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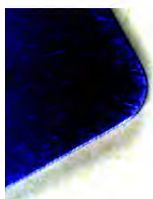
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Sunshine in Sorrow.



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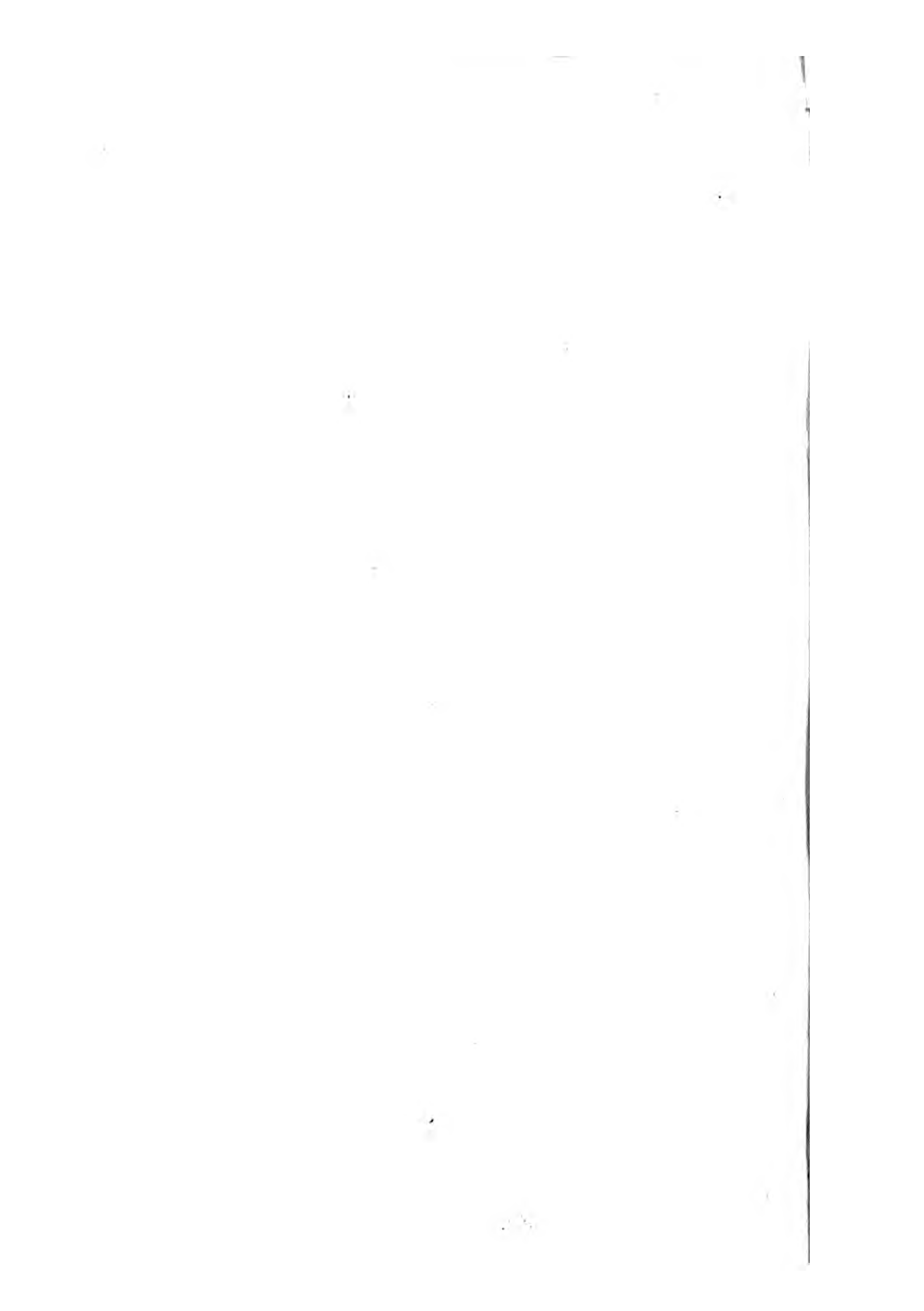








**SUNSHINE IN SORROW.**



# SUNSHINE IN SORROW.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUNSHINE IN SICKNESS ;"

"PICTURES OF THE HEAVENS," ETC.

"I am the world's true Light: who hear  
And follow Me no darkness fear,  
Nor waning eve nor changing year ;  
The Light of Life is their's, pure Light of  
Life Divine."

J. KEBLE.

LONDON :

J. AND C. MOZLEY, 6, PATERNOSTER ROW ;

MASTERS AND SON, 78, NEW BOND STREET.

1864.

141. K. 33.



DEDICATED

TO THE BLESSED MEMORY OF

THE LOVING FATHER,

AND THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE HIM TO

THEIR REST ;

With whom much of the Sunshine of my earthly life has passed into another world ; without whom my pilgrimage would indeed be dark and cheerless ; but for the faith which he inculcated, in the Infinite Love and Wisdom of the yet more Loving Father in Heaven, Who takes from us the Reflection, that our gaze may be the more steadily fixed on the Light Itself—the true Light Which shineth everlastingly, without shadow or dimness.

*All Saints' Day, 1863.*





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## SUNSHINE IN SORROW.

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“ Unto the godly there ariseth up Light in the darkness.”

“ Open our eyes, thou Sun of Life and gladness,  
That we may see that glorious world of Thine ;  
It shines for us in vain while drooping sadness  
Enfolds us here like mist ; come, Power benign,  
Touch our chilled hearts with vernal smile ;  
Our wintry course do Thou beguile,  
Nor by the way-side ruins let us mourn,  
Who have th’ eternal towers for their appointed bourne.”

*Christian Year.*

To my fellow-sufferers from sickness I have endeavoured to show how much sunshine there is mingled with the darkness of their lot ; how much enjoyment the good God has given us of the blessings of this life, even in the midst of bodily suffering and weakness. But how shall I speak to those who are bowed

down by the far heavier burthen of mental anguish ; whose very heart-strings are riven by anxiety for those they love ; or who sink down in the desolation of bereavement, and feel that the very light of their eyes, the sunshine of their life, is taken from them ? By grief like this, the pleasures of intellect, the beauties of Nature, nay even the sympathy of friends and the kind offices of affection, are for a while unheeded : they avail not to bring us comfort now : no human consolation, though it may soothe the bitterness of our grief for the moment, can enable us to bear up under its weight, can reconcile us to the calamity which with one fell stroke has stricken us to the earth.

Is there then no comfort for those who sorrow with a great and bitter sorrow ? God forbid ! There is no desolation so great, no darkness so intense, but what the Light of Heaven can pierce through the gloom. “Unto the godly there ariseth

up Light in the darkness." There are times when the softest earthly light oppresses our burthened spirits, when we would fain shut out the sunshine around us, and the brightness of Nature seems but to mock our guilt; but the Light of Faith, the Hope of Revelation, can still find entrance into our darkened hearts, can still enable us to see through and beyond the mist the Light of Love Divine. For Faith teaches us that the bitter chastisement under which we tremble, is the chastening of a loving Father yearning for the everlasting happiness of His children; the cup of trial, which we are it may be bidden to drink to the dregs, holds the "healing waters" which His Wisdom knows to be needful for our souls' recovery from the fell disease of sin.

