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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

When a preacher of the gospel is discovered with a fine selection of novels in his library, his explanation is that they are good for the making of sermons. It may be so. But biographies are better. And of recent biographies the best for all the preacher's purposes, and for the preacher himself, is the *Recollections* of John Viscount Morley (Macmillan; 2 vols., 25s. net).

Why is it good? Because of the estimates it contains of certain great men, and because of the revelation it makes of the character of Viscount Morley himself. The estimates are very many—of Cotter Morison, Mill, Meredith, Matthew Arnold, Mazzini, George Eliot, and other men and women with whom he has been associated in literature; of Gladstone, Balfour, Chamberlain, Asquith, Lord Spencer, Campbell-Bannerman, and the rest (with only one brilliant exception, Lloyd George) with whom he has been associated in politics. But for the preacher's purpose it is not his estimate of the men and women whom he has known that is most profitable, it is the revelation he makes of himself.

For he reveals himself as irreligious. He is one of those men, rarely met with now, to whom the things that are seen with the eyes and handled with the hands are everything. He ignores God. He is utterly unconcerned with Christ. There is no life for him but the present life.

He does not deny the existence of God. He ignores Him. Throughout the two volumes the word occurs three times—twice in quotation from others, once by himself in the phrase 'God knows.'

He is unconcerned with Christ. We noticed the name of God three times. We have found the name of Christ only once. Once also He is referred to as 'the founder of Christianity.' That reference is worth considering. It is best perhaps to quote the passage entirely. It enables us to see how much Viscount Morley knows about 'the founder of Christianity,' and how little. 'Mill's estimate of the founder of Christianity is a glowing, beautiful, and deeply sincere tribute. Unfortunately for its strength as argument, he overlooked one of the most remarkable new growths of his time, the science of comparative religion. If he did not overlook comparative religion, he dissociated his speculation on Theism from methods of ordered historic thought and knowledge, with which it was specially connected. He had forgotten or overlooked the shock given to orthodox faith only seven years before by a Jewish scholar, who showed that the sublimest sayings in the Gospels found exact parallels in the Talmud. The originality, however, of the lessons taught to man-

kind in the Gospels is a question with only secondary bearings on the source of that benignant inspiration, whether it was altogether human or partially divine. What became of the whole scheme of social evolution in its successive stages fixed by ordered mutation, if one of the most important of all the changes in moral history was due to a special, express, and unique act of supernatural intervention? Why may not the same special interposition be just as reasonably claimed for Athanasius, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Hildebrand, Knox, and the rest of the mighty actors in spiritual and ecclesiastical transformations, by whom what bears the common name of Christianity has been defined, decided, settled, and set to work in the stupendous phalanx of Catholic and Protestant churches?'

Again, there is no life for Viscount MORLEY beyond the present. He quotes John Stuart Mill. 'Mill once said to a friend afflicted by a sore domestic tribulation, "To my mind the only permanent value of religion is in lightening the feeling of total separation, which is so dreadful in a real grief."' His comment is, 'If you will. But can we really suppose that this scheme of possible contingencies, low degrees of probability, permissive hopes, dubious potentialities, could bring comfort or consolation worth the name to aching hearts—

> In shock of loss and anguish of farewells,
> At that eternal parting of the ways?

After all, death is death, however we may meet it. As we cannot but see every day we live, even religion fails to wipe away the tears from the eyes of those to whom religion is the most priceless of blessings. We know well enough that problems of life and death offer us a knot that is hard indeed to disentangle. Mill here cuts it, then at the same moment he presents us with a second knot that is still harder to disentangle than the first.'

He also quotes Huxley. 'It was in 1883 that Huxley wrote to me (the letter is printed in his *Life*): "It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older and nearer the goal. It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in '1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal—at any rate in one of the upper circles, where the climate and company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in this way."' MORLEY says, 'My answer to his query I cannot recall; that it was a negative is certain, perhaps supported by a reference to Lucretius' world-famed Third Book, or Pliny's ironic reproach of *avida nunquam desinere mortalitas*; or our English—

> Men must endure
> Their going hence even as their coming thither,
> Ripeness is all.'

