No. 56.

The living water of the Gospel.
John IV. 13-14. - "Jesus answered, and said unto her, whatsoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

There are few passages in the history of Jesus more interesting than the conversation with the woman of Samaria, from which these words are selected. It finely exemplifies one of the most striking beauties in the instructions of our Saviour. - I mean, this very happy and impressive manner of divining upon the present occasion, the present topic, to enunciate truths of unfolding views of sublime meaning, vital importance. In some ages of the world, it has been a favored object with
rise men to find some substance, which should turn every thing that it touched into gold. One might say that this was realized in a far nobler sense by our Lord; for every subject, in all he touched, by his divine wisdom became the medium of conveying the golden treasures of divine instruction. Of this we have an instance in the case before us. Jesus was travelling from Judea to Galilee. On his way passed through a town of Samaria. Between the Samaritans and Jews, it is well known, there had long been a deep settled and bitter hostility. The people of Samaria acknowledged no part of the O.T. except the five books of Moses, as of divine authority. They had established the worship of God at mount Gerizim instead of Jerusalem. These causes of animosity between them, if the Jews had, from year to year, been aggravated by the addition of other less important dis-\underline{\text{puties}\text{, by mutual calumnies, by mutual injuries, feelings had become so exasperated and implacable, that they refused to each other the common offices of kindness and civility. It was a woman of this nation, gone with all the better spirit of her countrymen in his heart, whom Jesus met at the well.}}

"Rosalie, she gave to his son Joseph, we recognize her strong natural feeling in this very just expression. She was a beast to draw water. You cannot \underline{\text{give me to drink,}}" he answers. But, besides, this is the first time she felt like a Samaritan; as if, remembering that a Jew, with Jewish feelings, could have the boldness of the Jew, to ask any, even the most, favor of a Samaritan, instead of complying with the request of the Jew. She says, "Now as it is that thou art a Jew, and I am a woman of Samaria, why doth the Jew have no dealings with the Samaritans?" How unjust was this reply! How did it betray a heart embittered by narrow and local prejudices. But our Lord returned no such expression of dislike. He administered to her a string of love, but gentle, so true, yet at the same time seized the opportunity to declare himself to be, as the Messiah, to open to her a glimpse of the mighty character, with which he was invested by his "God." He said, "You have not eaten the gift of God. Receive it as that which it is, give me to drink, then would have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." — By living water.
So much for doubtless meant the divine light. It is a metaphysical expression of very common use in this sense. The Samaritan woman, whose mind was wholly unprepared for any such disclosure, did not penetrate the veil, and at first the meaning was concealed. The woman asks for water, as a literal sense; whereas, she rejoins, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living water?" Then proceeds to ask whether he pretended to be greater than their father Jacob, who gave to his children the well. Still more in his answer continues his metaphysical language, saying, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." The narrative proceeds to relate that the woman of Samaria became at length convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and many of her friends and acquaintances believed in him; that on that same occasion he telleth the woman he that then was at hand, when the flesh and blood,Sans had stood, as a wall of division between Jews and Samaritans, would be destroyed, when it should be known that God is a Spirit, and that the same Spirit dwelleth with Jerusalem for the house of Jacob, even so, since the earth should be his sanctuary and his altar. As for the heart of man...
...closes yon sets its faith, as the storm of persecution grewheader; and more violent.

By that water, with promises as will be in beauty receives it a well of water springing up into everlasting life, we are to understand all the truths, words, influences of God. The figurative expression is often used to convey an idea of the peculiar value of religious truths. Thus the prophet Isaiah says: we every one that thirsteth, come ye to the water. And whoever receive the consolation, the support of divine truth. The force of this expression will be better understood, if we consider the situation of the people among whom it proceeded. In these Eastern regions, the ground is parched and burning sun. Sometimes, while troops of travellers were overhwhelmed with the heat of deserts, where so frequently meets with the Oriental part of the world. Being placed thus, situated, we may easily imagine, that fountains of pure, fresh water would be regarded as among their most valuable possessions, and richest blessings. And this we see, in easily & naturally, they would come to express by the word, "spring water," whatever they considered as peculiarly precious, or as bringing refreshing and preserving support. With them the expression must have had some force, and it can have neither, if, under circumstances, they must have felt the metaphorical language, as peculiarly impressive. Keeping in view the peculiarity of the place, where the words were spoken, we shall find an uncommon energy and earnestness in the words of the text. What the fountain of living water is to the memory of every poor traveller, such is to the heart of the thirsty soul. We must, therefore, remember our Saviour's, as intending to say, that whoever shall go to the spring of satisfaction, and shall go to any other source, than to this, his religion, will meet to any other source, than to this, his religion, will meet disappointment. He will thirst again, but all those persons will look to the God, for aid, for assistance, and to this, its divine light. In its heavenly consolations shall be full and complete satisfaction. He shall never thirst, but shall know by experience that the hopes & instructions
contemplation of this future of more valuable existence in the world to come, to reclaim them from worldly-mindedness, from attachment to the earth, to encourage a pure and upright mind, to impress them with the anticipation of the society of good men, the perfect of this world, the blessedness of the world to come, by gradual improvement and progressive advancement to everlasting happiness. When therefore we see the design of it was to make us happier by making us better, are we not led to ask the reasonable question, why there is among men so little of the temper and spirit required by the laws and institutions of the Gospel?

