

**THE SLING AND THE STONE; OR,
WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?
A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE
PARISH CHURCHES OF MANSFIELD
WOODHOUSE, NOTTINGAMSHIRE**

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The sling and the stone; or, What is Christian education? A sermon, preached in the parish churches of Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire by Francis Minden Knollis

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FRANCIS MINDEN KNOLLIS

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THE SLING AND THE STONE;
OR,
WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCHES OF
MANSFIELD WOODHOUSE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE,
AND
NORMANTON-ON-SOAR, LEICESTERSHIRE,

IN BEHALF OF
THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS,
On the Tenth and Eleventh Sundays after Trinity, 1842.

BY THE
REV. FRANCIS MINDEN KNOLLIS, M.A.

Fellow of St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford;
late Rector of Congerstone, Leicestershire;
and Officiating Minister at Costock, Nottinghamshire.

Published by Request.

"I call Education, not that which is made up of the shreds and patches of useless arts, but that which inculcates principles,—polishes taste,—regulates temper,—cultivates reason,—subdues the passions,—directs the feelings,—habituates to reflection,—trains to self-denial,—and more especially, that which refers all actions, feelings, sentiments, tastes, and passions, to the LOVE AND FEAR OF GOD."—*Hannah More.*

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NOTICE.

THE publication of the following Sermon was so kindly and earnestly wished, both by the Curate of Mansfield Woodhouse, and many of its respectable Inhabitants, that the Author could not find in his heart to refuse compliance with their flattering desire. He earnestly trusts that it may be found of real and lasting use to all into whose hands it may chance to fall.

Costock Rectory,
August, 1842.

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A SERMON,

8c.

I SAMUEL XVII. 50.

“SO DAVID PREVAILED OVER THE PHILISTINE WITH
A SLING AND WITH A STONE :—BUT THERE WAS
NO SWORD IN THE HAND OF DAVID.”

THERE are probably few passages of Holy Writ more familiar to our ear than that from which I have selected the words of our text. The victory of the Jewish stripling over Philistia's haughty champion is almost the infants' Sunday tale. And doubtless many of those to whom I now address myself, can remember the time when they sat and listened to it with wonder and delight, in all the innocence and simplicity of early and confiding youth. And when, beneath the Sabbath calmness of a summer eve, they drank in with eager ear the voice of some fond and gentle mother, who told, in all the beautiful plainness of the scripture story, how “David prevailed over the Philistine with a

sling and with a stone," while "there was no sword in the hand of David."

Nor let me hope were those lessons of humble faith and patient confidence forgotten, which this most affecting passage of Scripture is so well adapted to convey.

But its applicability to the present occasion may not at first sight appear so evident as on maturer consideration I trust to render it.

I appear, my brethren, before you this morning, at the request of your appointed minister, as the humble advocate of your parochial Sunday schools. And it is with feelings of great delight and sincere interest that I find myself called upon to address you this day. To one whose office it is constantly to intercede "for the good estate of the Catholic Church," and to offer "prayers and supplications and giving of thanks for all men," it should ever afford cause of joy and gratitude to see the work of our common Lord, in any portion of his blood-bought Church, thrive, prosper, and increase. [But when to these general considerations are added more special and particular ones,* and when I can bear my feeble testimony to the great zeal and alacrity of your school's present instructors, and the ready desire for instruction of many, at

* In reference to certain local associations connected with the schools at Mansfield Woodhouse, which it is not thought needful, though mentioned from the pulpit, to particularize in print

least, of its children, I do feel indeed, my brethren, that they have established a claim upon my poor and unworthy services which can be pleaded by very few other schools beside!"]

May that God without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us his mercy this day. May he give you one and all a liberal, willing, and ready mind, and command his gracious blessing both upon my words to you and your offerings to him. Lord, vouchsafe us this and every other favour, for the sake of thy dear Son.

Now the words of the text, *in a spiritual sense*, are most strikingly appropriate to the cause which we are now advocating. A greater and more formidable giant than Goliath of Gath, has long been threatening to spread his baneful and destructive influence over our native land. That giant is *ignorance*:—ignorance of ourselves—ignorance of our prospects—ignorance of our situation—and ignorance of our God. That it is also highly desirable that this giant should be vanquished and overcome, is a point as readily admitted by all parties *now*, as the destruction of Goliath of Gath was a point most earnestly wished for by Saul and the men of Israel *then*. But, as in the former case, so also in the latter, there are totally opposite ways proposed as conducive to the same end. Goliath must, at all events, be conquered; but who is to compete with the haughty boaster? with what