

# THE GOSPEL IN PARIS:

*S E R M O N S*

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*WITH PERSONAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR*

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## XIV.

### *FOOLISHNESS AND POWER.*

"For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 18.).

FOOLISHNESS! Power! Those are the two names which St. Paul gives to the preaching of the Cross. My purpose is to study these two ideas successively, and then to point out to you the close and deep connection which exists between them.

The preaching of the Cross is *foolishness*. Note that it is not an enemy of the Gospel, but an apostle, who tells us so. Christianity has not waited to hear this reproach from the lips of the world; it has not left this satisfaction to its foes. It has laid hold of this insult and claimed it the first as its lawful property. And let none tell us that this is a figure of speech, a hasty expression which escapes the apostle. The Gospel is sparing of those high-flown epithets, of those rhetorical figures; and, moreover, the same thought lies at the foundation of all Jesus Christ's instructions. Jesus has presented His doctrine as a thing which the world would denounce as senseless; He has spoken plainly of the incompatibility which existed between the ideas of men and the lessons He taught; He has foretold that His disciples would meet with opposition, hatred, and scorn.

This is, let us say it in passing, a strange way of trying to win men to one's cause; it is so strange that it would be foolish if it did not betoken a Divine inspiration. Generally when a man wishes to succeed, he promises himself and his disciples success. Every general knows full well that in order to conquer he must predict victory to his soldiers. In the intellectual order it is the same: the philosopher, the head of a school, endeavours to prove that his system answers all the needs of the age, and will satisfy all its aspirations; he points to the minds that are ready to accept it, and to the proselytes who will rally round his standard. And we ourselves, how often, yielding to this universal enthusiasm, have we not proclaimed the approaching triumph of our beliefs. Jesus Christ alone tells His disciples: "Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake," and it is this thought that Paul takes up when he speaks with so much assurance of the folly of the Cross.

To the Cross, in particular, it appertained to receive this distinction and this reproach, for in it the whole of Christianity is summed up. It is its central point; in it especially appears all that in the Gospel is strange and contrary to human wisdom. The preaching of the Cross was to be foolishness; it has been such, and St. Paul's language is not exaggerated.

In the first place, considering it only from an external point of view, the death of Christ, such as it has been recorded in the Gospels, that ignominious and troubled death, must have seemed a strange means of assuring success to His cause. . . . Today, I know, the Cross has become the most glorious of symbols; it waves above all the Christian nations, and just as the loftiest and most magnificent monuments raise it high in the air, so, in the moral order, it has become the highest expression of love and sacrifice. So radiant a halo surrounds it, so wondrous a splendour radiates from it, that our dazzled eyes can conceive of nothing more sublimely grand. But let not this deceive us; the Cross, in the days of Christ, was a mere instrument of torture, no other glory surrounded it than that which today is attached to the gallows or the scaffold. It was not even employed for free-born criminals; a particular infamy was associated with this accursed tree upon which slaves only were crucified. I ask, therefore, to aim at triumphing by means of a similar symbol, was not this simply raising against Christianity a storm of opposition and antipathy? What must the Jews have thought of it, they who had always indulged in their fond dreams of a glorious Messiah; or the Greeks, accustomed to worship the stern majesty and the calm beauty of their deities; or the Romans, who bowed only before triumphant might? It is easy to understand that the crucified Christ should have become the object of all their scorn; and it was, in fact, against the Cross that all the great scoffers of heathendom directed their keenest darts.

Some will perhaps tell us that after all it was natural that the Cross should triumph, because there is in martyrdom a secret power which attracts and captivates the soul. But those who reason in this way forget that it is precisely since Christianity, and at the shadow of the Cross, that men have learnt to distinguish, to elevate, to honour all the victims of oppression. Before it, the conquered were always in the wrong, and this was most natural, since fatalism was the true and supreme divinity of the ancient world. Further, I would understand the effect which a calm, serene, and triumphant martyrdom might produce. But why, then, if the evangelists and apostles wished to succeed, do they seem to delight in pointing out, in their narratives of Christ's death, all the signs of agitation and anguish which are peculiar to it? Why bring before us again and again the dismal scene of Gethsemane, the sweat of blood, the hand that trembles at the touch of the mysterious cup, the terror and the bitter sorrow of Jesus? Why picture that agonising look which, from His Cross, He turns towards heaven which is closed upon Him? why remind us of that despairing cry He utters, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Is it then a sight so well calculated to inspire souls with confidence and peace? Is it by such pictures that men are to be attracted and subdued? This is so con-

