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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

MANY are the interpretations of Jn 16⁸⁻¹¹, but not one of them has given general satisfaction. Mr. W. H. P. HATCH tries another.

The difficulty is with the verb. In the Authorized Version it is translated 'reprove'—'he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.' But to reprove the world of righteousness, or even of judgment, requires explanation. The margin of the Authorized Version, however, has a more likely word: 'or convince,' it says. If that word 'convince' had its modern meaning the difficulty would almost be removed. He will convince the world of [the reality of] sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment—that is sense enough, and very good sense. And the probability is that that is the meaning which the ordinary reader takes out of it and is content. But that meaning will not do.

For the verb so translated does not mean convince. It means 'convict.' The Revisers render the eighth verse literally and accurately: 'And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement.' And we are back again with the old difficulty.

The difficulty, when you give the verb its proper meaning, is with 'righteousness.' Mr. HATCH,

who writes in *The Harvard Review*, sees that. He sees that to convict the world of sin is intelligible enough; but to convict the world of righteousness, which is the very opposite of sin, is not intelligible.

But *is* righteousness the very opposite of sin? Not always. The word rendered righteousness here is sometimes rendered justice. It is rendered so even here by the Rheims translators, after the Vulgate *justitia*. For it has sometimes the meaning of righteousness or moral excellence, and sometimes the meaning of justification or acquittal. Take the latter meaning here. Then, says Mr. HATCH, 'the world will be brought to recognise three things by the power of the Paraclete: First, that it has sinned because it has not believed in Christ; second, that believers are justified or acquitted because Christ has gone to the Father to act as their advocate; and third, that evil has been condemned because the ruler of this world (the devil) has been condemned.'

Are we out of the wood now? By no means. 'Brought to recognise' is just the old and impossible 'convince' over again.

A volume of sermons of quite unusual interest, and of quite unusual ability, has been published

by Messrs. Hodges & Figgis, under the title of *The Downfall of Satan* (5s.). The author is the Rev. J. E. HUTTON, M.A., of the Moravian Church in Dublin.

The Downfall of Satan is the subject of the first sermon. The text is Lk 10¹⁸, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.' It is a text that has awakened the curiosity of the most careless reader and has occupied the thought of the most attentive student, and the one has taken about as much out of it as the other. Mr. HUTTON believes that the failure is due to lack of the historical imagination.

He has no doubt that the disciples understood what Jesus meant. They had certain ideas about Satan. Jesus took these ideas into account. And they had a way of speaking of the future which also He accepted and made use of. What were these ideas and what was that way of speaking?

The way of speaking—Mr. HUTTON takes it first—was to represent the future as if it were the past. Jesus adopted that way of speaking. 'Your work,' He said, as the Seventy returned with joy, 'is only a beginning. There are far grander things in store for you; some day Satan, the Prince of the Demons, will fall. I have had a vision of the good time coming. I have looked ahead into the golden future. I have seen Satan himself fall as lightning from heaven.'

Mr. HUTTON says that it is common for preachers to speak in that way. We are not sure that it is common. But it occurs. It is more common with poets than with preachers. And it is to a poet that Mr. HUTTON goes for his example. In 'Locksley Hall' Tennyson 'puts his prophecy into the form of a vision, and says that he himself actually saw what was about to take place. He saw the airmen fighting in the air:

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye
could see,

Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of
magic sails,

Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there
rained a ghastly dew

From the nations' airy navies grappling in the
central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-
wind rushing warm,

With the standards of the peoples plunging
through the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the
battle-flags were furled

In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of
the World."

Then Mr. HUTTON turns to Satan. What were the ideas which the disciples of Jesus had about Satan?