Could we but read His Dispensations aright, we should bless the Hand with which He smites us. We mourn for the destruction of our fond hopes; we lament



over the bright promise of goodness and talent suddenly blighted in the bud; we grieve for the tender mother taken from her children, for the father removed in the vigour of his manhood ere the infirmities of old age have begun to weaken his powers of mind or body. We weep for ourselves and for those who are taken from us, and we see not the unerring Wisdom, the unfailing Love, that hath dealt the blow that crushes us to the earth; we dream not from what suffering, what sorrow, what feebleness, what sin it may be, it hath preserved those who are far dearer to us than ourselves; we know nothing of this, we only feel that we are bereaved, and lonely, and heart-stricken, and have none to comfort us! But the light of faith breaks in upon our darkness, the mists roll back beneath its beams, and gleam upon gleam of brightness from the land that is very far off, give us glimpses of a home where no clouds can over-

shadow our sunshine, where all will be made clear that seems dark and fathomless here, and where sin and sorrow are unknown. And while we gaze enraptured upon the vision, striving to grasp all the comfort that is dawning upon our souls, a voice seems to utter in our ears solemnly and sweetly, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Let the words sink deeply into our hearts, let us treasure them there as the key-note of comfort in all our woe. Not a pang is given us but what is needed to make us better and happier. "In the world we *must* have tribulation;" we have God's own word for it. We have but to trust His Love a little longer, till the shadows of this life have passed away, and then we shall see clearly why suffering has been needed. In the "hereafter" of joy and bliss, the fullness of which we cannot realize now, all shall be made plain to us; we shall see things as they

really are, and understand the great mystery of suffering, the yet greater mystery of permitted sin. Meantime, can we doubt His love Who gave His own Son to suffering and to death for us? Can we doubt that sorrow would have been spared us, if it were not good for us to be afflicted? Let us think of our own feelings towards our children, of our parents' feeling towards us, of the way in which our sufferings are bound up with theirs; and remembering how far beyond comprehension greater is the Love of our Father in Heaven for us, His feeble children, let us rest securely in the belief that "all things work together for our good" as He has ordered them. This is, in very truth, the foundation of all our comfort. His Love *cannot* fail us, His Wisdom *cannot* err in His dealings with us; and however thorny and rugged and steep our pathway through this life may be, His Angels will bear us onward, will

raise us when we fall, and guide us to the green pastures and still waters which await us at our journey's end. Then we shall look back upon our track, and shall be able to recognize the Love that has brought us safely over the obstacles in our way, and we shall see how what seemed to us to be stumbling-blocks did but keep us in the right path, and stand in the way of our wanderings to the right and to the left. We shall understand why the Light of Heaven was dimmed for a season, lest it should dazzle our feeble sight, and why clouds veiled it from us from time to time.

Meanwhile, let no faithless doubts and fears place a mist of our own raising before our eyes. By refusing to look up, and closing them against the bright light that is in the clouds, they may grow too feeble to recognize and welcome the bright ray even now struggling through the gloom, and learn to love darkness rather



than light. What avails it, if the warm sunlight is gleaming upon our windows, if we keep the curtains closely drawn and refuse to admit its life-giving rays? Nay, we must make an effort for its reception; not only must we draw back the curtains and allow it to stream through the windows and to fall upon the mirror of our souls, but we must cleanse and brighten these, and remove all that would obscure, or shadow, or colour them with earth-born tints; so only shall we receive the true reflection of the Light above; so only can we retain its presence with us, to touch with its golden tints, and illumine with its glory, the work that God gives us to do. The injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," applies to the sorrowful as well as the joyful servant of God. With the might of a steadfast will, and a firm confidence in Heaven's Love, we must struggle against the temptation to sink

down beneath our burthen and leave our work unfinished ; when we feel our steps faltering and our eyes dimmed with sorrow, we must pray the more earnestly for power to discern the Light that reveals itself to us by gleams of brightness only when we look very steadfastly towards its source in the Everlasting Hills. The sorrowful have a work peculiar to themselves ; not only have they the day's appointed toil to undergo, the " tale of bricks " to complete in its fullness, but they have to polish and brighten them with tints of brilliancy such as never shone upon the gorgeous sepulchres of Egypt ; they have to tinge their work with the hues of heavenly light that are everywhere playing softly on the shallow mist that obscures them. They have to work out their patience into cheerfulness, to learn the Songs of Praise in a dark night, and in the midst of their captivity to bear themselves as true servants of



their Lord, as rightful heirs of the bright kingdom on high.

Yet have they comfort and help in store if only they will open their hearts to receive them. What said the Lord to the captives of Babylon in their sorest strait? "Mine Angel is with you, and I Myself caring for your souls." What says He to all who are heavy laden with sorrow? "Come unto Me, and I will refresh you." "In the world ye must have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Only let us not sit down faithlessly to weep over our "wintry course" by the way-side ruins, but welcome each "vernal smile" with glad and thankful hearts. Let us strive to feel in all its intensity the strength of the Love that draws us on through shadow and darkness to light and sunshine, through suffering and sorrow to peace and joy eternal. Let us not grope about in the twilight of doubt and mistrust, but let us

open our eyes to every ray of brightness that Heaven's Love may vouchsafe us in our pilgrimage. These rays will vary in intensity and in kind according to our needs; according to the clouds that are overshadowing us. In some, indeed in most cases, Nature's earthly light and warmth will alleviate sorrow; lapse of time, occupation, and fresh interests, will, to a certain degree, dull or distract the keenest pain of heart. God gives them as means of solace, and therefore they are not to be despised or neglected; but their effect in lightening inward darkness is wonderfully augmented and quickened when excited and illuminated by the pure beams that flash from the Light of the World—the Lord and Giver of Life. Alone, they are but faint and lukewarm; but brightened and stirred by the breath of the Holy Spirit of Love and faithfulness, they acquire a glory and an energy not their own.

Another source of the purest consolation may be derived from the power which sorrow gives us of entering into the sorrows of others, and of ministering to them real comfort instead of that which seems to all very cold and spiritless, offered by those who are unacquainted with the pain of their wounds.

Sorrow is indeed a precious opportunity for introducing into our system a spiritual vigour and elasticity, a nearer view of Heaven's Light, a fuller measure of love to God and man, than unvaried prosperity can ever know. Let us not waste the opportunity by adopting consolations and remedies which may satisfy us for the moment, but which rather change the nature of the darkness than increase the light, and skin the wound without restoring and strengthening the tone of spiritual health.

Each sorrow has its especial balm, no doubt, provided by Heaven's Love; and

to help us in our search for the healing-salve which each wound demands, it must be, alas ! laid bare awhile ; the sore must be opened to remove the festering matter that covers it and prevents it from healing ; the darkness must be traced to its depth, and its full gloom made evident to us, before we can throw light upon its recesses. My sisters in sorrow therefore must pardon me if, in endeavouring to draw down upon the shadows encompassing them, the gleams of sunlight which may cheer them onward, I dwell awhile upon the cloud that threatens to overwhelm them, and penetrate into the hidden recesses of their grief. Those only who have felt the darkness of night can estimate the full brightness of the daylight that is dawning upon them ; and if in my search for Sunshine I seem to bring the clouds nearer to them, and to make them more familiar with their inmost shadows, it is but to show them the

gloom for a moment, before the Light of Heaven banishes it from their sight ; it is but to probe the wound before the healing balm is poured into it. I would entreat them to bear with me awhile, and to join me in an earnest prayer that any light which I may be permitted to throw upon their darkness, may be rays from the clear and perfect Light of Truth, and prove no *ignis fatuus* to lure them to destruction—glimmering of peace where there is no peace, and comfort where it abideth not ; but the true Sunshine from on high before which all shadows fly, “that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day.”