trary to all our instincts that it has ever been a stumbling-block for human reason. The last century furnishes us with a very striking proof of this. A philosopher, who in the midst of much vice and folly had preserved his faith in God and a lively admiration for the Gospel, J. J. Rousseau, wrote on Jesus Christ a page which has been a thousand times quoted, that famous page in which he compares Socrates with Jesus, and in which we read these words: "Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God;" and portraying this death from his own imagination rather than from the narratives of the Gospel, Rousseau depicts it calm, divine, triumphant. Well, when Voltaire read this famous page, he wrote in the margin: "You forget His bloody sweat!" This note of Voltaire's was prompted by hate; but in this case hate had been clear-sighted, and Voltaire was not wrong; the death of Christ has been a troubled death; the Gospel has dared to say it, and it has presented this troubled death to the human conscience as its great peace-restorer. Well, to aim at success by such means, in the eyes of reason, was it not foolishness?

That is not all. So far we have beheld only the external features of the death on the Cross. But need I say that St. Paul saw in it more than this? He saw in it the pledge of man's reconciliation with God; he saw in it an act of reparation, a sacrifice offered to Divine justice by the new Adam of a new humanity. For him the death on the Cross was not a mere martyrdom, it was a wondrous drama, the very centre of Divine revelation, the object of the admiration of the elect and the angels to all eternity. Now, of all the teachings of the apostles, this is perhaps the point which most shocks and scandalises the reason of a generation upon whom the rights of Divine holiness seem to have lost all their power.

Today the Cross, considered merely from the external point of view, has become the most glorious of symbols, the crown of thorns is surrounded by an incomparable majesty. Nobility of soul, imagination, nay, mere poetic sentiment, must be strangely absent from the being who would not understand this charm. But when, faithful to the teaching of the apostles, we affirm that in the death of Christ there has been a sacrifice offered to God Himself, when we say that it is in His character of representative of humanity that He allowed Himself to be nailed upon the Cross, when we explain His unutterable sufferings by the inexpressible anguish which our sins caused Him, then we see surprise and the scornful smile reappear, then the word foolishness, under a milder form perhaps, rises to the lips of the wise. . . . The world, you say, has become Christian. Oh! how could I ignore this? Yes, the world has taken the mantle of Christianity, it has adopted its language, but its spirit is so utterly foreign to it, that true Christianity always astonishes and scandalises it. If you doubt this, suppose for

an instant that St. Paul has returned to the world. Suppose him preaching in the large towns of Europe—in Paris, for instance, that modern Athens—the Son of God crucified. Do you not think that, for the greater number, his God would still be the unknown God? How would he be received by our thinkers, our writers, and our critics, I mean by those who boast that they are the true interpreters of the age and the guides of modern thought? How would they judge the holy rudeness and the astonishing doctrine of a man who would refuse to know anything beyond Christ and Him crucified? Ah! if we who are not men like St. Paul, if we who have neither the courage nor the fidelity of the great apostle, if we who know how to sweeten by our wisdom and our combinations the bitter savour of the Cross, if we escape not reproach, polite ridicule, the scorn of modern wisdom, how would the apostle be treated, he who, to save souls, took not counsel of flesh and blood, he who despised the approbation and smiles of men, he who brought them the truth without reticence and without weakness? We cannot doubt it; St. Paul would say to the present generation what he said to the Corinthians in his Epistle; the preaching of the Cross would, in his lips, be foolishness now just as well as it was then.

But this foolishness is a *power*, and the mightiest power which the world has ever seen at work. Paul knew this from experience. It was the Cross that had conquered him, and no mean conquest, in truth, was that by which the proud, intrepid, fiery soul of the Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, had been subdued. Not only had this Cross subdued him, but it had been his surest instrument of triumph; and in his Epistle to the Colossians, he pictures, in sublimest language, all the powers of this world brought into captivity at the foot of the Cross.

