



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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Thomas Goodwin

by Alexander Whyte

from *Thirteen Appreciations*

Gentlemen. I have long looked for a suitable opportunity of acknowledging an old debt to a favourite author of mine. But when I proceed to pay a little of that old debt today, I am not to be supposed to put any of you into that same author's debt. All I wish to do is for once to make full and heartfelt acknowledgement of my own deep debt to that author, and then to urge you all to get into some such indebtedness to some great authors of past days or of the present day.

It was in my third year at the University that I first became acquainted with Thomas Goodwin. On opening the 'Witness' newspaper one propitious morning, my eye fell on the announcement of a new edition of Thomas Goodwin's works. The advertised 'Council of Publication', as I remember well, made a deep impression upon me, and it will not be without interest to you to hear their honoured names even on this far-distant day. They were Dr Lindsay Alexander, of this city; Dr Begg, of this city; Dr Crawford, of the University of Edinburgh; Principal Cunningham, of this College; Mr Drummond, of St Thomas's Episcopal Church; Dr William Goold, of Martyr's Church. I entered my name at once as a subscriber to the series; and not long after, the first volume of Goodwin's works came into my hands. And I will here say with simple truth that his works have never been out of my hands down to this day.

In those far-off years I read my Goodwin every Sabbath morning and every Sabbath night. Goodwin was my every Sabbath-day meat and my every Sabbath-day drink. And during my succeeding years as a student, and as a young minister, I carried about a volume of Goodwin wherever I went. I read him in railway carriages and on steamboats. I read him at home and abroad. I read him on my holidays among the Scottish Grampians and among the Swiss Alps. I carried his volumes about with me till they fell out of their original cloth binding, and till I got my book-binder to put them into his best morocco. I have read no other author

so much and so often. And I continue to read him till this day as if I had never read him before.

Now, if I was to say such things as these about some of the Greek or Latin or English classics you would receive it as a matter of course. But why should I not say the simple truth about the greatest pulpit master of early this century? Pauline exegesis and homiletic that has ever lived, and who has been far more to me than all those recognized classics taken together?

It was a great time, gentlemen, when I was attending the University and New College. The works of Dickens and Thackeray were then appearing in monthly parts. The Brontë family were at their best. George Eliot was writing in Blackwood. Carlyle was at the height of his influence and renown. Ruskin, Macaulay, Tennyson, and Browning were in everybody's hands. And I read them all as I had time and opportunity. But I read none of them as I read Goodwin. He is not to be named beside them as literature. No! But then they are not to be named beside him as religion. Masters in their own departments, as they all are, yet none of them laid out their genius upon Paul, nor upon Paul's supreme subject --Jesus Christ and his salvation! And therefore though I read them all and enjoyed them all in their measure, yet, as Augustine says about the best classics of Greece and Rome, since the Name of Jesus Christ was not to be found in them, none of them took such complete possession of me as did Thomas Goodwin the great Pauline exegete.

I frankly confess to you that I sometimes say to myself that I must surely be all wrong in my estimate of Goodwin's worth, else someone besides myself would sometimes be found to mention his name with some honour. But when I am led to open Goodwin again all my old love for him returns to me, and all my old indebtedness and devotion to him, till I give myself up again to all his incomparable power and incomparable sweetness as an expounder of Paul and as a preacher of Jesus Christ.

Thomas Goodwin was born October 5, 1600 at Rollesby, a little village in Norfolk. He was brought up with great care by his Puritan parents, who had from his birth devoted him to the Christian ministry. He was educated at Cambridge where he attained a great proficiency in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. He kept up his reading in those three languages to the end of his life, and to the lasting enriching and adorning of his pulpit work. 'By an unwearied industry in his studies', says one of his biographers, 'Goodwin so much improved those natural abilities that God had given him, that, though so very young, he gained for

himself a great esteem at the University. But all the time', adds the biographer, 'he walked in the vanity of his mind, and ambitious hopes and selfish designs entirely possessing him, all his aim was to get applause and raise his reputation, and in any manner to advance himself by preferments. 'But', adds his biographer, 'God, who had designed Goodwin to higher ends than those he projected in his own thoughts, was graciously pleased to change his heart and to turn the course of his life to the divine service and to the divine glory'. After his conversion, Goodwin attached himself openly and boldly to the Puritan party in the University, and he remained one of the great pillars of that party as long as he lived. He was wont to say that it was his deep reading of his own heart, taken along with his deep reading of his New Testament, that made him and kept him an evangelical Puritan through all the intellectual and ecclesiastical vicissitudes of his after life.