The first idea was that he is a political tyrant. Where did they get that idea? They got it from the prophecies of the Book of Zechariah. There Satan is 'a barrister defending the cause of tyranny.' The question of the day was between Church and State. 'Should men be free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, or should the State decide what every man should believe and teach? Should there, in a word, be religious liberty or should there be State tyranny? The people were divided into two parties. On the side of religious liberty stood Zechariah, assisted by Joshua, the High Priest; on the side of tyranny, Satan, the clever lawyer: that is Satan's first appearance on the stage of human history. The prophet described the situation in a vision. The scene is a Court of Justice. The Judge on the throne is God; the

prisoner at the bar is Joshua, the High Priest, clad in filthy garments; the prosecuting counsel is Satan; and Satan argues like tyrants the wide world over. As the Jews suffer, it is clear God does not love them; therefore they cannot know Him first hand; and therefore the State must regulate religion for them. The verdict was given by God. The wicked barrister received a stern rebuke; the prisoner's filthy robes were taken from him; then he was given new fine robes, and a diadem crowned his head; and God Himself laid down the sacred principle that henceforth each man should worship according to his conscience.'

'What, then, did Jesus mean when He said, "I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven"?' He was predicting the downfall of political tyranny. For that cause of religious liberty our fathers shed their blood; for that cause their noble sons died on the plains of Flanders. The first need of the soul is freedom: freedom to seek and to proclaim the truth.'

The next idea of Satan held by the disciples of Jesus was that he is a cynical philosopher. They got that idea in the Book of Job. Mr. HUTTON quotes the passage from the first chapter of the Book of Job. We need not quote it here. Satan 'has no belief in human virtue; there is, he informs us, no such thing as unselfish heroism. No one, he says, will be religious unless he finds that it pays; no soldier fights except for what he can get; and no one does a kind deed except for a reward. And now a modern Satan informs us that this vile law applies to nations. According to the German historian Treitschke, the duty of every nation is to be selfish; no nation has any right to risk her life for another; and, therefore, when England rushed to the help of Belgium she was either a hypocrite or a fool. In plain English, Satan was a brutal cynic.'

Mr. HUTTON finds the best definition of the cynic in Oscar Wilde. A cynic 'is "a man who knows the price of everything and the value of

nothing." He knows the price for which a man will work, and he does not know the value of the soul. According to Satan, all men's motives are selfish; according to Jesus, a selfish man may, by Divine grace, be made unselfish; and that is what He meant when He said, "I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven."'

Another idea of the disciples about Satan was that he is a tempter. That idea they found in Chronicles, where they read that Satan tempted David to number Israel. Very likely the idea was fostered by our Lord, if by this time He had told the story of His own Temptation. In any case that was the thought of Satan which of all others they left as a legacy to the Church. And Christ looked forward to the temptations which His followers would have to meet, and the victories which they would gain. He looked forward to Peter's temptation and the prayer, 'I prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,' to Paul's temptation, so hopelessly strong at the first, so gloriously overcome at the last. 'Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

One other idea the disciples had about Satan. He was the origin of bodily suffering, the author of disease. And here Mr. HUTTON boldly ranges himself with the disciples. 'The Christian Scientist says there is no disease; the New Testament calls it a Satanic reality; and, being Satanic in nature, it must come down. What, for example, did Jesus mean when He said that Satan had bound a certain woman for eighteen years (Luke xiii. 16)? He meant that she had chronic paralysis or rheumatism. St. Paul spoke in the same way. He called his disease "a messenger of Satan to buffet me"; he wrote to his friends at Salonika, "I would have come to you, but Satan hindered me"; and what he really meant was, "I had a touch of malaria." In that sense, Satan has still much power in those regions.'

'For all true Christians, therefore, the future is

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch will take you back to John Earle and Henry Vaughan, and further back still to George Herbert, of whom Henry Vaughan was a learner, and to Thomas Traherne, who learned of both Herbert and Vaughan. Traherne has it both in poetry and in prose, and his prose is as poetical as his poetry. In poetry thus—

How like an Angel came I down!
 How bright are all things here!
 When first among His works I did appear
 O how their Glory me did crown!
 The world resembled His Eternity
 In which my soul did walk;
 And everything that I did see
 Did with me talk.

And then in prose—'Those pure and virgin apprehensions I had in my infancy, and that divine light wherewith I was born, are the best unto this day wherein I can see the universe. By the gift of God they attended me into the world, and by His special favour I remember them till now. Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world than I when I was a child.'

