No. 90.

On the parables of the grain of mustard seed, of the leaven hid in three measures of meal.

Jan 1821
Matt. xiii, 31-32. "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; for indeed it is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a woman that had three measures of meal, and with those took a little thereof. Then there came a lack, and she began to grind meal and to measure it for the breakfast of the house. So is the kingdom of heaven, if a householder, being wakened, should find among his goods that which should be sold; he would say to himself, I have three measures of meal; sell these and give to the hirelings, because the other is ready. And why have I not sold all my goods, and given my alms, that I might have a company in the next world? But wisdom is not sold. For, behold, there is nothing that can be sold. But he that has it, has it for ever."

These two parables should be taken together, because they both relate to the same object, and design to convey the same instruction. By these comparisons, Jesus intended to shadow out to the sinners the future ruin of all the transgressors of the laws. The phrase "kingdom...
of heaven" frequently occurs in the N. T.; its meaning is
sometimes different from what we commonly apprehend. We
almost always consider it, as intended to signify that fes-
tive state in which the righteous will dwell, and reign in
the presence of God and his angels. But it is often used
in quite a different sense. In the parlance of our own time
we consider; yea, in many other passages, it means not the in-
visible world of spirits, but the dispensation of the
law, in this world, i.e., our own; it means x. We cannot
define the way in which this phrase came to have this
signification. In the O. T. as in the prophecies of Daniel
for instance, when the time of appearance of the Messiah
are spoken of, they are represented as the period of the setting
up of a kingdom, yet a kingdom of heaven, because the
Messiah was to be made "the compassions of God." It is
time the Jews expected the reign of their king to be a time
of temporal glory; they misunderstood the thing signifi-
ced; but the phrase "kingdom of heaven" gives to the
laws among them, you say, "hand-fashioned" very forcibly.

 sincere use of it, as the common language of this country,
in speaking of his own office and mission. If the religion he was
about to establish. It was this, that the supreme "king-
dom of heaven" came to signify. The two dispensations,
the dispensation of law, if the dispensation of the
kingdom of heaven, came to signify. The two dispensations,
The object of design of these great acts, was that to repre-
sent the rise and dispersion of the spiritual success of the re-
ligion of Jesus in the world. If, whose beginning was humble
what its aim is, as it to all human expectations was
powerless, reach, but it was the limit of the object of the it
of dispensations went on increasing in strength and
one till multitude, upon multitude overtook it. It
and, if at length its power, its energy, still it has preserved
sane
universal, the whole mass of civilized society. If
this unwavering, if this piling up of itself, is seen, and the
seed, which is one of the smallest of all seeds, but comes
in this sense, there springs a tree, that gives its roots deep
from is spread its branches far, and affords a shelter to
resting place to the winds of the air; if it is compared
to a small portion of heaven, where concealed in the
seeds of meal, till at length it quickens as sprouted upon the
whole mass. Such is the meaning of the two dispensations.
Before we...

I must, therefore, call your attention to the facts concerning the propagation of the gospel, and the evidence of its truth. The facts afford the divine authority of our holy religion.

The history of this is remarkably distinct. It is therefore often to the strictest scrutiny; it is not the history of an opinion, but of opinions, which have been floating about the world in a shadowy form, until the being of one man was caught up into the imagination of another, thus transmitted them. The imagination of a father, and shining as a strong light, where it was, if not altogether in one place, it is not the common property of mankind. It is important to remark this, because the general spread of opinions, even in all the world, do not involve those who are in consequence of any kind, is by no means a parallel case with the general spread of opinions of religion. We are able to trace the precise time, at which the gospel made its appearance in the world, we can trace the period of history before the name of Christianity. If it were wholly unknown, we can point you to the country where it was first promulgated, we know distinctly the ground on which it claimed to be received; the history from the first profounded it, the nature of the evidence which had space of such an authority from God. The history of mankind in the world stood with regard to these new claims, and new information.

