full conjunction of the divine and the human—the true, full mystery

of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, and so finally received up into glory (1 Tim. iii. 16)—became complete in his person; constituting at the same time his complete, ultimate qualification for the work of our human redemption; not any one part of it simply, but the whole of it, according to his own grand word just before his final glorification: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John xii. 31, 32). Thus the realness of the new creation in our Lord Jesus Christ is preserved, over against all mere notional abstraction. His life, the wholeness of his incarnation, enters into it, from first to last, not as outward mechanism but as inwardly living and continuous organism. A sublime oratorio of the Messiah, in very truth, rising high above all the music of the spheres, echoed perpetually in the Apostles' Creed, and sounding through the ages in those words of the old Ambrosian hymn: "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ; thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst humble thyself to be born of the Virgin. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

With this progressive movement now of our Lord's theanthropic life, we say, falls in correspondingly the order of the consecutive Epiphany Sundays in the movement of the church year. They form, as it were, a general reproduction of it in the worship of the church, not so much chronologically as ideally and spiritually. They give us its temporal facts translated into their proper eternal sense, the language of earth raised into the language of heaven. The one thought of the Epiphany is of course throughout, the manifestation or showing forth of our Saviour's glory, which was to be at the same time the glory of his kingdom. That could not be in the way of mere outward demonstration, such as might be demanded by the merely natural mind. It must be from within his own person; but in this view again not thaumaturgic in any sense, not as by stroke of magic doing violence to the constitution of the

world in its natural character and form ; for how, in that case, could the coming of Christ into the world be itself anything better than a magical figment ? The verification of his presence, then, must be through evidence from beyond himself, as well as through evidence from within himself ; while still, however, in the nature of the case, these two sorts of evidence can never be rightly thought of as co-ordinate or reciprocally independent. The inward as related to the outward is in fact central, while the outward is at best peripheral only and circumstantial, and must ever owe any force it may have to the power of the inward living in it actually as the soul lives in the body. But in full analogy again with the universal law of life in the world, that which is first in order of being here, as elsewhere, is not at once that which *appears* first in the order of actual historical existence. Hence the movement of Christ's manifestation begins with the outward wonders that attend his supernatural birth, things far off in one view from the glory that lay as yet concealed in his own person. That is as the case should be, to herald such an advent. But it was the power of the advent itself which gave these wonders in the end all their significance ; and as the mystery goes forward accordingly, it is found more and more that the manifestation of Christ and his kingdom in the world must be regarded as being from the beginning, through all signs and wonders, purely and strictly his own *self-manifestation*. "The Word was made flesh," says the Apostle, "and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." It was a self-evidencing vision for all who received power to become the sons of God by believing on his name. So it was then, and so it is now ; and so will it be to the end of time. How else could he say : "I am the light of the world ; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life !"

The Epiphany season opens with the visit of the wise men from the east to Jerusalem, who came guided by a star to do homage to him that was born King of the Jews—an event,

that looked forward prophetically to the bringing of the Gentiles into his kingdom. It is as it were the lifting of the curtain before a vision of the Saviour's glory, which is felt to be in the highest degree impressive and grand; but the vision has to do mainly with what appeals to us as the outward show of the heavenly things of the Gospel—seen in the distance and seen obscurely—rather than as the very presence of these things themselves seen in their own proper form. Only as we come to read the star by the light of what comes after it in our Lord's life, can it be said to have any office for us really in the way of showing forth his glory.

The first Sunday after the Epiphany brings before us the boyhood of Christ, on the occasion of that memorable epoch in the unfolding of his divine-human life, when he was found by his parents "in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions; so that all who heard him "were astonished at his understanding and answers." An occasion, whose full significance is intimated more particularly by his answer to the precipitate rebuke of his mother: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" To some this may appear a falling away from the celestial distinction which attended his birth; but it is in fact a vast advance on that, just because the distinction which was before outward and relatively remote, now begins to come into view as something inward and personal with the Lord himself. We are met in the case with an awakening glimpse of his Messianic glory, as it had begun already to dawn upon his own mind; through this, in long vista, the glories of his coming spiritual kingdom rise more or less obscurely into view; and more and more we find ourselves in deep sympathy with the Virgin mother, of whom it is said that "she kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

Far in advance of this manifestation again is the view we have of the same Christ in the second Epiphany Sunday, where at the opening of his public ministry, after full both inward and outward preparation for its mighty task, he comes before

us in the miracle of turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. This is brought forward purposely in the evangelical history to show how his miracles universally are to be regarded. They are in no case wonder-works simply, exhibited as outward evidence of his divine mission, in the sense of the Jewish question, "What sign shewest thou that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?" In difference from this, they are to be considered as but the outgoing expression of his own interior life, revealing itself in natural forms answerable to its higher presence and power. They are not the natural affecting mastery over the spiritual, as in the case of magic, but the spiritual using the natural in its own superior service according to the universal order of God's creation. The miracles of Christ thus are all primarily spiritual. The testimony of Jesus and his kingdom is in them directly and immediately as their living spirit or soul, just as it is declared to be in his word universally. For with him word and work are in truth one. So his miracles are parables always, or oracles of the divine; and his parables are always miracles also, or sacraments of the divine. Both miracles and parables, with him, are in this sense revelations of his personal glory from within himself, epiphanies of his power and majesty shining out from the inmost sanctuary of his own heavenly life. And just here it is that the miracle of Cana in Galilee, in particular, is found to have its proper significance in the progress of the Epiphany season. It opens the way for all following miracles in our Lord's ministry; and is so ordered in all its circumstances as to bring into view mystically the true interior of his life, as infinitely more than human, beyond all previous manifestations. Profoundly significant in this respect is the new rebuke to his mother, compared with the lighter rebuke in the temple eighteen years before, implying as it does unquestionably her full exclusion now from all participation in his true theanthropic being and work. Well may it be said of the whole occasion, therefore, with pregnant emphasis: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLOMY; and his disciples believed on him."

The third and fourth Epiphany Sundays carry out this manifestation by the recital of new miracles; in the case of which again, then, all turns on their spiritual relation to Christ and his kingdom, in the mystical view just explained, and not at all on their simply external form. So regarded, they are not repetitions merely; they give us, in the way of general example, what we may call progressive revealings of the glory of Christ reaching onward continually toward its full end. And so it is also with the fifth Sunday, where the parable of the wheat and the tares, under the like inward view, brings home to our faith still more closely what must be regarded here as the ultimate aim and scope of all true Christian worship.

Our Lord's transfiguration, as we have it celebrated in the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, is the movement in question conducted finally to this grand conclusion. Not, of course, the movement of Christ's actual life in the world, brought to its close in his full glorification; but the prefiguration of that, as it has entered into the mind of the Church from the beginning in the idea of the church year.

The life of Christ was full of such prefiguration from the beginning, and especially so after he entered on his public ministry. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, may be said to have shone forth from him, in a certain measure, all the time. As we have just seen, a progressive epiphany in this respect, runs through all the days of his flesh, brightening continually more and more toward the perfect light of heaven. But in the vision of the transfiguration, we have toward the last a very sunburst, as it were, from the midst of heaven itself, outshining all previous manifestations, and plainly ordered and intended by our blessed Lord himself to be their crowning culmination—the palpable never to be forgotten legacy of his coming glory, we may say, before “his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” It is for us thus the supreme epiphany, the miracle of all miracles, foreshadowing directly the great fact of the resurrection, and the return of the risen Redeemer to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.

To understand that such was, in fact, the object and meaning of this revelation "in the holy mount," we need only to consider the occasion in right connection with what goes before it in the evangelical record. It is admitted on all hands that Peter's memorable confession, as we have it in the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, constitutes a most important height of observation, for taking in the true sense of Christianity. "Whom do men say," it was asked, "that I the son of man am?" Answer: "Some say, John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Question: "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." For the traditional Christian faith there seems to be nothing particularly great in that. Outwardly taken, the confession sounds but as the common first element of a child's catechism. Yet see to what startling height it at once rises before the inward gaze of our Lord. "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona," he says, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Here is something surely that may well challenge our most earnest attention. What does it mean?