Owing to Archbishop Laud's persecution of the Evangelical party in the English Church, Goodwin was compelled to resign all his ecclesiastical appointments and to take refuge in Holland. By this time his scriptural and historical studies had made him a convinced Independent, both in politics and in church government. He was looked on and spoken of as the 'Atlas of Independency' all through the coming years of much debate and controversy in connection with church constitution and church government.

After Laud fell Goodwin was able to return to England. He settled in London where his unparalleled power in the pulpit soon gathered a large and influential congregation around him. In the porch of the City Temple there is a monumental tablet to the memory of the first minister of that famous congregation, which runs thus: 'The church assembling here was founded by the Reverend Thomas Goodwin, D.D.: Preacher of the Council of State; President of Magdalene College, Oxford; Member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines; and chaplain to Oliver Cromwell . . . This tablet is erected by this church to perpetuate the Hallowed Memory of her venerable and illustrious founder'. And his Latin epitaph, in Bunhill Fields Cemetery has been translated thus: 'Here lies the body of Thomas Goodwin, D.D. He had a large acquaintance with ancient, and above all, with Ecclesiastical History. He was exceeded by no one in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. He was at once blessed with a rich invention and a solid and exact judgment. He carefully compared together the different parts of Holy Writ, and with a marvellous felicity discovered the latent sense of the divine Spirit who indited them. None ever entered deeper into the mysteries of the Gospel, or more clearly unfolded them for the benefit of others ... In knowledge, wisdom and eloquence he was a truly Christian pastor ... Till having finished his appointed course, both of services and of sufferings ' in the cause of his Divine

Master, he gently fell asleep in Jesus. His writings that he has left behind him will diffuse his name in a more fragrant odour than that of the richest perfume. His name will flourish in far distant ages, when this marble inscribed with his just honour, shall have dropt into dust. He died February 23rd, 1679 in the eightieth year of his age’.

Goodwin’s works, in their original editions, occupied five massive folio volumes. ‘And’, says Andrew Bonar, in one of his learned notes to Rutherford’s Letters, ‘they are five invaluable volumes’. In the Edinburgh edition the whole works fill twelve closely-printed octavo volumes.

The first volume of the Edinburgh reprint is wholly occupied with thirty-six sermons on the first chapter of Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians. The Ephesians was the Apostle’s favourite Epistle and it was also Goodwin’s favourite Epistle. I know nothing anywhere at all to compare with this splendid exposition, unless it is Bishop Davenant on the Epistle to the Colossians, or Archbishop Leighton on First Peter. Goodwin cannot be said to have the classical compression, nor has he the classical finish that so delight us in all Leighton’s literature. But there is a grappling power; there is ‘a studying down’ of the passage in hand; and withal, there is a height and a depth, and a fertilizing suggestiveness in Goodwin that neither Davenant nor Leighton possess.

For a specimen of this golden volume take the expository sermon on the words: ‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ’; or the sermon on the words: ‘Holy and without blame before him in love’; or the sermon on the words: ‘Sealed with the Holy Spirit’; and in those great sermons you have noble examples of the height to which the Puritan pulpit could rise. Then there is Thomas Goodwin’s twenty-six pages on ‘The sealing of believers’. I know nothing deeper, nothing sweeter, nothing more captivating and enthralling in the whole range of exegetical and homiletical literature. I would almost venture to set those divine passages as the test of a divinity student’s spiritual experience, spiritual insight and spiritual capacity for opening up to a congregation the deep things of God. To the wonderful sermon on ‘Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith’ you must bring your most disciplined theological mind, and your most deeply exercised Christian heart. For myself, when I am again reading that superb sermon, I always set it down in my mind beside Hooker’s immortal sermon, ‘Of Justification’, as two of the greatest, if not the two very greatest sermons in the English language. But how Hooker’s people or how Goodwin’s people could have

followed such powerful and such soaring sermons, I cannot imagine. It is hard enough work to follow them and to master them even when they are read or re-read in the leisure of the study.