Then comes Wordsworth. And then Hood—

I remember, I remember,
 The fir trees dark and high;
 I used to think their slender tops
 Were close against the sky:
 It was a childish ignorance,
 But now 'tis little joy
 To know I'm farther off from heav'n
 Than when I was a boy.

And then Whittier—

We wander wide through evil years,
 Our eyes of faith grow dim;
 But he is freshest from His hands
 And nearest unto Him!

And then the succession passes to two quite modern poets, Percy Ainsworth (of whom, had he

been a poet only and not also a preacher and a greater preacher than a poet, another Shelley might have written another 'Adonais'), and A. E. (the chief of the Irish and some say of all the poets of our day). This is Ainsworth—

Still to gentle hands is left the task of waking
 Children dreaming in the glamour of the
 dawn

To the lurid day, where hearts are nigh to
 breaking

For the fairy joys, so simple in the making,
 That are gone.

Very slowly o'er the Eastern light comes creep-
 ing

A faint shadow that shall deepen by and
 by;

And ye know not that there passeth from your
 keeping

That for which your heart will hunger when
 the weeping-

Time draws nigh.

Be ye thankful if the swift-spiced days but weave
 you

Blooms of heart's-ease 'mid the cypress and
 the thorn;

If the hours that bring a message that must
 grieve you

Shall but tell their tale and pass away—nor
 leave you

Quite forlorn.

And this is A. E.—

How far apart are I and you,
 Beloved, from those spirit children who
 Felt but one single Being long ago,
 Whispering in gentleness and leaning low
 Out of its majesty, as child to child.

I think upon it all with heart grown wild.

Hearing no voice, howe'er my spirit broods,

No whisper from the dense infinitudes,

This world of myriad things whose distance
 awes.

Ah me; how innocent our childhood was!

Now before passing to the theological and the scientific interpretations let us see if this poetical view of the state of infancy is left unchallenged.

Archbishop Temple does not challenge it. He accepts the innocence of childhood, finding 'something sacred' in it. 'The purity,' he says, 'which has been kept clean, not that which has been made clean, always seems to have a peculiar unearthly lustre.' And he holds that though the sinner who repents reaches a higher degree of purity, it is not the same kind of purity. For 'nothing else can quite replace the simple attachment which binds the innocent heart to the loving Saviour, and the grown Christian clings with earnest longing to whatever fragment of childlike innocence still remains to him. And as he grows older there is no temptation which cuts him with deeper pain than one which solicits him to do a wrong thing which he never recollects having done before.'

Nor does Stevenson challenge the poetical estimate of childhood. But he challenges the idea that the child's heaven passes away into the common day of manhood. 'The regret we have for our childhood is not wholly justifiable: so much a man may lay down without fear of public ribaldry; for although we shake our heads over the change, we are not unconscious of the manifold advantages of our new state. What we lose in generous impulse we more than gain in the habit of generously watching others; and the capacity to enjoy Shakespeare may balance a lost appetite for playing at soldiers.'

And Ruskin challenges it more decidedly. 'No line of modern poetry,' he says, 'has been oftener quoted with thoughtless acceptance than Wordsworth's:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.

It is wholly untrue in the implied limitation; if life be led under heaven's law, the sense of heaven's nearness only deepens with advancing

years, and is assured in death. But the saying is indeed true thus far, that in the dawn of virtuous life every enthusiasm and every perception may be trusted as of divine appointment; and the *maxima reverentia* is due not only to the innocence of children, but to their inspiration. And it follows that through the ordinary course of mortal failure and misfortune, in the career of nations no less than of men, the error of their intellect, and the hardening of their hearts, may be accurately measured by their denial of spiritual power. In the life of Scott, beyond comparison the greatest intellectual force manifested in Europe since Shakespeare, the lesson is given us with a clearness as sharp as the incision on a Greek vase. The very first mental effort for which he obtained praise was the passionate recitation of the passage in the *Æneid*, in which the ghost of Hector appears to Æneas. And the deadliest sign of his own approaching death is in the form of incredulity which dictated to his weary hand the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*.'