Will any one say that St. Paul ascribed too much power to the Cross? Well, suppose the apostles marching on to the conquest of the world without it. Suppose them teaching the most reasonable of doctrines, preaching and practising the purest of morals; do more—suppose them accomplishing the most marvellous works, curing the sick, feeding the multitudes, raising the dead—think you they would have succeeded? Assuredly no. And this I affirm with the utmost confidence, for that supposition has been realised. A man who was not an apostle but the Master of the Apostles, had preached to the world the most perfect of doctrines, the purest of morals; He had realised His teaching by revealing in His Person a holiness before which we bow in adoration. . . . He had performed works such as the world had never seen before, and this Man, at the close of His three years and a half's ministry, scarce could number a handful of irresolute and fearful disciples. What then was required that He might convert the world? Death: “Except a corn of wheat die, it cannot *bring forth* fruit.” Death, and the death of the Cross: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all

men unto Me." If without the Cross Jesus Christ Himself had spoken for nought, what without it would the disciples have done? It has truly been the power which has transformed the world. Men tell us that the morality of the Gospel would have been sufficient to save the world. Morality! And who does not know that in heathendom itself, in the days of the primitive Church, it had cast its brightest lustre? Morality! Never had it been more honoured and exalted than by such philosophers as Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius; but also, never had it been more powerless to convert even those who preached it with so much eloquence. But whilst in their schools they dissented upon duty, without, however, changing one heart, the Cross had risen bright and blessed . . . ; it had lighted up the most gloomy darkness and the lowest depths of ancient society, and there, from amongst the poor, the lowly, the slaves, it had called forth thousands of souls who were willing to die for the sake of truth and justice, and who, in the circus and amidst the most cruel torments, proclaimed pardon, hope, and life eternal. That is what the Cross then did, and what it alone could do. Count all its triumphs since then! Tell us how many sinners it has snatched from pollution, how many troubled hearts it has saved from despair, and this from age to age; for all the clouds which the unbelief of men has raised round it may have dimmed its brightness for a moment, but they have not quenched its light. . . . Ask of our missionaries what they would do without the Cross? and what discourses, what arguments, what morals would produce the same results as the simple narrative of the death of Jesus Christ? But what! without the Cross would there be any missionaries at all? Do men leave their native shores and peril their lives simply to preach morality? Has deism ever essayed to evangelise the world? But why go such lengths? Let us examine ourselves, for if we are truly Christians, it is through the Cross that we have become such. Till we had beheld it, we had perhaps felt many pure and sweet religious emotions, we had perhaps felt the attraction of truth; but to make of us new creatures, to inspire us with new thoughts, new affections, new hopes, the Cross, and nothing short of the Cross, was required.

To judge of its power, we must see it struggling with the human soul in the hours of sorest trial. For instance, here is one of those sorrows against which all manner of consolations dash as the waves against a rock—one of those sorrows which express themselves in revolt and blasphemy. Armed with the Cross, I fear not to encounter it; for there is upon this Cross a sorrow greater, deeper, more distressing still, but in which we feel the tender sympathy of a God. . . . Or give me a criminal conscience—a conscience tortured by remorse, and trembling before the approaching judgment of God—with the Cross I can meet it, for from it flows a pardon in which love unites with holiness. Since the first sinner converted by the Cross—

since the repentant malefactor—count all the souls it has saved, all the broken hearts it has comforted, all the sufferings it has appeased, all the agonies it has helped to endure! Truly the Cross is the greatest power in the world, the only power which has remained standing in the midst of the heaped-up ruins of eighteen centuries, the only power which conquers still. Where is the Christian who does not hail, in hope, the day when it will have subdued the world? and who does not believe in its final triumph? This, for us, is a mere question of time.

Therefore, now as in the day when it was first uttered, this saying of St. Paul's remains true, and the Cross is at once foolishness and power. How shall we conciliate these two ideas? If the Cross be foolishness for the world, how is it the only power by which the world can be conquered? That is what we have still to show.

Pascal has explained this in one of his incomparable pages. "There are three orders of power," he says, "and there are only three: material power, intellectual power, and moral power." To bring man under subjection, one of these three powers must be employed. Supposing God wishes to bring back the human soul to Himself, let us see which of these means will be the most worthy of Him.