We are able to trace causes and effects with uncommon accuracy, to calculate the force of obstacles, to see whether any thing is to be attributed to favorable circumstances, or how much is to be ascribed to a higher power. Jesus appeared in the world in the character of a Messias, from God to man, gave the first impulse to that moral renovation which was afterward carried into effect. He was poor, friendless, alone, and even those who espoused his cause, if attached themselves to him, were encompassed with the author's fears. He was the object of vengeance alike to the pride of rank, the dignity of principles, the estimation of public applause, the ministry according to all probable calculation, was of no more than decent duration. In this time he performed miracles, delivered divine instructions, and rose again from the dead. Yet in the sight of all, the very people of this ministry, Jesus could not of course spread the gospel as was the necessity; he was to plant in the heart of men, to diffuse its...
the world his divine instruction, at times preparing others to carry them abroad. He gave the first movements to the society that had been stagnant, but left it to others to carry on the purifying process of agitation. He put the golden treasures of this religion into the hand of his apostles, that they might carry them to the four winds of heaven. 

It is to the history of these apostles that we are now to next take our steps—where the miracle of zeal begins to offer itself. There we commence our acquaintance. Let us accompany this little band of men of illeustrious men in the efforts they have made in the steps of their success. We find, from the Acts of the Apostles, that in their way they met with success. The society that had gone from Jerusalem, after the death of the Master, had consisted of about 120. These were probably all men, at that time, more willing to acknowledge their adherence to him, whether their seat be in light, had been. One on tory days from this time, you see added to their society about three thousand souls, when the occasion of the discipline of some who had been added. The number of the society he preferred his belief, which was about five thousand. And it is plain that, besides this number, there were many, who, seeing for their ranks and reputation, would not be led to believe in the word, though they were known secretly to have faith. The success of the word is increasing; for it is said that the multitude of believers were added to the Lord. It is said, 'The number of the disciples was multiplied greatly of many of the Lord points.' The last man in the world, probably, to have this in any way, became a disciple to the faith. Now let it be remembered that I have not said the increase of the number of disciples was more than one year in the whole city of Jerusalem, where the Lord had his seat. Before the temple, the place of the public worship was poured upon the head of the Master. It was where the people showed their reverence, their freedom from the pressure of the people, and where the high priest went to his garments, and indignation at the scoffers, some of whom, it seems, that the scene of many of the miracles of the apostles have that the number of many of the miracles of the apostles have
detected inferior artifice, is there had been any. We must particularly observe the progress of it in this period, because it took place in that very city among those people, who have every means of continuing and vitiating its claims, who minds the events of the life of Jesus are still preserved distinct. On the very soil on which that seed was planted the blood of those, whose religion took root so soon, was shed. The loss on men to subsequent periods. During the next two years, it was spread through Samaria: and before the end of thirty years, it was diffused through the numerous districts of Asia Minor, through Greece, the islands of the Aegean sea, the seaboard of Africa. It spread itself to Rome, and to Italy. At Antioch, Ephesus, Comana, Theba- 

dica, Beroea, Samos, Daphne, Lydia. It spread out to distant places, the number of converts is intimated by the expressing great multitude,” much hoped. At Rome, Athens, Alexandria, Damascus, Tyre, Tyre, there were numerous followers of the religion. During this time, Jerusalem continued, not only the centre of the missionary, but the seat of the religion, for where did it return? there, he found thousands of believers in that city. This is where<br>

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do them bring, good or ill, of war? Or were they, who engaged in this terrible duty, the favored sons of modern learning? Was there among them the philosopher, the man sincere to present beautiful notions, to captivate by intellectual and moral wonders? Did the first broachers of the gospel succeed, because they carried with them a religion that accommodated the passions or flattened the corrupt propensities of man? Was there nothing in the feelings and hopes of their countrymen of the rest of the world, to oppose them? Did they set in with the current of things & help it on, or was it all a smooth & easy business to them? No, nothing of all this. Great as their success was, they were compelled to struggle incessantly against the enemy of difficulty by subterfuge. They were obliged, if we may so express it, to throw its way in the face of opposition, it was obliged to contend for every inch of the ground, that it occupied. Profane men, poor, wretched, & illustrious, destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, recommended by no worldly reputation, went forth & triumphed over the forces of most determined foes, over the tyranny of the most material passions, over the subtleties of the philosophers, over the prejudices of the Gentiles & the bigotry of the Jews. They preached a religion from the severity of whose discipline, vice & corruption, & want of instruction, they knew, as important, & exposed them to danger & pain, & persecution, committed of unrestrained, to the gloom of a prison, & to the pangs of death. Hopeless as this self-denial might seem to man, the gospel emerged from the obscurity in which it was likely to be overwhelmed by the complications of distress of its friends & the unrelenting enmity of its foes. It succeeded to an astonishing degree in a peculiar manner: it derived that success from truth, obtained it under circumstances, other falsehood must have been detected & crushed. The Jewish arrogance & pride were against the apostles; for the descendants of Abraham had the proud distinction from other nations, by which in the midst of calamities, the most provoking he had always flattered himself, standing away in the broad height of a religion, that knew no distinction, but that of character & no excellence but of
the heart; the Scribe, the Observers, of the Rabbi, felt that his arbitrary power over the common people was about to crumble into ruins, that their insurrections would be detected sooner or later, that their claims denied, if their topographical claims were challenged by a system of faith and enlightenment, which it professed to be true and only its true disciples. Interest suppor
ted arose against them: for many could say in the spirit, if not in the language, of Cantorow, "See what our nation is, and see what it is that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be dedicated, whereon all Asia is alarmed!"