He never swerves from this indifference. In the second volume there is a long chapter with the curious title of 'An Easter Digression.' It is a series of quotations from men who wrote of death, and he quotes them (even though one of them is Archbishop Leighton) as if they had not a thought of a hereafter. It is the show of courage in dying that delights him. Thus he quotes Gladstone in reference to Cranmer at the stake: 'Do you remember Jeremy Collier's sentence on his bravery at the stake, which I count one of the grandest in English prose? "He seemed to repel the force of the fire, and to overlook the torture by strength of thought." Thucydides could not beat that.'

One day Mr. Gladstone was much interested in a story which MORLEY told him of an old patriarch 'for whom I had opened a park in my burgh of Forfar. He was 94, shrewd and lively as ever. "Sensuality, Vanity, Avarice," he said to me, "these are the three things that destroy a man." I never heard him say a word about another world, or the Creator of this: shrewd, generous, kindly, rationalistic.' That is Viscount MORLEY himself —'Not a word about another world or the Creator of this'; or, as he afterwards says of Lucretius, "vehemently unorthodox on sacred fundamentals —a pagan, without religion, or the feeling for it.'

Is Viscount MORLEY any the worse for that? We must face the question fairly. And the answer is not immediate. For there is no denying—and who would desire to deny?—that John MORLEY has been reckoned one of the most reliable public servants that ever King or Country had. But listen to Lord ACTON.

Lord ACTON knew MORLEY well, and esteemed him highly. They were almost always at one in public policy and sometimes very pleasantly at one in private intercourse. Yet this is what he wrote: 'As there are for him no rights of God, there are no rights of man—the consequence on earth of obligation in Heaven. Therefore he never tries to adjust his view to many conditions and times and circumstances, but approaches each with a mind uncommitted to devotion and untrammelled by analogies. . . . The consequence of this propensity of mind is that he draws his conclusions from much too narrow an induction; and that his very wide culture—wide at least for a man to whom all the problems, the ideas, the literature of religion are indifferent and unknown—does not go to the making of his policy. These are large drawbacks, leaving, nevertheless, a mind of singular elasticity, veracity, and power, capable of all but the highest things.'

'Capable of all but the highest things'—that is just the impression which the biography makes. But not only does he not reach the highest things, he does not try to reach them. He has a certain standard of approval or disapproval, and it is not the highest. It is the political world he lived in, or it is himself.

It is not his constituents. He did not always seek to please his constituents, because he had a wider public to consider. There is in the second volume a beautiful passage from his diary, in which he describes a visit to Bervie, one of the Montrose Burghs. 'One of the most delightful days of my life. Superb sunshine, broad and flashing on the floor of waters; sea, skies, air, all vivid.' It ends with, 'Bervie hereafter a name of blessing.' Yet on that very occasion the Liberals in Bervie were deeply disappointed. The writer was present at the meeting and saw the disappointment. He saw also the curious circumstance of a farmer from the district rousing to enthusiasm an audience which had remained unmoved by Viscount MORLEY's speech. 'For the Member for the little burgh ignored his audience, and spoke to the body of reporters who sat in front of him—leaning over sometimes towards them to watch their progress and give them time!

He did not seek to please his constituents because he had a larger audience to please. And then he had to please himself.

This is the most astonishing and yet characteristic thing in the book. Viscount MORLEY frequently refers to his own estimate of his own doings; and when he does so it is always with approval. 'Glad to find that I keep my head cooler than most.' 'And so to bed at 1 a.m. with a really clear conscience.' Those are phrases; there is the sense of this satisfaction throughout.

Now no man can do his best who stands before no higher tribunal than this. But the striking thing is that Viscount MORLEY does not try to do his best. 'It was not long,' he says, 'before a lady of quality, an uncompromising Millite, dealt faithfully by me. "You know what people are beginning to complain of? They say three things. You are too haughty. You are not at heart a real democrat. You are not half ambitious enough."' His only comment is,' 'Who knows?'

Why *did* he miss the highest? Was it circumstances? He went to Oxford with the intention of taking Holy Orders. He came under the influence of—whom but Cotter Morison! How scornful would Viscount MORLEY have been in after life had he met Cotter Morison then with his feeble arguments for infidelity.

