

do not reject all their opinions, but neither do I approve of them all indiscriminately."

The present Pope, Leo XIII., in the Encyclical *Æterni Patris*,<sup>1</sup> pronounces a glowing eulogium on Thomas Aquinas, and recommends the whole Christian world to study his writings. But, he adds, "we refer to the *wisdom* of St. Thomas; for whatever in the Schoolmen savours of over-subtlety or over-rashness, and whatever is little in accordance with the demonstrated doctrines of a later age, or whatever lastly is improbable, it is by no means my purpose to recommend to the imitation of our age."

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#### NOTE ON ST. JAMES i. 9, 10.

I SHOULD be glad of space for a brief note on the above verses, having special reference to the admirable papers recently contributed to the *EXPOSITOR*<sup>2</sup> by Dr. R. W. Dale. The interpretation of the verses that is given in those papers is, in my judgment, entirely trustworthy, and indeed the only one that the words can reasonably be made to bear; and it may be hoped that Dr. Dale's complete statement and defence of it will do much towards disposing of the "savage," "artificial," and other untenable interpretations to which Huther, Alford, and other commentators have been driven in their endeavour to escape the imagined difficulty of understanding ἀδελφός to belong to both verses. This difficulty, which I take to be wholly imaginary, is really at the root of all the perplexity that the commentators have felt and occasioned in their treatment of this passage.

The only object of this note is to claim a closer connexion than Dr. Dale seems willing to allow between these verses (9, 10) and the verses that immediately precede them (6-8). In reference to this latter passage Dr. Dale writes: "The words which follow:— 'Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. For

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 4, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> *EXPOSITOR. Second Series*, vol. v. pp. 321ff. and 426ff.

let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord. A man of two minds, he is unstable in all his ways'—need not detain us. They are a vivid statement of a truth which recurs in many other parts of the New Testament, and have no special connexion with the subject of 'temptations' and 'trials,' unless indeed we say that temptations and trials of all kinds make it hard to pray in faith."

Now it appears to me that these words have the very closest connexion with the subject of those "temptations" and "trials" which James has especially in view, and that they immediately suggest, that they did immediately suggest to him, the exhortations he proceeds to give. If this be so, and if we can discover the unexpressed links in the Apostle's thought, we may expect to arrive at a still clearer understanding of his teaching in the passage under consideration.

The doublemindedness that James condemns, and declares to be the hindrance to all effectual prayer, arises from a false estimate of worldly position and temporal possessions—an estimate wherein the judgment of man shews itself at variance with that of God. This really exposes men to the assaults of temptation. If the Divine standards of value determined all their judgments, the "lust" through which they are "drawn away and enticed," would be robbed of its power, and would by and by altogether cease to trouble them. But the brother of low degree is tempted to look with envious eyes upon the brother who is rich, and the brother who is rich is tempted to look down with haughty pride upon the brother of low degree, because neither has learnt to see himself as God sees him, and to prize above all else the things that are most precious. Hence the "doublemindedness"—half a mind towards God, and half a mind towards the world—which reveals itself in the futile attempt to serve two masters, and in the "respect of persons," that are so flagrantly inconsistent with "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory."

For all this James indicates the true remedy. He remembers the commonest cause of the doublemindedness that he condemns; and to correct the false estimates so natural to man, so persistent even among Christian men, he gives the exhortations of verses 9 and 10. The brother of low degree, and the brother abounding in the wealth of this world, are on the same footing in the sight of God. The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory,

reverses our customary judgments. Let, therefore, the brother of low degree glory in that high estate which is his through Christ; and let the rich brother glory in the knowledge that rebukes his foolish pride, and shews how transient and superficial are those distinctions which are based on temporal position and possessions. Christ has enriched us all, and our true ground of glorying is the wealth that is ours through Him—wealth in which poor and rich may have an equal share.

Thus, I venture to think, it may be seen that, in the thought of James, the statement in verses 6-8, has a special and close connexion with the subject of temptation, not only because "temptations and trials of all kinds make it hard to pray in faith," but because the doublemindedness that renders it impossible to pray in such a way as to be heard is at the root of so many of the temptations that beset us, and especially of those temptations against which the exhortations of verses 9 and 10 were intended to guard and strengthen us.

In support of the connexion I have attempted to indicate it may be worth while to notice: (1) the very obvious characteristic of St. James's style, according to which the concluding word or thought of one section or sentence becomes the starting point of that which follows. It seems to me that the thought expressed in verse 8 immediately and most naturally suggested the exhortations that succeed it. (2) The words of the Apostle in Chapter ii. 4, where the false estimate of worldly wealth, or obsequious reverence for the rich man, is said to indicate a doubting or divided mind. This division of mind would be effectually healed, and the man of two minds would henceforth have one mind wholly toward God, if only he rightly learnt, and constantly remembered, the great lesson of those verses that Dr. Dale has expounded for us.

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