The scene before them was in truth truly alarming. They engaged in a formidable warfare. Their contention was with the most of enemies, with passion, with contempt, & pride. Some smitten at them, the finger's fruit of malice & disappointment; and some prepared their stories of vengeance. It is not something wonderful in the fact, that these few men, not only unattended by the powerful, but persecuted by them, not only unclouded, but expelled by the learned, should go forth uniting & encompassing, in the first years of their teaching, living whole cities of devotations, & countenance under the eye of God. Their success wonderful, as in itself it was, becomes still more so, when we remember that strong resistance against the most relentless power of history, that it was affected by no acts of compliance, by no flattering occasions. They did not take from the faith of the nation: they accommodated the feelings, we from the spirit. They sought to make room for indulgence and the passions, of their persecutors, yet to use the strong expression of the sacred historian, "the word of God grew mightily and prevailed." Surely this could not have been done, had not the hand of God been with this little band, had not the agency of God mightily been there. They were enhanced to work wonders, thus to exhibit the evidences of their authority; so the words, to ask them directed their proclamations to a battle in the tents, recorded in the ages. The history of this success with a parallel: for it must be observed, that one have not now been tracing the progress of describing the proclamations of an axiom, founded upon philosophical or critical arguments, when one detestations of reason, with the construction of ancient writings, that are void of a
system, the very basis of justification, in fact, was a supernatural character ascribed to a particular person of a doctrine as it contained the truth of souls as defended inerrancy on the truth of matter of fact from the outset. Of course, these successes are evidence in the necessity of the evangelical doctrine, consequently to the truth of the Faith religion. The success of Christianity is very far from being a hard case. It was the strong arm of force; it was a conquering army, the sentence was, you must believe in the Roman image, must die. At the head of this army, be enforced his religion, be his soldier was, he taught, to be sure of heaven. And what was the heaven he promised to his followers? Abundant of light, freedom, personal pleasure, or all that was associated in an alliance to be sure. He took a little from this, a little from that, the religion of Judaism, a little from all things, and this flexible nature of his own, he made a religion which should accommodate all temper of all persons, to be a support of this strange morality, because he tended to the power of making miracles. But Isaac, I must say that in every point of comparison, the case was totally different, with the first incarcerations of the same kind. If there were any allusion to any Goa, then must have been something more than human in thecold

habitations of diffusion of a religion; it was preached at first by the poor, humble, of ignorance. - York - though unfruitful by human authority, was recommended by the arts of penetration, men, though instead of being recommended by a flattering accommodating character, it advanced many of the profoundest truths with the utmost force, was not expatriation of false teachers reared in the minds of men, still proceeded. It hit them, only march with an unflattering step, till the name of the man was the banner of empire, it became more and more crept the scepter of the Prince of Peace.