Was it temperament? Why did he take to Cotter Morison and his like? Undoubtedly there was something in him that satisfied him with the superficial. All his life long (if this biography is enough to tell us) he had no strong feeling for man or woman. He never deeply hated; he never deeply loved. Tolerant he has always been to an incredible consistency. He can repeat what is said against him, without a word of reproach or reply. The sentence which he quotes from Machiavelli describes himself: 'He uses few of our loud, easy words of praise and blame, he is not often sorry or glad, he does not smile and he does not scold, he is seldom indignant and he is never surprised.' Once only does he let himself go in words of moving sorrow, and they are uttered over the death of a little dog.

Messrs. Cecil Palmer and Hayward have published an edition of *The Book of Job*, with an Introduction by Mr. G. K. CHESTERTON and illustrations in colour by Miss C. Mary TONGUE (10s. 6d. net).

It is a book to be noticed for three reasons. The Book of Job can be read in it (according to the Authorized Version) with comfort and even a sense of luxurious content. The illustrations compel us to reconsider our conception of Job and his surroundings—where we got it, what it is worth. The Introduction is the least paradoxical and most considerate of all the writings of Mr. CHESTERTON that we have read.

What is the conception that we have formed of Job's wife? Miss TONGUE represents her as utterly overwhelmed with grief. She has thrown herself across Job's knees, as he sits on the ground—his brow shaded with sackcloth, his mouth half-hidden with his hand, his eyes bewildered and heavy as if with sleeplessness. She lies across his knees, her white left arm clasping her head, which is hidden, all but the dark blue hair which the white arm throws almost into blackness. The right arm hangs long and helpless, till the fore-finger unconsciously touches the ashes. 'Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die.' The words are terrible because terrible is her desolation. Said a woman recently: 'I prayed every day for six months, that my son might be spared, and now he is gone: *I have no more use for God.*' Thus is the Book of Job immortal.

Mr. CHESTERTON'S Introduction is not critical. He is content with the critics or without them. He asks one thing only, that they will leave the Old Testament a unity. 'Those are wrong who maintain that the Old Testament is a mere loose library; that it has no consistency or aim. Whether the result was achieved by some supernal spiritual truth, or by a steady national tradition, or merely by an ingenious selection in after times, the books of the Old Testament have a quite perceptible unity.'

He demands unity because he finds that one main idea runs throughout the Old Testament. It is more prominent in some books than in others. In the Book of Job it brings all other ideas within its shadow, till you have to look again in order to discover their existence. That idea is the sovereignty of God.

Mr. CHESTERTON does not use the word sovereignty. He prefers to speak of God's loneliness. 'The central idea,' he says, 'of the great part of the Old Testament may be called the idea of the loneliness of God. God is not only the chief character of the Old Testament; God is properly the only character in the Old Testament.'

The thought is not new. It was a discovery of that great expositor of the Book of Job, Professor A. B. Davidson, of whom Mr. CHESTERTON may not have heard. But it is Mr. CHESTERTON'S own discovery. And he develops it. Since God is the only character of the Old Testament, all the men and women in the Old Testament, good and bad, are merely God's tools and instruments.

Good or bad—that is the peculiarity of the Old Testament. The New Testament makes only the saints the instruments of God. When He would have work done in the earth He sends His saints and martyrs to do it. That, says Mr. CHESTERTON, is a deeper, a more daring, and a more interesting idea than the old Jewish one. For the Gospel, which is of the New Testament, is a deeper, a more daring, and a more interesting idea than the Law. The New Testament idea is 'the idea that innocence has about it something terrible which in the long run makes and re-makes empires and the world.'

That is a daring idea. It is not the idea of common sense. The common-sense idea is the idea of the Old Testament 'that strength is strength, that cunning is cunning, that worldly success is worldly success, and that Jehovah uses these things for His own ultimate purpose, just as He uses natural forces or physical elements. He uses the strength of a hero as He uses that of a Mammoth—without any particular respect for the Mammoth.'

'This is the main key and characteristic of the Hebrew scriptures as a whole. There are, indeed, in those scriptures innumerable instances of the sort of rugged humour, keen emotion, and powerful individuality which is never wanting in great primitive prose and poetry. Nevertheless the main characteristic remains; the sense not merely that God is stronger than man, not merely that God is more secret than man, but that He means more, that He knows better what He is doing, that compared with Him we have something of the vagueness, the unreason, and the vagrancy of the beasts that perish. "It is he that sitteth above the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." We might almost put it thus. The book is so intent upon asserting the personality of God that it almost asserts the impersonality of man. Unless this gigantic cosmic brain has conceived a thing, that thing is insecure and void; man has not enough tenacity to ensure its continuance. "Except the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it. Except the Lord keep the city the watchman watcheth but in vain."'

