

***CHARLES
KINGSLEY***

The image shows the interior of a large Gothic cathedral. The architecture features high, pointed arches and massive stone columns. In the center, an altar is covered with a green cloth and sits on a red carpeted platform. A large, ornate cross is visible on the altar. Stained glass windows are visible in the background, and the overall atmosphere is one of grandeur and historical significance.

***DISCIPLINE
AND OTHER
SERMONS***

Charles Kingsley

Discipline and Other Sermons

EAN 8596547178392

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SERMON I. DISCIPLINE.

SERMON II. THE TEMPLE OF WISDOM.

SERMON III. PRAYER AND SCIENCE.

SERMON IV. GOD'S TRAINING.

SERMON V. GOOD FRIDAY.

SERMON VI. FALSE CIVILIZATION.

SERMON VII. THE NAME OF GOD.

SERMON VIII. THE END OF RELIGION.

SERMON IX. THE HUMANITY OF GOD.

SERMON X. GOD'S WORLD.

SERMON XI. THE ARMOUR OF GOD.

SERMON XII. PAUL AND FELIX.

SERMON XIII. THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

SERMON XIV. CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD.

SERMON XV. THE JEWISH REBELLIONS.

SERMON XVI. TERROR BY NIGHT.

SERMON XVII. THE SON OF THUNDER.

SERMON XVIII. HUMILITY.

SERMON XIX. A WHITSUN SERMON.

SERMON XX. SELF-HELP.

SERMON XXI. ENDURANCE.

SERMON XXII. TOLERATION.

SERMON XXIII. THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

SERMON XXIV. THE LIKENESS OF GOD.

SERMON I. DISCIPLINE.

Table of Contents

(Preached at the Volunteer Camp, Wimbledon, July 14, 1867.)

NUMBERS XXIV. 9.

He couched, he lay down as a lion; and as a great lion.

Who dare rouse him up?

THESE were the words of the Eastern sage, as he looked down from the mountain height upon the camp of Israel, abiding among the groves of the lowland, according to their tribes, in order, discipline, and unity. Before a people so organized, he saw well, none of the nations round could stand. Israel would burst through them, with the strength of the wild bull crashing through the forest. He would couch as a lion, and as a great lion. Who dare rouse him up?

But such a people, the wise Balaam saw, would not be mere conquerors, like those savage hordes, or plundering armies, which have so often swept over the earth before and since, leaving no trace behind save blood and ashes. Israel would be not only a conqueror, but a colonist and a civilizer. And as the sage looked down on that well-ordered camp, he seems to have forgotten for a moment that every man therein was a stern and practised warrior. 'How goodly,' he cries, 'are thy tents, oh Jacob, and thy camp, oh Israel.' He likens them, not to the locust swarm, the sea

flood, nor the forest fire, but to the most peaceful, and most fruitful sights in nature or in art. They are spread forth like the water-courses, which carry verdure and fertility as they flow. They are planted like the hanging gardens beside his own river Euphrates, with their aromatic shrubs and wide-spreading cedars. Their God-given mission may be stern, but it will be beneficent. They will be terrible in war; but they will be wealthy, prosperous, civilized and civilizing, in peace.

Many of you must have seen—all may see—that noble picture of Israel in Egypt which now hangs in the Royal Academy; in which the Hebrews, harnessed like beasts of burden, writhing under the whips of their taskmasters, are dragging to its place some huge Egyptian statue.

Compare the degradation portrayed in that picture with this prophecy of Balaam's, and then consider—What, in less than two generations, had so transformed those wretched slaves?

Compare, too, with Balaam's prophecy the hints of their moral degradation which Scripture gives;—the helplessness, the hopelessness, the cowardice, the sensuality, which cried, 'Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians. Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou brought us forth to die in the wilderness?' 'Whose highest wish on earth was to sit by the fleshpots of Egypt, where they did eat bread to the full.' What had transformed that race into a lion, whom none dare rouse up?

Plainly, those forty years of freedom. But of freedom under a stern military education: of freedom chastened by discipline, and organized by law.