In the first place, there is material power. It has this peculiar character, that it is irresistible and fatal. God might have subdued men by that power. That is what they seem to demand of Him, all who express surprise at His toleration of revolt, injustice, and sin in the world, when it were so easy for Him to destroy them by a word of His mouth. God might annihilate them; for this He would have only to open heaven, to crush our pride, to sweep us away as by a second deluge. The voice which said: "Let there be light!" and there was light, would have merely to bid life die away on this imperceptible globe where our pride so complacently displays itself. Now, the God of the Gospel desires another triumph than this; He will not reign over slaves.

But, above material power, there is intellectual power. This, too, is irresistible. It bears with it an inflexible evidence. Lay down an axiom of logic or geometry, and, if I can understand it, I am forced to admit it. God might have subdued man by this power. He might, by irrefutable reasonings, have demonstrated religious truth, the way that leads to Him. This is what the wise ask of Him. He has not done so, and why? First of all, because the reasonings of the mind neither change nor touch the heart, and because God will be known only that He may be loved; again, because if God had revealed Himself to the mind, the intelligent alone would have been saved. What a revelation, or rather, what a monstrous injustice! In this way, the great majority of our fellow-men, fatally condemned to ignorance, would

at the same time have been condemned never to know God. God seeks another triumph than this, and we have to bless Him for it.

There remains a third order of power, moral power. By this I mean the power that acts upon the heart and conscience. Here we enter the domain of liberty. Whilst material or logical power forced themselves upon us fatally, here, in the moral order, we are free to admit or deny, to accept or refuse truth; but observe at the same time that here only we are fully responsible. I cannot be blamed if I yield to material constraint, and if physical strength fails me for resistance; neither can I be blamed if my intellect is too feeble to understand the value of this or that argument; but I am bound to obey moral truth, and I am responsible for the condition of my heart and conscience. Well! if all this be true, I understand the power of the Cross; for the Cross, brethren, is the grandest moral power in the world. It is the power of God, for more clearly than any doctrine it reveals the love and holiness of God; yes, but on condition that we see in it what the apostle did.

You have been told of the love of God, and you have tried to believe in it, but have you found this easy? You have been told of God as the God of nature; the admirable wisdom and the touching kindness which all His works manifest has been pointed out to you. Ah! I will not deny the emotions which then have seized upon your mind, and which have drawn your heart towards Him. And how, in truth, could we, in a spring day such as this, see nature decked out in joy and beauty without feeling a hymn of gratitude rise from our hearts towards the Author of all things? How, then, could we refuse to believe that all nature sings of the love of God.? Yes, but when, in a day like this, you will be called to follow, with a slow and heavy step, a bier containing the mortal remains of the being you loved best; when, oh ye fathers who now hear me, you will be forced to hear the damp earth falling on the grave of your child while all will be joy and gladness in nature, while its thousand voices will sing of life and hope, while the sun will fill the earth with floods of pure and radiant light; answer, will nature then reveal to you the love of God? Will it reveal God to so many beings who suffer, to those sick and hungry ones; and do you not feel how cruel and derisive is this mere supposition?

You have been told of the love of God, and the admirable ways of His paternal Providence have been pointed out to you in your own life as well as in history. God forbid that I should refuse to acknowledge them! how often have they not been made manifest in the magnificent triumph of some just cause, in the prosperity of a united family, in the peaceful happiness, the reward of a noble existence? Yes, but what does it say to your heart, this doctrine of Providence, when trial sweeps over you again and again, when misfortune seems to call unto misfortune, when your prayers

remain unanswered, when your fireside grows desolate, when your health declines, and when, beside you, a faithless, loveless being, who lives for self alone, sees his desires gratified, and his cup of prosperity overflow? What does it say to you when, touched by some cruel and undeserved iniquity, you see your right ruthlessly trampled under foot? Is it easy then to believe in the love of God?