I will leave what I have said about the specimen sermons I have selected out of Goodwin's Ephesians with this fine saying of Hazlitt about Burke: 'The only adequate specimen of Burke', said Hazlitt, 'is all that the greatest of English statesmen has ever written'. And with this out of Coleridge: 'How Luther loved Paul! And how Paul would have loved Luther!' So will I say: How he would have loved Goodwin! And that not without good reason. For not even Luther on the Galatians is such an exposition of Paul's mind and heart as is Goodwin on the Ephesians. I never open this great volume that I do not recall the words of my dear old friend, John More of Woolwich, who said on one public occasion that he owed all his divinity to Goodwin on the Ephesians.

Now, if only somewhat to justify Mr More's high appreciation of this volume and my own, I will give you what some of Goodwin's most learned contemporaries said about it. 'That person' they said, 'is the best interpreter, who (besides other helps) hath a comment in his own heart. And he best interprets Paul's Epistles who has Paul's spiritual sensibility, Paul's temptations, Paul's whole experience. Goodwin has a genius to dive into the bottom of the scriptures which he intended to treat of; he *studied them down*, as he was wont to express it; he always waded out into the depths of things.' Also he had intelligent congregations to minister to, a matter that draws out the best gifts of a preacher.

'After his return to London', his editors continue, 'he was made choice of to preach on this Epistle, to which great work he was eminently suited, upon all accounts, having seen into the deep mysteries of this Epistle even beyond the insight of these times. He makes use of a great variety of learning, though in a concealed way. Studying to bring his learning to Scripture -- not Scripture to his learning. He breaketh open the mines of the glorious grace of God and the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the further he searches into those riches, the greater treasure he always finds: *plenius responsura fodienti*, as one saith in a like case. No man's heart was more taken with the eternal designs of God's grace than his; none more clearly resolves the plot of man's salvation into pure grace than Goodwin. That these discourses are all his own we need say no more than that they bear his own signature, he having in them drawn to the life the picture of his own heart by his own hand'. So speak two of the most eminent men of that day.

Goodwin's second volume contains his famous sermon on what he calls 'the strangest paradox ever uttered'. That strangest of paradoxes is the passage in

which the Apostle James tells the twelve tribes to count it all joy when they fall into divers trials or temptations. Goodwin's loss of his valuable library in the great fire of London was the occasion of his remarkable discourse entitled 'Patience and her Perfect Work'. In that great calamity our author lost £500 worth of selected and cherished books; a greater loss to such a student than any number of pounds could calculate. 'I have heard my father say that God had struck him in a very sensible place. But that since he lost his books much too well, so God had sharply chastised him by this sore affliction'. This recalls to my mind what Dr Duncan of this college was wont to say: 'My Semitic books', he said, 'are my besetting sin'. But, as God would have it, out of the red-hot ashes of Goodwin's burned-up books there sprang up a sermon that has been the calming and the consolation of multitudes amid crosses and losses such that, but for Goodwin's teaching and example, would have completely crushed and overwhelmed them.

The third volume contains 'An Exposition of the Book of Revelation,' which is followed by 'Three Select Cases Resolved.' And Goodwin's *Three Cases* are as lastingly valuable to me as his Revelation is worthless. Goodwin warns his readers that some of them may find his Revelation somewhat 'craggy and tiresome.' And I am fain to confess that I am one of those readers. The true key to the Book of Revelation had not been discovered in Goodwin's day. And, therefore, I thankfully accept his offered permission to leave his Revelation alone. But if his Revelation is 'craggy and tiresome' to me, his 'Select Cases' are everything but that. The truth is, there is no part of Goodwin's twelve volumes that has been more thumbed by me from my youth up than just his 'Three Select Cases.' The ablest, the most scholarly, the most elaborate, and, I need not say, the most eloquent book of case-divinity in the English language, is Jeremy Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium*. The *Ductor* is a book that every divinity student ought to read once at any rate in his lifetime, even if he finds it also to be somewhat craggy and tiresome in some parts. But if he reads Goodwin's 'Select Cases' once, and if he needs them as much as I do, they will never be long out of his hands. 'Likewise, at the same time,' says James Fraser of Brea, 'I received much knowledge and much comfort from Mr. Goodwin's works, especially from his *Growth in Grace*. For that book of his answered to the frame of my heart as face answers to face.' 'The Three Select Cases' are: 'A Child of Light Walking in Darkness,' 'The Return of Prayers,' and 'The Trial of a Christian's Growth.'

