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## SERMON DLXIX.

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### THE INVISIBILITY OF GOD.

The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.—1 Kings VIII: 12.

THE first fact which shows that there is in all men a religious instinct, is the universal conviction of an Invisible Power. The idea of God, however derived, has extended far as the human race. Despite the ignorance and degradation in which a large part of mankind have been sunk, that belief, the germ of all religious faith and worship, has perpetuated itself through the darkest ages and the most barbarous nations.

But WHERE is God? All men believe in him; yet "no man hath seen God at any time." We discover no huge, mysterious form sweeping through the sky. We hear no voice speaking from the cloud. We call upon Him, with loud cries and prayers, to manifest his presence; but our voices seem to float away, and lose themselves in the eternal silence. In the anguish of disappointment, man begins to waver in uncertainty, to doubt his first convictions, and sometimes, in despair, sinks back into total unbelief.

Certainly here is a great mystery, and it seems to grow darker and darker. The more palpable becomes the fact of God's existence, the greater is the wonder that he should have departed from all sight and hearing of his creatures. Every thing leads to this great mystery—God. He is every where present, but we cannot see him; acting in all, but we cannot detect him. He retires behind his works.

Nor in history has God ever come forth from this darkness.

He has created the world, and sustained it for six thousand years, yet not once has he permitted man to behold him face to face. He appeared to Jacob in a dream, but it was at the top of a ladder far receding into heaven. Moses heard his voice from the burning bush, but the eyes of the pious Hebrew were dazzled by flame. He descended on Sinai to give his law, but thick clouds closed around the mountain's breast. Thus he was enfolded whenever he approached the earth. "He bowed the heavens, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." At the transfiguration of Christ, the silence of heaven was again broken, but the voice came from an overshadowing cloud.

As the person of the Deity is studiously kept out of sight, so attributes are veiled, and his agency silent. The power of Almighty is indeed attested by the everlasting monuments of creation; yet not in the earth nor heaven do we behold all of God. "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power who can understand?" Seldom is that power exhibited in a startling or terrific form. Here and there, a voice of thunder or an eye of lightning, discover the mighty force that is working behind the universe. But commonly man is left to take his course through life undisturbed. If, for a moment, convulsed nature awakens an instinctive awe, soon the sun chases away the storm, and the alarmed spirit relapses into its quiet atheism.

The same obscurity rests on all that passes in the mind of God. His counsels are wrapped in inscrutable mystery. Often human curiosity tries to penetrate the secret designs of Heaven, and thus to solve the mystery of our own destiny. But the darkness of the subject baffles every inquiry. All events are at his disposal, yet not one of them can man foretell. He holds our breath in his hands, yet lisps not a word of the time we are to live or die. The future is all light to him, but it is all dark to us.

Even the administration of justice seems slow and obscure. So astounded are we at the frequent prostration of virtue, and the triumph of wrong, that we sometimes doubt if there be a moral Governor of the world. The long delay of punishment exposes the Supreme Judge to ceaseless murmurs and complaint. Yet he hastens not to vindicate his name.

This studied concealment and mystery perplex us. We are fond of accounting for the actions of superior beings by such motives as we find in our own breasts. But this impenetrable reserve and silence is so contrary to that ostentation in man which eagerly vaunts his power, that our philosophy is at fault. Besides, so many objects might be secured by a more direct manifestation of the Almighty. How would the faith of good men be fortified! Oppressed virtue would be raised out of the

dust, and impiety awed from the world. So men reason, and they often wonder that God does not give to every man a direct revelation, which should leave no room for doubt, and work miracles to enlighten every age.

But God's ways are not like ours. While men speculate concerning him, he keeps hid within the veil, retiring into the recesses of his own eternity, beyond the utmost stretch of human thought. There, in those shadowy realms withdrawn, within the temple of eternal silence, overhung by the canopy of everlasting night, stands the throne of God.

It would be presumption to attempt to penetrate this thick darkness where God dwells. We would not even form an imagination of the person of the Deity; nor would we pry too curiously into His designs concerning us. Leaving this fruitless search, we would more reverently seek to satisfy the devout mind, by pointing out several reasons why God thus withdraws from his creatures.