## POVERTY.

“Man is God’s Image, but a poor man is Christ’s stamp to boot.”—*G. Herbert.*

“Them to Himself He hath the nearest styled,  
Who have on earth no blessing but His Love.”

*I. Williams.*

WORDS such as these, and the far higher words of the Gospel on which they are founded, which treat of Poverty and contrast the conditions of the poor man and the rich with so strong a bias in favour of the former, might well make us doubt whether Poverty should be classed at all amongst the sorrows of this life; and perhaps it becomes one from the trials which it often brings in its train rather than from its own individual pressure. In itself it is blessed, as being the con-



dition in which our Lord placed Himself on earth, and as tending to keep us from laying up treasures here, and sparing us many of the temptations and responsibilities which riches necessarily bring upon us. But we too often forfeit the blessings of poverty by the state of mind in which we receive it. If we are yearning for the good things of this world, craving for riches, impatient of our low estate, careful and burthened with troubles about our comforts and position in this world, we have no right to the blessings which Christ pronounces on the poor ; we have put on the mind of the rich man whose portion is in this life, and his trials and temptations become ours ; we must be content to “ endure hardness ;” to live without this world’s pleasures, and to be of no reputation in it. We must be *poor in spirit* if we desire the blessings of the estate which our Lord chose for Himself. We must set our affections on things

above, if we would lay up store for ourselves on high. It is quite possible that the extremes of poverty should cause the same temptations as the extremes of riches. There is a danger of dwelling too much upon the things of this life, to those who are obliged to live, as the phrase runs, "from hand to mouth," and whose days are entirely occupied in striving to procure food and raiment for themselves and their families. Yet if they put away care, and trust in the Providence of God, by Whom the very hairs of their head are numbered, and without Whom not a sparrow can fall to the ground; if they are content to look to Him for their daily bread, and ask no more than that which is sufficient for the day; while health and strength are given to them, I suppose there is no happier condition than that in which a man's daily work provides for his daily wants, and his labour gives him enjoyment of the food

and sleep he earns ; when he sees his children growing up around him healthful and happy, and with no wants which he cannot supply by the sweat of his brow.\* But his happiness in this condition depends mainly upon the state of mind in which he receives it ; if he is content with what he has, and desires nothing more than to do his duty in that state of life to which God has called him ; if he feels that he is only a sojourner and a wayfarer here, and he wishes to be cumbered with no more of this world's goods than are sufficient to supply his needs while he is passing along the road ; if he looks to Heaven for his real Home, and seeks not to lay up stores of earth's treasures on his way—the cares of this world will sit lightly upon him, or rather he will be unconscious of their weight, and long

\* Owing to the gradual descent of comforts, too, in the present day into the lower ranks, the poorest man has luxuries now which were unknown five centuries ago.

only to press forward to the goal which he has in view. But once take contentment from him, and all his peace is gone; once open the door to longings for riches or pleasures or greatness, and everything that was sweet and enjoyable to him in his low estate, becomes mean and wretched and despicable in his eyes; his self-respect is lowered, and he passes his days in discontented murmurs and wild cravings for that which can never be attained. Not content with the wages earned by honest industry, he seeks some more profitable employment; where, it may be, health and strength, nay perhaps conscience and honour, are sacrificed to the lust of gain, and the fruit of his toil is either expended on riotous pleasures, or hoarded up, to the destruction of his peace of mind; his heart being set upon treasures which moth and rust corrupt, and of which any day or hour may deprive him. The blessings of poverty are



unknown to such a man; the curse of wealth is as surely his, as that of his neighbour of high degree, who is nursed in the lap of luxury, and has no thought but for himself and his own pleasures.

But there are other conditions of life in which it is perhaps harder to endure poverty well, and to deserve the blessings promised to the poor, than in that which we have been considering—a state in which it is not our natural condition; when it has come upon us from some fault or misfortune of our own or of others; when we have been born in affluence, and have been brought up to do little or nothing in the way of providing for our wants, and when fictitious needs have arisen from the circumstances of our early lives, which we are suddenly deprived of means to supply; when we see nothing before us but a life of toil and hardship, for which our up-bringing has unfitted us, and we are rudely awakened

from our day-dreams of prosperity and honour to find ourselves reduced to poverty and insignificance, where we had once been rich and of high repute.

Then comes a hard struggle with ourselves, perhaps a combat with the world around us, before we submit to the low estate in which we find ourselves; before we bring our minds down to the level of our condition, and accommodate our wants to our means; before we learn to look upon ourselves as we really are, not as what we have once been, and cease our endeavours to wrest from others the honour and deference which was once our due—due, I mean, to our position in life; for as regards ourselves no change of worldly condition can degrade us; the respect and esteem of the good and true is as much ours as ever; but we forfeit our self-respect, we lower ourselves, when we struggle to keep that which it is the will of God, Who has ordained the dis-

inctions of high and low, rich and poor, in this world, to take from us. Half the sting of poverty would often be removed if we would freely accept our position, and putting away all false shame, acknowledge ourselves to others as well as to ourselves to be poor, and unable to incur expenses which are not necessary in our present circumstances ; allow that it is needful to work for our support, and when we really need it, receive help from those who have the means which we no longer possess.

Recalling the pleasure it has given us to bestow a portion of our abundance on those who were less well supplied with worldly wealth, let no false pride hinder us from allowing others to experience the like. If we feel that it is more blessed to give than to receive, let us be willing that through our necessities that blessing should be theirs ; let us not selfishly close our hearts against the many little gleams

of sunshine that would fain reach us from the kindness of those about us. Adversity is often the touchstone by which the true metal of affection may be distinguished from the false glitter of friendship which is only professed to favourites of the world; and misfortune will often call forth traits of feeling and real kindness in those whose true selves we should never have known, had we continued beyond the reach of their good offices. And when we suffer from the knowledge that we may no longer bestow the alms which it was once our happy privilege to give, let us remember the blessing on the widow's mite, and the cruse of oil, and feel that we may still do many works of love and mercy on earth, and still minister to the needs of others, though we are deprived of the abundance out of which we dispensed our gifts. Our prayers and our thoughts may still be employed for our fellow-creatures, and the sweetest



pleasures of charity may still be ours ; nay, no gifts which we have bestowed in the days of our prosperity can be half so pleasant as those which can only be accomplished by some self-denial of our own. Now we count the cost of that which was perhaps lavishly and carelessly given when we did not know its value by experience. No, however painful it may be to withdraw the aid which once we gave to the great and good works at home and abroad, which are a part of the age in which we live, we must never consider ourselves shut out from the pleasures of alms-giving ; however small our means may be, however narrow the groove in which henceforth they must run, God's Blessing will surely give them increase an hundred-fold. The smallest offering made with good will, and hardly saved out of our pressing needs, is far more precious in His sight than the thousands carelessly or grudgingly be-

stowed by the millionaire. Only let us give willingly and heartily, not with a repining spirit, for "God loveth a cheerful giver;" nor with ostentation or display, which although we think it not, may originate the smallest as well as the largest gifts; but as a humble offering of love and thanksgiving to Him Who has given us all that we have. The responsibilities of wealth are no longer ours; but we must still consider ourselves stewards of the little we have, and take heed that we so use our stewardship that as faithful servants we may restore to our Master "His own with usury."\* In our gifts, as well as in our other actions, let the highest principles influence us, let not the opinions of the world around us actuate us against our sense of right and wrong. Pride, or rather weakness of purpose, often tempts the poor to expenses which justice would forbid; it requires some

