

and fathers them upon 'the Devil,' since they 'do his lusts,' and their falsehood and the murder they were designing spring from Satan. To His disciples He says, 'None cometh to the Father but through me'; 'I am the door,' 'I am the way.' God is intimately near in His paternal love to men and graciously accessible—the way is plain, the door is open; but access is through the offices of Christ; other ways are barred. So it stands in the First Epistle: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father either; he that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also.' This dependence on Jesus Christ for filial standing before God, as well as for true knowledge of God, is intimated in the later words of the Epistle: 'He that hath the Son of God, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.' 'The antichrist,' therefore, is an antitheist too; 'he denies the Father and the Son,' in one breath contradicting the filial Deity of Christ and the eternal Fatherhood of God.

In writing his Gospel, St. John seems to be jealous of any expression that might appear to trench upon the sole Sonship of Jesus Christ; the title 'Son of God' is His unshared designation, and 'the Father' signifies, almost invariably, *His* Father. This mode of speech, presumably, reflects the prevailing attitude of Jesus to 'the Father': 'the Father and the Son,'—these are the two actors that fill the scene. 'The world' of men is the sphere into which 'the Father sends the Son.' The disciples are those whom 'the Father gives' to the Son; they are exchanged or shared between the Two as 'thine and mine'; they are 'branches' in the vine of which the Son is the vine-stock and the 'Father the vine-dresser'; 'sheep' for the Father's flock, of which the Son is the faithful shepherd. Amongst the heathen also, outside of

'this (Israelite) fold,' there are 'scattered abroad, children of God,' for whose sake He permits His Son to die. All His earthly children the Father regards with an infinite love, making the Son the channel of His love to all alike. Gathered around Him and ranged under His leadership, 'bought for God,' as the Apocalypse describes it, in His blood, 'out of every nation and tongue,' they people the heavenly city and fill the Father's house of many dwellings. Then 'the tabernacle of God shall be with men; and God Himself shall be with them as their God, and shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.' 'The Lord God the Almighty is the temple' of the city, and His glory is all its light; 'the Lamb is *the lamp* thereof.' So the eternal blessedness of the saints is the eternal impartation of God Himself to them in Christ.

From the concentration of the light of Divine knowledge in Jesus Christ—the idea in which the Johannine theology is rooted—it ensues that God is viewed and thought of through His character. He is what Jesus Christ exhibits, in word, deed, and disposition,—that and no other. 'We beheld his glory,' writes John in the Prologue, 'glory as of an Only-begotten from a Father, full of grace and truth,'—the one person in whom God is exactly and adequately mirrored. The Unseen is seen! God, who is Spirit, is manifest, and palpable, in the flesh. The Word of the Eternal, which spoke in the forms of nature and through the course of history in broken and contradicted utterance, now voices itself through human lips in clear tones of grace and truth to the universal heart. We know through His image in His Son what the Most High is really like, and what are His thoughts and purpose for our race.

Literary Illustrations of the Sermon on the Mount.

BY THE REV. JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., DUNDONALD.

THE BEATITUDES:

'No list of circumstances will ever make a paradise.'—GEORGE ELIOT.

'There are no real pleasures without real needs.'

—VOLTAIRE.

Mt 5⁸ 'The spirit is the seat of this poverty,

just as the heart is of this purity' of the Gospel.—LOISV.

Mt 5⁵. See Fiske's *Man's Destiny*, chap. xv.

Mt 5⁸ "Hold off from sensuality," says Cicero, "for if you have given yourself up to it, you will find yourself unable to think of anything else."

That is morality. "Blessed are the pure in heart," says Jesus Christ; "for they shall see God." That is religion.'—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

'When he said "Be free," they cheered him to the echo; when he said "Be pure," the effect was very different.'—Mrs. OLIPHANT, of Savonarola and the Florentines.

Mt 5⁹ 'The Lord does not use me, like His servant Dr. Chalmers, for great things, but my way of serving the Lord is walking three or four miles to quiet a family dispute.'—A. A. BONAR.

Bunyan died from the effects of a cold caught during a journey undertaken to heal a family feud between a father and son at Reading.

Mt 5¹⁰. 11—

'If it prove a life of pain, greater have I judged the gain; With a singing soul for music's sake, I climb and meet the rain.'—ALICE MEYNELL.

In a letter to the *Westminster Gazette* (7th June 1904), 'an Old Liberal' declares that he can reproduce with absolute fidelity the purport and spirit of some words in a great speech of John Bright at the unveiling of Cobden's statue in the Bradford Exchange. "I remember," said the orator, "on the morning of my dear friend's funeral, I was standing beside his coffin, looking at that which contained all that was mortal of the man I had known so long. His daughter, who was in the room with me, said, 'My dear father was always very fond of the Sermon on the Mount.'" And then Bright's voice swelled and grew in depth and volume, as it was wont to do when he was deeply moved, and he went on, "And I think that my friend's whole life was a sermon upon that highest and holiest of all texts." He repeated, as only he could have done, the blessings uttered by the Divine lips upon the poor, the mourners, the meek, the hungerers after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peace-makers; and then, in his own severely simple words, summed up the labours of Cobden and his associates in a single phrase, "We tried to put Holy Writ into an Act of Parliament."

