No. 32.

God is Right.
I John, 1. 5. — "God is light."

The human mind has never another employment, than when it endeavors to stretch its powers to the conception of Deity. In our happiest moments of aspiration, we would fain send our thoughts on the upwaid path of glory, which leads to the throne of Jehovah; & to a certain distance, they ascend by a rapid flight borne on the instructions of the Gospel; but they reach the place where "archangels veil their faces", & then humbled & awed struck, they return to earth to tell us that it is not for us, who live in the midst of littleness, to bring forth in the grasp of our minds the full glory of the eternal God. — In the weakness of our vision & the defects of conceptions, we have recourse to sensible objects, & consider them as representatives of the Majesty, who is veiled from our sight. — This
propensity seems to have dictated the use
of the Apostle in my text. "This light
is a short sentence, but it has volumes of
Perhaps creation does not furnish an object
adapted, than light, to enwrap, as it were,
perfect thoughts concerning God, I give them
vision & beauty. Let us suppose for a moment
we had been present at that hour of our
operation, when this world was called into
Let us travel back in imagination to that
when the materials, of which composed our ear
dark, shapeless, & desolate, (when night sprin-
the wings were chaos,) when as yet that common
there be light," grand & mighty as He who
it, had not been proclaimed, & the incon-
ble energy of the Divine Spirit had not on
the face of the waters. Suppose that this scene of wild, solitary gloom we had
the light bursting forth & pouring its beam
glory on this vast spread domain of might
fusion. With what powerful effect regular
flood of splendid from this new object
come rushing across our minds, & how would a
awakened every heavenly, adoring thought, that had slumbered within us.- Should we
not almost spontaneously have deemed it a vis-
tant from heaven, considered it as the repre-
sentative of Him, whose word of power was cal-
ting the elements to order & assigning to them
the bounds which they might never pass? Oh,
suppose that a being, in the full maturity of
his corporeal & mental powers, but who had been
a stranger to our earth, were suddenly intro-
ted to the illumined face of nature. With what en-
ger delight may we presume his eyes would move
from one object to another, linger along on na-
ture's beauties. Yet in all this theatre of won-
ders, nothing probably would so powerfully
endear him to the attention, as the brilliant orb of day,
so we may imagine him often revelling with the
beams of astonishment, perhaps of devotion, to the
Sun shedding his beams on the subject world.
I maintain these suppositions to show how natural
is the divine nature; if this is still more clearly
evidenced by the fact, that when the human
mind was wandering in darkness & "the wise man by wisdom knew not," the heavenly bodies were the first objects which engaged the notion of idolatrous man. To these influences were so necessary to the happiness & enjoyment of mankind, gratitude presented its tribute of weakness offered its supplications. And who better knowledge of religious truths could render him, it was natural for man to exert his wonderful powers and the possession of giving the abstract ideas by the aid of the senses, in that light, the source of animation, activity, the emblem of excellence & happiness. Of the creative representation no books make more frequent use than the Scriptures. Thus, good men are called "the light of the world." "Children of the light." "The day!" "Light is given for the righteous." is the inheritance of saints in light! The exaltation rises still higher, is used to represent the to man. "He clotheth himself with light as a garment." "He dwells in light unapproachable. But the expression of the Apostle, "who have tasted, oversteps them all in boldness & energy," light." It makes us feel, that all ask light.
most pure, unmingled, & refined, the Most High
possess in all the glory, sublimity, of his existence.

I propose to consider in this discourse a few of
the larger & more general points of resemblance, on
the comparison of light to the divine nature
may be presumed to be founded.