It means immediately the boundless difference there is between knowing and being, between thinking and actual life, in the kingdom of God. It seems strange there should ever be, with our rational nature, any confusion of things which, however intimately related, are yet so plainly separate and distinct; strange especially, that we should be in any danger of inverting the plain order of their relation, so far as to make the idea of knowing and understanding first in order, and the idea of actual being and life wholly secondary. In our merely natural life we are protected from such error by our bodily senses. But with our higher spiritual life, by reason of the derangement which has come upon us through the fall, the case is altogether different. Here in very truth we are continually in danger of this very hallucination; just because we are all the time prone to subordinate the spiritual to the natural, as something that is

to be mastered in such view from the side of our simply natural existence; and need in reality a divine regeneration, whereby the spiritual shall flow into us from its own higher sphere in God, that we may be capable at all of receiving into ourselves its actual being and life, as we take in through our bodily senses the things of the natural world. Hence our universal tendency to substitute, in religion, the office of the understanding for the office of the will, the function of thought for the function of love, the kingdom of God in the character primarily of doctrine and faith for the kingdom of God as essentially and inmosty "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The power of seeing and owning the presence of the supernatural in Christ, not as theory or doctrine merely but as the felt reality of a new heavenly life something not conceivable apart from the influent energy of this life itself) becomes thus the necessary test of all genuine faith in Christ and of all true Christianity. And that is just what is recognized here by our Lord himself in Peter's confession, as being nothing less in fact than the breaking of the gospel itself as the light of a new creation upon his soul. It is the gospel as living reality, the kingdom of God in its substantial power and glory, apprehended first of all in the person of the Saviour himself, and by that very act of apprehension made to be in the confessing disciple at the same time as the inmost essence of his own being. This precisely is the meaning of all true faith in Christ. It is one always with its object, and draws from this at once its whole vitality and force. That, we may easily see, implies of itself something far beyond all external illumination, all teaching or science of man. It must enter the soul, not from the earthward side, but from the heavenward side of its existence. It must come, if it come at all, as a divine revelation, and this not circuitously through flesh and blood, but directly, as is here said, from the Father of our Lord himself. Well may such faith be singularized in its possessor then by the title *Blessed*. For what less is it in fact than the very stream of uncreated eternal life itself, opened into the spirit from the fountain of this life

in God? That surely is the benediction of all benedictions, without which there is no room to conceive of felicity or good for men in any other form.

And so it easily follows: "I say also unto thee"—standing in the life and power of this heaven-born confession—"that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." What this means, in the light of the context, is not rationally doubtful. Peter's name, signifying stone or rock, and expressing, according to Bible usage the general nature of the man, is here raised to its highest power, as we may say, through the exaltation by which he was made to have part, as we have now shown, in the actual spiritual life of the Lord. That was brought to pass by his faith; but there was no strength or worth in his faith itself, separately considered, which could possibly entitle him to this glorious distinction. All the blessedness there was in the faith belonged to the new order of life and power and glory, by which in its mere receptive quality it was vitalized and quickened into action from the life of the Lord himself. That only, therefore, could be the rock on which his Church or kingdom should be built: and the attribution of its properties to the man Simon Bar-jona, then, cannot possibly mean more than the declaration of what he had now come to be, though the actual and real coming of the Lord's kingdom into his person. Any imagination other than this, by which the rock is taken to be the man Peter himself, and the power of the keys is made to lodge itself in him, or in any other man coming after him, is simply monstrous. For the term rock or stone, in its spiritual meaning, is not at all of rare or uncertain use in the Bible. We meet with it scores of times; and all through the sacred volume from the rock in Horeb onward to the end it has but one legitimate application. It means **Jehovah**, the Redeemer of Israel, the Mighty One of Jacob, the Lord Jesus Christ in his Humanity; of whom it is written," "The

stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner. Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Luke xx. 17, 18). Is it possible to conceive rationally of such a divine prerogative as this being passed over to any human, or even highest angelic vicegerency? We might just as well think of God's omniscience, or omnipotence, or absolute life and being in any view, thus passing over to either angel or man. Christ, the Son of God, comes before us as the fulness of the Divine in this way, being in his glorified Humanity itself, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person (Heb. i. 3). But just for that reason he is one with the Father, and not to be sundered from him in thought even for a single moment. To see him is to see the Father. Each is absolutely and entirely in the other. That we have at once in the Old Testament declaration: "I am Jehovah; that is my Name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Only think now, in the face of this, of a finite mortal like Peter being made to stand for the Rock of Ages, on which the Church is built, impregnable against all the assaults of hell. Is it not in truth the name and glory of Jehovah Christ given to another? Have we not in it a graven image, most palpably of man's device and art? More than a stupendous solecism! A frightful blasphemy.

Peter's good confession at this time, though genuine and of real heavenly birth, was itself relatively imperfect and unsteady, needing to be deepened by farther providential discipline and experience; and as if for the very purpose of sundering its true divine life and power from the mere human personality of the man himself, we have the notice almost immediately after of a fall from his high-toned faith again, which drew upon him that severe rebuke: "Get thee behind me, Satan! thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

So in every way we find on the part of our Lord from this time forth, what we may call a systematic endeavor to bring

home to the mind of his disciples, in connection with the closely approaching end of his own earthly life, the true nature of the spiritual kingdom which was to proceed from his crucified and then glorified person; the veritable kingdom of heaven, regarded as a reign of truth, righteousness and glory, having place in the most substantial way beyond the present world, and causing the things of earth to appear as nothing in its presence. The path by which he was now to pass into that glory, was the path in which also he must be followed by all who would aspire to come into the same heavenly life; and for this, involving as it did necessarily the crucifixion and giving up of the merely natural life universally as such, no simply notional or outwardly traditional sense of heavenly things, it was plain, would be found sufficient. Only the felt realness of the kingdom of heaven in its actual substance, as our Lord was himself the bearer of it in his own person (and not the teacher of it simply as something outside of himself), could in the end avail for the purpose. Hence the stress he is now heard laying particularly on the coming of his kingdom in this view, "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." And with this fittingly falls in then the idea and purpose of his transfiguration on the mount, by which, as a display of his hidden glory, surpassing all before, full practical proof should be given of that future advent. That such was the significance of the occasion in fact, and that it was specially ordered and brought to pass by our Lord for this great end, is shown by his own reference to it here beforehand, when he says, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom;" or as St. Mark gives it, "till they see the kingdom of God come with power."

What the transaction was intended to mean, and actually did mean in this respect, is strikingly shown by St. Peter in his second Epistle, written long after, and near the end of his own life. Exhorting those whom he addressed to use all diligence in their Christian calling, that so an entrance might be minis-

tered unto them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord, he goes on to say: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." The Gospel in this respect was no matter of thought or speculation simply, but an overpowering substantial reality close at hand in the spiritual world, which might well cause all temporal existence to shrink before it into nothing. "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount."

It follows immediately in our English version, "We have also a *more sure word of prophecy*, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed;" which at first sight seems to weaken the force of the appeal just made to the fact of the transfiguration. But looking closely at the original text we find it to mean, "And we have the prophetic word more sure;" that is, we have thus, or hereby, the word of the Old Testament established and confirmed. A declaration, that falls in exactly with the reigning purport and scope of the transfiguration, which was to bring into vivid view, as we shall see, the relation of Christ to the Old Testament, by which each is found to be in the end the living verification of the other—according to the angelic word, The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. So Peter understood it; and therefore it is that he thus refers to the subject in the passage before us, and follows out the reference by a corresponding intonation of what in fact the true office of the Old Testament is always with regard to this fulfillment of its own full sense at last in Christ. The prophetic word being thus confirmed and made more sure, ye do well that ye take heed to it, he says, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." Externally considered, or regarded in their mere historical letter, the Old Testament Scriptures are indeed a dark place. Yet they have in them

all along the very life of heaven, not as something imaginary, but as light actually shining there, though the darkness itself comprehend it not. How is the dark external in such case to become lucid with what is thus its own true hidden sense? Not most assuredly by any amount of outward science (though drawn indirectly even from the matter of the Bible itself), which may be thrown upon it from the outside through grammar, lexicon or theological logic. We feel at once the utter incongruousness of any such thought as that with what the Apostle has here plainly in his mind. In his view, if the darkness of Scripture is ever to become really lucid, it can be only by the light that is actually in it shining through it from its own heavenward side; and that, as Peter well knew, could never come by human teaching (flesh and blood), but only by vital influx from the Lord himself. All depended thus on taking heed to the word itself; looking into it and continuing therein, as another Apostle puts it (Jas. i. 25); and in this way making room for it to accomplish its office of illumination in its own divine way. The way which is here grandly described in analogy with so many other passages of Scripture, by the bold language, "until the day dawn and the day-star—*φωσφόρος*, light-bearer, sun, Christ himself in and by his word—ARISE IN YOUR HEARTS."