\* St. Matt. xxv. 27.

moral courage to say steadily "I cannot afford" expenses which are urged upon us as required by opinion, by the fear of a reputation for meanness, and so forth. In all our doings let us be straightforward and true to ourselves, and look our condition fairly in the face. If we submit to our low estate unrepiningly, and cheerfully prepare to fulfil its duties, the peace of a humble spirit, the rest of resignation, will bring us sunshine, however dark and gloomy the clouds may be that are overhead. And for a time the prospect may be very dreary and full of gloom. In such extreme cases as sometimes, alas! meet our notice, those who have been living luxuriously all their lives, and have never known the meaning of the word "hardships," are suddenly reduced to necessity, scarcely know how to find food sufficient for their daily wants, or clothing sufficient to shield them from the cold; and suffer in proportion to the violence

and suddenness of the change from riches to extreme and pinching poverty. Here no fancied "wants" have to be dealt with, but real and absolute privation. Here steadfast faith in the love and wisdom of our Father in Heaven are indeed needed to brace them to endure the trials before them. "Give us this day our daily bread," becomes to them a petition full of reality; and the sufferers feel, for the first time it may be, the trial which our Blessed Lord took upon Himself when He underwent the long fast in the wilderness. In the midst of their suffering, comfort comes to them from the feeling that they are allowed a portion in the cup of which He drank to the dregs, Who "knew not where to lay His Head," and they doubt not that the love which ministered to their Great Master in the wilderness will sustain them in their greatest need. They think of the Widow's cruse of oil, and Elijah's mira-



culous sustenance; and knowing that the Hand which gives food to the birds of the air and clothes the flowers of the field can supply all their wants, and provide them with food in the desert and with water from the stony rock, they feel that if they are permitted to suffer the pangs of hunger and thirst, it must be because God wills it for their good: therefore their trust languishes not, even when the sky appears most dark, even when they scarcely know where their next meal is to come from; and they look forward but the more earnestly to the time when, if they take their trials aright, "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Few of my readers are, I trust, called upon to bear such extremity of distress; but there are other trials to which poverty, even of the comparative degree, adds a very sharp sting, which many of

us have to encounter. Our own sickness, and still more that of others, presses very heavily upon us, when we are deprived of comforts which then seem to be necessities; and it is often a hard trial to be unable to secure the good medical advice, the change of air, perhaps the warm winter's abode, for our suffering dear ones, on which their present solace or their recovery of health appears to us to depend. Our comfort must be when these are denied, that they are only instruments in the Hand of One Who knows when to use and when to withhold them, Who can perfectly work out their results without them. They are of no avail without His Blessing, and might all be tried in vain; some counteracting influence unthought of by us might nullify the best chosen remedies; we can but guess, after all, at what is best for them and for ourselves. We *must* trust our darlings to Him, and believe that if His

Love withholds that which we so eagerly desire for them, it is because His Wisdom sees that it is not for their present or future good that it should be granted.

This same Trust is our chief comfort in another of the trials often attending on poverty : when the means of educating our children so as to qualify them for certain professions, which we consider essential for their well-doing in life, are denied us. One can well imagine the bitter pain it may give a mother who sees much promise in her child's character; talent, and genius, which she fondly thinks only require cultivation to be great, and to enable him to make his name noteworthy in the world; to be unable to provide him with the instruction, the books, &c. &c., with which, under happier circumstances, it would have been her first object to supply him. Her cherished aspirations for him (perhaps the only treasure of her widowed



heart,) are blighted by her poverty ; it is hard to see him struggling against adverse circumstances, crushed perhaps by disappointment, and to think of what he might have become if it had been in her power to give him the advantages which seem his birth-right. And yet the very stumbling-blocks, as they appear to her, in the way of her son's greatness, may be the stepping-stones to his success. Many of those who are eminent in the world, have made themselves a name when circumstances seemed to render such an event most unlikely. Many have had cause to bless the misfortunes of their early life for the talents and energies which adversity has called forth, which would have been lost and smothered in the lap of prosperity. Let the fond mother remember too that God sees not as we see ; let her dwell upon the littleness of this world's honours, the shortness of fame, the vanity of everything that

this life only has to offer; let her bethink herself that God is educating her child in the way that He knows to be best for his immortal soul; let her trust His Love in this respect as well as in matters which concern his physical welfare, and believe that whatever He ordains must be the very best discipline for the mind and heart upon which her fondest affections are bestowed. This is the real Sunshine which she may discern in the darkest hours of her life; and if she does not shut it out, many gleams of brightness will be reflected from it on her dreary pathway, and she will be permitted to see many buds of promise in the character of her darling child, unfolding amid the clouds that appeared for a time to check their growth, only that they might become more strong and vigorous, more fit to bear the bracing atmosphere of a winter's day.

God orders all things well, and of

nothing can we be more sure than that His Blessing will rest upon our right reception of our appointed lot ; and when poverty is the portion given to us, and the false light of this world's glare would lead us to despise our low estate, let us pray Him to throw the Light of His Word upon it, that we may see it as it is ; and presume not to think slightingly or scornfully of that station upon which the Son of God has shed a brightness not of this world. What are we that we should feel oppressed and cast down by poverty ? when He to whom all honour and glory in Heaven and Earth belong, has said of Himself, " The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head ! " Can we feel poor and despised and wretched, with such words as these ringing in our ears ?

" To be in both worlds full  
Is more than God was Who was hungry here."

*G. Herbert.*

And while we take this abiding comfort to our hearts, and feel our poverty ennobled by such thoughts, let us not be unmindful of the many minor gleams of sunshine which it allows us to enjoy without a cloud. If we cannot purchase the delights of beautiful music, if the sight of paintings and other works of art is beyond our attainment, the simple pleasures of Nature are to some extent within the reach of all. In the present day too, the cheapness of our books puts us in possession of a great many good and useful publications, quite beyond the attainment of the rich in past days; not to dwell on the treasures the poorest cottager now possesses in his Bible and Prayer Book. Those whose lot is cast in the country, within hearing of Nature's choristers, can never be at a loss for enjoyment and refreshment; every bird on the wing, every insect that buzzes about them, every way-side flower, every blade



of grass, has within itself beauties and powers which may supply them with never-failing admiration and adoration of its Great and Beneficent Creator: and even to the denizen of a crowded city; the blue sky, the flitting clouds of which they catch a glimpse through the narrow skylight of their dark attic, are full of beauty and of hope.