I. One object evidently was to discountenance idolatry.

Educated as we have been in the Divine unity and perfection, it is hardly credible with what infinite labor that simple faith was established in the world. But, in truth, clear, spiritual conceptions of God are among the last attainments of the human mind.

When the intelligence of man first opened to a world of wonders, its impulse was to ascribe every thing to a supernatural agency, and to people the universe with divinities. The simple child of nature beheld with awe phenomena which he could not explain. He saw action in a thousand instances where there was no visible actor. He inferred, therefore, that the world was animated by invisible agents, by spirits, by divinities. Thus he deified almost every living thing. Every spot of interest had its divinity. There was a god of the valleys, and a god of the hills, and some lesser divinity for almost every grove and stream.

After this childhood of the world—this age of poetry, and simple, wondering faith—comes an age of philosophy. Men begin to speculate, to generalize, to form abstractions, to talk of necessity, of fate, and the laws of nature. From the extreme of idol worship the mind passes to the extreme of unbelief. Idolatry and atheism are the two poles of human thought. Between this action and reaction of the human mind, it is the business of Revelation to guide man to the true knowledge of God.

It was the special work of Judaism to expel the crowd of heathen divinities, and to substitute the worship of Jehovah alone.

We cannot understand how great is the fascination of idolatry, where it has seized strong hold of the imagination of a people. It took a course of ages, and the several national calamities,

to break the strange charm among the Jews themselves. It was never effectually done until after a punishment of seventy years' captivity in Babylon. So the pagan nations of our own day may be shown the absurdity of their religions; yet with what astonishing tenacity do they cling to their ancient systems of idol worship!

Now, to replace these multitudinous deities by the altars of the one living and true God, it is almost necessary that he should be unseen. A visible manifestation would inevitably suggest the idea of a local Deity, not of a Being every where present. The place of his apparition would be invested with superstitious sanctity, and the form in which he appeared would become an object of idolatry. Therefore, to guard against such unworthy conceptions, the Divine Being has hidden in impenetrable obscurity, and forbidden his creatures even to make an image of himself.

Thus only can we conceive of the greatness of God. Every visible form is measured by sight. It is only as God is invisible that he can be illimitable. To give to the Deity the bounds of visibility would impose a restraint on our devout conceptions. The idea of God would shut down like a solid firmament, repressing the soul from soaring into infinity.

Hence visible deities, however gigantic and imposing to the eye, are enormous weights upon the human mind. Spirit is turned into matter; the object of worship appeals directly to the senses, but it has no longer power over the imagination. A religion may thus be rendered permanent, but it cannot expand with the mind. Its ideas are all rigid as its gods of stone. They restrict thought, binding it down to deadness of faith, and formality in worship. Thus, for example, Hindooism is a petrified religion; and how it weighs down the life of India! The characteristic of the Hindoo mind is immobility. It is like the civilization of China, a motionless Dead Sea. Not a wave, not a ripple, crosses its surface.

The spirituality of God lifts up this crushing weight, and gives to the human intellect infinite elasticity and scope. Our God is by no bounds confined; at once, "in heaven," "in hell," and far as fly "the wings of the morning." Thus, ever vanishing and reappearing, he keeps beyond our thought; and when men think to have reached the limits of his being, he darts away into the abysses of the universe, that the mind may stretch farther and enlarge itself in the attempt to find its Creator.

True, it is more difficult to apprehend this Omnipotent Being than to look on a huge idol. It requires reflection to conceive of a spiritual object of worship, while the visible Divinity requires none. But how much more quickening is this view when acquired! Instead of an enthroned monarch, present to the eye, and finite like ourselves, we have a Power, illimitable as "the

vast and wandering air," rolling through all things, and giving life to universal nature.

The march of the human race is slow. For centuries has mankind struggled towards this great truth, that there is but one God for all worlds. But it was worth the labor of thousands of years to establish this faith immovably in the human mind. The unity of God is in religion and philosophy, what the Copernican System is in astronomy. It gives order to all man's knowledge. Here he attains the summit from which he can overlook the universe.

II. God is partially concealed, so as not to overpower the human mind; yet he is partially discovered, so as to excite its attention and wonder, and thus lead it to seek after him.