That of course is something far other than the common view of the inspiration of the Old Testament. Hence the solemn caveat is added: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—literally *φερόμενοι*, not simply *moved*, but borne away, and as it were, rapt out of themselves, by the divine afflatus under which they thus came.* All can feel the dread solemnity of the theopneustic idea in this

* The same idea that we have, 1 Pet. i. 10-12; where the prophets are spoken of as not understanding their own prophecies in relation to the gospel; and as "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

form. It means much for our general subject; but we allow it to pass for the present without further comment.

Let us ascend now reverentially into the holy mountain, the theatre of our Lord's proleptic glorification, and gaze as we may with open face, through the evangelical narrative, on the wondrous scene which is there presented to our view. The account, having to do with mystery of the highest order belonging to the spiritual world, moves as it should, like the whole occasion itself, in a certain mystical and supernatural element throughout. We are made to feel this, if in right mind, in all its incidents and circumstances; as indeed the more we are in such right mind, we cannot help feeling the same thing in all serious study of Holy Scripture everywhere. For herein lies emphatically the inherent *sanctity* of the Word, the distinctive quality of its perpetual living derivation from God, which hallows all things belonging to it, however seemingly small, and lifts the outward natural and secular at every point into the sphere of the spiritual. So here, where it is said, "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart;" we are not to take these particulars as mere outside points, casually noted, that have no essential bearing on what follows. They form in fact the necessary spiritual portico and threshold, through which only we can pass with proper inward exaltation into the glorious temple beyond.

As we have already seen, there is an intimate connection between what was now to take place, and all that our Lord had been trying previously to impress upon his disciples with regard to his approaching death, and the true idea of his coming kingdom and glory, the account of which we have in the preceding 16th chapter of St. Matthew. At the close of the chapter we have the declaration, that some then standing in Christ's presence would not taste of death till they had seen the Son of man coming in his kingdom; and now, six days *after* this the time was come for the verification of that enigmatical word.

But why the term of just *six days* in the case? For the

reason, no doubt, that the week, with its six work days ending in the rest of the seventh day or Sabbath, as in the account we have of the creation of the world in the book of Genesis, regards spiritually always, as its primary sense, the stadium of temptation, conflict, and labor through which only our fallen human life is ever introduced into the higher state signified by the kingdom of God. With our Lord himself that higher state was gained, through vast suffering and labor, in his final glorification; and there accordingly we have the full idea of what the Sabbath means. In the supreme sense he himself is the Sabbath; and it is only in the light of that thought, that we can ever understand what the Sabbath really means in either the Old Testament or the New. All regeneration with men is an entering through toil into rest in the same view. And it is not hard to see then, how the general thought applies to the case before us; where the transfiguration of our Lord breaks in like a new creation of light and glory on the hard work-day order of the world going before it. After six days, lo! the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom.

Peter, James, and John hold the same place in the Christian Church that is attributed everywhere in the Old Testament to Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, the three firstborn sons of Jacob, in the representative Jewish Church. They stand for the cardinal forces or powers of the kingdom of God, signified in its total or whole complex by the twelve Apostles as also by the twelve Patriarchs of old; the primary essential virtues or graces of the life of God in the soul of man, we may say, without which there can be no room for the vision of the highest as revealed in our Lord's transfiguration. Hence these alone, for the Church at large, are allowed to come directly into the glory of that vision.

And so it is easy to feel now what is mystically signified by their being brought *up into an high mountain apart*. The mountain is among the oldest types of heaven; and here every word goes to assert and enhance its meaning for the soul in this view. It is high; it involves climbing and withdrawal from the world below; it stands solitary and apart, like Tabor overlook-

ing plain and sea in the far off distance. A full retreat from the whirl and noise of earth, making room as it were of itself, for meditation, and prayer, and communion with God.

And here then, as in fit sanctuary, the everlasting doors of the heavenly world flung themselves open, suddenly revealing the King in his glory. "He was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

This we see at once was no earthly light; and no terms taken from earth to describe it, can be considered therefore more than a dim and remote approximation to its proper reality. But we must not for that reason resolve it into the character of an unthinkable abstraction. We are constantly prone to wrong the things of the spiritual world in that way, by restricting our sense of positive substance to the things of time and sense, and thus quietly remanding all beyond such outward existence to the region of sheer mentalism or the action of our own minds, something tantamount in the end to sheer non-entity. Of one thing we may be very sure, the spiritual world can never be grasped by us in its proper reality, as an attenuation simply, in any view, of the natural world. If there be any such spiritual world at all, it must be for all true thinkers a simple axiom or self-evident truth that while the two orders of existence form together one organized system (that is one divine thought), the natural or outermost side of this system can never take precedence in any way of its innermost or spiritual side; but must be ruled by this universally from within, so that everything whatever belonging to it shall bear witness correspondingly to the priority of the spiritual, as being in fact the only real substance in creation, of which the natural is but the transitory and ever changing shadow.

One of the most familiar examples of this general truth, is found in the relation of natural light to spiritual light. We cannot see this last with the bodily eye, and we are apt then to think of it as a figure of speech, a mere metaphor borrowed from the outside light of nature. There is, however, a profound feel-

ing in men, at the same time, that the case has more in it at bottom than a figure of speech ; and with this feeling the Bible shows itself every where in full accord ; making light always in its spiritual sense to be primary or first, and light in its natural sense something secondary—the constant production indeed of the spiritual, the reflection of it on a lower plane, and in that way not the emblem or sign of it merely for men's thought, but its very effigy as we say, for their life. Light in its natural form, flowing from the natural sun, owes all its reality, all its vitality, all its, splendor, to light in its higher spiritual form as this flows from our Lord in heaven, the Sun of righteousness, who proclaims himself in this view the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, and of whom it is here said that on the mount of transfiguration HIS FACE DID SHINE AS THE SUN. The celestial mode of being in which he appeared, transcended thus immeasurably all the qualities and conditions of his ordinary earthly life ; being in no sense ghostly or spectral merely, but in all respects indeed infinitely *more* substantial, and full of positive existence, than the whole show of nature which it overpowered and displaced.

The manifestation of this most glorious spiritual light could not be made, of course, to the mere bodily sight of the disciples. Our Lord himself pronounces it a *vision* ; when as they came down from the mountain, after it was over, he charged them saying, Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. But here also we need to be on our guard, lest we fall into the error of sinking this idea far below its proper biblical sense. The idea must not be confounded with the notion of the dreaming fancy, either sleeping or waking ; which would imply something less objectively real than the world with which we communicate through our bodily senses. The true idea of the vision, in its biblical sense, goes far beyond this ; clearing itself altogether of our outside mundane life, and taking hold of things that belong to the spiritual world in their own actual substantiality, just as our bodily senses in their lower sphere take hold empirically of natural things. In which view, then, it is not something that falls short

of bodily sense in any respect, but a vastly superior mode of perception,—more real, more full, more vividly alive to its objects—answering in this way altogether to what we have just seen to be the positive superiority of the spiritual world itself to the natural world. This means necessarily the opening of new senses in the soul, interior to the organism of our ordinary bodily sense, and capable of piercing into mysteries that lie beyond that organism altogether.

