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*"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but
mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds"*

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LOVE.

FREDERICK DIXON.

THERE is a story of the apostle John, recorded by Jerome, which may possibly be apocryphal, though both the external and internal evidence in support of it seems to be irrefragable. It relates to the days subsequent to his release from imprisonment on the rock of Patmos, when he had returned to Ephesus. Here, it is said, he would sit, lost in thought, in the assembly, never opening his mouth except occasionally to remark, "Little children, love one another." The younger members of the church, exasperated perhaps at the silence of the beloved disciple, with his memories of those wonderful years of the Master's ministry, and wearied possibly by the monotony of his advice, at last demanded from him why he kept repeating these words. "Because," he answered, "it was the Lord's command; and, if that only is done, it is sufficient."

Fifteen centuries later, one who was regarded as the greatest of the world's thinkers at that time declared that love was all very well in the theater, but that in real life it did considerable mischief. It is quite true that he modified this statement later on, but he left no doubt that he regarded love as essentially a passion, for which he had no more respect than had Whitfield after him. Between the conception of the Galilean fisherman and that of the Elizabethan philosopher there is a great gulf fixed, as wide as the one which separated Dives from Lazarus; nor did any teacher attempt to return absolutely to the definition of the former until Mrs. Eddy uncompromisingly accepted Love as a synonym for God, and declared that the realization of what this means would destroy sin, disease, and death.

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The verb commonly used in the Greek Testament to express love is *agapao*. What its exact meaning was in later Greek, the bastard tongue which in the first century had become in a measure the vernacular of the Mediterranean basin, it is perhaps not yet possible to say; but that in the writings of the New Testament the word had acquired a peculiar "religious-ethical" significance, the lower and more material sense being in turn expressed by *phileo*, is an admitted fact. The most familiar illustration of this occurs in the record, in the last chapter of the Gospel of John, of the famous charge of Christ Jesus to Peter, "Feed my sheep," where the difference is completely and probably unavoidably lost in the translation:—

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (*agapas*) thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (*philo*) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (*agapas*) thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (*philo*) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (*phileis*) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (*philo*) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

It is of course absolutely impossible to imagine for a moment that the man who in a few months was to be found healing the sick instantaneously and raising the dead, did not understand the significance of Jesus' words, and therefore we are compelled to accept the only possible alternative that, remembering the horror of that night in the hall of the palace of Caiaphas, he shrank from the lofty claim to the spiritual love for the Christ implied in Jesus' question, and took refuge in the assertion of his human love for his Master.

Now it is manifest at the beginning that the word *agape* can be, and is in the New Testament, used sometimes as a synonym for God, as in the text, "God is love," and sometimes as an attribute of God, as in the phrase, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," just as, Mrs. Eddy writes on page 319 of *Science and Health*, "we can by special and proper capitalization speak of the love of Love."

Now the law had always insisted on the primary importance of love. The Deuteronomical writer had insisted, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;" and the Levitical writer had required, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord;" while Hillel, writing years before the Christian era, had declared, "That which is hateful to thee thou shalt not do to thy neighbor. This is the whole law: the rest is only commentary."

It is obvious, therefore, that when Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," he was not insisting on anything that the Jews had not always superficially accepted; and that when consequently, at a later period, he again enforced this in the words, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another," the newness must have lain not in the letter but in the spirit, not in the scope but in the interpretation.

It is clearly of supreme importance to the student of the Bible to discover how the new understanding of love differed from the old; in what fresh sense a man was to love his neighbor as himself. Jesus' words were perfectly clear, the disciples were to learn to love mankind as he had loved them. Now how had Jesus loved them? Viewed humanly, he had taken them from their homes and families, and had made practical outcasts of them; he had exposed them to the malice of the rabbis and the violence of the mob; he had embarked them on a career of privation and danger, with martyrdom at its end. On the other hand, he had taught them to heal the sick and the sinning, to cast out devils, and raise the dead; that is, he had given them the knowledge of God as Life; he had taught them to rise above the evidence of the senses, and to find the kingdom of God within themselves; that is, to value Truth and nothing but Truth; he had taught them, in short, to understand Love, for, in the words of the beloved disciple himself, "he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is

love." Love, then, used as an attribute, is knowledge of God; and therefore, in a phrase of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, it is the *epignosis tou theou*, the full, exact, therefore scientific, knowledge of God, who is Truth.