Fitzgerald, however, wholly denies the existence of Wordsworth's heavenly child. He discusses the matter in *Euphranor*:

'I know not yet whether I have ever had an Infant Hero of any kind to deal with; none, certainly, who gave any indication of any such "clouds of glory" as your Wordsworth tells of, even when just arrived from their several homes—in Alexander's case, of a somewhat sulphureous nature, according to Skythrope, I doubt. No, nor of any young Wordsworth neither under our diviner auspices.

"Nay, but," said Euphranor, "he tells us that our Birth is but a 'Sleep and a Forgetting' of something which must take some waking-time to develope."

"But which, if I remember aright, is to begin to darken 'with shades of the Prison-house,' as Wordsworth calls it, that begin to close about 'the growing Boy.' But I am too much of a Philistine, as you Germans have it, to comprehend the Transcendental. All I know is, that I have

not yet detected any signs of the 'Heaven that lies about our Infancy,' nor for some while after—no, not even peeping through those windows through which the Soul is said more immediately to look, but as yet with no more speculation in them than those of the poor whelp of the Dog we talked of—in spite of a nine days' start of him."

And the experience of teachers and coachmen is on Fitzgerald's side. In the Life of William Alexander, Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of All Ireland, we read that there was 'a remarkable coachman called Jimmy. He evidently had no excessive veneration for his master. In fact, he was more than once heard to say—"Experience teaches fools, and if his Lordship does what he's thinkin' on, he'll larn." On one occasion the Bishop was giving away prizes at a school—it was on the Festival of the Holy Innocents, and he spoke with feeling of the beauty of innocent childhood, their trailing clouds of glory, and so forth. "Childer is just wee botherations, so they are," floated in from where the carriage waited. "The horses will tramp you, without you quit yer capers—ye limbs of Satan."

Pass to the theological view of infancy. The theological view is that the child is by nature sinful. The Rev. Thomas Stephens, who edited a volume of essays by many and various writers on *The Child and Religion*, summed up the matter in this way: 'There have been dogmatic developments of the theological idea which have had to be rejected. Theologians have exaggerated and elaborated, and so have made the thought repugnant. But still, the derived sinful bias of human nature is a fact, not a dogma. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Serious observers have recognised that the "taint" is transmitted. Only a superficial view of humanity or an inadequate conception of morality can jauntily say that "all children are born good." The modern view of things is marked by an even stronger sense than in former days of the reality and universal presence of sin. The flimsy optim-

ism which led men to regard this as the best of all worlds, and to make light of the facts which contradicted their pleasing hypothesis, has vanished. To-day there is even an oppressive sense of the weight of the sin which burdens humanity. We have disposed of the shallow views of Rousseau respecting the inherent goodness of children, and have ceased to dream of a perfectibility based on education, and on altered social and political conditions. Pelagian views of human nature are discredited. Kant's deeper and truer note is accepted, and we are forced to acknowledge the presence of a radical evil.'

The theological view of the nature of children is obtained from Scripture, but it is supported by observation. Take observation first, and take so untraditional a theologian as Mr. F. R. Tennant. 'The child nature,' says Mr. Tennant, 'is always characterised by what, in older persons, would be described as faults and vices. Young children are invariably very impatient of godly restraint and discipline; they exhibit a passionateness of temper, a wilfulness, a greed, an unconscious cruelty, and a capacity for unrestrained self-pleasing, which serve to convince the majority of minds that there is indeed much of the old Adam in human nature from the first. "Can you possibly doubt the doctrine of original sin," the present writer was once asked by a mother, and again by a theologian with experience of Sunday Schools, "if you have ever had anything to do with children?"'

Take again so unfettered a theologian as Bishop G. A. Chadwick: 'The theological dogma of original sin, however unwelcome to many, is in harmony with all experience. Impatience is there, and many a childish fault; and graver evils develop as surely as life unfolds, just as weeds show themselves in summer, the germs of which were already mingled with the better seed in spring. It is plain to all observers that the weeds of human nature are latent in the early soil, that this is not pure at the beginning of each individual life.'