It is, moreover, a merciful provision of our Father in Heaven, that the greatest enjoyment, the most intense appreciation of such blessings and beauties, are granted to those who have them in the scantiest measure. Witness the delight of the captive of the Bastille in his prison-flower;\* the affection of Silvio Pellico for the ants and spiders that inhabited his dungeon. Mark the rapture of a little city-bred child in the veriest weed of the way-side; the charm of "a bit of green" to the sick man in his dismal hovel; the

\* "La Picciola."

delights of a penny book to a little village scholar; and contrast them with the careless mien of those who walk among the most beautiful and costly exotics with indifference, and turn over book after book in the best furnished libraries, with no interest in works which scholars and men of genius would have given their last crust to possess. Surely our greatest need is of a sense of the blessings that throng about us, of power to discern the flowers that are blooming beside our daily path. Well may we adopt the prayer of the poet—

“I ask Thee not my joys to multiply,  
Only to make me worthy of the least.”

## ANXIETY.

“Live for to-day ; to-morrow’s light  
To-morrow’s cares shall bring to sight ;  
Go sleep like closing flowers at night,  
And Heaven thy morn will bless.”

How many of us add tenfold misery to the sorrows which God sends us, by a fretful anxiety to know the worst at once, to forestall the trouble that seems to be at hand, to take as it were God’s dealings with ourselves and those we love out of His Hands, to end our suspense by rushing upon our fate before His Love would bring it upon us ! Suspense is in truth a great trial ; yet I think few would deliberately exchange it for a miserable certainty while a glimmer of hope remains to brighten it. To many of us it is our



appointed discipline, sent to teach us to curb our eager desires, to feel the uncertainty of everything belonging to this world, and to rest upon God's Love day by day. Perhaps in very heavy sorrows we are more ready to learn these lessons than in the small trials and vexations of daily life; partly because we feel that we could not bear more than is laid upon us at the time, and partly because we call our faith to our aid on great occasions, and are apt to neglect its support at other times.

I suppose early in life everyone is more or less beset with longings to know our future; and looking on into the vista which our imagination puts before us, our day-dreams represent us as wise and great, and revered for goodness or genius; or we weave for ourselves a tale of love and happiness far too bright to be ever realized. Then our anticipations are naturally joyous, and unclouded by

experience of life's troubles and cares; the very thought of which would often overwhelm us if we could see the clouds rising up in the distance. As we grow older we have less disposition to look forward, and we begin to see a little the mercy which has kept the future out of our sight. And although I suppose many parents who live their lives over again in their children, build bright castles in the air for them, as once for themselves; their own experience must have prepared them for disappointments. They know life *cannot* be as cloudless as it looks at early dawn, and they dread its storms while they court its sunshine for their treasures. Some mothers indeed would fain hold them back from the Battle of Life which all must fight, and tremble at the very thought of their encounters with the rough world before them. To them the veil that hides the future from their eyes is indeed a friendly one; for if they

could read the fate of the bright unsuspected soul which enters upon life with heart and mind so pure and full of promise, the pain of parting would be heightened an hundred-fold. As it is, hope mingles with their forebodings, and weaves its bright visions, undismayed by the clouds that cross their path from time to time. One cannot look back upon any of the terrible tragedies which have filled us with horror in their day, without feeling how great the mercy has been that has withheld the knowledge of the future from us. Could we have foreseen the sufferings to be undergone in the trenches before Sebastopol; the horrors which the Indian Mutiny were to bring upon those who left our shores, with hearts beating high with glad hopes and bright visions of the future—could we have borne to see them go? Could any mother send her bright-eyed guileless boy into the world, without her heart breaking in the

effort, if she could imagine him after years of sin and debauchery a criminal in the dock, consorting with thieves and murderers, with the scowl of evil passions and despair on his haggard brow? These are extreme cases, but in every-day life the mercy is the same. Our Father's Love spares us hours and days of agony by withholding the knowledge of the future from us, and leading us day by day along our appointed path. When sickness comes upon us or our darlings first, it is far easier to bear because of our ignorance of what is to come or how long it is to last; and so it is with every sorrow that comes upon us by degrees. We have strength to bear it at the time, which would utterly break down if we knew that it was to be a life-long trial. One is often disposed to wonder how frail and delicate spirits bear the weight of sorrow and anxiety which is laid upon them. We see a loving wife, for instance, whose whole existence seems



to be bound up with that of her husband; watching over him through days and days of sickness, and bearing with fretfulness and impatience, which would utterly weigh her down if she knew what the compassionate physician sees, that they are the prelude to confirmed disease, an agonizing death, or, what is far worse, the overthrow of a brilliant mind, the ravings of insanity, or the drivellings of mental imbecility. Devoted to her present task of soothing each pain and calming each distress as it arises, she dwells not on what is before her, she thinks only of giving present relief; and Heaven's mercy keeps her in the twilight. So it is with a mother who sees the germs of evil in her darling child. Anxiously and prayerfully she strives to curb the passion that threatens to overthrow everything before it; could she have strength to fight against it, would not she throw down her arms in despair, if her trembling fore-

bodings were exchanged for the certain knowledge that the venom would spread and infect the whole spirit of her darling, poisoning every talent and blighting every bud of promise that should inspire her with hope and joy? Again, when sickness lays us low, our strength to bear each painful symptom would be insufficient if we could foresee the weeks, months, perhaps years, of suffering and helplessness which are before us. As the days go on, we grow more and more accustomed to the trial, and at last by God's mercy our invalid condition becomes a habit of our lives, and we grow familiar with a trial which would have looked very ghastly if we had taken in all its features at once. The injunction to "take no thought for the morrow," though spoken expressly with reference to undue thought for our food and clothing, always seems to me to apply very much to any trouble that we are expecting; the con-

clusion of the sentence, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," comes home to our hearts in all cases. It is the only way to bear the present "evil;" singly, as it comes, not to gather the work of several days into one. There is great significance in the form of the petition, "Give us this day, or day by day, our daily bread." It teaches us how to ask for sustenance and help, in the measure needed for our present wants, so as to keep us in continual dependence upon our Heavenly Father, ever looking to Him for all we need, even as the little birds wait on Him as He opens His Hand to feed them; even as a little child looks to its mother to supply its every need as it arises. It teaches us too, not to look beyond the day: to let our anxieties be bounded by the horizon of night; to catch something of that noble spirit which can put off its *cares* with its *clothes*, to echo that distich of our exiled Reformers,



“Be the day weary, be the day long,  
At length it rings to evensong.”

It may be objected that, however true it is that our ignorance of the future keeps much positive suffering from us, the converse is equally true; it gives us much pain, that of suspense and anxiety, which we should be spared if we knew that all would go well with our darlings, that they would issue scatheless from the perils before them, that the fire of adversity would purify and brighten them as silver is refined by heat, &c. I cannot deny that it is so; but I do deny that such knowledge would be for our real good; and is not that the motive which actuates our Heavenly Father's dealings with us? Indeed, in a material view, we may lose a great deal of happiness by undergoing no anxiety. For the very great delight, the bounding thankfulness that fills our hearts when we see our treasures snatched from the grave which appeared to be yawning

for them, and restored to health and vigour, would be utterly unknown to us without it ; and when that happiness is granted to our prayers, do we any of us grudge the anxiety that has preceded it? Do not we all feel that our recovered treasure has acquired a value that we were scarcely conscious of before we knew what it would be to lose it? We should never be half awake to the blessings which we enjoy, if now and then we had not a fear that they would be taken from us, to teach us gratitude. Where too would be the trial of our faith if all were made plain to us beforehand? There would be no such thing as Faith in fact. If we could see how every sorrow would bring gladness, every sickness a joyful return to health, could we feel the chastening which is our appointed discipline? and which can only work us good through our present suffering. Trust would have no meaning, prayer no fervour, if we knew

its answer beforehand. No, we must work on still in darkness, we must trust His Word that there *is* Light in the clouds although we see it not; we must take the suspense and anxiety which must cling to us all in a measure through life, and which attaches itself to our dearest blessings, and belongs to our fondest aspirations, as part of our trial and discipline here. We must try not to writhe beneath the rod, not to throw off our burthen in impatient restlessness, and unsubmitive longing to know the worst that is before us; we must check the desire to

“ pray for sharpest throbs of pain  
To ease us of doubt’s galling chain.”