So in answer to the prayer of the prophet Elisha, when he was surrounded by the Syrian host in Dothan, the Lord, we are told, opened the eyes of the young man with him, whose heart quailed at that outward sight, and immediately a new inward vision took its place: “he saw,” it is said—saw what he had no power to see before, though it was all there; “and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha” (2 Kings vi. 15–17). So it was with the beloved disciple, when he both saw and heard the wonderful things that are reported in the Apocalypse. He was “in the Spirit,” he tells us; parted for the time as one dead from his outward material life, and by the touch of the Lord’s hand resuscitated into a far more profound interior existence. And how then could it be otherwise in what now took place with Peter, James and John, on the holy mount, when they found themselves confronted with the full blaze of what is signified by the “Son of man coming in his kingdom.” That was no terrestrial vision, and most certainly it could be seen by no terrestrial sight. Their natural life was overpowered by it as in a swoon; they fell on their face and were sore afraid; and needed, like Daniel by the river Hiddekel (Dan. x. 8, 9, 10, 16, 18), like John in Patmos (Rev. i. 17), the touch of the Lord and his reassuring voice, to set them up again upon their feet in the unearthliness of the new state into which they had now come.

The vision, however, was not at an end, at once, in this overpowering sensible display of the personal majesty of the Son of man. It looked to far more than that in the economy of his spiritual kingdom. Along with their Master, accordingly, there

appeared unto the disciples two other men talking with him, which we are told were Moses and Elias; who also "appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." This, we may be very sure, is not to be taken as something casual only for the heavenly occasion. It belongs to the very heart and core of its true interior sense, as no serious mind can help feeling from the very circumstantiality of the sacred narrative itself.

By general consent, Moses and Elias are acknowledged to stand here for the Old Testament Word: Moses signifying in particular the Law, and Elias the Prophets—the familiar two-fold division of the Old Testament, which is recognized by our Lord where he says, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Plainly then one great object of the Saviour's transfiguration, perhaps, we may say, its chief object, was to set in bold relief the full meaning of his own presence in the world as the Word Incarnate, over against all that had gone before it in the way of Divine revelation; which if at all real, and not simply imaginary and fictitious, must have tended toward his advent, at every point and in every pulse of its existence, from the beginning; and which could become thus fully intelligible in the end, only through its fulfillment inwardly by his Divine Humanity, carried forward through his sufferings to its ultimate glorification in heaven.

The representatives of the Old Testament, it is said, "appeared in glory;" and it might seem at first, that this merely indicated their general spiritual state, as showing them to be in the same celestial sphere that now burst suddenly into view through the transfigured person of the Redeemer. But a moment's thought is enough to set the matter in a different light. The appearance of Moses and Elias in glory, was the effect altogether of the illumination that fell upon them from the glorified presence of the Divine Redeemer himself. The radiance that surrounded them proceeded wholly from him, and was in no sense their own except as it flowed to them from his person. So it is in truth with the universal heavenly

world. That has no subsistence outside of the Lord. He is the living spiritual Sun, to which it owes continually its whole life and being, just as the world of nature is maintained also in its lower order of existence, by the heat and light which it is made to receive continually from the material sun. In this way, he is literally in all the angels, though^l at the same time immeasurably above and beyond them; and the lightth at flows around them in their celestial habitations is nothing less in fact, than his divine wisdom and intelligence, reaching into them from the fullness of God himself, and causing them to "shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever."

But what it concerns us now more especially to ponder upon, is the relation which Christ is here shown to hold to the Old Testament Scriptures represented by Moses and Elias.

They form together one Divine Revelation. The Old Testament is not a body of Jewish religious knowledge, having something divine in it mixed up with a great deal that is merely human, and allowing in such view only some general and more or less accidental application to the religion of the New Testament. The two Testaments condition each other and demand each other from beginning to end. They are the execution of the same thought. They carry out the same work. They rest at last in the same glorious end. They cannot stand apart. The New fulfils the sense of the Old. Not in any external way, but inwardly and vitally. So without the Old the New must perish, as really as the Old without the New. And this being so, there is no room to think of any partial or only occasional connection binding them together. The so-called inspiration of the Old Testament amounts to nothing, if it be not the same inspiration that we have in the New; if the Word of God, as we call it in the Old Testament, be not Messianic throughout, and at every point, and thus of identical sense with its own supreme manifestation as the Word Incarnate in the New Testament.

Related in this way, however, the two Testaments are still not

co-ordinate. Historically regarded, the Old is before the New ; but considered in their essential inward being, the New is immeasurably superior to the Old, being in fact first though in appearance last. The relation exactly which is brought out so strongly by the witness of the Baptist, "This was he of whom I spake, he that cometh after me is preferred before me ; for he was before me" (John i. 15). The relation, we can see at once, which is signified by all the circumstances of this vision in the holy mount ; where Christ appears as the central figure, with Moses and Elias in attendance upon him ; irradiated by the light which fell upon them from his glorified presence, and talking with him of his kingdom ; till the whole scene closes with the voice out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."

Thus intimately conjoined in the manner we have seen, and yet at the same time clearly distinct, the relation of the two Testaments to each other, as superior and subordinate, becomes intelligible only in one way. Looking simply at the vision before us (which is only however of one sense with a thousand other inspired testimonies), we may readily see that it is nothing less than the living spirit of Christ himself, as the Word Incarnate, dwelling with perpetual inspiration in the Written Word as represented by Moses and Elias, that can make this to be at all what is signified by this vision. We see here the Old Testament interpreted in no outward or mechanical way by Christ, least of all in the way of anything like human logical exposition ; but illuminated all at once, as it were, by the glory of the Lord shining into it directly from himself, and so shining forth from it again, like sunlight through an otherwise dark cloud. All this, at the same time, not the putting of a sense into the Scriptures which was not there before—as one may galvanize a dead corpse ; but literally and truly the opening of the interior sense of the Scriptures as this belonged to them from their first inspiration. It is the outward Word vivified and made resplendent by its own original meaning, through the life of the Incarnate Word entering it and finding there its proper

home. It brings before us thus the only true idea of the distinction between the outward sense of Scripture and its inward sense; what St. Paul calls the letter of the Bible, which by itself is dead, and the spirit of the Bible, which causes the letter to live, and gives it power also to make alive. The universal inward sense of the Old Testament is Christ, his work of redemption, and his everlasting kingdom; and that sense, not as theory or doctrine merely, but as positively divine life, must animate and actuate its outward sense everywhere in the most immediate and direct manner, if this is ever to have in it anywhere the power that of right belongs to it as the Word of God. The relation between the two senses in this order, is as close as that between soul and body in our common human life; as we have had occasion to say often before, and have been at some pains to show more particularly in our articles on the Testimony of Jesus and the Spirit of Prophecy.

But there is still another lesson—the fourth in order—to be drawn from the vision of our Lord's transfiguration; a lesson more difficult, we fear, for most of us to learn effectually, than any yet mentioned; and that is the place that rightfully belongs to the Written Word, outwardly considered, as being the only medium of any real communication on the part of man with the Incarnate Word. Moses and Elias, in the presence of the glorified Christ, shrink in one view into utter insignificance, for they are nothing apart from his central superiority; but they are not there to be reduced to nothing—just the reverse; they are there to have honor put upon them by their being made to appear, through his heavenly illumination, as standing immediately between mankind and himself, and thus making room for their approach into his presence. As Peter, James and John represent in this way the subjective conditions by which only men are qualified and enabled to see the glory of the Lord in his Word, so on the other hand Moses and Elias represent what must be considered as the objective need of the Word itself for this purpose. We deceive ourselves when we think of looking to the Lord, or seeing his glory, or hear-

ing his voice, without the mediation and ministry of his Word. It is an enormous blunder especially, to think that the New Testament, regarded as a more spiritual revelation, may enable us to communicate with the Lord in this way, without the help, or it may be in the utter neglect of the Old Testament. So divorced and sundered from the Old Testament, what men may call their New Testament belief is sure to run at last into spiritualistic unreality, if not into downright denial of Christ. "If men believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, though one rose from the dead." There is in this view something fearfully startling and solemn in the closing words of the Old Testament: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. iv. 4-6). This looks directly to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, which as the shining fulfilment of both Moses and Elias was to have through them at the same time its own most shining verification.