But it is in Scripture that the doctrine is discovered. The passages are familiar and need no repetition here. These passages are accepted by the great majority of theologians, Roman and Protestant, as decisive. And decisive on two things—both guilt and depravity.

They are decisive on original guilt. The chief passage of Scripture is Ro 5¹²⁻¹⁸. 'Whatever obscurities lie in it, its main tenor is considered to be clear—St. Paul is proving the guilt of all men, young and old, from the fact that all men suffer the penalty of guilt, to wit, death. It is an argument from the effect to the cause, from the universality of the punishment to the universality of the guilt. Children, who have not sinned according to the similitude of Adam's transgression, die. If they die, thus suffering the penalty of sin, they must have sinned—sinned in a pre-temporal state according to Origen, in a super-temporal state according to Julius Müller, in Adam according to the evangelical divines. Accordingly, all children are born in a state of guilt, and consequently of condemnation.'

They are equally decisive on the depravity. 'No phrase,' says Dr. J. Cynddylan Jones in *The Child and Religion*, 'has been more prominent in the discussion of this subject than that of "total depravity." What did Augustine, Calvin, and their equally able followers intend by it? Evidently that man by nature is destitute of all goodness, and has in him the seed of all vice. The Westminster Confession, the standard of orthodoxy in Calvinistic churches, teaches that our first parents "became dead in sins and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body," and that "they convey the same death in sin and corrupted nature to all their posterity." The (United) Free Church of Scotland recently receded from that extreme position, making "total depravity" to mean, not total in intensity, but total in extent, *i.e.* that no part of our nature has escaped the contagion of evil. According to the modern interpretation it does not signify that human nature

because of original sin is as bad as it might possibly be, but that in every faculty it has been tainted with badness.'

It follows from the guilt and depravity in which children are born that they must be 'born again' if they are to enjoy fellowship with God. Says Bishop Moule: 'Such is the damage wrought by that deep mystery we call the Fall, so sore a break of continuity in the filial attitude does it bring, that Scripture seems plainly to speak of a regeneration as necessary for every human being if it is to enjoy that sonship which is to be sonship indeed. It seems to me clear that the New Testament, in the vast majority of passages, when it speaks of "children of God" (and similar phrases), speaks of human beings who have been thus regenerated.' And the Rev. John Lewis, a Baptist, in the same useful handbook, says: 'I cannot see how anyone can be in the kingdom until he is old enough to exercise his own choice, and has by an act of faith and love surrendered to Christ. I believe this choice, which from the human side we call conversion, is possible at a very early age, and often takes place before the subject of it is fully conscious of everything that has happened. It should be expected in very little children, who can often understand what sin is and what forgiveness means far better than many suppose, and should be regarded as the normal experience of child life in every household where the little ones are brought, not to any ceremony, but to the living Christ, in prayer and faith.'

Pass to the scientific view. 'What do psychologists, who have studied the infant mind, find to be the constitution of human experience during the first epoch of mental life? No one, of course, believes now, if indeed anyone did in Locke's time, in innate ideas. There is no such complex furniture in the infant's mind at birth as the general idea; even what Kant called the forms of intuition, space and time, modern psychology has shown to be the outcome of elaborate synthesis. The

infant's experience begins in raw sensations, feelings of pleasure and pain, and the motor adaptations to which these lead. With these, and with the latent germs of the faculties of perception and thought, which cannot be observed but which must be assumed in order to account for the development of the child into the man, we have no concern. There remain only the congenital instincts and appetites.'

On these instincts and appetites we may quote Sir Henry Jones. He is very clear and he is very emphatic. They are not to be regarded as sinful. They 'are not actual tendencies in any direction, but *potential faculties*.' 'There is no room for doubt that a degenerate parentage brings weakened offspring; or that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. But in every other sense, except that of varying capacities awaiting realisation by actual contact with circumstance, each child is a new beginning; the way to virtue is as open to the child of the wicked as it is to the child of the virtuous. The whole stress, therefore, falls upon the environment, and above all else upon the social environment, into which from birth the child enters.'