Man is born in ignorance. He begins with limited ideas and sensible objects, and gropes his way forward. The intellect, like the body, at first must creep. The child must have his crude conceptions, and pass years in attaining to intellectual manhood. The first danger to be avoided is that of overpowering his little mind by too fast and vivid communications. All wise education is tolerant of weakness, and condescends to ignorance. At first, a dim and faint outline of truth is better than the full, broad reality. When a blind eye is opened, it must be kept in a shaded room, and the light be admitted gradually. So, too much knowledge is as dangerous as too little. Many a feeble mind is seriously injured by being brought suddenly into connection with a strong one. The weaker intellect is wholly crushed by the power of the giant. Its individuality is destroyed. Such would be the effect of bringing the human mind into too close contact with the mind of God.

Even for the purpose of studying the Divine Being, it is better that a wide distance intervene between us. We cannot look steadily at the sun. That luminary, which now revives the earth by his warmth, if brought nearer, would destroy all life on the globe. He has to be placed at a distance of ninety-six millions of miles, lest his burning rays should set fire to our planet. So God stands afar off in the heavens, and shines with distant and softened light.

The heart that craves the support of religion, and begins to grope after its Creator, is oppressed by this want of clear knowledge. The firmament is starless, and the earth rests under it in silence and in gloom.

But while we seem thus to be left alone in the night, we find presently that in this darkened universe there is a twilight brightening into dawn. We soon discover a power which, by the very silence and secrecy of its operations, arrests and fascinates the mind that loves to watch nature in her course. A man with any faculty of observation can hardly open his eyes, and not be made conscious that there is an invisible agency abroad.

The world is full of life. Animated beings dart through the air and the waters. The conviction of a great soul of the world steals into the mind like the sense of beauty. It is not the result of a process of reasoning so much as an intuitive sentiment. Even unbelief whispers, with hushed voice,

"The awful shadow of some unseen Power,  
Floats, though unseen, among us."\*

Thus God's revelations are all gentle: he does not force himself upon the mind. His object is not to dazzle us with his glory. "He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth a cloud upon it." He does not illumine the world with blazing comets, but with the mild splendors of morning and evening; with the sun by day, and the moon by night. So unobtrusive is God's goodness. But this delicate and tender agency is more touching to a devout spirit than would be miracles and voices from heaven, because it enters the mind softly and peacefully. Miracles and visions might startle us; but they could not furnish such food for silent meditation and gratitude.

III. The darkness which envelops the Divine Being was designed to inspire a religious feeling of mystery and awe, and thus to keep the mind in an attitude of adoration.

Nature is full of mysteries, and therefore religion, which treats of the highest objects in nature, which, in fact, is a natural history of the invisible world, must include mysteries also. Men find fault with this obscurity. But what would they have? A religion without mystery? Then they will have one that is not true and divine. All that is real and living shoots down into the realm of mystery.

The most obscure subject in the universe is the Supreme Being. The mode of God's existence, like the vital principle in nature, escapes all research or analysis. Nor does religion dispel this obscurity. The flashes of Revelation only make visible the deeper abysses of the Godhead. The form in which the Divine Presence was symbolized in the Shekinah, and in that inner shrine called the Holy of Holies, was such as to give the worshipper the idea of mystery—of a Being distant and unapproachable. So in the New Testament God is offered to human worship as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see."

But does this infinitude of God prevent our affection or worship? No more than the mysteries of the material world prevent our enjoyment of nature. On the contrary, it heightens every religious feeling. Were all mystery dissipated from the earth,

half its beauty would be gone. Its brightness would cease to charm the eye, if not relieved by shadows. So in religion. The mind loves to lose itself in mystery and gloom. The most striking of sacred objects, like the veil in the ancient temple, are sublime, not for what they are, but for what they suggest. The object of our worship must verge away into the unknown. Could we once scale heaven, and comprehend the Infinite, our devotion would come to a pause.

Is it said, Then in the future world our adoration of God will cease, as we enter his presence? I answer, No; for as we learn more of the Divine Being, we shall find constantly new wonders to explore. Were it possible ever to comprehend God utterly, then, indeed, our religious awe would abate. But his immensity admits of no complete apprehension, any more than the beginning of eternity, or the limits of space. The farther we go, the more we shall wonder and adore. Newton worshipped his Creator more profoundly than was possible for an ignorant man; and archangels bend lower, the nearer they approach the throne.