1. In the natural world, the rays of sun light
spread a bright shining animation, wherever they fall,
open to us in vision, more or less clear, therewith
objects at rest ordain the scene around us. Without
it the world would be blank & pathless, with
whatever of interest or beauty the works of nature
might be crowned, they would be indistin-
guished under "the form of might." - Light
may be called our guide & interpreter in these
objects with the power of the Most High has
scattered around us, & it discloses the perspective
of creation in all its beauty, & dignity, & glory.
So it is with the moral world, the Almighty
has appeared to man in the spiritual light of
his divine instructions, to have one beautiful
infinite point of resemblance shines upon us. - God
is light, because he is the source of moral light.
The two grand sources of this blessed boon: light, care, the powers of faculties of mind, on God has been as a stream of precious water to man, as the rich treasures of revelation are the main of our house, has communicated to us through faith in C. J. He who made us hath made us with rational immortal souls, with minds destined for some better purpose than to minister to the senses, or to give us more dignity of success in the pursuit of great happiness. In that state as soon as we have reached them; have this charm we—"the days no longer at a distance. The grand and godlike task of man is to search out and find the light, and in the blessing of finding them, to follow the charm that binds together the operations of the soul through the continuum of life, although its progress be comparatively slow, parts of this charm it may bright to discover its traces. As the eye of man, by its organic structure, is naturally adapted to receive the rays of light, so the faculties of man, if exercised and guarded from delusion or embarrassment, are naturally fitted to perceive and embrace truths.

To pursue the high purposes of an immortal existence. God has given us reason, and therefore all that reason helped us to discover, all that it teaches us of the nature of our being of his character, our duties and will, whatever it discloses to us in our natural expectations, or in our nature, is nature, in our condition here of our prospects in the awful realities of their fruition. Oh, friends, before us the measured song, all things we may consider as coming in the light of nature from nature's pen. But after all reason is with a weak and faltering step, if the best she has to offer is in some cases doubt, in other conviction. Consider what, what would be our condition, if in the knowledge of duty we had no aid but such as the effort of our own mind and thoughts, and which, so far as were the Bible in existence, all the instructions, and that book of heavenly truth, had given us, were erased from our memory, if we were left by our own strength, weak in our own weakness, to form such conclusions as we might of religion? How could unworthy would our methods be, and how should we claim to value the treasures of divine grace. —Peppe
the truth of this, we need but look to the moral state of mankind before the coming of Christ. The human mind, without the sanctuary of the Logos, for centuries been floating on a sea of doubt, where mere words were anamnesis. In the language of Hebraic poetry, "darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people." There was but one mind in which the knowledge of the true G was preserved. The human mind was in the unutterable depths committed to their care, the G of the universe, the star of Bethlehem, the pure affection, and rose. Well, my friends, the Apostle says, "G is light," and he has come near to us in the very light of the Gospel. I need not remind you what G has done for us by his Son. He has taught us in all his character, in all our duty, in our most absorbing, and settled conceptions of faith, to think of our sublime destination. Several of the Hebrews, What once came to the world in the floating form of a shadow, when vanished, did the
man attempted to grasp it, now stands forth in full. Ideal's distinct vision, if not well
and minds to the dimensions of the subject. G

unity is now the banner of our civilized nations, and where once only a faint ray occasionally glimmered through the dark, there now shines the pure and broad light of the day. Thus "G is light," because he has sent the light to enlighten, to purify, to regenerate, and to sanctify the hearts of men. And when we consider how gloriously the living revelations were unfolded from the first to the last, how the dying eye rested on the glorious, the old prophet, who was nothing but dead in peace after he had seen the infant G, was not forcibly reminded of this similarity to the story of the moon's day? When we see the light that G has given upon the mind, upon the spiritual light of the heavenly truth, shall we not say in the noble comprehensive expression of John, "G is light"? Light is equally diffused over all objects. It has no selection of favorite spots; it spreads itself on all sides, and to us without distinction the most common and the most splendid scenes are made

illustrious. ItT retro the humble cottage of poverty, as the stately palace, or the private