But if, through the darkness by which I am enveloped, I might but reach God Himself, if I might but hear the pulsations of His heart, if I might but feel that in Him dwells an unfathomable love and sympathy of which each of His creatures may be the object, that not one is forgotten, that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without His permission, that all my tears and sighs are numbered, what strength, what consolation, would I not derive from such a thought. But who is there that can know God? He is the mighty and invisible God; no eye hath seen Him, nor can any ever behold Him. . . . No; we had never known Him had not the only Son, in the bosom of the Father, revealed Him unto us. But here is a new revelation, beside which all other lights pale and vanish. Here upon earth is a Being who affirms that when they see Him men see the Father, and that He is the visible manifestation of the hidden God. Here in Him is a love such as the world had never beheld, a love which enlightens, raises, comforts, and which spreads in the midst of humanity a lustre so bright that henceforth the world shall dwell in its light. . . . Behold that love condescending to sacrifice, to the most mysterious sacrifice, to unutterable sorrows; behold it exposed to the world's gaze on the Cross of Calvary . . . You had asked to see God; well, where will He be if not here, and what revelation of His love can He give you if this does not suffice? What works, what miracles, what prodigies, will enable you to comprehend His essence more fully than the sight of the Cross? And though you might witness the sight of His most ineffable perfections, of His eternity, of His Omnipotence, and live; though you might survey all His works, in those thousands of worlds which His hand has scattered in space, would you discover anything grander than the love He has revealed to us in His Son?

To choose such a method for bringing man back to Himself is, if I may so speak, the *chef d'oeuvre* of love. I have told you that God will subdue men neither by force of constraint nor by force of evidence; that He wishes to respect our liberty, and that He requires of us a voluntary obedience. Now, is not that precisely what the Cross has produced, and what it is producing every day? Does it not appeal to all that is best, noblest, and grandest in man? When you yield to the attraction of the Cross, are you prompted by the interested instinct of the mercenary, or by the servile fear of the slave? Are you not rather won by the purest of motives, by gratitude, and are you not thus led to give yourselves unreservedly to God? Could God

have chosen a more powerful means of bringing His wandering creature back to Himself? By what prodigy could He more successfully have called forth that willing people He sought?

Yes, St. Paul is right; the Cross is the power of God, because upon it appeared the most striking and sublime manifestation of love, and that is why men have believed in the love of God only since they have beheld it on the Cross of Calvary; that is why it is unknown wherever the Cross has not been preached; that is why, without the Cross, the apostles would never have set forth to preach that love; why without the Cross there would be no missionaries, and why those who, while speaking of the love of God, overthrow the Cross, are like the savages who fell a tree that they may gather its fruits. And that is also what constitutes the eternal power of the Cross. . . . Think you that man, having once seen God in the manifestation of that wondrous love, will ever deny Him? Think you that he will ever exchange that centre of warmth and life for the icy abstractions of a religion of the mind? No, no, I am tranquil; notwithstanding all the efforts of those who shake it, the Cross will remain standing, for it is planted in the heart of humanity to such depths that none will ever be able to uproot it.

But is this all? Does the Cross speak to our heart only? Does it not speak also to our conscience? Does it reveal only the love of God? Does it not also reveal His holiness? Yes, and that again is what makes it the power of God.

I have supposed the apostles setting forth to conquer the world without the Cross. Well, suppose them preaching Divine mercy without it. Think you men would have listened? Think you their message would have been accepted? But, some will object, men have believed in pardon without knowing the Cross. Has not David sung of the blessedness and peace of a pardoned soul? Oh! I will not deny this. Yes, doubtless God, at all times, by a direct and personal intervention, may have revealed His mercy to the repentant sinner; but do not forget that this same God required at the same time that the whole nation and David himself should every year assemble in His temple for the feast of expiations. Now, who would dare to say that this was a vain show? and by what right should any one separate, in the Old Testament, what God Himself has joined? Ah! I admit that all truly pure souls knew full well that the blood of bulls and goats could not purify, and David himself sets over against those sacrifices that of the contrite heart. Nevertheless, this betokens a fact which is generally acknowledged, namely, that the holiness of God demands a reparation; that only after the accomplishment of this reparation on the Cross could mercy be preached to man. This is not an arbitrary condition; it is claimed by universal conscience, which everywhere has poured torrents of blood upon the altars. That pardon might be preached and received, it was necessary that hu-

manity should offer to God an atoning sacrifice, and thus proclaim the eternal rights of His holiness. Now that is what its Chief, what the new Adam, has voluntarily done for it. That is the only possible explanation of His untold sufferings, of the anguish of Gethsemane and Golgotha. That is the only fact which will enable us to understand why the sight of that troubled death has become here below an ever-flowing source of peace. That is why human conscience feels a thrill of profound assent in presence of the sacrifice of Calvary, and that is why we feel that Jesus upon the Cross suffers in our stead, that His work is our work, that upon the accursed tree our salvation has truly been accomplished. Destroy this belief, and what becomes of the faith of St. Paul, of St. Peter, of St. John?