I say, of freedom. No nation of those days, we have reason to believe, enjoyed a freedom comparable to that of the old Jews. They were, to use our modern phrase, the only constitutional people of the East. The burdensomeness of Moses' law, ere it was overlaid, in later days, by Rabbinical scrupulosity, has been much exaggerated. In its simpler form, in those early times, it left every man free to do, as we are expressly told, that which was right in his own eyes, in many most important matters. Little seems to have been demanded of the Jews, save those simple ten commandments, which we still hold to be necessary for all civilized society.

And their obedience was, after all, a moral obedience; the obedience of free hearts and wills. The law could threaten to slay them for wronging each other; but they themselves had to enforce the law against themselves. They were always physically strong enough to defy it, if they chose. They did not defy it, because they believed in it, and felt that in obedience and loyalty lay the salvation of themselves and of their race.

It was not, understand me, the mere physical training of these forty years which had thus made them men indeed. Whatever they may have gained by that—the younger generation at least—of hardihood, endurance, and self-help, was a small matter compared with the moral training which they had gained—a small matter, compared with the habits of obedience, self-restraint, self-sacrifice, mutual trust, and mutual help; the inspiration of a common patriotism, of a common national destiny. Without that moral discipline, they would have failed each other in need; have broken up,

scattered, or perished, or at least remained as settlers or as slaves among the Arab tribes. With that moral discipline, they held together, and continued one people till the last, till they couched, they lay down as a lion, and as a great lion, and none dare rouse them up.

You who are here to-day—I speak to those in uniform—are the representatives of more than one great body of your countrymen, who have determined to teach themselves something of that lesson which Israel learnt in the wilderness; not indeed by actual danger and actual need, but by preparation for dangers and for needs, which are only too possible as long as there is sin upon this earth.

I believe—I have already seen enough to be sure—that your labour and that of your comrades will not be in vain; that you will be, as you surely may be, the better men for that discipline to which you have subjected yourselves.

You must never forget that there are two sides, a softer and a sterner side, to the character of the good man; that he, the perfect Christ, who is the Lion of Judah, taking vengeance, in every age, on all who wrong their fellow men, is also the Lamb of God, who shed his own blood for those who rebelled against him. You must recollect that there are virtues—graces we call them rather—which you may learn elsewhere better than in the camp or on the drilling ground; graces of character more devout, more pure, more tender, more humane, yet necessary for the perfect man, which you will learn rather in your own homes, from the innocence of your own children, from the counsels and examples of your mothers and your wives.

But there are virtues—graces we must call them too—just as necessary for the perfect man, which your present training ought to foster as (for most of you) no other training can; virtues which the old monk tried to teach by the stern education of the cloister; which are still taught, thank God, by the stern education of our public schools; which you and your comrades may learn by the best of all methods, by teaching them to yourselves.

For here, and wherever military training goes on, must be kept in check those sins of self-will, conceit, self-indulgence, which beset all free and prosperous men. Here must be practised virtues which (if not the very highest) are yet virtues still, and will be such to all eternity.

For the moral discipline which goes to make a good soldier or a successful competitor on this ground,—the self-restraint, the obedience, the diligence, the punctuality, the patience, the courtesy, the forbearance, the justice, the temperance,—these virtues, needful for those who compete in a struggle in which the idler and the debauchee can take no share, all these go equally toward the making of a good man.

The germs of these virtues you must bring hither with you. And none can give them to you save the Spirit of God, the giver of all good. But here you may have them, I trust, quickened into more active life, strengthened into more settled habits, to stand you in good stead in all places, all circumstances, all callings; whether you shall go to serve your country and your family, in trade or agriculture, at home; or whether you shall go forth, as many of you will, as

soldiers, colonists, or merchants, to carry English speech and English civilization to the ends of all the earth.

For then, if you learn to endure hardness—in plain English, to exercise obedience and self-restraint—will you be (whether regulars or civilians) alike the soldiers of Christ, able and willing to fight in that war of which He is the Supreme Commander, and which will endure as long as there is darkness and misery upon the earth; even the battle of the living God against the baser instincts of our nature, against ignorance and folly, against lawlessness and tyranny, against brutality and sloth. Those, the deadly enemies of the human race, you are all bound to attack, if you be good men and true, wheresoever you shall meet them invading the kingdom of your Saviour and your God. But you can only conquer them in others in proportion as you have conquered them in yourselves.