It is charged upon the Jews accordingly that their want of power to receive Christ, lay wholly in their want of power to understand their own Scriptures. In rejecting him they rejected them, and so rejected God himself. "Ye have not his word abiding in you," it was said unto them; "for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.—But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.—Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?"—(John v. 38-47).

And so, on the other hand also, nothing can be more plain

than the teaching of Christ in the New Testament, with regard to this reciprocity of witnessing illumination between himself and his word, in the case of all his true followers. "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."—(John viii. 31-32). "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.—If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.—The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John xiv. 21-24). To restrict this to any particular directions or instructions of Christ, considered externally and apart from the Divine Word at large, is frivolous and profane. His sayings and doings throughout are of force only as they are comprehended in the bosom of that Word, which must be regarded as one and entire from the beginning. How else could he say, "the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's that sent me;" language that refers itself at once to the universal Word of the Old Testament, which he came into the world as the SENT OF GOD, to actualize and fulfill.

And to make the matter still more plain, what he says of his own earthly ministry in this view, he is most careful to extend also to the ministry of the Holy Ghost, which was to follow his ascension into heaven, and which in that view is the full fruit of his glorification in the Church. Freedom and enlargement are properly considered to be the grand distinction of this ministration, and there has been a wide disposition in the Christian world accordingly, to make it independent of all rule or measure from beyond itself. As if that indeed were just what is meant by the mystical declaration: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." But how much pains our Lord takes to teach the exact contrary of this. In the first place, the Spirit cannot go beyond Christ

himself, or the revelation of the Father in the Son. He is the outgoing efflux of the Son, even as the Son is the express image or very effigy of the Father. "He shall glorify me," Christ says; "for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." And thus then, in the second place, the Spirit cannot go beyond the Written Word; for that, as we now see, is the norm and measure of God's presence among men from the beginning, and the very medium of his living communication with them to the end of time. And therefore it is said, "When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not *speak of himself*; but whatever he *shall hear*, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." How, or whence, this hearing that must govern the speaking of the Spirit? The question admits of but one rational answer. Only in and by the Word, made luminous more and more from within itself, through the light of the Lord's glorified life shining into it, and thus bringing into view its true inspired sense. Christ, first of all, is his own witness or testimony; this testimony goes forth from him as his voice or word, forming the living spirit or true inspiration of the Bible; when it is said of the Holy Ghost, therefore, "He shall testify of me," it must mean that he will cause the voice of Christ to be heard as it dwells already in his Word. How else, we may well ask, should he be the *Spirit of truth*, as he is called, proceeding from the Father *through* the Son?

The signification of the vision, as thus far explained, comes to its full overwhelming expression in what follows; namely, the bright overshadowing cloud, and the voice out of the cloud: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

If there be plainly a standing spiritual sense for light in the Bible, it is no less plain that there is such a sense there also for *cloud*; not just in the way of metaphor or outward comparison in either case, but from real inherent correspondence

of the natural with the spiritual in both cases. Thus, all through the Old Testament, Jehovah is spoken of as appearing in cloud; clouds and darkness are said to be round about him; clouds are under his feet; he rideth upon the swift cloud. His bow is in the cloud as a token of his covenant after the deluge (Gen. ix. 13). He went before Israel out of Egypt in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way (Ex. xiii. 21). Out of this cloud and its fire, he looked forth and troubled the Egyptian host (Ex. xiv. 24). His glory appeared in and through the cloud again, before the giving of the manna, in the wilderness between Elim and Sinai (Ex. xvi. 10). So at the foot of Sinai it was said: "Lo I come unto thee in a thick cloud" (Ex. xix. 9). Afterward, also when Moses was called up into the mountain, a cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord in the cloud abode upon it for six days; the sight of the glory being in the eyes of the children of Israel like devouring fire on the top of the mount. And Moses, it is said, "went into the midst of the cloud, and got him up into the mount," and continued there forty days and forty nights (Ex. xxiv. 15-18). So after this again, in answer to his prayer, "I beseech thee show me thy glory," the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him on mount Sinai, and proclaimed before him the name of the Lord (Ex. xxxiv. 5). And when the tabernacle finally was set up and anointed, with its boundless wealth of scriptural meaning, who must not feel the overwhelming grandeur of the words that follow: "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys; but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, within the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys" (Ex.

xl. 34-38). At the dedication of the temple, which afterward took the place of the tabernacle, we meet again the same supernatural appearance; "the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" (1 Kings viii. 10-11). In Ezekiel's vision by the river Chebar, the Lord appeared in the likeness of a man, on a throne surrounded with brightness as of fire, having "the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain;" a manifestation of "the glory of the Lord," as it is called, which caused the prophet to fall upon his face, till he was raised up again through new life entering him from the Lord's voice (Ezekiel i. 26, 27, 28; iii. 23). Again being transported in vision to Jerusalem, he sees there the same glory of the God of Israel over the threshold of the temple; "and the house was filled with the cloud; and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory" (Ezekiel x. 4-18; xi. 22-23). In his delineation of the new temple shown to him in later vision, the glory of the Lord is to be understood in the same way, though no direct mention is made of its enshrining cloud. Nothing can be more beautiful or transporting, in its spiritual sense, than the terms in which it is described. "Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the EAST: And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the EAST, and his voice was like the noise of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the Lord came into the house by way of the gate whose prospect is toward the EAST. So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house" (xliii. 1-5). Ezekiel's "likeness of the appearance of a man," the God of Israel, comes before us again in the book of Daniel, as the Son of man, under the same view of

glory and cloud; where it is said, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (vii. 13-14). In Christ's ascension, or taking up into glory, a cloud received him out of sight (Acts i. 9). And so of his coming again it is said, that it shall be in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 30). In the Apocalypse, a mighty angel—no other, plainly, than the Son of man himself—is seen coming down from heaven clothed with a cloud; having a rainbow upon his head; his face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire (x. 1). The two slain witnesses raised into new life by the Spirit of life from God, ascend up to heaven in a cloud (xi. 12.) And once more the Old Testament vision rises before us in new form: "I looked and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle" (xiv. 14).

Only the most obtuse naturalism, surely, can fail to see in all this something more than the vague generality of common metaphorical human speech. There is too much of it by far for that; and by far too much uniformity and continuity of plainly mystical rather than logical thought-texture in it, extending through the entire Word of God; to say nothing of what is due to the idea of God's inspiration, which alone makes the Bible to be his Word.

For what we have to look at in the case, we see at once, is not just the ever recurring image of the cloud, but this, in conjunction with what seems to be at first view its immediate opposite, namely, the glory of the Lord represented as brightness and light. The cloud, in its spiritual meaning, becomes intelligible only by our knowing what the light of this glory means,

which the cloud serves to modify and temper in various ways and degrees. Careless readers of the Word of God have no idea, to what extent it has to do with the term glory in such divine sense. In the view of the Bible, indeed, all that can be rightly considered glory in the world, refers itself to the glory of the Lord as its origin and source; just as all truth, righteousness, holiness and felicity, with men or angels, refer themselves to him in the same way. In the supreme sense he is all these in virtue of the union of his Humanity in full with his Divinity, which is called therefore his glorification or entering into glory. Whatever there may be of glory under any lower view, in the general kingdom of God, in the church on earth, or in any regenerated man, is but the fruit of our Lord's glorification, and its more or less remote type. In all these derivations, accordingly, it carries with it the essential quality of its source, and is thus, in all Christian doctrine, worship, and life, strictly and truly, the glory of the Lord, wherever it appears.