Thus far we have considered the progress of God in its earliest days; with the new only is our argument chiefly concerned. But as we proceed to trace the history down the path of time, the new shows us with increasing splendor of glory. In after ages, it spread itself with the rapidity of an easterly; truly astonishing, year after year gaining new conquests, stretching its arm over new nations, till now it is diffused from continent to continent, from pole to pole, from the rising of the sun to the setting sun, going down thro'... Its power is extendible over the last of the most enlightened parts of the world. Its influence has

Paley
been felt to an almost inalienable degree through a large portion of the earth. It has shaken the temples of heathen worship, the gods of pagan idolatry have fallen before it. Where there was darkness, it has cast light; where there was ignorance, it has imparted knowledge; where there was war, it has given consolation. From many a spot on earth, the voice of sin, fraud, and corruption has been heard, and the cries of the wretched have ascended to heaven. But the religion of Jesus has brought many a wilderness into the abode of happiness; it planted the tree of gladness, and caused the desert to rejoice with blossoms. During the last fifteen hundred years, it has never abated power; but on the contrary, it has continued to be one of the chief healing distinctions prevailing among mankind. Of these parts of the world in which it is established, have been imbibed for centuries wisdom, refinement, happiness, and improvement; it has intertwined itself with all the concerns of man; it has been engraven into the structure of society; it has become a most prominent subject of history, having convulsed itself with almost every important event; it is one of the principal subjects of consideration of every age and generation; it is one among the most widely distributed and powerful influences of which the transactions of mankind, when the religious, moral, and political state of the world, have been deeply affected. It is one of the most illustrious triumphs of the Christian religion. From a small spot in Judea, from a little company of few and despised men, how can we account for such an effect from any trifling or temporary causes? Hath not God chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty? There is here, my child, a fact in the history of the world which has stamped its distinct character on this declaration: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

We have thus considered the progress and diffusion of Christianity; we have gone through the whole earth as it is in the act of being formed; we have not recognized the accuracy of the beauty of our Saviour's conceptions? Do not you like the seed, art is made? the smallest of all seeds, but when it is sown beneath a tree, so that the body of the same doth lodge in the branches thereof, it has not grown, like the heaven and the earth.
measures of food till the whole was leavened? - Yes, it is indeed a tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, it is spreading its branches over the world, of all nations, and some trust, some fear under its shadow.

It is true, it has not yet gone to every region of the earth with its truth and its blessings; but to complain of this would be as unreasonable, as to complain that the sun does not shine when we are once in meridian height, instead of mounting gradually from the horizon.

We should remember, that men, being established firmly in the world by the providence of God, it must be extended by degrees, as in justice as the heavens, that offire, its progress can be effectually removed. Much is now doing to diffuse the knowledge of it among nations, who are formerly enslaved by barbarous and heathenish, who are wandering in a thick mist of darkness: but care should be taken that the means be wisely judiciously applied, that the end in view be not lost, for want of due consideration. The soil must be prepared, before the seed can be sown with good effect. If you go to a people, whose minds have long been wedded to their superstitions and idolatries, who have grown up in the obscurity of their mind, and unmeaning rites, you must to approach them cautiously, and gradually, their religion, if the case be, is to them the dearest, as ever the wily and not surrender it to another, or by direct demand. We must begin by enlightening, instructing, and enabling them: we must from some common ground, in which we can both stand, if our ideas can meet; if then we may hope to introduce among them our holy religion, and communicate the same its blessings. They who have directed their labours to this object, have begun to adopt this cause, I doubtless it will be the most effectual cause. God grant that well directed labours in this cause may be successful, may be the means of enlightening and helping to the dark regions of the earth. This first duty to pray for the advancement of the kingdom of God on earth, brings, as we proceed with all these preparatory and helpful, are passing away; but the truths of thebole of the Lord abide forever, for they are unchangeable. May the knowledge of the power of these truths of hope be every year more and more diffused, till the earth shall become one grand tem
the heart of man are universal altars, to the living God.

Jan. 1824.

Often where providence is ever seen felt, who dost direct the event to govern the changes of life, we call divine and magnify thy holy name. We bless thee for thy manifold providence with regard to our immortal interests. We thank thee that the religion of Jew hath been propagated among men, we thank thee that thou hast to room before this vice of idolatry cause it to take deep roots, till it filled the nations; the idols are covered with the shadow of it, & it sends forth its strength unto the sea, & its branches unto the rivers. We pray that the religion of thy church may be from year to year more extensively diffused, & that thy church may carry to every nation light, of peace, of hope, of salvation. May the pride of the fancied passions of man be subdued; may the arrogance of man be extinguished; may all become the subjects of the prince of peace, imbibe this spirit, to submit to his rule. Amen.
At home, Jan. 28, 1824. - afternoon.

At home, May 20, 1832. - afternoon.