It can only be answered, that they do not consider that the objects of the moment, like a delirium, have in such cases so long prevailed for a time the exercise of their better reason, or that enveloped in a cloud of great darkness arising from their own evil habits and indulgences, the beams of gospel light have not penetrated their hearts? in other words, that they undoubtedly prefer darkness to light, because their deeds...
an evil. In proof of some effort being necessary to
sense & awaken the depraved mind, that is adverse
to sensible pleasure, it is one of the properties of vice,
that it waits to be subdued. So true is this representa-
tion, that besides the constant watching the ap-
proach of any enemy that may attack us in secret
in disguise, weaken the security of our virtue, we
are hindered to be vigilant over ourselves; for the
passion only in the cause of aspiring virtue is to be
indifferent to our success in great dangers of being
overcome. It is only while the man sleeps, that he
may be taken in the net. In the struggle for the
crown of immortal glory set before us, we must
be seriously affected to every good work & deed;
we must work out our salvation with fear & trem-
bling, employing the day, while it is called today,
lest the night come when no man can work. In th
sight of grace, whether we are any day advancing,
there is no knowledge one device, such as we are
the tomb closes upon us, & when the restorations
of the dead shall be called upon to give up their
who have fallen asleep, they will be restored to
the day of retribution in the same order as in
the world. I am told, in that state an ask death
over them, the resurrection will find them.

The yes, my sir, is truly what our deed has deserved.
it to be, a fountain of living water; both an ac-
count of the divine instructions to it itself &
for the motives by which those instructions are gone
unheard. Besides the grand yonder truth which
it has disclosed concerning the character of God
the nature of kingship, it teaches us, that
when men had prospered from their Lord, that
when they had been for ages involved in the dream
of vengeance, perfidy, & darkness respecting the fu-
ture destruction; exposed to add those naturally
sinful evils, which are the inevitable consequences of
real evil; & absolutely passion, a fire to the savages of
vice, to unwavering care, disgust & remorse, that
at length the God whom they had offended
through light on their darkness, minds, by declaring
his readiness to forgive their sins, upon the condition of their sincere repentance, of return to the laws of God, obedience, to receive them again into his favour, to give them the assurance of a restitution to that life immortal which they had forfeited by transgressing the law of innocence, most excellent, and to effect these and purposed, to give the highest sanction and solemnity to his declarations, after many forebodings intimations of predictions delivered to the world by the holy men in ancient times, through many successive generations, he sent this well belovéd Son, to declare to his whole council, and relating to our eternal salvation, that this Messiahs of this hire by his divine character, was qualified for the high office of enlightening the race out of darkness, of regenerating mankind by giving them the light of everlasting glory. He gives of grace delivered by this messenger of the Most High is the most substantial benefit and eternal help of man; this conveys to us the moral of life, the life of our calling, the charter of our salvation. What was openly taught in the laws of Moses is here delivered with the utmost plainness and simplicity. We are taught our duty to man and our duty to God—how we should live here, what we must expect hereafter. There is benign for the afflicted heart, because the law teaches us that there is an onward hand high for the righteous beyond the shore whereto the sun cannot come to the noon. There is perfect encouragement for all our heavenly rewards because we are assured that God looks with affection on every pure thought & every good purpose. While therefore the blessedness and these instructions, all these aids of divine grace, is it out, this, for indeed a well of water springing up into everlasting life. And while it is in our power to divine these many distinguished blessings from the light of the discoveries of our holy religion, shall we not confess that God has given us, that power of 2nd the Bridegroom shall none thrust again. Yes, he gaspeth in truth, a lamp to our feet by a light to our path, let us listen to the still small voice, who says—This is the way, and we will walk in it! Let us follow this light & give glory to God, before the cause our feet stumble.
on the dark mountains. Let us walk as children of the light of the day, as love as becomes those that have been instructed in the things pertaining to the good news through the knowledge of him who hath called us to holiness by virtue. The light which he has imparted to us concerning his grace, the dispensation of the grace, the reality of a future state of existence, these grand consolatory doctrines will be reas revealed to man in the present state of darkness, death, the living waters of life. We drink deeply we shall not thirst again; they are highly rich advantages to the righteous men of whatsoever shall seek the same. We have not withheld from us on either side of the world. In these latter days God has given us the light of the day. This is the true light of the light of every man, that cometh into the world. This is the polar star that guides through the darkness. It is the beacon that marks him of the world, the sinner, that guides his back amidst the winds of the world, at last directs his course into the desired haven of safety and peace. And thus the grace of grace, that is himself assured as that it should, in the beam of the righteous, an inexhaustible fountain of living water springing up unto everlasting life.