May God give you grace to conquer them in yourselves more and more; to profit by the discipline which you may gain by this movement; and bequeath it, as a precious heirloom, to your children hereafter!

For so, whether at home or abroad, will you help to give your nation that moral strength, without which physical strength is mere violent weakness; and by the example and influence of your own discipline, obedience, and self-restraint, help to fulfil of your own nation the prophecy of the Seer—

‘He couched, he lay down as a lion; and as a great lion. Who dare rouse him up?’

SERMON II. THE TEMPLE OF WISDOM.

Table of Contents

(Preached at Wellington College, All Saints' Day, 1866.)

PROVERBS IX. 1-5.

Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and to him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

THIS allegory has been a favourite one with many deep and lofty thinkers. They mixed it, now and then, with Greek fancies; and brought Phœbus, Apollo, and the Muses into the Temple of Wisdom. But whatever they added to the allegory, they always preserved the allegory itself. No words, they felt, could so well express what Wisdom was, and how it was to be obtained by man.

The stately Temple, built by mystic rules of art; the glorious Lady, at once its Architect, its Priestess, and its Queen; the feast spread within for all who felt in themselves divine aspirations after what is beautiful, and good, and true; the maidens fair and pure, sent forth throughout the city, among the millions intent only on selfish gain or selfish pleasure, to call in all who were not content to be only a more crafty kind of animal, that they might sit down at the

feast among the noble company of guests,—those who have inclined their heart to wisdom, and sought for understanding as for hid treasures:—this is a picture which sages and poets felt was true; true for all men, and for all lands. And it will be, perhaps, looked on as true once more, as natural, all but literally exact, when we who are now men are in our graves, and you who are now boys will be grown men; in the days when the present soulless mechanical notion of the world and of men shall have died out, and philosophers shall see once more that Wisdom is no discovery of their own, but the inspiration of the Almighty; and that this world is no dead and dark machine, but alight with the Glory, and alive with the Spirit, of God.

But what has this allegory, however true, to do with All Saints' Day?

My dear boys, on all days Wisdom calls you to her feast, by many weighty arguments, by many loving allurements, by many awful threats. But on this day, of all the year, she calls you by the memory of the example of those who sit already and for ever at her feast. By the memory and example of the wise of every age and every land, she bids you enter in and feast with them, on the wealth which she, and they, her faithful servants, have prepared for you. They have laboured; and they call you, in their mistress's name, to enter into their labours. She taught them wisdom, and she calls on you to learn wisdom of them in turn.

Remember, I say, this day, with humility and thankfulness of heart, the wise who are gone home to their rest.

There are many kinds of noble personages amid the blessed company of All Saints, whom I might bid you to remember this day. Some of you are the sons of statesmen or lawyers. I might call on you to thank God for your fathers, and for every man who has helped to make or execute wise laws. Some of you are the sons of soldiers. I might call on you to thank God for your fathers, and for all who have fought for duty and for their country's right. Some of you are the sons of clergymen. I might call on you to thank God for your fathers, and for all who have preached the true God and Jesus Christ His only-begotten Son, whether at home or abroad. All of you have mothers, whether on earth or in heaven; I might call on you to thank God for them, and for every good and true woman who, since the making of the world, has raised the coarseness and tamed the fierceness of men into gentleness and reverence, purity, and chivalry. I might do this: but to-day I will ask you to remember specially—The Wise.