Addressing the new-born infant, Longfellow as a poet can say:

Here at the portal thou dost stand,
And with thy little hand
Thou openest the mysterious gate
Into the future's undiscovered land.

And science can accept the poetry as scientifically true.

But scientific observers are not always all of one mind. At the present moment a keen controversy is raging between the believers in environment and the believers in heredity. There are those who deny the white-paper theory, as they call it. Children are not born as a sheet of white paper is laid on the desk to be by and by written upon by

the outside influence of their surroundings. They are born with hereditary tendencies. These tendencies may be for good or for ill, but they are there and they have to be reckoned with. 'A child may inherit from vicious or dissolute parents a disposition to evil. It matters not, we are told, what influences may be brought to bear upon it, sooner or later the original strain will manifest itself in act. The vicious life breaks out in due time almost as surely as oak leaves upon an oak tree. And so strong is this conviction, so fully does it seem to be maintained by evidence gathered from all quarters of the animal kingdom, that it has been a main obstacle in the way of one of the most desirable and promising of social reforms—the adoption as members of the family of the derelict waifs of the great cities. The fear of hereditary predisposition paralyses the benevolent, and paralyses them the more, the more they place value upon character. They cannot face the risk of twining their affections around children who may have brought with them into the world the tendencies which destroyed their parents.'

My child is mine.

Blood of my blood, flesh of my flesh is he,
Rocked on my breast and nurtured at my
knee,
Fed with sweet thoughts ere ever he drew
breath,
Wrested in battle through the gates of death.
With passionate patience is my treasure
hoarded,
And all my pain with priceless joy rewarded.

My child is mine.

Nay, but a thousand thousand powers of ill
Dispute him with me: lurking wolf-like still
In every covert of the ambushed years.
Disease and danger dog him: foes and fears
Bestride his path, with menace fierce and
stormy.
Help me, O God! these are too mighty
for me!

Now of those three interpretations which is the true one? The first undoubtedly. The Poet is a seer. He looks into the heart of things. And when he expresses truly what he truly sees, that is the truth for us. If, instead of declaring his vision he reasons and reflects upon it, he may go wrong. Wordsworth may be wrong when he says that the youth must daily travel further from the east. For he is then speaking as a theologian rather than as a poet, and agrees with the theologian who says, 'No mere man since the Fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them, in thought, word, and deed.' With that, however, we have nothing at present to do. Our business is with the child. And it is true that heaven lies about us in our infancy.

It is true as an ideal, as all poetic truth is. The reality is often far otherwise. The literal truth is that hell lies about the infancy of some children. That is one of the problems of our time, one of its greatest and most urgent problems. The problem is how to turn the hell of so many an infancy—a hell which is due to man—into the heaven which God intended it to be. But the ideal of the poet is also often realized. In many a home heaven lies about the children's early years, and many a man has been able in after years to thank God for it.

But the theological interpretation is not all wrong. Many modern theologians are ready to abandon the doctrine of original sin, and among laymen it seems to carry so little sense of reality that congregations are apt to smile at the mention

of it. But it is one of the few attempts of individualistic theology to get a solidaristic view of its field of work. The doctrine of original sin views the race as a great unity, descended from a single head, and knit together through all ages by common unity of origin and blood. This natural unity is the basis and carrier for the transmission and universality of sin. Depravity of will and corruption of nature are transmitted wherever life itself is transmitted.

And science agrees. Evil, as well as good, says the scientific observer, flows 'down the generations through the channels of biological coherence. Idiocy and feeble-mindedness, neurotic disturbances, weakness of inhibition, perverse desires, stubbornness and anti-social impulses in children must have had their adequate biological causes somewhere back on the line, even if we lack the records.'

The poet is right. Heaven lies about us in our infancy. Jesus was a poet and He said so. 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' And the theologian is right also. For even when they come to the Saviour, and at however early an age they come, they are already weighted with the inheritance of the race. They are bone of their fathers' bone. They are flesh of his flesh. They are soul of his soul and spirit of his spirit. They cannot be, without being human; and humanity has in it something of the brute, if you speak after the manner of science and evolution, something of the Fall, if you speak, more reverently, of the will of God and highest hope.