This obscurity of the Divine nature is made apparent to teach man, in approaching God, to worship rather than to speculate. It bids him be modest in his religious inquiries, for that his Maker transcends his feeble thought. Thus it checks familiarity; it rebukes the impertinence of philosophy.

It is a question whether the habit of speculating so freely on the Divine nature has not extinguished much of the spirit of adoration. Men discuss their Creator as if he were but a curious subject of metaphysical inquiry.

This shallow and self-confident spirit, which thinks to compass even God in its systems; to analyze the faculties of his mind, and to assign the limitations of his power, is deadening to the very spirit of religion. Men may as well paint the Deity on canvas, or carve him into a statue, like a pagan god, as to circumscribe him with their definitions. While the reverent study of the Creator deepens the feeling of awe, this subtle philosophizing is unfriendly to that prostration of soul demanded in religious worship. Rationalism never inspires awe, or bows its disciples in adoration.

Now the spirit of worship is the fountain of all sublime emotions or efforts. It is only when the soul is penetrated with a sense of something infinitely above its own poor, weak nature, that it is inspired with enthusiasm for either natural or moral beauty. Thus, whatever kills the spirit of adoration—whether materialism in philosophy, or rationalism in religion—is ultimately as fatal to art and poetry as it is to whatever is heroic and devoted in the human character.

It is worthy of remark that there is no attempt in the Bible to relieve philosophic doubts. Whatever concerns our duty is distinctly revealed, but nothing to gratify curiosity. The proud

skeptic may go away as wise as he came. Let him ask for wisdom from that human reason which he adores. Here the first direction to the seeker after truth is to become as a little child.

This dimness of revelation itself is a perpetual embarrassment to timid minds. They pine for more startling and decisive proofs of what God has spoken, and wonder that he should leave any obscurity resting on his Word. But they expect too much from Revelation. Its light is not like the full day, shining into every sequestered glen, but rather a pale twilight, only throwing on the earth the mighty shadows of the mountains. Many things in religion are purposely left half explained. The very doubts they excite constitute a part of our life's discipline. It were easy for God, by more direct interpositions, to produce an intensity of conviction which should for ever exclude doubt. But then there could be no submission of the natural infidelity of the mind to a simple reliance on his truth. Perfect knowledge would leave no room for believing. It is only in the temperate zone—the region of alternate warmth and cold—grows the beautiful flower of Faith.

IV. The darkness of God's providence is designed to exercise our religious trust.

We live under a dispensation of mingled light and shadow. Night follows day, and death succeeds to life. God's face is like the sun shining through clouds. There are in nature tokens of kindness, and yet there are, apparently, marks of anger. The globe is torn by earthquakes and volcanoes, and the air moans and shrieks in tempests. Our life is a labyrinth; it has a plan, but God alone can read it. Through this maze no man can see his way.

Yet God gives us confidence to plunge into this dark futurity by what he indicates to us of his own character. He shows us, not our destiny, but the nature of him who is to decide it. Though we know not what course our life is to take, yet we receive such proofs of the affection of a Father in heaven, that we may be reassured. We see not the hand that leads us on, yet we experience a constant care from an invisible source. Sometimes, indeed, there is a more palpable interposition for our safety. We are startled by what seems a supernatural event; a miraculous deliverance from danger or from sudden death. The relief is so instantaneous, that it pierces the gloom like a flash of lightning from the midnight sky. Instantly all is dark again. But that momentary illumination shows us that God is present in the night as in the day, and that he forgets not the most helpless of his creatures.

But, ordinarily, the Divine goodness is rather intimated by daily benefits, descending like the dew, than forced upon us by sudden breaks and interruptions of nature. God refrains from



divulging his secret agency, to throw us upon believing. If he should interpose visibly in every emergency of life, where would be the virtue or the blessedness of faith? No, when we reach the limit of our sight, we must *trust*. We are to rest our security on the immutable basis of the divine character. Many answer that they will believe when they see, and hold their confidence in suspense, until an event on which their hopes hang has transpired. But this is absolute impiety. If there be a God, and if his nature be justice and goodness, surely we can leave our fate at his disposal. We may not be sanguine as to particular events, but we should not doubt that his almighty will is better than our wayward passions.

