

# THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.

DEVOTED TO HOMILETICS, BIBLICAL LITERATURE,  
DISCUSSION OF LIVING ISSUES, AND  
APPLIED CHRISTIANITY.

VOL. VIII.—SEPTEMBER, 1884.—No. 12.

## SERMONIC.

### GOD'S IDEA OF MAN.

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*What is man, that thou art mindful of him?*  
—Ps. viii: 4.

Considered as a part of nature, man is insignificant. Without our modern knowledge of astronomy, by which the ancient conception of the universe is immeasurably expanded, the royal Psalmist, looking from his native Judean hills, as he watched his sheep through the stillness of the Oriental night, beneath the lustrous canopy which spread above him, was forced to exclaim, in his communing with Jehovah: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Seen from some lofty height, as an object in an expanded landscape, man is but a speck in the wide field of vision. Compared even with his fellow-creatures of the animal kingdom, denizens of the jungle or the sea, he is but a weak and diminutive being. Lifted by the strong hand of the storm, or tossed by the waves of the ocean, he is like a feather on the tornado's breath,

or a leaf upon the rushing waters. Even the silent, invisible forces move him at their will, the sun's light extinguishing his vision, a change of temperature chilling his heart, the electric current blotting out all consciousness, and the unseen fever wasting him away as by the cursing touch of a magician.

As a product of nature man seems to possess a higher dignity. He is the last result of the vast systems of forces that play about him. Summing up in his composite being all the kingdoms of nature, the inorganic, the vegetable and the animal, as man does, the Psalmist could truly say, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand; Thou hast put all things under his feet." Apart from man, apart from the consciousness and reason, that are his attributes, the glory of the visible universe has little meaning. What is the beauty of the earth, vast and wonderful though it be, with its oceans and mountains, its wealth of treasures, and its fertile plains, its forest solitudes, and its animated waters, without its rational inhabitants? What is the grandeur of the heavens, with their infinite space and innumerable orbs, their immeasurable energies

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story; saintly sufferings are borne, unseen by human eye, and the pen of history fails to record them.

"If singing breath or echoing chord  
To every hidden pang were given,  
What endless melodies were poured,  
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!"

It is enough that one eye sees, and one heart enters into our conflicts and griefs, and that "our record is on high."

### Revival Service.

#### THE THREE CROSSES.

[By T. De Witt Talmage, D.D.]

*And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.*—Luke xxiii: 33.

THREE crosses in a row. Stand and give a look at the three crosses. Just look

1. At the cross on the right. Its victim dies scoffing. More tremendous than his physical anguish is his scorn and hatred of Him on the middle cross. There has always been a war between this right-hand cross and the middle cross, and wherever there is an unbelieving heart, there the fight goes on. That right-hand cross—thousands have perished on it—yea, in worse agonies.

2. Gather around the left hand cross. (a) This left-hand cross is a cross of

repentance. Hear the cry of the dying thief: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." So must we repent. (b) This left-hand cross was a believing cross. (c) This left-hand cross was a pardoning cross. (d) It becomes the cross of contentment. Peace filled his heart. Peace closed his eyes in death. That dying head is easy which has under it the promise, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may I, though vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away."

I have shown you the right-hand cross, and the left-hand cross; now come to,

3. The middle cross. We stood at the one and found it yielded poison. We stood at the other and found it yielded bitter aloes. Come now to the middle cross, and shake down apples of love. Uncover your head. You never saw so tender a scene as this. (a) It was a suffering cross; (b) It was a vicarious cross. To this middle cross, my dying hearers, look, that your souls may live. The right-hand cross shows you what an awful thing it is to be unbelieving. The left-hand, what it is to repent. The middle cross, what Christ has done to save your soul.

## LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

*Poverty is the reward of idleness.*—ENGEL.

*Poverty, like a lamp, shows everything bad and annoying.*—ARISTOPHON.

*There is not on earth a more powerful advocate for vice than poverty.*—GOLDSMITH.

### The Problem of Poverty, and How to Deal with It.

*For ye have the poor always with you.*—Matt. xxvi: 11.

WHAT ARE THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PROBLEM?

This question is of prime importance and deserves the first consideration, as it must give color and shape to the solution of the problem. We are confident that these principles are not clearly and generally understood and acted upon in our dealings with the poor.

1. The essential claim which this class of mankind has upon the com-

mon brotherhood is not one of "charity," but is founded in religion; it is not a humane sentiment to be gratified, but a law of Christianity to be obeyed. The relation and duty involved do not grow out of society simply, but pertain to the universal law of brotherhood, as children of the same Father, and heirs of the same divine love and grace. The first two words of that universal prayer which Christ taught His disciples, convey the idea: "OUR FATHER." The spirit, the principle of these prefatory words bind all who utter them to look upon and treat the poor, not in the light of charity to strangers, but of love and