We can easily see, in this way, what the idea involves. It is immediately one with truth; answering thus to what this is as spiritual or heavenly light. But it is such truth or light, not as cold intellectual abstraction, but as having in it the essential being of God as love and actual life. Just here we reach the radical conception of all truth, in its real and not merely notional derivation forever from this fountain of life in God; in whose light only, thus received, it is possible for men or angels to see light. The glory of the Lord, in this way, is the real outgoing of his Divine-Human life; which we see at once again to be one with his word or speech, as this comes before us in creation, and is not to be sundered of course from the inspiration of the Bible, if that be anything more than a theological fiction. Such word or speech of God in Christ can never cease to be living, and must have the glory of the Lord interiorly in itself, and not simply as a halo of respect thrown around it from the outside. Thus living, working, and shining, the glory of God shows itself one also with his strength and power; on which account, he is spoken of as coming in his kingdom with

power and great glory; while his word is likened to thunders and many waters, and declared to be powerful and full of majesty. Still another attribute of the most far-reaching significance, is comprehended in the glory of the Lord as now described; and that is the idea of sanctity or holiness, which also belongs primarily only to the Lord himself, and then extends itself from Him again to all persons and things belonging to his kingdom, in broad distinction from all that lies outside of his kingdom, in a way which it has not been found easy always either to understand or explain. Holiness is not just truth in its character of thought, the common notion of truth among men; for in that view it is possible, as we know, to hold the most sacred truths of the Bible itself in unrighteousness. But truth so held is never more than the outward show of truth. It has in it no life, and therefore no reality. To live at all, and in that way to be truth, it must have being and life breathed into it, in the way we have seen, directly from the life of the Lord himself. And just that quality of direct inward derivation from the Divine life dwelling in the Lord, we now say, is the root signification of what we are to understand by holiness in the universal sense of the Scriptures. It is one then with truth, one with God's Word, one with the testimony of his Spirit in the Word; all flowing together to round out and complete the glorious majesty of the Lord and his kingdom.

Applying now all that has been said of the biblical use of these terms, cloud and glory, to the scene on the mount of transfiguration, there can be no doubt whatever but that they are to be interpreted here in analogy with this usage, and that it is not therefore by mere casual circumstance that we find them brought together, as they are, in the general picture of the vision. They must be interpreted moreover by the sense and scope of the vision as a whole. Moses and Elias, with the central presence of the Lord, the glorious majesty of his appearance, the enveloping cloud, and the voice out of the cloud, all go to form one divine tableau; and the meaning of the tableau would seem to be not hard to find. The key to it is the

relation of Christ to the Word of God represented by Moses and Elias; the testimony of Jesus Christ, the living power of his advent into the world as the King of Truth, now nearing its effulgent completion through his decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem; this regarded as the living spirit of all prophecy going before in the Old Testament, apart from which no part of the Old Testament can be counted otherwise than dead. That clearly is what the vision in its wholeness means. The cloud thus is the natural side of divine revelation, the side which it turns immediately toward the outward world in our present state; while the glory of the Lord in it is its interior spiritual side, or the side by which it looks directly toward heaven and the true life of the soul in the heavenly world.

Why the Word of God should be of such double nature, it is not necessary now more particularly to inquire. Enough that we know the fact; which in one way or another the Church has always acknowledged. It agrees with the connexion there is between soul and body in our ordinary human life; as well as with the conjunction of spiritual and natural universally in the constitution of the world at large. And it needs no argument to show, how this distinction of inward and outward must govern the true and only right sense of things wherever it prevails. Each side of the relation needs the other; just as form needs essence, to be real, and essence at the same time needs form, to come into the light of actual existence. But the essential and inward, nevertheless, must everywhere rule the formal and outward, as the soul rules the body. So the spirit of prophecy, which is universally the living self-testimony of Jesus Christ, must rule everywhere the outward letter of prophecy. And it cannot do this from the outside; it must do it from the inside; that is, from the theopneustic side, which lies not toward the world but toward heaven, where only all prophecy of Scripture "ceases to be of any private interpretation," and becomes in truth the voice of holy men of God speaking "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 20, 21). Without this, the outward sense of Scripture is but as a dark

cloud, a ministration of blindness and condemnation as St. Paul calls it; whilst with it, on the contrary, it is a cloud made bright and glorious (a very iris, it may be, of all celestial colors) by the sun of righteousness, shining into it, through it, and from it, with endless variegation of spiritual interest and delight (2 Cor. iii. 7—18).

That, in the end, is the true coming of the Lord and his kingdom into the souls of all his people; something immeasurably beyond all that is borrowed from the imagery of the natural world to describe it, when he is spoken of as coming in the visible clouds with power and great glory. It is the fulfilment of the promise: "The Lord," it is said, "will create upon every place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for on all the glory there shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (Is. iv. 5, 6). Then it is, as light breaks upon the awakened soul from the orient of this blessed advent, that the oracle begins to be heard and understood: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall **ARISE** upon thee, and his **GLORY** shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Is. lx. 1—3).

The promulgation of the law or word of God, in the midst of cloud and splendor, from mount Sinai; the cloud covering the tabernacle and the glory of the Lord filling it from within; the precious stones of the urim and thummim, representing all divine truth, but this only as translucent media for interior heavenly light; the entire Jewish ritual, magnificent in its spiritual signification, but in its mere outward letter, spiritless and dead; the rainbow, pictured like fire on its cloud, round about the cherubim in Ezekiel's vision; all these, and any amount of lesson and parable besides in the Old Testament (where the eye is

not wanting to see or the ear to hear), join together in illustrating and enforcing the same great truth. The truth, namely, that the Word of God is in its own miraculous constitution the medium and the only medium of direct communication with heaven ; that it carries a divine life, for this purpose, in its own bosom ; that it can be understood, therefore, only as it is illuminated in its outward letter by the light of this interior life shining from within ; and that the whole sense and power of what it is in such view meets us fully only in our Lord's glorious Humanity as it is exhibited to us on the mount of transfiguration. That is what the whole vision means. And that is what the voice out of the cloud means, at once ratifying the vision and bringing it to a close : " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him ! " It makes the Son to be one with the Father ; sets him as king upon his holy hill of Zion ; clothes him with incomparable majesty and glory ; and shows the universal kingdom of God, through all ages and dispensations, bowing in willing homage at his feet.

And how expressive then the words that follow, when all was over and the disciples found themselves once more back again in their natural life. " When they had lifted up their eyes," it is said, " they saw no man, SAVE JESUS ONLY. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead." To which St. Mark adds : " They kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorified SON OF MAN, as we have seen him in this vision, stands not only supreme but absolutely sole and one in his kingdom. It is his own work, his own battle, his own victory, from beginning to end. That is what the language ascribed to him by the prophet means : " The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked and there was none to help ; and I wondered that there was none to uphold : therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury upheld me "

(Is. lxiii. 45). It is no flourish of speech simply, when he says : " All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He is the firstborn of the new creation, as of the old, its alpha and omega, its beginning and its end. The fulness and all-sufficiency of what he is for it, in this view, goes far beyond all that is commonly imagined. He is not only the centre of his kingdom, but the wholeness of it in all its parts. This not in any mechanical outward sense ; but in the sense of vital organism, the only sense in which the conception can have in it reality or force. It is the relation then of the head to the body ; where the life of the head, as we know, runs all through the body, and is felt in every nerve and fibre and vein. It is the relation of the vine to its branches ; of which our Lord himself says : " As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me "(John xv. 4). " In him," says St. Paul, " dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily ; and ye are COMPLETE in him, which is the head of all principality and power " (Col. ii. 9, 10). " He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption ; " all this, most assuredly, not through the wretched fiction of any merely outside imputation, but by inward living communication of his own life ; that, according as it is written, " He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord " (1 Cor. i. 30, 31).

This is the one great theme of the Apocalypse, the song of Moses and the Lamb as it is heard forever in the heavenly world. " I beheld," says the seer of Patmos, " and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the

four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever " (Rev. xi. 14).

Christ all in all in his kingdom ; angels and men, considered in themselves, nothing. Who, it may be asked, does not know that ? It is a first element in our Christian faith, taught in all evangelical catechisms, and preached in all evangelical pulpits. But, alas, how few are able to receive it in its proper sense. It is one of those bed-ridden truths, so named by Coleridge, that lie in the souls of men for the most part shorn of all power through sheer familiarity ; the inward awakening of which then, when it does come by the voice of the Son of God, is felt as nothing less than a resurrection from the dead.