This strong faith produces a submission as absolute as that of fatalism, yet unmixed with sorrow or despair. It is not the sullen gloom of the Mussulman, who sinks down and dies without a struggle. It is a resignation as cheerful as it is complete. Unbounded confidence in God quiets every emotion of sadness or discontent. This is not ignorant credulity. To believe is true wisdom. A life of faith is as far above that of mere philosophy as a life of reason is above that of sense. This is the highest point to which religion carries man, where his will and his being are lost in God. I love the Bible for teaching me this virtue of absolute submission; I love that voice which thunders out of the cloud, "Be still, and know that I am God;" I love Jesus Christ for that great example of resignation when he said, "Not my will, but thine be done."

V. Yet another reason why God withdraws himself from men, is to leave them perfectly free, to furnish a better opportunity for the development of character.

This is a world of probation. Every influence is excluded which could impair the trial. For this reason, God does not permit his own presence to embarrass the conduct of his creatures. Men cannot act out themselves under the influence of fear. If they were every moment apprised of the presence of their Judge, they would be placed under a restraint; they could not show what were their true characters.

That such would be the effect of a more direct vision of the Almighty, appears from those instances in which mortals have caught a glimpse of the light within the veil. Such terror has seized them as to overpower reflection, and almost to take away life. Thus, when that mysterious cloud rested upon the head of Sinai, "All the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

Knowing that such would always be the effect, and that his

presence, if it did not call forth a willing, would force a hypocritical obedience, God averts his face. He leaves man to plan and plot without restraint. One bend of that awful eye would cause the earth to tremble, but it is turned away.

Just enough is revealed to keep the mind in an attitude of expectation, yet not enough to paralyze it with fear. The working of unseen power always stirs in us an emotion of awe. The dark cloud where the thunderbolt slumbers, the lull of volcanic fires, the calm of the ocean, suggest the ideas of omnipotent energies in repose. Like these immense forces of nature, the power of God in governing the world is held in abeyance; because, if manifested in a sudden and terrific form, the proper feeling of awe would be swallowed up in the stronger emotion of terror.

For the same reason, the future is enveloped in obscurity, that, while it gives exercise to faith, it may keep expectation awake. In the movements of Providence there is an uncertainty which stimulates fidelity. God knows when we are to die, but he will not tell us. Death, at last, takes us all by surprise. It stops not for us to finish our plans of life. This is to warn us to be "always ready."

It is to discover more completely the character of bad men that their punishment is delayed. God has manifested his displeasure against all evil, and his general purpose of retribution. But he tells no man the day of his execution; he even suffers the foolhardy to delude themselves with the idea of impunity. Every day we behold, on the great stage of the world, gigantic and successful crime. But not all human guilt can provoke him to anticipate the hour of judgment. God is patient because he is eternal. Yet he has not abandoned the earth to the wicked; he is not deaf to the cries of the poor and the oppressed; his own time is fixed when he will lift up the sorrowful, and bring down the proud. As the canvas of history unrolls, we shall find that the short triumph of evil but gives a deeper bitterness to its fall.

This subject, therefore, the invisibility of God, though apparently obscure and remote from any human interest, comes forth at last with a fearful warning to the guilty, but with encouragement to the good to hope and believe to the last extremity.

Let no man presume to sin because God has retired from the scene, or because he defers punishment. The very fact that you behold not your Maker should make you watchful. An invisible Being cannot be guarded against; an unseen Spirit may be every where present, and watch men even in their places of concealment. Thus, God hears the blasphemies of the wicked, as well as the prayers of the righteous. Do not dream that you may finally escape, because you see no avenue by which punishment can reach you. Who knows where the lightning will strike, or from what cloud it will dart to the earth? God's messengers are

every where. Still, but deadly as the pestilence, they fly abroad on the wind ; disease floats in the heat of summer noon, as in the damp of midnight. Who knows when the angel of death has his foot on the threshold ? Then be not confident : “ Boast not of to-morrow.”