Who does not see that if the Cross is not the central point of divine revelation—if it tells not of Redemption—it may well be overthrown, and we may well dispense with it?

I have told you what constitutes the power of the Cross; I have told you that it answers to the deepest wants of our souls, and that it alone manifests the love and holiness of God in their fulness. How, then, account for the fact that, satisfying as it does the human soul, it raises an eternal opposition on the part of the world? how account for the fact that, though it is the power of God, it is at the same time foolishness?

It is because the world takes a serious view neither of the holiness nor of the love of God. I do not hesitate to say that the human soul, when it is stirred in its depths, when it understands all that the law of God requires and all that His love has inspired, declares itself in favour of the Cross, and finds in it the fullest answer to its inmost needs; that is why the Cross is eternal. But where are those who reflect seriously upon these things? Where are those who, in the present day, resolutely affirm the holiness of God? Is it falling into the current of empty declamations to affirm, to repeat incessantly, that the sense of holiness is dying away in modern society? Do you find it strange that men should admit a divine law which nothing enforces, a mercy without reparation, a Gospel without redemption? Do you find it strange that men should mistake indulgence for love? that they should cast away the holy and jealous love of a God who gives Himself that He may obtain the affection of man in return; and finally, that they should accept the Gospel—all the Gospel save its foolishness, which is also its power?

Consequently, for the greater number, the Cross will remain what it was in the days of St. Paul, foolishness. We must be made aware of this fact, that it may neither surprise us nor shake our faith. The world will endeavour to take from us this foolishness; it will bring all its powers into play against it, seductions, threats, mockery; it will try to make of the Gospel a reasonable doctrine, an edgeless sword, a savourless salt, a religion which

will never wound, but which will never convert. Let not enthusiasm lead us astray on this point. It is a fearful thing to be in contradiction with the rest of men, to clash against the favourite ideas of the generation to which one belongs. Ah! doubtless this part is easy for those troubling and morose spirits to which any eccentricity is welcome, and who would willingly add the foolishness of the Gospel to the scandal of their own narrow-mindedness. But he who aims at being the humble witness of a despised truth, he who, loving much, must consent by his fidelity to estrange the hearts whose affection was most precious to him, he will understand me and tell me if such a part is indeed easy. This opposition to the world, this firm and patient testimony is what men most dislike; therefore to clash with public opinion, to preach foolishness, all this implies suffering, and is not that what the Cross tells of? Well, let us suffer if it must be so, happy at being thus made partakers of Christ's sufferings, happy at being able to know the fellowship of His sorrows.

But if we are to be the witnesses of a thing which is foolishness, let us at least show that this foolishness is the power of God. Now, how shall we show this, I ask, if not by the influence it will exert upon our lives? You wish to defend the Cross; prove to us, first of all, that it has converted you, prove to us that it sanctifies you, prove to us that it inspires you with the spirit of devotion and sacrifice. Do you know what does most harm to the Gospel? Not the attacks of its enemies, but the apathy and timidity of believers.

Alas! how can men believe that the Gospel is a power when those who have heard it for ten, twenty, thirty years are the same today as they were of yore; when in many cases they retrograde instead of advancing; when their life in nowise differs from that of the rest of men; when the world diverts, absorbs, engrosses them more and more.

How can men believe that the Gospel is a power when they see it vainly demand of those who accept it the sacrifices of time, money, ardour, life, which tomorrow, perhaps, vanity, glory, the world in all its forms will obtain without so much as asking for them?

How can men believe that the Gospel is a power when the hearts of those who hear it remain cold and dry? There is a heresy which no watchful zeal can reach, which no profession of faith can remove,—a subtle and dangerous heresy which insinuates itself in the very bosom of the “best organised churches, of the most enlightened societies,—a heresy which everywhere spreads a deadly poison, and instils death under the appearances of life,—a heresy which refutes all the apologies of truth, which paralyses every effort, and which well-nigh renders the Cross itself useless—it is coldness of heart. To be a Christian and not love! To speak of the power of the Gospel and not feel it in one's heart, not prove it by one's

life! Is not that denying it? Lord, at the foot of that Cross where Thou hast revealed to us Thy love, teach us to love more, and to prove by the change in our lives the power of that Divine foolishness of which Thou wouldst have us be the witnesses!