Even those who affect the highest theological orthodoxy on the subject of man's utter inability to think, or to will, or to do anything of himself, in the work of his own salvation, and thus take special credit to themselves for their favorite shibboleth of *free grace*, as they call it, may easily be seen as a general thing untrue to their own theory in different ways ; but especially by this, that what they think to have received into themselves as such grace or free gift of God (through particular election it may be, and particular redemption) they feel authorized to regard afterward as their own, using it and handling it with the feeling of such personal self-appropriation, though as they say in the service of God and his kingdom. That at once, as all who think can easily see, turns their whole righteousness into Pharisaic mechanism and self-merit ; and is such a dead fly in the ointment of the apothecary as must cause the whole of it to become a stinking savor.

Just here it is that the full difficulty of the true evangelical idea of free grace, in distinction from all such clock-work righteousness, comes fairly into view. It is comparatively easy to say, for example, that faith is the gift of God, if it mean simply that our natural power, apart from the Holy Ghost, cannot produce it. But to understand, to acknowledge, and to see inwardly in our souls, that the gift can enter into us only in the way of actual life from the Lord ; and yet, farther, that

having so entered into us it is still no property of our own selfhood separately taken—not this even for a single moment—but the continuous inflowing of the same living gift as at the first, in full analogy with the life of the vine in its branches; to own this, we say, and to see it is something which is not easy, but exceedingly hard. But Christ all in all, for the Christian salvation, and man nothing, can mean nothing less than such absolute comprehension of the life of the Church, and the life of every true believer, in the life of him who in this and no other way is the head of the Church. And what we have now said of faith in that view, holds good necessarily also of all else belonging to the Christian life; which just for this reason has been aptly called the life of God in the soul of man. Here it is that we reach the inmost touchstone of that life; of which our Saviour says: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God”—meaning by a rich man, one whose life turns in any way on the hinge of his own selfhood. To the carnal mind such abnegation of the selfhood seems indeed impossible, and at the same time morally suicidal, and hence the question, “Who then can be saved?” To which, however, the Gospel has but one answer, “With man it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.” It is after all the only way in which it is possible to conceive rationally of a true Divine government in God’s universe. It is thus that his will is done by the angels in heaven; and the end of all doctrine and worship in the Church is, that it may be so done also here on earth.

The inmost stronghold perhaps of the general error we are trying to expose, comes before us where the natural self-working of man, in the matter of religion, takes upon it the form of voluntary obedience to the Word of God, through the truths of the Word itself, received into the mind as divinely true in a merely natural way. There is a difference of course between the truths of nature as they are called, and the truths of revelation. The last are nearer to the kingdom of God, and form

more immediately the door of admission into its interior life. But regarded as matter of knowledge merely, they have no more power than any other kind of mere knowledge, to induct the soul actually into this kingdom. Bible truths need to be taken into the mind in such natural way, and it belongs to all true Christian education that the outward memory should be largely stored with them, just as it needs to be stored in the same way with facts of knowledge from the world of nature. But in either case, this rightly understood is only in order that what is thus outwardly received, may enter into the service of a higher spiritual end. In such merely outward form the truths of revelation, like the truths of nature, are at best but the pabulum or food that is required for the life of God in the soul; which as such, however, has no vitality in itself, but becomes vital and thus real as food, only when it is vitalized from the life which it goes thus to nourish and support. That order we see everywhere at work in the natural world; and it is the clearest mirror we can have, to make plain to us the nature and office of truth in the spiritual world. The truths of faith here, Bible truths, are never more than approaches only to what they are in their proper interior sense (very dim and defective even at the best), until they are met from the interior spiritual side of our being with the true life of the spirit flowing into it directly from God. They must be regenerated and purified in this way from within, and thus from above, before they can have in them for the believer at all the life and power that actually belong to them in the Divine Word.

But the mystery of the new birth under any such view as this, is just as bewildering for most men now as it was for Nicodemus, when the star of Christianity first dawned upon the world; and hence we find, in all directions, an inveterate disposition still on the part of those who call themselves Christians to place the letter of God's Word above its actual interior life as now described, and to dream of bringing the sense of it in that outward way under the rule of mere human intelligence, even while professing the most unlimited obedience of faith to

its heavenly authority. This they are fain to regard in themselves indeed as the very issue of faith against science, supernaturalism against naturalism, of which we hear so much in our time; not seeing that the truths of faith received in such purely outward manner from the Bible are after all mere natural knowledge or science (not essential being and life in the soul), and in that respect not a whit better for the kingdom of God, than the truths of astronomy, chemistry, or natural history, received into the understanding in the same outward way.

We have no wish to disparage science or intelligence; just the contrary; our wish is to exalt them to honor and praise. But that can never be done, by assigning to them a primacy which is not theirs in fact. Their province is to serve, and not to rule. They become free only as they come into the freedom of God's house, and are made to drink of the "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. xxii. 1). The same that Ezekiel saw in his vision of the new temple, where it is said in such glorious style, "These waters issue out toward the EAST COUNTRY, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the WATERS SHALL BE HEALED. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, SHALL LIVE: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be HEALED; and every thing shall LIVE whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many" (Ezek. xlvi. 8-10). To the mere literalist, or the mere typologist, all this can only seem a very dark cloud, meaning but little. But only let the spiritual sense of temple, orient, water, river, sea, desert, fishers and fish, as it runs with wonderful uniformity through the whole Bible, be once fairly awake in the soul, and how then the glory of the Lord shines in and from the whole passage, suffu-

sing it with unutterable splendor and beauty ! It is among the very grandest pictures of the Church of the future that is to be found in the whole Bible. It is such a glorification of the world's coming life—such prospect and promise especially of what the life of science is hereafter to become—as may well cause the heart to break forth into singing and joy ; turning into shame, as it does, the insane dreams of atheistic naturalism, and revealing the true marriage of science and faith in the only form in which this can ever possibly take place.

The absolute and sole supremacy of the Lord in his kingdom ; in full opposition to the idea of any power on the part of man to participate in the work of his own salvation, either directly or indirectly, except in the way of giving up his private selfhood, and finding for himself a new centre of life in the Lord ! That, we say, is the great cardinal thought of the Bible, on which may be said to hang the whole significance and power of it as a Divine Revelation, from beginning to end ; and without which as a key to its true inward sense, we verily believe, not a page of it can ever be rightly understood. So in Jeremiah ix. 23, 24 : “ Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth. For in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” And so in a different strain the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the coming of Christ's kingdom : “ Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD ALONE shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up ; and he shall be brought low. And upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan ; and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills, that are lifted up ;

and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall ; and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low : and the LORD ALONE shall be exalted in that day. And the IDOLS He shall utterly abolish " (Is. ii. 10-18). Idols here refer to no outward heathen worship as such. They are to be understood in the spiritual sense of the second commandment ; and mean the molten images and graven images (produced from the fire of self-love and the lurid light of self-intelligence), which are ever ready to exalt themselves against the Lord and his Anointed in the human heart.

It would need a commentary, and indeed a very large one, upon the entire Bible, to bring into view the wealth of instruction there is in it with regard to this subject. It meets us, first of all in the Mosaic cosmogony and the creation of man. It comes before us with graphic representation in the garden of Eden, with its rivers and two trees, the serpent, the temptation, the fall, the expulsion from Paradise, the cherubim on the EAST of the garden, and the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. The story of the Noachic deluge is full of it from first to last ; and so also the account given of Babel and the confusion of tongues. It enters into the universal history of the Patriarchs, and finds all manner of illustration in their relations with neighboring countries, particularly Syria, Philistia and Egypt. How much of profound, far-reaching signification in this view, is comprehended in the otherwise seemingly unmeaning oracle of old, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." What a world of rich spiritual instruction in the story of Jacob and Esau, in the series of events which brought the Israelites into Egypt, in their condition of bondage there, in the whole manner of their deliverance from it by the mighty hand and outstretched arm of Jehovah, conducting them through the Red Sea, in the midst of great signs and wonders, to the foot of Sinai—the mount that burned with fire, and from which his voice was heard in the proclamation of the Law. But we will not pretend to quote exemplifications further, even in this

most general manner. The entire history of the Jewish nation, in the Bible, is a hidden parable of heavenly things, ordained and ordered on the part of God, for the very purpose of bringing to pass his inspired Word, as we now have it in the Bible, in such form that this should be the vehicle throughout of spiritual truths under natural cover and veil, in the most real and not any simply imaginary way ; and of all the truths thus represented, that of which we have now been speaking holds everywhere the inmost and foremost place, namely, Salvation in and from the Lord alone. He is the all in all of his kingdom in heaven and of his Church on earth ; and so necessarily also, to the same extent, the all in all of his own reign of truth, righteousness, and eternal life, in the soul of every one to whom he thus comes as the Lord of life and glory.