Mt 5¹⁶ Tolstoy, in his *Confession*, speaks of the faith and practice of orthodox believers in his own circle, men whose religious position was respectable, and whose manner of life in no way differed from the ambitious, vicious conduct of unbelievers like himself. 'No arguments were able to convince me of the sincerity' of such so-called believers' faith. 'Only actions, proving their conception of

life to have destroyed that fear of poverty, illness, and death, so strong in myself, could have convinced me; and such actions I could not see among them. Such actions, indeed, I saw among the open infidels of my own class in life, but never among its so-called believers.'

'Christ doth not say that others hearing your good works, your good story, or your pathetic expressions; but that *others seeing your good works may glorify your Father*.'—JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Before men: 'The main point nowadays is to be pious in the open air.'—ROTHE.

'Let your light shine before men, and think them not unworthy the trouble.'—MARGARET GORDON to Carlyle.

'Good people shine from afar like the snowy mountain peaks.'—Buddhist Dhammapada.

Mt 5²⁰ 'Religious people do not see that the "irreligious" are "irreligious" because they demand much of religion, more than the religion of "religious people" have to give them.'—*Contemporary Review*, July 1898, p. 54.

'People have often tried to find a type of life that might serve as a basement type. . . . The type must be one discontented with society as it is.'—W. PATER.

Mt 5²⁸ 'But this is not the rule by which we are to judge our past actions, but to guard our future ones. He who has thoughts of lust or passion is not innocent in the sight of God, and is liable to be carried on to perform the act on which he suffers himself to dwell. And in looking forward, he will do well to remember this caution of Christ; but in looking backward, in thinking of others, in endeavouring to estimate the actual amount of guilt or trespass, if he begins by placing thought upon the level of action, he will end by placing action on the level of thought. It would be a monstrous state of mind in which we regarded mere imagination of evil as the same thing with action; hatred as the same with murder; thoughts of impurity as the same with adultery. It is not so that we have learned Christ. . . . However important it may be to remember that the all-seeing eye of God tries the reins, it is no less important to remember also that morality consists in definite acts, capable of being seen and judged of by our fellow-creatures.'—JOWETT.

Mt 5^{88f}. 'The present week is within what is ecclesiastically termed the Octave of St. John the Baptist. I wonder whether anyone who read first

the preachment of Count Tolstoy and then the leading article on it in the *Times* of last Monday, had the same thought about it that occurred to me. Was it a sermon of John the Baptist that I had just read, taken down by a reporter on the banks of Jordan for the *Times of Judæa*, and were these the comments of the Scribe or Pharisee who no doubt wrote the leading articles for that journal in the year A.D. 29? And was it not the same vigorous, sober, practical, and common-sensible writer who wrote that notable article (which made such a sensation a year or two later) about the Sermon on the Mount? I need not go beyond the Baptist for my illustration, but one can perceive how cogently the scribe would have pointed out the inability of that eccentric idealist clothed in camel's hair "to perceive, even dimly, the elementary facts which dominate the social and political order of Judæa, his intolerance of the men and the institutions upholding that order, and his powerlessness to suggest any working alternative for the system he would overturn." . . . How is it that there is this gap between the spiritual and the practice of mankind? I do not think that any reflecting person can have lived through a war without daily puzzlement over this, the deepest of the antinomies. But, after all, it is a problem which is with us in peace also; for war, which Tolstoy chooses for his example, is merely a heightened instance of the everyday antagonism between the ideal and the practical. If the Sermon on the Mount is fatal to war, it is fatal also to many of the operations whereby men get rich, or win the women they love, or pursue their own interests or those of their families. Man moves incessantly on two separate planes under mutually conflicting instructions, either of which he disobeys at his peril. The one is the physical law which decrees that the stronger shall prevail; the other the spiritual, which says that the meek shall inherit the earth. . . . The fighting, striving, eat-and-be-eaten life goes on simultaneously with the meek, spiritual religious life in different individuals and in the same individual at the same time.'

—*Westminster Gazette*, 2nd July, 1904.

Mt 5^{48f.}—

'He is a friend, who, treated as a foe,
Now even more friendly than before doth show;
Who of the very stones against him cast
Builds friendship's altar higher and more fast.'

—ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Mt 5⁴⁶ 'I am more and more clear about this, that we must be content to know that the best things come to us both from man and God, without our deserving them.'—DALE.

Mt 5⁴⁶ 'It would be a great step in advance for most of us to love anybody, and the publicans of the time of Jesus must have been a much more Christian set than most Christians of the present day; but that we should love those who do not love us is a height never scaled now except by a few of the elect in whom Christ still survives.'—*Mark Rutherford's Deliverance*, chap. iv.