To love any one, then, at all as Christ Jesus loved the disciples, it is necessary to bestow on him some perception of the fact that man is spiritual and not material. In the belief of a physical personality apart from God is inherent the belief in sin, disease, and death, of all, in a word, that is unlike God. Human birth is only one end of a chain, the other being death, of which every link is forged out of fear. Human education is the effort to avoid the consequences of these fears, and to see by how many links the chain may be extended. To prevent, however, any undue optimism, the victim is warned to remember that hopeful signs should be regarded with suspicion, as something possibly too good to be true; as if, God being Truth, anything could possibly be otherwise than too bad to be true.

Now fear when analyzed is the belief that there is a human being physically created, and because so created subject to all the laws of the flesh. Consequently the deeper the human affection for a sick person, the more terrible the fear which accompanies the growth of what are known as serious symptoms. Yet the beloved disciple declares that "perfect love casteth out fear." It is manifest, therefore, that if for this human love there could be substituted something of the love which Jesus had for the disciples, the fear of the power of evil to injure would be cast out, and healing would come with the realization that man, as the image and likeness of God, is not subject to laws of sin, disease, and death. Writes Mrs. Eddy, on page 476 of *Science and Health*, "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick." The love expressed in the new commandment is the recognition of man's spiritual selfhood, just as fear is the belief in his materiality.

If, then, a man wishes to exercise his God-given dominion over fear, he must first gain this loftier understanding of Love. He must lose his parochial sense of the impor-

tance of a particular church or "field" in a spiritual recognition of what Christendom really is; that is to say, not a geographical area, but the kingdom of God in our midst. He must broaden his human sense of family and kindred into that diviner sense of the sons and daughters of God to which Jesus referred when he declared, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." He must approach the healing of the sick and the sinner not from a personal wish to get his own patients well, but with that impersonal hold on Truth whose aim is to demonstrate the omnipotence of Love. When the seventy, returning from their first healing mission, rejoiced that the very devils were subject to them, their Master replied with a promise and a warning: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Now if a man's name is to be written in heaven, it will only be because he has learned to "dwell in the secret place of the most High;" that is, in those beautiful words by Mrs. Eddy, in *The Christian Science Journal* of March, 1899, to keep his mind "so filled with Truth and Love that sin, disease, and death cannot enter." Healing, that is to say, is the result of abiding in Christ, Truth; not of spasmodic journeys into Christendom. Some twenty years ago a great painter and a famous critic fell out, and carried their quarrel into the English law courts. In the course of cross-examination one of the leading counsel of the day asked the artist if he charged two hundred guineas for a picture which he had taken only a day to paint, and received the answer that he charged it not for a day's work, but for the knowledge of a lifetime which had enabled him to paint it in a day.

This reply is not without its lesson to Christian Scientists. The foolish virgins were called when their oil was exhausted; and only as the flame of a man's love ceases to flicker and die down, and when, instead, it burns with steady brilliance, will he be able to obey the summons of the bridegroom, whenever it comes, and enter the sick-chamber with that clear perception of man's spirituality

which will cast out the fears of those to whom the sick man is a suffering, perchance dying, mortal. The fact is, of course, that healing is not accomplished by the mere effort of giving a treatment, but by the persistent devotion to and effort to abide in Truth which brings the healer to his patient with the unshaken conviction that God is Love.

Now this does not mean that human affection is in any way to be undervalued or despised. Human affection is the mortar that holds together the social system, or, as the ablest of the Dukes of Buckingham has said, "the salt of life." In the noble words of a living poet it is the only solution of our earthly problems known to the wayfaring man:—

When the pulse of hope falters,
 When the fire flickers low
 On your faith's crumbling altars,
 And the faithless gods go;
 When the fond hope ye cherished
 Cometh, kissing to betray;
 When the last star hath perished,
 "Love will find out the way."