For you are here as scholars; you are here to learn wisdom; you are here in what should be, and I believe surely is, one of the fore-courts of that mystic Temple into which Wisdom calls us all. And therefore it is fit that you should this day remember the wise; for they have laboured, and you are entering into their labours. Every lesson which you learn in school, all knowledge which raises you above the savage or the profligate (who is but a savage dressed in civilized garments), has been made possible to you by the wise. Every doctrine of theology, every maxim of morals, every rule of grammar, every process of mathematics, every law of physical science, every fact of history or of

geography, which you are taught here, is a voice from beyond the tomb. Either the knowledge itself, or other knowledge which led to it, is an heirloom to you from men whose bodies are now mouldering in the dust, but whose spirits live for ever before God, and whose works follow them, going on, generation after generation, upon the path which they trod while they were upon earth, the path of usefulness, as lights to the steps of youth and ignorance. They are the salt of the earth, which keeps the world of man from decaying back into barbarism. They are the children of light whom God has set for lights that cannot be hid. They are the aristocracy of God, into which not many noble, not many rich, not many mighty are called. Most of them were poor; many all but unknown in their own time; many died, and saw no fruit of their labours; some were persecuted, some were slain, even as Christ the Lord was slain, as heretics, innovators, and corruptors of youth. Of some, the very names are forgotten. But though their names be dead, their works live, and grow, and spread, over ever fresh generations of youth, showing them fresh steps toward that Temple of Wisdom, which is the knowledge of things as they are; the knowledge of those eternal laws by which God governs the heavens and the earth, things temporal and eternal, physical and spiritual, seen and unseen, from the rise and fall of mighty nations, to the growth and death of the moss on yonder moors.

They made their mistakes; they had their sins; for they were men of like passions with ourselves. But this they did— They cried after Wisdom, and lifted up their voice for

understanding; they sought for her as silver, and searched for her as hid treasure: and not in vain.

For them, as to every earnest seeker after wisdom, that Heavenly Lady showed herself and her exceeding beauty; and gave gifts to each according to his earnestness, his purity and his power of sight.

To some she taught moral wisdom—righteousness, and justice, and equity, yea, every good path.

To others she showed that political science, which—as Solomon tells you—is but another side of her beauty, and cannot be parted, however men may try, from moral wisdom—that Wisdom in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour; whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

To others again she showed that physical science which—so Solomon tells us again—cannot be parted safely from the two others. For by the same wisdom, he says, which gives alike righteousness and equity, riches and long life—by that same wisdom, and no other, did the Lord found the heavens and establish the earth; by that same knowledge of his are the depths broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

And to some she showed herself, as she did to good Boethius in his dungeon, in the deepest vale of misery, and the hour of death; when all seemed to have deserted them, save Wisdom, and the God from whom she comes; and bade them be of good cheer still, and keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last.

And they beheld her, and loved her, and obeyed her, each according to his powers: and now they have their

reward.

And what is their reward?

How can I tell, dear boys? This, at least can I say, for Scripture has said it already. That God is merciful in this; that he rewardeth every man according to his work. This, at least, I can say, for God incarnate himself has said it already—that to the good and faithful servant he will say,—‘Well done. Thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’

‘The joy of thy Lord.’ Think of these words a while. Perhaps they may teach us something of the meaning of All Saints’ Day.

For, if Jesus Christ be—as he is—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, then his joy now must be the same as his joy was when he was here on earth,—to do good, and to behold the fruit of his own goodness; to see—as Isaiah prophesied of him—to see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

And so it may be; so it surely is—with them; if blessed spirits (as I believe) have knowledge of what goes on on earth. They enter into the joy of their Lord. Therefore they enter into the joy of doing good. They see of the travail of their soul, and are satisfied that they have not lived in vain. They see that their work is going on still on earth; that they, being dead, yet speak, and call ever fresh generations into the Temple of Wisdom.

My dear boys, take this one thought away with you from this chapel to-day. Believe that the wise and good of every age and clime are looking down on you, to see what use you

will make of the knowledge which they have won for you. Whether they laboured, like Kepler in his garret, or like Galileo in his dungeon, hid in God's tabernacle from the strife of tongues; or, like Socrates and Plato, in the whirl and noise—far more wearying and saddening than any loneliness—of the foolish crowd, they all have laboured for you. Let them rejoice, when they see you enter into their labours with heart and soul. Let them rejoice, when they see in each one of you one of the fairest sights on earth, before men and before God; a docile and innocent boy striving to become a wise and virtuous man.