Sir Henry NEWBOLT'S new book *A New Study of English Poetry* (accept the emphasis on the 'new') has been published by Messrs. Constable (10s. 6d. net), and that ancient and eminent firm has rarely published a more pleasing or more profitable book.

Its value is great to those who enjoy poetry. It is greater to those who maintain an attitude of detachment—'I cannot say that I have ever cared much for poetry.' It is greatest of all to the preacher.

For the preacher is an artist. Whatever else is forgotten let that be forgotten never. There are two attitudes to life. Sir Henry NEWBOLT separates them well. 'There are two worlds,' he says, 'to which every man simultaneously belongs. He lives by his bodily senses and his intellect in a world of matter, governed by "laws of nature." Its language is the language of reason, its statements are such as can be verified by calculation: it is the world of prose. To any one living wholly in this world, if that were possible, beauty would be merely one particular arrangement of molecules, not more interesting than another, except perhaps as the ascertained cause of a pleasurable excitement of the nerves. His representation of it would be either a diagram or a photograph: in either case a mere imitation of nature: purely prosaic.' That is the one world.

And the other? The other world is ours too. 'The illimitable blue above the earth cloud: the shoreless sea into which we would plunge back from our desert island: the universal life in whose freedom all is good—it is Art that gives us this: and poetry is the living voice of Art: the emotion of life made audible. It reminds us of that which is both our native land and the far country of our pilgrimage. We recognise again in every supreme moment of Art that unremembered, unforgettable

kinship, "O born with me somewhere that men forget." Even while we are trudging among the roaring mechanism of our civilisation, we can always hear any word that is spoken in the language of our home.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.'

Is that poetry? It is also preaching. For not only is preaching art; it is art expressing itself in words; and when art expresses itself in words it is poetry. As Sir Henry NEWBOLT has it on another page: 'A work of art in words is always poetry; a work of science, in whatever form of words, would always be prose.'

Now the preacher sometimes forgets that his work is art. The inevitable result is that he interferes in matters with which he has nothing to do. He interferes in trade disputes even though he knows that Christ refused to be a judge or a divider. He interferes in politics. Sir Henry NEWBOLT has a whole chapter on 'Poetry and Politics.' And in that chapter he makes it very clear that the poet and the preacher have nothing to do with politics. He is neither a Liberal nor a Conservative. He is above both.

For there is a region above both parties in the strife of politics and public life. It is the Ideal which the devoted of both parties hold in their heart. Blake expresses it:

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

That Ideal it is the business of the poet and the preacher to maintain in existence and ever point to. He is not a judge or a divider. He bids both sides beware of covetousness. When the preacher or the poet leaves this high office and goes to 'serve the State,' he loses himself, and the State loses more than a servant. 'For twelve years Addison spent his time in lucrative appointments, sessions of Parliament, and high Offices of State. In these he made only a subordinate figure: but in the one interval when he was out of office he achieved the triumph of his life by the production of *Cato*, and by the perfect expression of his own personality in the *Spectator* he worked a lasting change in the thought and feeling of the nation.'

'This is a lesson for the modern Poet: if his poems should achieve so much success as not only to influence the public but even to attract the attention of the Government, he will none the less resist all attempts to turn him into a Secretary of State: he will probably—though this is less certain—refuse even to become a member of the House of Lords. He will not forsake poetry, nor will he attempt to use poetry in the service of particular interests. The conflicts of policy he will judge, not by pitting arguments against each other, but by measuring each against the ideal which is common to both sides. Those who hear him will be reminded not of their differences but of the underlying sympathetic aspirations which are not partisan or temporary, but national and imperishable.'

