make up a matter with an adversary before judgment is passed, which may deliver  
a man to a hard and rigorous imprisonment,  
so reconciliation with an offended brother  
in this life is absolutely necessary before  
his wrong cry against us to the Great  
Judge, and we be cast into eternal condemnation.’—The adversary, in its *abstract personification*, is the *offended law of God*,  
which will cry against us in that day for  
*all* wrongs done to others; but in its *concrete representation* it is the *offended brother*, who is to us that law, as long as he  
has its claim upon us. The **way**, in the  
interpretation, is the way in which all men  
walk, the “*way of all the earth*” of  
1 Kings ii. 2, the “*way whence I shall not  
return*” of Job. xvi. 22. In the civil  
process, it represents the attempt at arbitration or private arrangement before coming  
into court.

**26.**] These words, as in the earthly example they imply future  
liberation, because an earthly debt can be  
paid in most cases, so in the spiritual counterpart they amount to a negation of it,  
because the debt can never be discharged.  
We have “*until he should pay what was  
due,*” in ch, xviii. 30, where the payment  
was clearly impossible. The minister is the  
officer of the court who saw the sentences  
executed. If we are called on to assign a  
meaning to it in the interpretation, it must  
represent the chief of those who in ch.  
xviii. 34, are hinted at by “*the tormentors,*”  
viz, the great enemy, the minister of the  
divine wrath.

**farthing**, the fourth of an *as*.

**27—30.**] SECOND EXAMPLE. *The law  
of adultery*.

**28. whosoever looketh ..**]  
The precise meaning should in this verse be  
kept in mind, as the neglect of it may lead  
into error. Our Lord is speaking of the  
sin of *adultery*, and therefore, however the  
saying may undoubtedly apply by implication to cases where this sin is out of the question—e. g. to the impure beholding of  
an *un*married woman with a view to fornication (it being borne in mind that spiritually, and before God, all fornication *is*  
adultery, inasmuch as the unmarried person is bound in loyalty and chastity to *Him*: see Stier below)—yet the *direct*assertion in this verse must be understood  
as applying to the cases where *this* sin is  
in question. And, again, the **looketh on...  
to lust after**, must not be interpreted of  
the casual evil thought which is checked by  
holy watchfulness, but the gazing *with a  
view to feed that desire*. And again,  
**hath adulterously used her already in  
his heart**, whatever it may undoubtedly  
*imply* respecting the guilt incurred in  
God’s sight, does not *directly state* any  
thing; but plainly understood, affirms that  
the man who can do this—viz. ‘gaze with  
a view to feed unlawful desire ’—has already  
in his heart passed the barrier of criminal  
intention; made up his mind, stifled his  
conscience; in thought, committed the  
deed. But perhaps there is justice in  
Stier’s remark, that our Lord speaks here  
after the O.T. usage, in which, both in the  
seventh commandment and elsewhere, *adultery* also *includes fornication*; for marriage is the becoming one flesh,—and therefore every such union, except that after the manner and in the state appointed by God,  
is a violation and contempt of that holy ordinance. The rendering of the A. V., “*hath committed adultery with her,*” is objectionable, as making her a party to the sin, which the original does not.

**29.**] Chrysostom observes, that these commands relate  
not to the limbs themselves, which are not  
in fault, but to the evil desire, which *is*. An  
admonition, arising out of the truth announced in the last verse, to *withstand the first springs and occasions of evil desire,  
even by the sacrifice of what is most useful  
and dear to us*. We may observe here,  
that our Lord grounds His precept of the  
most rigid and decisive *self-denial* on the