

might fail in, he would compel his hearers to attend. Watching, in the course of his first efforts, to discover what part of his discourses seemed to be most attended to, he saw that it was the illustrations. He accordingly resolved to cultivate that department with peculiar care. Cultivate it he did, and to the greatest purpose, for a greater master of illustration has never appeared in the pulpit, nor one who by means of it could more closely rivet the attention of his audience. But the copious use of illustration has higher sanction. Our Lord's discourses abound in it. His parables are illustrations all through. The Sermon on the Mount has hardly started before we find the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city set on an hill, the candle under a bushel, and the candle on the candlestick. In their most solemn and impressive periods, too, Christ's discourses are pointed with illustrations. The Sermon on the Mount fills us with an overwhelming sense of the retributions of the day of doom, by the illustration of the house on the rock and the house on the sand. The parable of the last judgment makes a similar impression, by the illustration of the shepherd dividing his sheep from the goats. Nothing could repress the outflow of illustration from the mind of Jesus. In the deepest agony of the garden his sufferings were spoken of as a cup. The farewell discourse begins with the house of many mansions, has for its central subject the vine and its branches, and near its end introduces the woman in travail having sorrow when her hour is come, but after the child is born forgetting her anguish for joy that a man is born into the world. Probably it is not less instructive in another connection, that there are *no* figures, and hardly any illustrations, in the *intercessory prayer*. When the address was to God, they were not needed. But on the way to Calvary the ever busy faculty again asserts itself in the address to the daughters of Jerusalem: "If they do these things in the *green tree*, what shall be done in the dry?"

There is this further to be said in favour of illustration, that it is adapted to take hold of all classes and ages of hearers. An apt illustration is fitted to interest the most cultivated philosopher and the youngest child. Illustration, in fact, is one of the chief instruments for enabling a preacher to fuse his audience together, and treat it as a unity. Some parts of a discourse may be adapted to one class, and some to another; but the illustrations are for all. They are the pictures of spoken instruction. Pictorial illustrations of Scripture, provided they be true, even if slight and almost rude, are not beneath the