We know not what blessings we may throw from us in our frowardness; of what rich treasures of patience and resignation, and humble dependance upon God’s Love, we may deprive our souls by disdainning our appointed portion of anxiety, and refusing to linger “ upon the verge of

good and ill" as long as it pleases Him to try our faith. We shall not be kept waiting one moment longer than is good for us. Meanwhile, let us take the suspense as "the day's" appointed task, and try to perform it well, and to turn it to profit. Too often we forget that it has a present work to do, and neglect that altogether; we look forward to the blow we are expecting, wondering whether it will fall, and when, and if we shall have strength to bear it; and in such questionings of ourselves, and vain strivings to pierce through the cloud that envelopes our destiny, we overlook the fact that our present duty is to bear the suspense of waiting to know what is God's Will. To some minds, no doubt, this waiting is harder to bear well and patiently than the absolute grief, whatever it may be, which we apprehend. Distance may magnify it; or rather, it is with our mental as with our physical powers, God's Love



gives us strength to bear whatever is laid upon us, *when* and *as* it comes; if we precipitate our fate by impatience, and seize the bitter draught before it is His Will that we should drink it, we have no right to expect the support and sweetness that submission brings with it. He would fain draw us gently to Himself—would unclasp our hands tenderly one by one from the brittle treasures we hold so tightly in our grasp, and healing even while He wounds us, gradually undraw the veil that hides the future from us, showing us day by day the flimsy nature of our brightest hopes, and leading us step by step along the thorny way, even as a tender mother guides her feeble infant's faltering steps. Let us trust His Wisdom as well as His Love, and wait upon His Will; let the very uncertainty of our fate give force and energy to our prayers. We are not forbidden to ask in the words of our Blessed Lord, "Father,



if Thou be willing remove this cup from me," if we add, as He did, from our hearts, "nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done;" but we must long earnestly and pray diligently that our will may be whatever His shall prove to be. We must put ourselves and our dear ones unreservedly into His Hands; and having done this, seek to know only what He tells us, and busy ourselves with the present rather than the future; so shall our perfect trust bring us rest even in our uncertainty—peace even in our suffering.

Hitherto I have spoken of anxiety as a trial,—as one of the sorrows of this life; but there is another view of it, in which it is a failing to be guarded against; or perhaps it should rather be called a disease of the mind, consequent upon certain dispositions and temperaments. Some minds are intrinsically anxious; they cannot take things easily, as calm phlegmatic natures do; they forestall trouble, and even create

it for themselves. They magnify every petty vexation till it becomes a real care and sorrow to them, and this infirmity may lead to fretfulness and discontent, and sap the foundations of faith and thankfulness. To minds like these probably our Lord's injunction "to take no care for the morrow," was especially addressed, for trivial cares would have an undue importance with them, and they would be inclined to fret chiefly about worldly matters; while the prospect of more serious griefs would lift them into a higher atmosphere, and they would become calm and steadfast in proportion to the necessity of calling their real faith and principle into action.

To all, however, who suffer from anxiety, whether reasonably or unreasonably, whether laid upon them by a Father's loving Hand, or caused by their own lack of faith or of a contented spirit; there is, it seems to me, but one remedy to suggest

—one ray of Sunshine gleaming through the clouds, and that is the real practical belief that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” If we sincerely believe this, and that every sorrow, from whatever quarter it comes, is guided to us by a Love which cannot err, nothing could trouble us very deeply or lastingly; and the restlessness of uncertainty would calm down under the fulness of our trust; we should resign ourselves and our darlings into His Hands without a murmur, or a doubt that all would be well with us that He ordains—

“The very hidings of His Face  
Would train us up to joy.”

And we should feel with undying confidence that however densely the thick clouds might be gathering round us, however dark and gloomy our earthly pilgrimage might be, “at evening time it would be light”—light, glorious and undimmed, brightening into the perfect Day.

Meanwhile let this be our daily prayer ;

“ Lead, kindly Light, amid th’ encircling gloom,  
Lead Thou me on ;  
The night is dark, and I am far from home,  
Lead Thou me on ;  
Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene—one step enough for me.”

## THE SUFFERINGS OF THOSE WE LOVE.

“I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.”—*Eph.* iii. 13.

“Nor to the darlings of thine aching heart,  
Nor to thine own weak soul,  
Grudge thou the good Cyrenian’s patient part—  
The Cross that maketh whole :  
Met unawares, and laid  
Upon the unresisting head ;  
The tottering feet upon the way of sorrow led.”

*Lyra Innocentium.*

ONE of the hardest trials of our faith in Divine Love, is to see those we love suffering or sorrowful, and to have no power to lift the burthen from their shoulders, or to take part of its weight ourselves. It is so much more trying to watch suffering than to bear it in our



own persons: and when the sufferer is endeared to us not only by fond affection, but also by the claims of helplessness and dependance, it often perplexes as well as distresses us. A mother suffers tenfold in the sufferings of her offspring: and when her little infant utters piercing cries of a distress it does not understand; or an older child clings to her in terror at its pain, and entreats her to take it away, in innocent unconsciousness that any task is too hard for its mother; her heart is almost breaking under its load of maternal sympathy, and she is ready to cry out in her anguish, "Why should my innocent babe suffer? give me the pain, and spare my child." Natural as such a prayer would be, it would be wrong, and the feeling prompting it would be faithless and selfish: faithless, because to ask that the order of God's Providence should be changed, betokens a doubt of His boundless love;

and selfish, because in her longing desire to spare herself the present agony of watching his sufferings, she would deprive her child of the blessing of partaking in the sufferings of his Lord.

“The Giver of all good,  
Even from the womb takes no release,  
From suffering, tears, and blood ;”

and He who submitted to the circumcising knife when only eight days old, gave us in this, as well as in all the other circumstances of His Life, a practical lesson in the necessity and blessedness of suffering. His example here is very full of comfort, as well as instruction, for the suffering we see in the world is one of its great mysteries, and one which we cannot expect to be ever fully solved in this life. Those who are not responsible for their actions, innocent children and unreasoning animals, the object of whose suffering we cannot see, are alike called to bear the bondage of corrup-

tion,—“The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together;” yet we may not doubt that a beneficent Hand orders all things as they are.

Surely God would not have made us sensitive to pain if it were not good for us, and had not its own appointed work on earth. We do not feel this perplexity when we receive it as a chastisement; when it falls upon ourselves we know how slight a measure is meted out to us of the punishment we deserve; we can scarcely dare to wish even for its removal: but when it touches our innocent darlings, or tries those whose faith and love and purity we treasure as costly jewels, it is very hard to feel that they need the fire, and to yield them up to their appointed lot.