No doubt it is possible, and at the present time even probable, that the poet or the preacher who takes no part in politics will be accused of lack of patriotism. Sir Henry NEWBOLT wrote the ballad of Plymouth Hoe. He will escape. But other preachers and other poets may suffer. Mr. Yeats was once afraid. 'In his early days the thought

came to Mr. Yeats that he might in time to come be reproached for not having done more for the cause of Ireland. It was not, of course, moon-lighting that might be expected of him, nor even speeches in favour of Home Rule, but good political verse, denouncing the oppressor, instead of unpractical poetry about that Lady Beauty, whose presence keeps alive the souls of nations. These are the first lines of his Apologia:

> Know that I would accounted be
> True brother of that company
> Who sang to sweeten Ireland's wrong,
> Ballad and story, rann and song;
> Nor be I any less of them
> Because the red rose-bordered hem
> Of her whose history began
> Before God made the angelic clan,
> Trails all about the written page.
> For in the world's first blossoming age
> The light fall of her flying feet
> Made Ireland's heart begin to beat,
> And still the starry candles flare
> To help her light foot here and there,
> And still the thoughts of Ireland brood
> Upon her holy quietude.'

What does Sir Henry NEWBOLT say of that? The Irish poems here defended, he says, 'are certainly very remote: I suppose none ever touched more distantly or more obliquely a question of contemporary political strife: none ever appealed less to the selfish fears and hates of men. But I believe they have done more for Ireland than all the threats and curses of the last hundred years.'

But if the preacher or the poet is to take no part in contemporary political strife, is there not some danger that he will live for ever in the clouds, untouched by reality? There is great danger, and Sir Henry NEWBOLT is aware of it.

A poet, he says, must never be so remote from the strife of tongues as to be no longer human. It is his business, certainly, to build an ideal world, just as it is the business of the preacher to build an ideal world, but he must build it of materials which he finds in the actual life of the world he lives in. 'Other-worldly,' he must be, or he is nothing; but he must be 'this-worldly' also.

Now it is no surprise to find that that necessity is forgotten most of all by the religious poet. For the religious poet has 'his conversation in heaven,' and it is very natural for him to look for heaven, not in the life of the Spirit which includes both worlds, but in the future life and in the future life alone. But when Sir Henry NEWBOLT tells us that this explains 'the astonishing weakness of our religious poetry,' we cannot agree with him.

For the sentence is too sweeping. Our religious poetry is not weak. Milton wrote religious poetry. Is it weak? Browning wrote religious poetry—we could almost say theological poetry. Is Browning weak? Is the poetry of Francis Thompson weak? Is Christina Rossetti's religious poetry weak? Sir Henry NEWBOLT says that 'among the few hymns to be excepted from this condemnation of futility is that anonymous one—not to be found in many of the modern books for church use—in which, among all the old conventional splendours borrowed from the gorgeous East and to us almost senseless, among the walls of precious stones and turrets of carbuncles and streets paved with pure gold, we come suddenly upon a touch like this:

> Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
> Continually are green;
> There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
> As nowhere else are seen.'

But this poem does not stand alone. Christina Rossetti has a poem which is identical with it in thought, and certainly not less poetical:

> Once in a dream I saw the flowers,
> That bud and bloom in Paradise;
> More fair they are than waking eyes
> Have seen in all this world of ours.

And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
Compared with them.

What Sir Henry NEWBOLT means when he says that our religious poetry is astonishingly weak is simply that certain of our hymns are weak. And the hymns of which he is thinking are those hymns which describe the heavenly life, the hymns which speak of the joys of Paradise. Religious poetry, he says, 'has tried not so much to remake this world as to make a new one out of unfamiliar or misplaced materials: it has invented a Paradise which is not a transfiguration of this life, but an irrelevant sequel to it.'

Now it cannot be denied that there are hymns in all our hymn-books which are not poetical. Nor can it be denied that, in Sir Henry NEWBOLT'S words, some of our hymns are 'only saved from total failure by the aid of music and other extraneous associations.' But it *can* be denied that the unpoetical hymns are especially those that have Heaven for their theme. It can also be denied that these hymns are a failure because they are out of touch with reality.

Sir Henry NEWBOLT has three faults to find with them. First, they are unpoetical because they deal with an unreality like Paradise. Are there no unpoetical hymns but those that speak of Paradise? We wish it were so. But what is to be said of a hymn like Faber's 'O it is hard to work for God'? Read the second verse:

He hides Himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God;
He is least seen when all the powers
Of ill are most abroad.

Or the eleventh verse:

Workmen of God! Oh lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battlefield
Thou shalt know where to strike.

Read any verse in it. Whatever associations we may have with it, whatever fragrance these associations may convey to us, we cannot call it poetical. Yet that hymn has no thought of Paradise from the beginning to the end of it. It is altogether occupied with the worry and the work of this present evil world.