When the last dream bereaveth you,
 And the heart turns to stone,
 When the last comrade leaveth you
 In the desert alone;
 With the whole world before you
 Clad in battle array,
 And the starless night o'er you,
 "Love will find out the way."

That "love," in the words of the old song used as a refrain to these verses, "will find out the way," is undoubted. Still this human love in its saner and disciplined state only dominates the consciousness as it strikes a more impersonal note. If Pilate had demanded, "What is love?" it would certainly have been because he had misunderstood Jesus as completely as in the question he did ask. A mere relative sense of love is as perplexing and unstable as a relative sense of truth. The mass of contradictory aphorisms contained in Bacon's famous essay is sufficient proof of this. Anybody reading it might be forgiven for adapting the famous words of Madame Roland, as she stood, facing the statue of Liberty from the scaffold in the Place de la Revolution, "Love! how many crimes are committed in thy name!"

Many of these crimes are so manifest as to deceive no one, but there is perhaps not one so subtle as the sugges-

tion to overlook evil in the name of Love. It is true that Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," but it is equally true that he said, "Judge righteous judgment." These two sentences, like a great many others in the Bible, may appear to be antithetical, and any one who, as Mr. Ruskin would have said, has the vanity to believe that the Bible is written in so slipshod a manner must be allowed to regard them as such. As a matter of fact, the one is the complement of the other. The verb *críto*, which is translated judge in the Gospels, means to accuse, to bring to trial, and so to judge in this sense; but it means more naturally to put apart, to separate; to judge, that is, in the sense of judging between good and evil.

Any one who will take the trouble to examine the quotation from Luke will find that the word is used in it, as part of an illustration, in the first sense. Jesus had been speaking of love, and he went on to say, "Judge not [accuse not], and ye shall not be judged [accused]: condemn not [sentence not], and ye shall not be condemned [sentenced]: forgive [acquit], and ye shall be forgiven [acquitted]." Any one can see that Jesus, using a simile drawn from the legal procedure of the day, was warning his listeners against condemning a person, that is, against confusing a sinner with his sin. He did not mean, however, that, because of this, the sin was to go unrebuked. On the contrary, he said, "Judge not according to the appearance [that is, superficially], but judge [the] righteous judgment;" and here it is obvious that he used *críno* in its normal sense of distinguishing good from evil, and that, not merely by the standard of truth (righteous judgment), but of absolute Truth (the righteous judgment). In plain English, Jesus, though he uttered his warning against judging a person, never suggested for a moment that there was any love in dealing gently with sin. His scathing utterances showered at the conditions known as scribes and Pharisees, his biting lessons hurled across the very boards of those with whom he sat at meat, no doubt roused the devil of resentment in the hearts of those who misunderstood him, nevertheless

The faithful witness to the truth,
His just rebuke was hurled
Out from a heart that burned to break
The fetters of the world.

The fact is that the man who is afraid to judge in the last sense, so far from giving any evidence of love, is simply giving evidence of fear, and so of ignorance, twin brethren of mortal mind of whom it may truly be said,—

By many names men call us;
In many lands we dwell,

and the sooner he acquires something of the true knowledge of God, the perfect love which casts out fear, the happier for him. Then he will begin to learn to be able to say with understanding, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" or as Mrs. Eddy has interpreted these words in one of the most far-reaching sentences in *Science and Health* (p. 17), "Love is reflected in love." Love, then, is the fulfilling, or to be more accurate perhaps, the completion of the law; for the law is grasped by faith, held to in hope, and at last realized in love, for "now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

[Written for the *Journal*.]

THE LESSON-SERMON.

FRANCIS E. FALKENBURY.

OH, to shut out the world!
All day, this day,
Like long black banners, blank, unfurled,
That shift and sway,
The thoughts of mortals have been blown
Against my soul all day, this day.

And now my books—so sweet—
Like mighty wings
Lift me where earth and heaven meet;
And Michael sings,
In a God-anthem fair and strong;
For Truth's thoughts are the only things.

And now my thoughts up-wing,
Rising higher,
Past the gates where cherubs sing
In heavenly choir,
To Gabriel's gaze that fronts to God,
And His own perfect Love entire.