And this we cannot but notice the subject consolation is derived from the God of gods in the midst of affliction. It is from our good that our Saviour sometimes accommodates the bitter portion of suffering. A state of trial here is necessary to make us fit for the state of endless enjoyment hereafter. Yet to be cut off to the will of God is one of the heaviest lessons we have to learn in the school of life. We must learn to bow down when the hand of God is upon us. But when once we have received the spirit of the religion of Jesus, we can then in any event say from the heart: "Father, not our will, but thine be done." It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth unto him good. And thus while the grace shall see the heart it flow
It becomes in truth that fountain of living water, as our savior has described, refreshing the soul, and giving it strength to meet the trials of life, without dismay, and without murmuring.

If then, stand by the Jesus, he indeed a well of water springing up into everlasting life; how does it deserve the serious and earnest attention of each one of us. Shall we not go down to this fountain and drink deeply for the healing and strengthening of our souls? I would particularly urge upon the young the importance of listening to the voice of religion. While the armor of youth is upon us, the smile of friendship is around us, how easily do we forget that this bright scene may wither in a moment, is leaves us nothing but the source of living water, to supply our wants and spirits. It is the duty of the young especially to consider the éolian harp in youth; the hopes and fears which may find a place in the heart. The young remembers that while they delay, they are diminishing the efficacy of means, and shortening the time of probation; while they hesitate, it may be, they lose it.

Thus promise themselves years perhaps they have not days the blessings of early life are frequently gathered for the tomb. Perhaps, my young friend, it hashaps he heard the voice of him that rose on the winding sheet. Perhaps the feet of him that buried your neighbors are at the door, to carry you out? Remember, therefore, your location in the days of your youth. Let the morning of life be ornamented by religion's virtue.

And let it is well, my friends, endeavor to realize the obligation under which we have to give heed to that voice. It affects the promise of peace of mind in this world, and the assurance of that peace beyond the grave, with all understanding. "They go, not, that being the true disciples of their Saviour, may be unceasingly endeavoring to perform the condition, finally attain the fulfillment of the promise of the gospel; or in the language of our text, may we all be persuaded to drink off that well, whose water will satisfy our thirst, that it may be in our heart a living fountain springing up into everlasting life." April 15th.
Other, who art our life, from thee we have received all our faculties of mind & all the means of grace that raise us above the world & direct our thoughts to the hopes & glories of immortality. In S. C. thou hast given to the thirsty the water, & to the hungry the bread of eternal life. And we pray that we may be truly sensible of the obligation, under which we are placed, to improve faithfully all the means of spiritual life, & use them best unto our hands. Help us to feel as we ought that our days on earth are passing rapidly away, & that therefore we should work while the day lasts, that we should not wait for our days 8 years to pass away, & 4 years with them to this hour the reward of our indolence, our faithlessness, our misappropriation of time & opportunities. O grant that we may have an ear to hear, a heart to understand & a hand to reach out to us by S. C. May his love be to us a fountain of living water, & may we be drank of his instructions, that we may never thirst, & thus may we become prepared to reign with him in his heavenly kingdom, through S. C.
At home, April 9th, 1820. Forenoon.
At home, Sunday lecture, July 28th, 1823.
At home, July 20th, 1827. Forenoon.