Mt 6⁵—

'He asketh not world's eyes;
Not to world's ears he cries;
Saith, "These
Shut, if ye please."'—FRANCIS THOMPSON.

Mt 6^{6f.} 'What indeed is prayer but love—love *with a want?*'—EUGENIE DE GUÉRIN.

Mt 6^{16f.} 'Fasting? Why, for a man who is trying to do his work in the best way, life is a perpetual fast.'—EDWARD THRING.

Mt 6²¹ 'The character of a man depends on that which is his confidence. . . . If you can persuade a covetous man that money is not *son boucier ni sa grande récompense*, but that God is, you change him from a covetous man into a pious man. . . . The thing in which I put my confidence for happiness has necessarily a directing influence over my whole being; it communicates its own nature to me in some measure.'—ERSKINE of Linlathen.

Mt 6³³ *Seek first* . . . 'We forget that there may be many duties, but that among them all there is a first and a last, and that we must not fulfil the last before fulfilling the first, just as one must not harrow without ploughing.'—TOLSTOY.

'The whole of duty is modified when we change the hierarchy of duty. How significant is the etymology of "prerogative," the section that was asked first for its opinion! There lies the whole force of our ideal. *Which do you consult first?* Everything else will be different. . . . That which gives life its keynote is, not what men think good, but what they think best.'—JULIA WEDGWOOD.

Mt 7¹⁻⁵ 'I sometimes wonder whether people who talk so freely about extirpating the unfit ever dispassionately consider their own history. Surely one must be very "fit" indeed not to know of an occasion, or perhaps two, in one's life when

it would have been only too easy to qualify for a place among the "unfit."—HUXLEY.

Frederick Denison Maurice to his mother: 'Of all spirits I believe the spirit of judging is the worst, and it has had the rule of me I cannot tell you how dreadfully and how long. Looking in other people for the faults which I had a secret consciousness were in myself, and accusing them instead of looking for their faults in myself, where I should have been sure to find them all; this, I find, has more hindered my progress in love and gentleness and sympathy than all things else. I never knew what the words "Judge not, that ye be not judged" meant before; now they seem to me some of the most awful, necessary, and beautiful in the whole Word of God.'

'Have it a fixed principle that getting into any scornful way is fatal.'—BUSHNELL.

Mt 7⁶. See Julia Wedgwood's *The Message of Israel*, p. 304, and Dr. Hanna's edition of *Erskine's Letters*, p. 362.¹

Mt 7¹⁴ "'The strait and narrow way" is an expression that gathers up the whole meaning of the life of this people. It is true even in a geographic sense, the rocky path which leads from Egypt to Assyria is the promised land of the chosen people. . . . Israel has been called to be the prophet among the nations, and life in the

¹ See also *Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford, vol. xxxv. p. 266) for the Buddhistic parallel: 'Let not this doctrine, so full of truth, so excellent, fall into the hands of those unworthy of it, where it would be despised, shamefully treated, ridiculed, and censured.'

present, for the prophet, is necessarily hampered and compressed within tiny limits.'—Miss WEDGWOOD, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

'I am suspicious of any religion that is a people's religion or an age's religion. Our Saviour says: "Narrow is the way."—NEWMAN.

Mt 7¹⁷ The spontaneity of life. 'When a man,' says Bacon, 'has proposed to himself the highest exemplars of noble words and virtues, "this done, he need not set himself, like a carver, to make an image, but let his better nature grow, like a flower."'

Mt 7²¹—

'And I remember still
The words, and from whence they came,
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will. . . .
Poor, sad humanity
Through all the dust and heat
Turns back with bleeding feet
By the weary round it came,
Unto the simple thought,
By the great Master taught;
And that remaineth still,
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will.'—LONGFELLOW.

'They call me a great man now, but no one believes what I have told them.'—CARLYLE.

Mt 7²⁹ 'The scholastic divinity which excites the antipathy of this delicate and charming spirit [the author of the *Imitatio Christi*] is that of the Realists and the Nominalists, that of Abelard and of William de Champeaux, the *scientia clamorosa* of the mountain Sainte-Genevieve, entirely occupied with definitions, genera, and species.'—RENAN.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

ACTS XIV. 17.

'And yet He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.'—R.V.

EXPOSITION.

'And yet He left not Himself without witness.'—In speaking to peasants like those at Lystra, St. Paul naturally dwells most on the witness given through the Divine goodness as manifested in nature. In addressing philosophers at

Athens and at Rome, he points to the yet fuller witness of consciousness and conscience.—ELLCOTT.

'In that He did good.'—Notice the three participles, the second subordinate to and explaining the first, and the third the second: 'He gave witness of Himself by doing good,' that is, by giving rains, etc., 'in that way filling.'—PAGE.

'And gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons.'—This simple appeal to the principles of natural religion illustrates the care with which the apostles adapted their language to their audience. The description of the Creator is borrowed from the fourth commandment.—RENDALL.