If it be thus with the outward history of the Jews, it is easy to see how the same interior sense must rule everywhere also the letter of their universal religious worship. The minute particularity with which the building of the tabernacle and the ordering of all things pertaining to it is determined at every point, according to the heavenly pattern shown in the mount, makes it certain that it must have in it throughout such spiritual meaning ; and it is not possible to study any part of it seriously without feeling in it more and more, the presence of a real divine inspiration in the whole of it in this view. Without pretending to any fuller notice of the subject now, let it suffice in closing the present article, to fix attention for a moment on what is said Ex. xxx. 22-38, of the holy anointing oil and the holy incense, which are ordered after all other directions going before, for the purpose of making the mystical meaning of the whole finally full and complete.

Moses, representing the Divine Law, the Word through which God speaks to men (Ex. xxx. 22-33) must take unto him principal spices, which are specifically named : myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, and cassia, each in definite quantity and proportion, together with a certain measure of olive oil, also distinctly named ; all of which were then to be compounded, after the art of the apothecary.

cary, into what is called an oil of holy ointment, for its own most sacred use. Shall it be said that any of these specifications are meaningless? Not, certainly, if we have any real faith in the inspiration of the record, as being in truth God's *Word*, having in it the testimony of Jesus Christ for its living, vitalizing spirit, as the soul is in the body. The whole regards primarily, not the outward things here mentioned, but the spiritual things that correspond with them in the Lord's true tabernacle, the sanctuary of his most real presence in the souls of his people. The spices, understood in this way, signify truths; not of course truths of mere secular science in any view, nor yet Bible truths in the naked unreality of such outward knowledge; but Bible truths taken in the view of their own proper life, as something derived into them inwardly from the good, that is, from the life of the Lord here represented (according to universal Scripture usage) by the olive oil. Truths, so related to the good, appear under different forms, as more or less distant from their right centre in the good; and hence we have them represented here in four different orders—myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, and cassia; the series starting with the outermost order, the truths of mere bodily sense, and reaching in at last to the innermost order, where room is found immediately for the inflowing of the good, whose vitalizing force then extends itself to the entire process going before. By this all is made, not only living, but fragrant with the breath of heaven—the “odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.”

Compare Psalm xlv. 7-9: “Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the OIL OF GLADNESS above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of MYRRH, and ALOES, and CASSIA, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. ‘Kings’ daughters were among thy honorable women; upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.” And what a stream of light, the same general thought throws upon the true conception of all heaven-descended charity, as we have it de-

scribed in the 133d Psalm ; “ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard ; that went down to the skirts of his garment ; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion : for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”

The whole composition must be by the art of the apothecary ; that is, not of ordinary human thought or work ; but of divine operation. Just as for the building of the tabernacle in general, we are told, Bezaleel, the son of Uri, of the *tribe of Judah*, was called by name, and filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship ; to signify the same thing, namely, the wholeness and soleness of the Lord’s work, to the entire seclusion of any agency of man, as such, in all that pertains to His spiritual kingdom. The thought, that we find so tersely expressed again in what is said of the altar : “ If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of HEWN stone ; for if thou lift up THY TOOL upon it, thou hast POLLUTED it” (Ex. xx. 25).

What the holy anointing oil means now, is plain enough ; and it is plain enough also, why it is called holy. It represents the Divine Humanity of our Lord, the Human in him transfused and filled completely by the Divine, whereby it has become the source and effectual power of life and salvation for all who draw near to God in his name. We may call it, if we choose, the infinite righteousness and merit of our Lord ; and in that view, there is no room, indeed, to conceive of righteousness or merit as belonging to men in any other form ; “ This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Only we must not think of this in the way of mere abstract imputation. To be ours at all, his righteousness must reach into us as something living, and not dead. It must be in us, not merely as truth for the understanding, but as actual being for the will ; and that it can never be, except through the love of the Lord, flowing into the will from the very life of the Lord himself.

Here, and nowhere short of this, we may understand what holiness means, in its Scriptural application to the kingdom of God, and all that belongs to it. It is the quality of real derivation from the Divine life, carrying along with it answerable thought and affection; in distinction from all life and existence which are not thus qualified, and so are to be considered profane. And just this quality of inward derivation from the life of the Lord it is now, we say, which we have symbolized for us in the holy anointing oil here under consideration. It is first of all the consecration of the Lord's own Humanity for his appointed work ("For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth"), making him to be thus the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One; and then flowing from this only and wholly, the consecration of his kingdom, and all things belonging to it, to the same glorious purpose and end.

And so it follows: "Thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot. And thou shalt SANCTIFY them that they may be *most holy*: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office."

After what has just been said, all this needs no farther commentary; the general symbolic meaning of it at least, is too plain to be misunderstood.

What we do need, however, for the full sense of all, is to consider and lay to heart especially the solemn caution in conclusion: "Thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people."

Apply this to the spiritual signification of the holy oil, and what does it mean? Plainly, the absolute restriction of all true spiritual life with man to its proper source and fountain, the glorified Son of man, and the absolute exclusion, therefore, of all merely human co-operation in the work by which it is brought to pass. That is involved, as we have seen, in the very terms holy and most holy, used to describe the oil. They express the peculiar quality of living derivation from God. Hence it is said, "It shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations;" as also, "It is holy, and it shall be HOLY UNTO YOU." It must not be poured then upon man's *flesh*; must not come into any communication with the natural self hood of man, which as mere flesh is only evil. And so also there must be no imitation of it; not even if this should be in the name of religion itself, and with the use apparently of the same ingredients. What is thus of man's thought and device as such can only be of man's interest and affection as such; which implies at once, determination toward self as an end, in distinction from determination toward the Lord as an end; and that is just the essence of all evil and falsehood, even though it be under the fairest semblance of truth and righteousness. Therefore the dread penalty, "Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be CUT OFF FROM HIS PEOPLE."

Following the prescription of the holy ointment, we have (Ex. xxx. 34-38) that of the holy incense; where, again, we meet the symbolism of sweet spices; not the same as before, but of like general sense, stacte, onycha, galbanum, ending inwardly in pure frankincense; all representing heavenly truths embalmed, as it were, in the fragrance of heavenly affection proceeding from the Lord. We know what incense, and the altar of incense in the holy place, properly represent; the prayers of all saints, ascending up before God through the mediation of Jesus Christ (Rev. viii. 3, 4); thought and speech, in Christian worship, made living by the breath of the Lord's love flowing into them from heaven. Such divine service can

never be produced by any human art ; cannot be self-manufactured, on the side of man in any degree ; but must come, if it come at all, only by the most real influx and operation of the Lord himself into the whole and every part of the service. So the Church at large teaches ; but how few, alas, understand the teaching, or seriously lay it to heart.

The incense being of such most solemn sense, it is no wonder that, like the anointing oil, it also should be pronounced holy and most holy ; or that we should have again the same tremendous caution uttered against the imitation of it, out of any merely self-end or self-impulse on the part of men. "It shall be unto thee," it is said, "holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall be cut off from his people."

It is the same case, in fact, which is so graphically represented in what we read, concerning the heaven-kindled fire of God's holy altar (Lev. ix. 23, 24) and the sin of Nadab and Abihu in substituting for it their own fire (Lev. x. 1, 2, 3) : "Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out and blessed the people : and the GLORY OF THE LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat : which, when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces. And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I WILL BE SANCTIFIED IN THEM THAT COME NIGH ME, AND BEFORE ALL THE PEOPLE I WILL BE GLORIFIED. And Aaron held his peace."

J. WILLIAMSON NEVIN.