One of our great difficulties lies in our proneness to dwell upon the present evil of pain, rather than upon the hidden blessings of its office and its results. We

do not look upon it as the refining fire which is to make the silver perfect in its purity; we do not look forward to the soul's condition after it has passed the ordeal; and in our shrinking appreciation of the present suffering, the future perfection it is intended to work is scarcely thought of. We look at those who seem to us so pure and guileless now, and wonder why they needed trial. Yet it is said of our Blessed Lord, the only perfect Example of humanity that ever trod this earth, that the Captain of our Salvation was made "perfect through sufferings." He had been "perfect" always, in the sense of being *without sin*, but these words would seem to show us that His human nature needed the discipline of suffering to make it absolutely perfect: even as a spotless block of pure alabaster may acquire a new beauty, and exhibit its intrinsic perfection more, by being subjected to the chisel and the



polishing stone. Christ's voluntary suffering has hallowed all suffering, mental and physical, to us; and the universal law of suffering prevailing around us ought to teach us its blessedness, since it has been ordained out of the fulness of Divine Love and Wisdom. When the suffering touches our hearts very closely, we know that it may be sent as a chastisement to *ourselves*. Our Father in Heaven may see that it is the trial we need, that no pain in our own persons would have the good effect that the sufferings our darlings are undergoing will have upon us. Has not many a hardened sinner been brought to repentance by the affliction of the frail child, his love for whom has been the one soft spot in his callous heart? has not the rugged or violent temper of many a virago been softened into gentleness and forbearance by sympathy with the sufferings of her fretful infant? God seeks by all means



to draw us to Himself; and I suppose many parents have been arrested on the very brink of vice, perhaps even in the full career of iniquity, by reflecting on the suffering and shame their sins would bring upon their children. One of the heaviest penalties of transgressing God's Laws, must surely be to feel that our sins bring suffering upon others; yet we may not rashly and arrogantly interpret God's Providences by our own short-sighted judgment; we may not draw despairing inferences of God's wrath from the fact of those near and dear to us being severely tried. We may not forget that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." When His disciples asked our Lord, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" He answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be

made manifest in him ;” and He expressly cautioned them against concluding that great calamities were a sign of great sinfulness. “Those eighteen, upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell and slew them ; think ye,” He asks, “that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay.” Mark, however, the lesson with which this caution concludes : “But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” It teaches us the twofold nature of suffering, and should make us careful, while we receive it as a token of God’s Love, not to overlook its possible design,—to lead us to examine our hearts and lives, and to repent of and forsake any sin which we discover needing correction in us.\*

It would be a very careless reading of God’s Word that would find but one,

\* The Book of Job abounds with sublime lessons of this kind.

and that the surface meaning in the narratives, and but one lesson in the precepts of Scripture. So it is doubtless with His dispensations ; blessing and honour are concealed in the bitter draught of chastisement, and Love, perfect all-seeing Love, directs the Hand that administers it ; therefore while we humble ourselves beneath the blow that smites our darlings, and acknowledge that we deserve to drink the bitter cup of sorrow to the dregs, we may take comfort in the thought that what punishes us, brings them blessing.

For there *must* be a blessing we cannot comprehend in suffering when it afflicts the pure and innocent. And looking back to the whole scheme of Redemption, and its types in the sacrifice demanded of Abraham, and in the animal sacrifices which the Jews were commanded to offer until the Messiah came, I trust that it is not presumptuous to

believe that it was not *only* to satisfy the justice as well as the mercy of God, that suffering was ordained as an atonement for sin. We know that the heinousness of our offences against our Father in Heaven is so great, that the painful death of His only and beloved Son on the Cross alone could suffice to expiate them; but may not we think also that Christ's Passion gave to suffering a blessedness and a refining power which we shall not be able to comprehend now, but which shall be shown to us hereafter?

In our Lord's dying moments, His love for His mother was evidenced in His command to His beloved Apostle to be a son to her. Would not that love have spared her the pang of witnessing His agony on the Cross, if He had not in His perfect wisdom known that the sword which pierced her heart (as foretold by Simeon) was sharpened by perfect love.

When He allowed the sisters of Lazarus to endure the pangs of grief for four days, when a word from Him would have turned their weeping into joy, why did He forbear to speak it? was it in indifference to their sorrow? when He mingled His tears with theirs, and those who saw Him weeping exclaimed, "Behold how He loved him!" Surely He endured the pain of seeing His friends' grief, out of the fulness of His perfect love!

If we could but believe in this perfect love! if we could but realize in the faintest degree the feeling God has for us His children, fallen creatures though we are, sinning against His Fatherly love all day long! we should not go on stumbling in the dark, groping after this and that cause for the suffering that rends our heart-strings; we should place our dear ones unreservedly in His Hands, and realize the truth that great as our



love for them may be, that which He feels for them is beyond the imagination of man to conceive. We in our shortsighted affection would fain hold them back from the Baptism of suffering; we would see them joyous and untroubled in their passage through this transitory life; forgetting how momentary it is, in comparison with the eternity of happiness into which He would have them enter, through "the waves of this troublesome world,"\* Whose mercy "is from everlasting to everlasting." †

Surely this is not the true unselfish love that "seeketh not its own." We should rather call our faith to our aid, and brace our hearts to endure the pang of seeing those stricken, whose Cross we would so gladly bear ourselves if it were God's Will that we should do so: and striving to look beyond the dark night of sorrow and suffering that now over-

\* Baptismal Service.

† Psalm ciii. 17.

shadows them, cheer them and ourselves with thoughts of the brightness of the coming dawn, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing on His wings. For them, as for ourselves, "Let patience have its perfect work."

"How should else earth's flow'rets prove,  
Meet for those pure crowns above?"

## THE ERRORS OF THOSE WE LOVE.

“Then marvel not, if such as bask  
In purest light of Innocence,  
Hope against hope, in love’s dear task,  
Spite of all dark offence ;  
If they who hate the trespass most,  
Yet, when all other love is lost,  
Love the poor sinner, marvel not,  
Christ’s mark outwears the rankest blot.”

*Christian Year.*

THERE are, it seems to me, three classes of sorrows with which God tries the faith of His children : those which come to us *directly* from His Hand, those which come *indirectly* through our fellow-creatures, and those which we bring upon ourselves.

Those of the second class, which are now under review, have a power to irritate us which we do not find in the

more direct trials in which the Source from whence they come is more distinctly seen. The errors of others war against our sense of right and wrong ; and when they personally offend or injure us, we rebel against the unkindness and injustice ; especially when they are committed by those we love, and wound our affection, disappoint our confidence, or overpower us with shame. A bitterness grows up in our hearts towards all about us ; and in the impatience it excites we too often overlook the fact that the trial comes from our Father in Heaven, although other hands give the blow, and that it is to be borne in the same spirit with which we meet what seems to us more ennobling chastisements. Were it otherwise, He would spare us much of the pain we now feel ; He does often lighten the burthen to a gentle loving heart by making it insensible to much of the coarseness and degradation which others

see so plainly in those to whom it is so fondly and blindly attached. Doubtless this is the reason for what often seems to us so paradoxical, when we marvel how a spirit that appears so ripe for Heaven and Heaven's joys, can cling so closely to one that is rude, and coarse, and degraded by vice. Through God's mercy the eyes are not opened to a full perception of the unworthiness so patent to the standers by.