'The Heart of Christ in Heaven towards Sinners on Earth' is the gem of the fourth volume. And it is a gem of the purest water, if I am any judge. If any enterprising student who now hears me is interested, or ever becomes interested, in the philosophical and theological controversy that raged round Mansel's

famous Bampton Lectures in my New College days, he will find the roots of that whole debate dealt with, again and again, in a most masterly way in this profound volume. It is such pages as occur, again and again, in this volume, that have won for Goodwin the fame of being the most philosophical theologian of all the Puritans. And every one who knows the works of the great Puritans will recognise how high that praise of Goodwin is. Hooker, in some important respects, comes up closer to the full truth about the Heart of Christ in Heaven than even Goodwin does. And it does not need to be said that the greatest theologian of the English Church clothes his great teaching here, as everywhere, in the noblest English ever written. At the same time, Goodwin is unapproached here, as so often elsewhere, in his combination of intellectual and theological power with evangelical and homiletical comfort. Take them together on this supremest of subjects, and Hooker and Goodwin will form an inexhaustible equipment for any man whose office and calling it is to preach Jesus Christ in His life on earth, and in His eternal priesthood in heaven.

Speaking about Hooker, the Fifth Book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* contains some of the very noblest things that have ever been written on that great mystery of godliness, 'God manifest in the flesh'; and that in language not wholly unworthy of that noblest of subjects. Unhappily for English Church doctrine and discipline, Hooker's incomparable Christology always ends in pure sacramentalism. But, on the other hand, happily for the evangelical faith, Goodwin's fifth volume is full of the purest and strongest and sweetest New Testament truth. *Christ the Mediator* is the all-comprehending title of this massive and most scriptural book. And throughout, this grand subject is grappled with, and is handled, as only Goodwin can grapple with and handle Paul. And then every chapter is carried down into the hearts of his hearers and readers with that powerful, and at the same time tender, homiletic of which Goodwin is such a master.

The chapters in the sixth volume to which I oftenest turn are those on True Spirituality; on true and pure scriptural and evangelical spirituality; what it is; and why and how it is what it is; on spiritual persons and spiritual things; and on the supreme blessedness of the truly spiritual mind. The chapters on conscience in the sixth volume are simply masterly, even to this day. Neither Sanderson, nor Taylor, nor Butler, nor Chalmers, nor Maurice, nor all of them taken together, have superseded Goodwin. I speak only of the authors I know somewhat well when I say that none of them comes near Goodwin for powerfulness, for subtlety, for finality, and best of all, for evangelical impressiveness and for pulpit fruitfulness. I know what I say, and you may believe me--Butler on conscience, and Chalmers

on Butler, and then Goodwin after them, these three masters will furnish out a young preacher with a doctrine and a homiletic of conscience that will be like iron in his own blood and in the blood of all who sit under him.

By men who know what they say on such matters, Goodwin has been appreciated and eulogised as by far the most philosophically minded of all the Puritans. Let the great treatise in his seventh volume, 'Of the Creatures, and the condition of their state by Nature,' be read in proof of this eulogium. Even in these Darwinian days, when Adam has been dissolved and distributed into so many protoplasms, and potencies, and preludes of the human being who was to come in the far future, I am bold to recommend Goodwin's seventh volume to all serious-minded students of Moses, and of Paul, and of themselves.