habitations of a monarch. As has
it descends upon the lofty mountain, & communicates its good influences to the smallest blade of grass, at the same time that it sparkles on the tinsel & gilds the rising sun. It is, if I may so speak, the universal mantle spread over the material world. Here, then, we find another point of its resemblance to the divine nature. God diffuses his bounty, his instructions with that unyielding impartiality which knows no distinction but that of character, no excellence but that of the heart. There is no particular class of men, no chosen class of men, whom he selects to cheer with the beams of his favor, while he leaves the rest dark, deserted, & unsheltered. Scrutinize the meanest object with nature offers, examine the minutest insect, explore the wilderness where human foot has never been before, look through the various orders of beings from the reptile in the dust to the archangel as he hymns in heaven the praises of his God. Say, do you not find everywhere the traces of that wisdom which calls all the might of your mind to the task of adoration, & the impress of that goodness for which your aspirations of
thing, it is the pillar most rested to the moral
government of God, I think to you, that hence
suffer this pillar to be shaken, when it's fall
might overwhelm in the pollution of guilt this
fair world ask the bath formed? - of this cannot
be. Scripture has told us that "the wicked pree
wake the L. to anger by their abominations." - When
we say therefore, that G. diffuses the beams of
his favor equally on all with an impartial mer-
cy, we do not say, that He disregards the stor-
mal measures of right goodness, & allows viole
ty to triumph in the hope of His acceptance & af
firmaion. No, we mean, in the language of Scripture,
that "God is no respecter of persons," that He has
given to all alike the means of grace, offered
to all the treasures of heavenly wisdom. It is true,
the religion of x has not been to every region
of the earth with its wealth & its blessings. But
we complain of this would be as unreasonable as to com-
plain that the Sun does not burn as eschews at once in
meridian splendor, instead of mounting gradually from
the horizon. No one can deny that it is adapted for
universal diffusion. It is intended to be the
religion of the world. - It will be the religion
of the world. It is going on in the midst of its strength,
so evert, every nation will yet repose under its shade. Thus, my s. "G. is bright," because, like light, He spreads his blessings freely, equally, indiscriminately alike.

3. I will mention only one other point of resemblance between light & the divine nature. If we analyze light we discover no combination of discordant ingredients. It exhibits nothing more than a diversity of colours, each of them pure & essential light, all contributing, when blended together, to form one bright, uniform, beautiful, & beneficial emanation. So it is with the divine perfections. They constitute one sublime, harmonious whole, in which there are no elements of discord, no principles of variance. In our reflections on the divine character we are too apt to break it down into divisions & fragments, to dwell upon some single part so long, that we forget its relation & agreement to the other parts. Some can think of the Deity with intense emotion, when he is presented to them in the glories of His majesty, in the roar of terror. The voice of nothing but his thunder is the only voice they can hear; of the rest, the most indifferent might of his power can subdue the minds into reverence. Others can never think of G. without
dwelling on the terrors of his justice, severing it from its eminent alliance with other attributes—
they make it vindictive, unsparing, indiscriminate. Some would even believe that injustice
vanishing mercy is the only trait in the character
of the Most High. — This perfection they represent in
such a manner that we can hardly distinguish from
the weak, erring pity of man. With others the etern
ity of self-existence of God are objects of exclusive
reflection. — But why will we thus set the die?
With divine character at war with itself? Why will
we pervert our talents in attempting to show how
sometimes the justice of God could refuse what
his mercy would gladly grant, as if the justice
of the Almighty were any thing else than
a modification of his goodness. Or why will we
in our own minds embarrass and entangle the divine
operations by placing them in opposition to each
other, and introducing among them irreconcilable dis
cord? — There is, it is true, a distinction in the
divine attributes of God. Some are essential to His
being; some of existence; others belong to Him
only in the character of Creator. Of the former are