And whenever you are tempted to idleness and frivolity; whenever you are tempted to profligacy and low-mindedness; whenever you are tempted—as you will be too often in these mean days—to join the scorers and the fools whom Solomon denounced; tempted to sneering unbelief in what is great and good, what is laborious and self-sacrificing, and to the fancy that you were sent into this world merely to get through it agreeably;—then fortify and ennoble your hearts by Solomon's vision. Remember who you are, and where you are—that you stand before the Temple of Wisdom, of the science of things as God has made them; wherein alone is health and wealth for body and for soul; that from within the Heavenly Lady calls to you, sending forth her handmaidens in every art and science which has ever ministered to the good of man; and that within there await you all the wise and good who have ever taught on earth, that you may enter in and partake of the feast which their mistress taught them to prepare. Remember, I say, who you are—even the sons of God; and

remember where you are—for ever upon sacred ground; and listen with joy and hope to the voice of the Heavenly Wisdom, as she calls—‘Whoso is simple, let him come in hither; and him that wanteth understanding, let him come and eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled.’

Listen with joy and hope: and yet with fear and trembling, as of Moses when he hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. For the voice of Wisdom is none other than the voice of The Spirit of God, in whom you live, and move, and have your being.

SERMON III. PRAYER AND SCIENCE.

[Table of Contents](#)

(Preached at St. Olave’s Church, Hart Street, before the Honourable Corporation of the Trinity House, 1866.)

PSALM CVII. 23, 24, 28.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

THESE are days in which there is much dispute about religion and science—how far they agree with each other; whether they contradict or interfere with each other. Especially there is dispute about Providence. Men say, and truly, that the more we look into the world, the more we find

everything governed by fixed and regular laws; that man is bound to find out those laws, and save himself from danger by science and experience. But they go on to say,—‘And therefore there is no use in prayer. You cannot expect God to alter the laws of His universe because you ask Him: the world will go on, and ought to go on, its own way; and the man who prays against danger, by sea or land, is asking vainly for that which will not be granted him.’

Now I cannot see why we should not allow,—what is certainly true,—that the world moves by fixed and regular laws: and yet allow at the same time,—what I believe is just as true,—that God’s special providence watches over all our actions, and that, to use our Lord’s example, not a sparrow falls to the ground without some special reason why that particular sparrow should fall at that particular moment and in that particular place. I cannot see why all things should not move in a divine and wonderful order, and yet why they should not all work together for good to those who love God. The Psalmist of old finds no contradiction between the two thoughts. Rather does the one of them seem to him to explain the other. ‘All things,’ says he, ‘continue this day as at the beginning. For all things serve Thee.’

Still it is not to be denied, that this question has been a difficult one to men in all ages, and that it is so to many now.

But be that as it may, this I say, that, of all men, seafaring men are the most likely to solve this great puzzle about the limits of science and of religion, of law and of providence; for, of all callings, theirs needs at once most science and most religion; theirs is most subject to laws,

and yet most at the mercy of Providence. And I say that many seafaring men have solved the puzzle for themselves in a very rational and sound way, though they may not be able to put thoughts into words; and that they do show, by their daily conduct, that a man may be at once thoroughly scientific and thoroughly religious. And I say that this Ancient and Honourable Corporation of the Trinity House is a proof thereof unto this day; a proof that sound science need not make us neglect sound religion, nor sound religion make us neglect sound science.

No man ought to say that seamen have neglected science. It is the fashion among some to talk of sailors as superstitious. They must know very little about sailors, and must be very blind to broad facts, who speak thus of them as a class. Many sailors, doubtless, are superstitious. But I appeal to every master mariner here, whether the superstitious men are generally the religious and godly men; whether it is not generally the most reckless and profligate men of the crew who are most afraid of sailing on a Friday, and who give way to other silly fancies which I shall not mention in this sacred place. And I appeal, too, to public experience, whether many, I may say most, of those to whom seamanship and sea-science owes most, have not been God-fearing Christian men?

Be sure of this, that if seamen, as a class, had been superstitious, they would never have done for science what they have done. And what they have done, all the world knows. To seamen, and to men connected with the sea, what do we not owe, in geography, hydrography, meteorology, astronomy, natural history? At the present