The next objection is that the aspirations of the hymns about Heaven are not the aspirations of truly religious poetry. Sir Henry NEWBOLT quotes from Mary Coleridge:

I envy not the dead that rest,
The souls that sing and fly;
Not for the sake of all the Blest,
Am I content to die.

My being would I gladly give,
Rejoicing to be freed;
But if for ever I must live,
Then let me live indeed.

What peace could ever be to me
The joy that strives with strife?
What blissful immortality
So sweet as struggling life?

Sir Henry NEWBOLT is at one with Mary Coleridge. He wants the joy that strives with strife, not the rest that remaineth for the people of God. But this is simply to deny his own most essential poetic principle. If there is anything that he is emphatic about it is that the individual poet's individual experience is not made prominent in the greatest poetry. Mary Coleridge prefers activity. The next poet may come with a preference for rest. And he may be as poetical as Mary Coleridge. Robert Browning is as poetical:

There's a fancy some lean to and others hate—
That, when this life is ended, begins
New work for the soul in another state,
Where it strives and gets weary, loses and wins:
Where the strong and the weak, this world's congeries,
Repeat in large what they practised in small,
Through life after life in unlimited series;
Only the scale's to be changed, that's all.

Yet I hardly know. When a soul has seen
By the means of Evil that Good is best,
And, through earth and its noise, what is heaven's serene,
When our faith in the same has stood the test—
Why, the child grown man, you burn the rod,
The uses of labour are surely done;
There remaineth a rest for the people of God:
And I have had troubles enough, for one.

The last fault which Sir Henry NEWBOLT finds with the hymns of Paradise is the most serious, and it is the most mistaken. He says that they make use of images borrowed from the gorgeous East which to us are almost senseless. He refers to 'the walls of precious stones and turrets of carbuncles and streets paved with pure gold.'

Now Sir Henry NEWBOLT would never deny that images borrowed from the gorgeous East may be used as the raw material of the very greatest as well as the most modern poetry or preaching. His objection cannot be to the images themselves or to their Eastern origin. His objection seems to be to their 'other-worldliness.' These figures of speech are not human. They do not belong to that blissful immortality which Mary Coleridge finds in our present struggling life. Do they not? Sir Henry NEWBOLT has made a mistake, and it is a serious one. He has forgotten Christ.

Between the present and the future there must certainly be some link of connexion, else the future is nothing to us. It is nothing to such a man as Viscount MORLEY; for Viscount MORLEY does not believe that any friend of his has ever survived the dread ordeal of death. But Viscount MORLEY's great friend Mr. Gladstone believed in the life to come. He believed that some who had gone from him were waiting in that other world which the hymns call Paradise, to receive him at his coming. To Mr. Gladstone the other world was scarcely less real than this. Sir Henry NEWBOLT demands that if the poet builds an ideal world he must use the material of our actual life, 'otherwise he fails, he leaves us cold, we refuse to enter into his alien and unattractive Paradise.' Mr. Gladstone used that material, and Paradise was both real and attractive to him.

And that is not all. That is not the half of it. For it is not chiefly those who have gone before who make Paradise real and attractive. It is the fact of Christ. First Christ becomes real here, human and 'altogether lovely.' And then this human and well-loved Christ is recognized as dwelling in Paradise. That is the secret of heaven's attractiveness. That is the condition of its reality. The circumstances of the life to come we may be very ignorant of. The best images we can use—taken from the gorgeous East or elsewhere—may be very imperfect. They may very inadequately express to others that ideal which we call Paradise. But at least they are real. They are both real and attractive because of their association with Christ.

How know I that it looms lovely that land I have never seen,
With morning-glories and heartsease and unexampled green,
With neither heat nor cold in the balm-redolent air?
Some of this, not all, I know; but this is so:
Christ is there.

How know I that blessedness befalls who dwell in Paradise,
The outwearied hearts refreshing, rekindling the worn-out eyes,
All souls singing, seeing, rejoicing everywhere?
Nay, much more than this I know; for this is so:
Christ is there.

O Lord Christ, Whom having not seen I love and desire to love,
O Lord Christ, Who lookest on me uncomely yet still Thy dove,
Take me to Thee in Paradise, Thine own made fair;
For whatever else I know, this thing is so:
Thou art there.