Editing the eighth volume, Goodwin's dutiful son says of it: 'In this book of my father's you have the infinite mercy of the divine nature displayed as far as human thought and human language can reach. And what you here possess in my poor English does not at all reach the rich eloquence of his Latin.' So far Goodwin's grateful son. But take the eighth volume from me, and in this way. We sometimes entertain one another by disclosing what author and what book of his we would select to take away with us if we were banished to a desert island, and were only allowed one author. One says that he would take Homer, another says Dante, and another Milton. Almost every one says Shakespeare. Now to employ one of Goodwin's own expressions--would you count me utterly 'uncouth and extravagant' if I said that I would take--Goodwin's eighth volume with me to my island? Whatever you count me, it is true, and I have done it, and that more than once. 'I write this book,' says its author, 'for the use of thoroughly humbled and thoroughly broken hearts.' And you will all admit that till a man's heart is thoroughly humbled and thoroughly broken he is not a fit judge of the books that contrite men should select to take with them to read, whether on an island or on a continent. The great acknowledgment I have to make concerning Goodwin's eighth volume is this. I had often read the thirty-fourth of Exodus before ever I came upon Goodwin's exposition of that great fountain-head of Old Testament grace and truth. But from the day when I first read Goodwin's epoch-making discourses on that wonderful chapter, it has been a source of daily salvation and of daily song to me. Yes, I am quite safe to say that for fifty years I have never seen the day that 'the Name of the Lord 'has not been a strong tower to me, and all owing to Thomas Goodwin's exposition of that great Name. 'Thank you, sir,' writes one of our ministers to me; 'thank you for urging us to study Goodwin. Nowadays he is never out of my hands.'

After you have read his ninth volume, 'On Election,' you will confess that amid much that is somewhat craggy and tiresome 'to you, at the same time you have come upon chapters that only Goodwin could have written, notably those chapters on the election of Christ Himself, and on your election in Him. As also the specially Goodwinian Book iv. on 1 Peter v. 10. Indeed, I will stake all I have ever said about Goodwin on this book: that is to say, when the book comes into the hands of the prepared and proper reader.

His tenth volume is a comprehensive treatise on the Prophetic, Apostolic, and Puritan anthropology. It cannot be denied that this treatise is somewhat sombre and even solemnising and overawing reading. But it would not be true to mankind if it were not both sombre and solemnising and overawing. The whole volume is an exhaustive and a conclusive answer to the Catechism question: 'Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?' And once mastered by the true student this massive treatise will remain a quarry of scriptural and experimental material both for his personal religion and for his pulpit work.

The eleventh volume contains an elaborate treatise on 'The Constitution, Right Order, and Government of the Churches of Christ.' As to the manner in which Goodwin's defence of Independency, and his assault on Presbytery and Episcopacy is conducted, I will let the author's son speak: 'Here,' says young Goodwin, 'is no pride nor arrogance. Here are no reproaches, no base and sly insinuations, none of those invidious reflections with which controversies are usually managed. But here are sober thoughts, calm reasonings, and the truth showing itself in such a mild and lovely aspect as may create inclinations to it in the souls of all persons whom passion or interest have not too much prejudiced.' So speaks an able and a loyal son about the only polemical work of his father. There is no doubt that this elaborate volume will greatly fortify the Independent who reads it, and there is as little doubt that it will both open the mind and reward the heart of the Presbyterian and the Prelatist who has the patience and the sympathy to master it. 'A truly great and noble spirit,' is the verdict of a Presbyterian of that day, who felt bound to attempt a reply to Goodwin's eleventh volume. For myself, I do not think that any one but Goodwin would have induced me to read a volume on Church government of five hundred pages again, and again, and again. To me that endless debate has little or no real and immediate interest, though I still believe in the apostolicity of Presbytery, even after reading both Hooker and Goodwin again and again. But what takes me back to both these authors is the nobleness of the thought and the style of the one, and the extraordinary freshness and modernness of mind of the other. But take this on this subject from Goodwin's own pen: 'As for my part, this I say, and I say it with

much integrity, I never yet took up party religion in the lump. For I have found by a long trial of such matters that there is some truth on all sides. I have found Gospel holiness where you would little think it to be, and so likewise truth. And I have learned this principle, which I hope I shall never lay down till I am swallowed up of immortality, and that is, to acknowledge every truth and every goodness wherever I find it.’

