field his own.

**45, 46.**] {45} SIXTH PARABLE. THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.  
In this parable our Lord sets before us,  
that although in ordinary cases of finding  
‘the truth as it is in Jesus,’ the buying of  
the field is the necessary prelude to becoming duly and properly possessed of it;  
yet there are cases, and those of a nobler  
kind, where such condition is not necessary. We have here a *merchantman*,—  
one whose business it is,—*on the search*  
for goodly pearls; i.e. a man who intellectually and spiritually is a seeker of  
truth of the highest kind. “He whom  
this pursuit occupies is a merchantman;  
i.e. one trained, as well as devoted, to  
business. The search is therefore determinate, discriminate, unremitting. This  
case then corresponds to such Christians  
only as from youth have been trained up  
in the way which they should go. In  
these alone can be the settled habits, the  
effectual self-direction, the convergence to  
one point of all the powers and tendencies  
of the soul, which are indicated by the  
illustration.” (Knox’s Remains, i. 460.)  
But as the same writer goes on to observe,  
even here there is *a discovery*, at a particular time. The person has been seeking,  
and finding, goodly pearls; what is true,  
honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good  
report: but at last he finds *one pearl* of  
great price–the efficacious principle of  
inward and spiritual life. {46} We hear of no  
emotion, no great joy of heart, as before;  
but the same decision of conduct: he sells  
all and buys it. He chooses vital Christianity, at whatever cost, for his portion.  
But here is no *field*. The pearl is bought  
pure—by itself. It is found, not unexpectedly in the course of outward ordinances, with which therefore it would  
become to the finder inseparably bound  
up,—but by diligent search, spiritual and  
immediate, in its highest and purest  
form. Trench instances Nathanael and  
the Samaritan woman as examples of the  
finders without seeking:—Augustine, as  
related in his Confessions (we might add  
St. Paul, see Phil. iii. 7), of the diligent  
seeker and finder. Compare with this  
parable Prov. ii. 3–9, and to see what  
kind of buying is *not* meant, Isa. lv. 1:  
ch, xxv. 9, 10. Also see Rev. iii. 18.

**47–52.**] SEVENTH PARABLE. THE  
DRAW-NET. *Peculiar to Matthew*.

**47.**] The net spoken of is a drag, or **draw-  
net**, drawn over the bottom of the water,  
and permitting nothing to escape it. The  
leading idea of this parable is the ultimate  
separation of the holy and unholy in the  
Church, with a view to the selection of  
the former for the master’s use. We may  
notice that the *fishermen* are kept out of  
view and never mentioned: the comparison not extending to them. A net is cast  
into the sea and gathers of every kind (of  
*fish*: not of *things*, as mud, weeds, &c.,  
as some suppose); when this is full, it  
is drawn to shore, and the good collected  
into vessels, while the bad (the legally unclean, those out of season, those putrid or  
maimed) are cast away. This net is the  
*Church gathering from the sea* (a common  
Scripture similitude for nations: see Rev.  
xvii. 15: Isa. viii. 7: Ps. lxv. 7) *of the world,  
all kinds* (see Rev. vii. 9); and when it  
is full, it is drawn to the *bank* (the limit  
of the ocean, as the *end* (literally, *consummation*] is the limit of the *world*, [literally,  
*age*]), and the *angels* (not the same as the  
fishers; for in the parable of the tares  
the *servants* and *reapers* are clearly distinguished) shall gather out the wicked  
from among the just, and cast them into  
everlasting punishment. It is plain that  
the comparison must not be strained beyond its limits, as our Lord shews us that  
the earthly here gives but a faint outline  
of the heavenly. Compare the mere “*cast*