What an hour will be that of death for unbelief ; for hardened villany, incredulous of futurity, and disdaining the cowardly fear of retribution ; for the base, bad man ; for the impious wretch who has defied his Maker ! What a moment will that be which raises the curtain between the visible and invisible worlds !

An Atheist comes to the close of life, still proud, and resolved to die as he has lived. He seems to stand on the brink of a precipice, which shoots down to a bottomless depth. Dense, chilling mists roll upward from the gulf. He owns the dismal uncertainty of his doom—

“ I stoop into a dark, tremendous sea of cloud.”

But suddenly that ocean of darkness lifts, and behold ! a prospect more dreadful than annihilation ! From the distant horizon comes, rushing like a sun, that great and terrible Being whose existence this miserable man has denied ; God is at last revealed to the view of the disembodied spirit. From that presence there is now no escape. “ There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” Then shall they long to die, and death shall flee from them.

But to every good man we can say with confidence, Have faith in God ; his ways are dark, but they are not unjust ; he is secret, but he is not unkind ; “ Clouds and darkness are round about him, but righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.”

The greatest happiness in life is to have a strong religious faith. This you are to cultivate. From what is seen, believe in what is unseen. If temptation assail your virtue or piety, “ endure, as seeing Him who is invisible ;” if sudden darkness comes over the earth, still look upward, and you may see the pillar of cloud slowly turning to a column of fire.

The reasoning which we have applied to the mysterious nature and providence of God will apply to the spiritual world. That is invisible. We reach out our hands, but we cannot touch it ; we strain our eyes, but we cannot see it ; we call on the dead to speak, or give some sign of recognition, but all is still ; spirits whisper to each other, and are silent. Where, then, is the world of souls ?

Thoughtful minds, in all ages, have fallen into deep melancholy while pondering on the mystery of death and the darkness of their fate. Struggling with the uncertainties of their situation, and impatient to resolve the mysteries of existence, they have sometimes longed to burst asunder the bond of life, and thus at once

to terminate their perplexities. Plato thought that a philosophic mind must await with eagerness the moment of death. It seems, indeed, impossible to restrain human curiosity to this side the grave. Men have tried every means to penetrate the invisible world; they have interrogated dreams and ghosts; they have studied astrology to read their destiny in the stars; they have spent whole lives in poring over magic, to learn nature's great secret—the essence of life, and the power of prolonging it at will. But death has still come to cut short their imagined immortality.

The gospel has brought life and immortality to light; but it does not, therefore, clear up all mystery in regard to a future state. We still see through a glass darkly. The coming life is to this as the night to the day. Religion only scatters gleams of light over the firmament, like stars shining through the universal night of death. In its revelations of futurity, it manifests a wise reserve. The wisdom of God is as apparent in what he conceals as in what he discloses. Had the Scriptures gone into minute details, and laid bare all the secrets of heaven and hell, they would have brought suspicion on their credibility. It is a mark of impostors that they talk extravagantly of the future and the invisible; but the Bible is not a book of marvels. It speaks in brief, but significant sentences. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." But what we are to experience in that endless life of holiness and peace, or of passion and of wo, it will be time enough to discover when we enter upon it.

Be not impatient to know the secrets of the invisible world. Soon enough will that awful morning rise. Were those scenes now to burst upon our vision, we should be overwhelmed. It is better that that land should be for a time unknown. We must live by faith. We know the goodness of God, and are sure of immortality. Here our knowledge ends. For the rest, we must wait the great revealer, Death. That, indeed, will be the moment when our eyes shall be opened; then we shall wake as from a troubled dream; then we shall know all. O sacred death! which shall deliver us from the darkness and mystery which encompass our life; from perplexity, and doubt, and fear!

In that hour, if you have lived a life worthy of a man and a Christian; if you have tried to do your duty faithfully as a member of the great human family, you may depart in peace; you can commit yourself to God, trusting in the great provision which he has made for the forgiveness of sin; you may await the future with confidence. No hidden laws will be discovered to interrupt the happiness of virtue; no unseen power will blast your hopes; you will have a protector in that invisible God, who reigns not only over this mortal state, but over the regions of futurity; who is Lord both of the dead and the living.