A& I have all along laboured to show, Goodwin is always an interpreter, and one of a thousand. So much is this the case that he is still an interpreter even when he lays out and executes his most elaborate, most confessional and most dogmatical works. I refer to such confessional and dogmatical works of his as *The Mediatorship of Christ*, in his fifth volume; *The Holy Spirit*, in his sixth volume; *The Object and the Acts of Faith*, in his eighth volume; and *Election*, in his ninth volume. Even when he plans out a great scheme of a book on the elaborate, constructive, and dogmatic method of his day, Goodwin no sooner commences the execution of his plan than he falls back immediately on his own favourite method of exegesis and exposition and homiletic. As a matter of fact, he heads every successive chapter, even of his most formal and logical works, with some great Scripture that he forthwith sets himself to expound and to apply. And thus it comes about that book after book, and chapter after chapter, is but another example and illustration of that endlessly interesting method of his. It cannot be too much signalised, for it is his outstanding and honourable distinction over all the great divines of his own and every other day, that every head of doctrine, every proposition of divinity, every chapter and every sentence and every clause of creed or catechism is taken up and is discussed down to the bottom by Goodwin, not as so many abstract, dogmatical propositions, but as so many fountain-head passages of Holy Scripture. All his work, throughout all his twelve volumes, is just so much pulpit exposition and pulpit application of the Word of God. And hence one great secret of the incomparable vitality, freshness, succulence, richness, great home-comingness, great personal directness, and great evangelical fruitfulness of all his work in all its parts. Like Paul, his master in mental constitution, in literary method, and in homiletic urgency, Goodwin will often ‘go off upon a word,’ as Paley says somewhat too familiarly about the Apostle. And sometimes, like his master in method, Goodwin does not soon return. But, like his master in this also, when he does return he returns laden with such fresh intellectual and spiritual spoils as make the digression almost richer than the proper text.

Long and elaborate as Goodwin’s sermons undeniably were, had they been measured by the scrimp and starved standards of our modern day, even so I feel quite sure that his sermons were not felt to be too long by those hearers of his who

had mind enough, and imagination enough, and experience enough to enable them to appreciate such a preacher. Indeed, his pulpit manner must have made his sermons singularly and endlessly interesting to those who listened to him. He is so natural in the pulpit; so homely, while so dignified; so unconventional, while so classical; so affable, so confidential, and always on such intimate terms with his hearers. He so takes his hearers into his confidence about his studies and about his sermons. He so shows them all the processes and operations of his mind in the conception and the composition of his sermons; he so leans over the pulpit and takes his hearers by the hand; he so speaks to them as if they were less his hearers than his fellow-students; he so introduces them to his favourite authors; he so assumes that they are all as much interested in his favourite authors as he is himself; he so tells them why he agrees so wholly with this great commentator and so wholly disagrees with that other; he so confesses to his hearers all the difficulties and all the perplexities he has had with his text; and how, at last, he thinks he has overcome those difficulties; and then he so puts it to them if they do not all agree with him in the interpretation that he is now putting upon the text. Full as Goodwin always is of the ripest scriptural and Reformation scholarship; full as he always is of the best theological and philosophical learning of his own day and of all foregoing days; full, also, as he always is of the deepest spiritual experience--all the same, he is always so simple, so clear, so direct, so untechnical, so personal, and so pastoral, in all his pulpit work, that what Thomas Fuller says about Perkins in his pulpit may be borrowed and applied to Goodwin. 'In a word,' says Fuller, 'Perkins' church consisting of town and gown, the scholar could hear no learned, the townsman no simpler or plainer sermons. He did distil and soak so much deep scholarship into his sermons, yet so insensibly, that nothing but the most familiar expressions did ever appear.'

And then as to his favourite authors, things like these continually occur. 'So Socrates was the highest instance how far the light of nature could go.' 'Plato thanked God that he was a man, an Athenian, and a philosopher. I, that I am a Christian.' 'Aristotle, that great dictator of nature, hath a touch of this notion in his *Ethics*.' 'See Athanasius on this text contra Arianos.' '*Omnipotente suavitate* is Augustine's word for this text on the drawing of the soul by Christ.' 'Suarez says this, and he is one of the acutest of our new schoolmen.' 'Scotus, the wisest of the schoolmen, and Bonaventure, the holiest of them, are of another mind.' 'Luther radically altered all his former principles and practices, such was the view he got of the sinfulness of sin.' 'Calvin, that great and holy light of the Reformed Church.' 'Pollock, Principal of Edinburgh University, in his Latin comments, and in his English sermons.' 'Worthy Mr. Dickson, also of Scotland.' 'Gerard, that most judicious divine.' 'Arminius also speaks true.' 'Zanchius, that best of our

