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even so are we in this world," said the aged John. As a cave on the seashore may be filled with the fulness of the sea when the tide is in, so may our natures be partakers of the divine nature; have the same moral qualities.

The Universe reveals the creative fulness of God; the energy that causes to exist. The Cross manifests His redemptive fulness; the sympathy that prompts to save. The character of Christ makes known to us the moral fulness of God. The fulness of the Godhead was embodied in

Him that we might know God, and be transformed into the same image.

"His Spirit in the inward man" is actually at work, removing everything unlike God, and producing the moral features of God. If we will let Him have His own way with us, the result will be the mind that was in Christ: "A full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

GEO. THOMPSON.

*Felling-on-Tyne.*

## The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. MATTHEW.

MATT. v. 6.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (R.V.).

### EXPOSITION.

"*Hunger and thirst.*" An obvious parallel to the prediction of Isa. lv. 1, lxx. 13, where it is prophesied that thirst and hunger shall be satisfied in the Messiah's kingdom.—MANSEL.

None of the beatitudes is more manifestly dug out of the rich mine of the Old Testament.—BROWN.

"*Righteousness.*" I do not interpret the righteousness spoken of as justifying righteousness, the outward righteousness of pardon, but I treat the hunger and thirst described as the eager, earnest inward desire for personal real goodness and holiness, the constant persevering effort to win higher and higher attainments of righteousness in Christ under the sanctifying Spirit.—SALMON.

"*They shall be filled,*" not in a general sense with happiness in the kingdom of God, as Fritzsche supposes, but as the context requires, *with righteousness.*—MEYER.

"They shall be saturated" (*χορτασθήσονται*), He says; they shall not only have what they so highly value and long to possess, but they shall have their fill of it. Not here, however. Even in the Old Testament this was well understood. "Deliver me," says the Psalmist, in language which, beyond all doubt, stretches beyond the present scene, "from men of the world, which

have their portion in this life: as for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 13-15).—BROWN.

### DETACHED NOTE.

*χορτασθήσονται.* *χορτάζω* is one of those words, strong and even coarse in their origin, which came to be used by the Jews at Alexandria with a softened and more refined meaning. It is properly used of cattle "to feed"; then in middle voice, in comedy, of men "to eat"; cf. German *fressen*. In late Greek, as here, *χορτάζω* means "to satisfy," for the classical *κορύνω*. It is curious to note how completely the distinction between *χορτάζω* and *ισθίω* has vanished. In Mark vii. 27, 28, both verbs are used; but their proper application is reversed, *ισθίω* being used of the *πανάριον*, and *χορτάζω* of the *σίκα*.—CARR.

### METHODS OF TREATMENT.

#### I.

#### HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*By the Rev. Professor George Salmon, D.D.*

1. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness"—*because these are the signs of health and life.* From time to time we see realised John's description of the sick man chastened with pain upon his bed, so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. In vain his attendants strive with delicacies to tempt his appetite; their well-meant efforts are loathed, and it is only as a matter of prudence and duty that he can force himself to accept what they bring. When, as the violence of the disease abates, the natural appetite

returns, and he himself begins to desire the food which he had repelled, then he begins to know the blessedness of returning health. Man's present state is a state of disease. Men have no appetite for that righteousness which is the true food of the soul. But when their experience is that of the Psalmist, "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God," then health is returning. The fulness of life and health was His who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work."

2. Blessed are they who feel such hunger and thirst, not only because these are the signs of health and life, but also *because they have the promise that they shall be filled*. In this world every desire and appetite God has implanted in His creatures corresponds with a provision He has made for satisfying it. That Holy Spirit, whose office and work it is to excite the craving for spiritual food, leads us to Christ, in whom it can be satisfied. "I am the bread of life." "If any man thirst, let him come to ME and drink."

## II.

### A TEST OF HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP.

*By the Rev. H. W. Butcher.*

The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. As a test of our relationship to its sway, our text states the condition of heart which is sure to find acceptance. Is there a deep-felt desire for righteousness? Then you are not far from the kingdom of God.

1. The Object of Christian desire—Righteousness. We understand righteousness as conformity to God's will. God is righteous. If it were possible for the right and the wrong to be placed before Him, He would do right as the very necessity of His being. Jesus Christ, the express image of the Father, was righteous. He taught us by His life what righteousness was. In whatever form truth, simplicity of purpose, unselfishness manifested itself, He accepted it, loved it, was drawn to it. His own life was true. To be righteous is to have a mind and heart at one with God and Christ. It involves the double reference of personal purity, not simply without transgression, but without the thought of it; and the personal obedience to God's law; duty sweetened by love.

2. This object as a matter of Desire. The figure used—hunger and thirst—is a very forcible one. The desire for righteousness is present more or less in most men; but this is neither the vague intention to do good in the future, nor the admiration of the bystander of the beauty of virtue. It is the "this one thing" of the soul.

3. The Attainment of the object. They shall be filled—with righteousness. There are two present hindrances to this satiety. (1) The pressure of past transgression is on the soul. But just as that is felt the satisfaction comes: Jesus Christ died to take away sin. (2) Temptation bears hard upon the natural feebleness of our fallen nature. But with the confession comes repentance, upon repentance comes forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit, by whose power we are strong. But the full attainment is not here. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

4. The Possession of this object is Blessedness. Nay, the blessedness belongs to the desire of it. Blessedness in heaven—yes, of course. But Jesus says blessedness here. True happiness is found when the soul, truly following Christ, hungers and thirsts after righteousness. It nestles under the shadow of Jesus, and lives and loves there.

### THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I HAVE taken occasion more than once to point out what is the order in which our Lord has arranged the seven blessings with which He begins the Sermon on the Mount. First come the poor in spirit—that is, those who possess that humility, without which no one shall even enter the kingdom of heaven. But to enter is not enough. Even after you are in you have much to learn, much to practise. So there are set before you on the one side the inner life, what you are to be in yourself; on the other side the outer life, what you are to be in your dealing with others. Blessed are they that mourn; blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; blessed are the pure in heart: that is the inner life. Blessed are the meek; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the peacemakers: that is the outer life. And it is plain enough that the order in each life is not without a meaning. The lower character and the lower blessing come first; the higher character and the higher blessing come afterwards.—F. TEMPLE.

THERE is a representation in the Catacombs, on one of the Christian tombs, of a stag drinking eagerly at the silver stream, figuring the first sign of the Christian life.—A. P. STANLEY.

THERE was once in this country a wild young prince, who selfishly indulged in all the enjoyments and passions of youth. By his father's deathbed he was brought to a sense of better things, and from that moment his soul went on constantly aspiring to higher and severer courses of duty. It was King Henry V. He specially attended to the complaints of the poor, and of these who had none to help them. Unlike his ancestors and his kindred, he never swore any profane oath. He had only two words to express the strength of his determination, and show what his resolution was. When anything was proposed to him that was wrong, his one word was, "Impossible"; when anything in the shape of a duty came before him, he had only one word, "It must be done." This is an example, in times gone by, of how the hunger and thirst after righteousness is filled—by conquest over ourselves.—A. P. STANLEY.

It is instructive to compare the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount with the beatitudes of the Pentateuch. The reward promised to obedience in the Book of Deuteronomy is, "Blessed shalt thou be in thy basket and thy store." Righteousness is commended as a thing desirable, not so much for its own sake as in order to gain external prosperity. And in modern preaching this Old Testament method is very commonly adopted, though the rewards and punishments may be shifted to another life. Consequently, if one of us had to express in his own words the idea of the text in the form in which he has received it, it would be apt to run, "Blessed are ye who hunger and thirst for *salvation*, for ye shall obtain it."—G. SALMON.

RAILWAYS and steamboats cannot speed the soul to its perfection. This must come, if it come at all, from each man's action on himself, from putting forth our power on the soul and not over nature, from a sense of inward, not

outward, miseries; from hunger and thirst after righteousness, not after wealth.—W. E. CHANNING.

THERE are two kinds of good possible to men: one enjoyed by our animal being, the other felt and appreciated by our spirits. Every man understands more or less the difference between these two; between prosperity and well-doing; between indulgence and nobleness; between comfort and inward peace; between pleasure and striving after perfection; between happiness and blessedness. These are two kinds of harvest, and the labour necessary for them respectively is of very different kinds. The labour which procures the harvest of the one has no tendency to secure the other. We will not depreciate the advantages of this world. It is foolish and unreal to do so. Comfort, affluence, success, freedom from care, rank, station—these are in their way real goods; only the labour bestowed upon them does not procure one single blessing that is spiritual. On the other hand, the seed that is sown for a spiritual harvest has no tendency whatever to procure temporal well-being. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" *with righteousness*. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"—that is the principle.—F. W. ROBERTSON.

REMEMBER, then, that wishing for a religious object is *not* religion: talking about religion is not religion. All the doctrines, all the facts of our religion, are means to the great end of making us such as Christ was. Let nothing else obscure in your minds the importance of the question, Are you proving the reality of your life in Him by daily growing more and more like Him in meekness, patience, self-denial, love? For if these graces be wanting, however much a man may seem to be religious, he deceiveth his own heart, his religion is vain.—G. SALMON.

## The International Lessons.

### I.

Isaiah lv. 1-13.

#### THE GRACIOUS CALL.

1. "The sure mercies of David" (ver. 3), or "the un-failing loving-kindnesses" given to David and to his seed. Is this the historical David, or is it great David's greater son? The question has been much debated. Jeremiah and Ezekiel certainly speak directly of the Christ under the name David (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Ezek. xxxiv. 22-24, xxxvii. 24, 25). But since the blessings promised to David are only realised in Christ, the reference to Christ is perfectly clear if we take it in the historical sense, and that is most natural in this place.

2. "For as the rain cometh down," etc. The meaning of this beautiful illustration is clear enough. Its connection is not so clear. Is it not a reference to the "sure mercies of

David"? It is amazing that God should pardon, it is amazing also that joy and peace should again follow those who had "gone astray" in sin. But God has promised; His word has gone forth like the dew; it will surely prosper even in so great a mission as this.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money"—well may Isaiah be called the *evangelical* prophet. Where in the New Testament itself will you find a clearer gospel invitation than this? Even the searching cry of our Lord on the great day of the feast, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," what is it more than this? It is simply Isaiah's call; its unique and moving power being due to no greater freeness or breadth in the call itself, but to the Person who now uttered it. "Come unto