his self-existence, spirituality, omnipresence; of
the latter his knowledge, wisdom, goodness. Among these attributes we must doubtless conceive
some to be more exalted than others. There are
divine minds engrossed with the peculiar glory of
moral excellence, and come to our hearts with mighty
power, because they appeal to all the more noble
purified parts of our nature. But it is our hap-
piness to know, if it is the glory of it to have taught
us, that these perfections blend together in the
eternal harmony of the divine character, from
a resource to ask our minds spontaneously look
with unconfused confidence and love. They imperce-
tibly mingle and unite with each other. ("Like the
colours of the rainbow, so to every eye can per-
ceive the varieties, while the keenest cannot
catch the precise point, at which each separate
tint is parted from its neighbouring hue"). By re-
reflecting on the attributes of G, successively, we may
dwell on the characteristic peculiarities of each, in
the same way as by the prismatic glass we can
separate the rays of the light into their various col-
ours; but we may not forget, that these attributes
like the same rays, when taken together form one pure,
luminous expanse of glory."
gratitude are all too short & feeble? Yes, everywhere there is the same Father, the same Friend, and truly we may say, God, like the light of heaven, is everywhere. - No is this impartiality of our Heavenly Parent seemingly in the external acts of his beneficence, as in the common privileges & bounty of his providence. It is not merely in the natural, but also in the moral & spiritual world, that He shows himself the God of all, the God of a just, the source of sanctity to everyone who will receive it, not merely to the few, but to all who might desire to monopolize it. He who has given to the whole race of man life, breath, and all things, has not utterly parcelled out that grace into distinct portions, but decreed to some the inheritance of his blessing & left others without his guidance, still less under the fear of his displeasure. - He has not drawn the boundary lines beyond or his favor shall not pass, though it were to give happiness to the greater part of the beings on whom his own hand hath formed. The weakness of perhaps the pride, of some may induce them to think that He is more pleased in the reasons he regards them with a more than common care.
grants them privileges which are denied to the rest of the world. But before the Almighty, the prince of the beggar is on a level, the rich is the poor alike dependant of helpless, the learned and the ignorant equally conscious of his grace supported by his aid. Purity of heart is the only price which gains the favor of the Most High. Holiness alone makes us elect and precious in his sight. Here indeed we grant there is a distinction in the kind regards of our Heavenly Father. He cannot look with the same smile of complacency on the saint and the sinner, on him who possess needlessly by the means of his grace or abuses them with wanton profanery, on him who strives to pour out his heart in the pure devotion of a humble than. The trappings of life, it is true, are nothing in the sight of heaven; the distinctions of man's pride and the hopes of man's vanity wither away into insignificance before the searching eye of Jehovah. But moral distinctions are eternal, and they ever must be regarded by God. The distinction between good and bad, virtue and vice, sin and folly, is no perishable
I have thus spoken to you of some points of analogy between light and the divine nature. But how poor and feeble are our conceptions! Light, of all things the purest and greatest ethereal, is too gross to represent with any thing like an adequate effect the character of our Great Self. In many particulars the comparison fails. However intense at the point of emission, light becomes weaker as it increases its distance, till at length the rays are too scattered to produce any effect on the organs of vision. But not so with the power and presence of Jehovah; for they are the same in every imaginable point of infinite space. - The light which shone out of darkness may again be absorbed by darkness. "The stars may fade, the sun himself grow dim with age." - But "the L. the everlasting, fainteth not, neither is weary." "The height's lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity," hath neither beginning nor end of days nor end of years. - My soul, while we think of these things let us be humble of trust in God. Not a thought concerning comes to our minds, but it brings with it the lesson of our poverty of weakness, and teaches us that the proper office for beings dwelling in the dust, as we do, is not to waste our moral
strength in minute enquiries concerning what we cannot comprehend, but to rise on the wings of adoration, till with the angels round the throne of God we may cry—"Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, Heaven and earth are full of thy glory." 

Aug. 1819.
Othne who art bright & driest in light, to thee would lift up our souls in adoration & reverence. We would praise thee for all that thou art in thyself, & for all that thou hast imparted to us thy creatures. To thee we look as the source of that light, whose beams warm, enlighten, & gladden creation. Especially would we be grateful for that moral illumination which shines upon us in J.C., thy Son. We thank thee that he was a ray of thy brightness & the representative of thy perfections, our teacher, our guide, our benediction. We would bow before thee with humility & reverence, when we reflect that though all thy children vanish like the morning dew, though the heavens & the stars thou hast created shall be rolled together as a scroll, yet thy being & glory are eternal, as they are infinite. Give us grace we entreat thee, that we may improve by our discipline here, as that henceforth we may join our voices with
At Mr. Pierpont's, Nov. 16th, 1819. - afternoon.
At Mrs. Frothingham's (Boston) April 16th, 1820. afternoon.
At home, July 16th, 1820. - forenoon.
At Medford, Aug. 29th, 1820. - forenoon.