Protestant writers, and a truly great divine.’ And so on; I have a thousand such references. Parenthetically, and as he passes on, he characterises and appreciates them all, as if, instead of having an everyday congregation sitting before him, he had an exegetical class hanging on his learned and eloquent lips. The Fathers, Greek and Latin; the Schoolmen; the Reformers, the Remonstrants, the Anglicans, the Arminians, the Antinomians, the Socinians, the Quakers, the English and American Puritans, the Scottish Presbyterians, they are all laid under pulpit contribution, and they all get their generous meed of praise, or their regretful word of passing blame. Till it must have been a Biblical and a theological education to sit under Goodwin, not only to his Bible students, but to all his hearers. And till I can see the Bible-loving Protector and all his preaching officers rubbing their hands with holy glee as they crowded round Goodwin’s pulpit, now in the House of Commons, and now in the camp, and congratulated evangelical England and themselves that they had such a ‘trier’ as Goodwin was, by whom to waken up the sleeping incumbents of the parish pulpits all over the land.

But, after all I have said, I would not feel that I had come within sight of doing justice to the whole wealth, originality, and suggestiveness of Thomas Goodwin’s mind unless I went on to give a specimen list of the topics and the themes he starts and treats himself, and of the topics and the themes he leaves his ministerial readers to take up and treat for themselves. I have, therefore, selected a short list of those topics and themes, some of which I have already treated in the pulpit myself. And if I have not sufficient time and strength left me to overtake them all, I shall leave them to such of you as shall succeed me in the study and exposition of Goodwin’s works. Take, then, the following texts and topics and themes as so many illustrations of Goodwin’s wealthy and suggestive mind.

‘God is glorified only by being made known.’

The Son of God might have assumed any nature, yours or mine.’

‘Jesus Christ was the greatest and the best believer that ever lived.’

‘The one great end of Christ’s preaching was to reveal the Father.’

‘Aliquid in Christo formosius Salvatore.’

‘Faith answers to the whole of Christ, and Christ answers to the whole of faith.’

‘Eye not the promises, but the Promiser.’

‘Holy Scripture is not abhorrent of the metaphor of purchase in the work of Christ.’

‘Man never knows how anthropomorphic he is.’

‘Some men have given over all other lives but the life of faith.’

‘Regeneration is but partial in the very best saints.’

‘Motus primi non cadunt sub libertatem.’

‘Our greatest sins are those of the mind.’

‘Their indwelling sin is by far the greatest misery of the regenerate.’

‘Self is the most abominable principle that ever was.’

‘Generalia non pungunt.’

‘We are to seek to have affections suitable to our knowledge.’

‘*Aqua fortis* is laid on letters of ink to eat them out, and so is the blood of Christ laid on the handwriting that is against us.’

‘Verba in res, as the philosopher said when he was converted.’

‘Divinity hath a definition of man, of which definition the deepest philosophy falls short.’

‘The circumstances lie heavier on the conscience than the act itself.’

‘Hell fire is not culinary fire.’

‘Good swimmers seek out deep waters.’

‘A thief that deserves hanging must not complain of being burned in the hand.’

‘Judas heard all Christ’s sermons.’

‘Demas left his preaching, and turned to merchandising.’

‘God had only one Son, and He made Him a Minister.’

And a thousand more of the same suggestive kind.

Now, I do not think that any born preacher can listen to a catalogue of texts and topics and themes like that without his heart taking fire for the pulpit. What think you? But with all that I have said, do not go away supposing or saying that I am demanding that any of you shall feed your mind and feast your heart on

Thomas Goodwin as I have done. All I have said to-day but leads me up to say this with some experience and with some authority, I hope: Find out the food and the relish convenient for your own mind and heart, and then feed continually upon it. Amid the immense intellectual and spiritual riches of our Biblical and theological and experimental and autobiographical literature, find out some first-class authors who shall be to you something of what Paul was to Luther, and Luther to Bunyan, and Calvin to Cunningham, and Athanasius to Newman, and William Guthrie to John Owen, and Augustine to Dean Trench, and Thomas Shepard to Jonathan Edwards, and Butler and Edwards to Chalmers, and Foster and Faber to Dods. And then study with all your might to put the theology of Paul and Luther and the Puritans into the written English of Hooker and Newman, or into the spoken English of Robertson and Spurgeon. And thus studying, and thus preaching, and thus living, you will both save yourselves and them that hear you.

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