

THE CATALYTIC POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Matthew xiii. 33.

It is not often that the discoveries of modern science elucidate and make more impressive the language of Scripture. The text, however, is one of these rare instances. It describes, indeed, a very familiar process,—that of bread making,—which, as a practical matter, has been known from very early times. But the principles on which some parts of the operation depend are even yet among the most recondite in chemical science. Something is known of them, however; and although the person who is acquainted only with the process of leavening bread must be struck with the peculiar force and appropriateness of this illustration, yet the man acquainted with its rationale cannot but realize it more deeply. I shall feel justified, therefore, in spending a few moments in scientific details, which would be appropriate to the chemical lecture room; nay, I should feel condemned if I did not take this course, because I am confident that I can thus make the beauty and force of this passage more obvious and impressive. And in doing this, and introducing a few technical phrases, I hope my hearers will not charge me with pedantry, till they have heard me through. Gladly would I avoid these scien-