This blindness, however, He does not vouchsafe to all. Some there are who see the more clearly the more devotedly they love, and feeling the full hideousness of the trespass, feel but the more strong to love and help the trespasser. The wound is *very* deep in this case; healing must come from the Physician Who permits it to smart; faith and prayer are the sources from which the strength to bear it must be derived. It requires such very tender handling that I would fain ask for especial forbearance from those who feel



it eating into their inmost hearts, while I try to suggest, in all tenderness and humility, how it may be soothed, if healing be impossible, in this life.

When the errors of those we love affect ourselves, it seems to me that the first step must be to strive to put away all considerations of self; to fight steadfastly against looking at the sin in its offensive and personal light; to regard it wholly as a sin against God, or rather as a fell disease needing the tenderest compassion; to remember that Christ died to atone for it; and that the greatest sinner is still an object of His pitying Love. If He can forgive Who alone knows the full brightness and beauty of goodness and purity, and therefore alone sees the full blackness and horror of sin and impurity, what are we? fellow-sinners as we are, full of transgressions and short-comings which call for forgiveness too, that we should withhold the grace we ask?

We must get rid of all personal bitterness before we can deal with the trespass, and see it in its true aspect, as it appears to God and the Holy Angels; and then strive earnestly, lovingly, perseveringly, not in our own strength, but in that which will be given to all who ask for it, to recall the offender to the paths from which he has wandered, and by every holy and gentle influence in our power to bring him to repentance and amendment. We must make no compromise with sin; but striving against it, and continually dwelling upon its blackness, irritate rather than cure. Much is said and written in these days about women's "rights" and women's "powers." It seems to me that a Christian woman's *duty* is to influence those about her gently, unobtrusively, and lovingly; by example rather than precept. Women have more power in their hands by this silent domestic influence, than they can ever acquire by

clamouring for their "rights ;" and if they will but use love's mighty engine for good, what will it not effect ?

But it must not be a selfish or a capricious love ; it must be strong enough to endure many falls, and to persevere in its labours even when scarcely a gleam of hope remains to light it on its way. And when all else fails, and every other weapon drops from our grasp, there is one which can do more than any other in the warfare against sin, which is never beyond our reach, and that is prayer—the prayer of faith, which brings a ray of sunshine into the darkest gloom, cheers our saddest desolation, and give us feelings of hope and confidence which nothing else could give to a heart ready to faint with despair at the failure of all its efforts.

It is related of the devout Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, that she rescued two souls from deadly peril by the influence of her life and her prayers. She

converted her husband from idolatry by the example of her purity, patience, and gentleness. She had much to pardon in his dissolute life and hasty temper; but he never heard an impatient or reproachful word from her. When he blamed her unjustly she was silent till his anger was exhausted, and then calmly justified herself. She was rewarded; he amended his life, received Baptism, and lived like a sincere Christian for a year before his death.

But perhaps a worse trial now befell her; her eldest son, of whose genius father and mother were both so proud, became the slave of his passions, renounced the Faith in which he had been brought up, and so shocked his mother by his blasphemies, &c. that for some time she would not allow him to reside in her house or sit at her table.

For nine years she wept and prayed for him incessantly, and persevered in spite



of disappointment and deception, in her loving endeavours to recall him to faith and virtue. How wonderfully her prayers were blessed, and her patient love rewarded, is a matter of history.

She did not work in her own strength, and in such a labour of Love we may each feel that we are not alone—the Holy Angels are aiding in our ministry; the Saints in Heaven and on earth are joining their prayers to ours for the recovery of the Soul so dear to us. God's Blessing is upon our labours; God's Word is passed to hearken to our petitions "if we ask anything according to His Will." And that these are according to His Will we know from what follows: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death."\* This promise is full of comfort—one of the only rays of

\* 1 John, v. 16.



sunshine that can reach us when the sky is thus obscured. If God vouchsafes us the slightest gleam of encouragement, and we are permitted to awaken some good and to banish some evil thoughts in the mind which we are watching with such anxious tenderness, it is very precious to us; but we must scarcely look for any such result. It may be our discipline to see every effort fail; it may be necessary for our humility's sake that we should experience practically the futility of every "arm of flesh," that we may rest solely upon God for all that we wish accomplished. We may be called to watch the gradual declension of everything good and noble into reckless wickedness, to see the grave close over the sinner in the midst of his sins; but even then, great as our agony must be, dark and gloomful as the prospect is as far as our eyes can reach it, we may not utterly despond; there may be a glimmer of

light behind the clouds which we cannot discern, because we cannot certainly tell what the state of the soul really is over whose wreck we are mourning so bitterly. The case of the Penitent Thief on the Cross forbids us ever to despair of God's mercy ; at the very last hour He may accept the penitence to which our Lord's ears were open then ; and this we can never know till the secrets of all hearts are revealed. Moreover, the soul for which we tremble may not be so guilty as it appears to us to be. The warning not to judge others brings us comfort here ; we know not what excuses there may be for sins which look so heinous, in the early training, or temptations, or natural temperament of the offender. His sins may seem to us past forgiveness, and yet they may not really be as bad as the more venial transgressions committed almost without temptation. We may not venture to pronounce upon the degrees

of guilt in any : all that we do positively know is that God's mercy is fathomless, and with fervent prayer and bitter tears of anguish, we must leave the soul so dear to us " spite of all dark offence," to Him Who ever tempers justice with mercy. Hope may be denied us, but trust in His boundless Love should never fail us. This is the true Sunshine, which pierces even through the blackness of desolation, and lights up every stormy cloud.

Very much of what I have said applies to the sorrow which many have to endure in these days of doubt and infidelity; in seeing those whom they love wavering in their belief, and falling into errors of faith and doctrine; as well as to those who are tried by breaches of morality in those who have so firm a hold on their affections. It is a grievous trial, and we may not seek to make it less by any pseudo-liberality, or rather latitudinarianism, of our own; as though it did not matter

what a man's creed were, if it were genuine, and he acted according to his belief; as though Truth were only a vision of our own creating, not a substance and a reality. They who care for the honour and glory of God must feel that it is not a matter of indifference how His Word and Ways appear to man; they who are anxious for the salvation of others must tremble when they see those who should be the supporters of Truth, sapping its foundations and shaking the belief of those whom they influence; in articles of Faith which should be their guide through life, and their support in death.

It cannot be true to say with the poet,

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right,”\*

unless we mean by it that faith and works are inseparable, and that a man can hardly be very wrong in his belief while

\* This might put upon an equality Christianity, Mahomedanism, Paganism, &c.



his life is good, and *vice versa* ; his life must be good if his belief is good. I am speaking here of being *wilfully* or *carelessly* in the wrong. Those who have not been permitted to know the vital truths of Christianity ; those whose early training, the influence and example of others, or the circumstances of whose lives have tended to darkness rather than light, cannot be judged by the same rules as ourselves. But as respects those who have every opportunity of knowing them, and reject them, or fall away from them into heresy or schism ; I think a searching investigation would find something amiss in their practical lives,—some flaw in the Christian character,—some arrogance of mind or careless indifference,—some glamour of this world's vanities,—which puts a mist before their eyes, rendering them unable to distinguish truth from error. And I say this in no spirit of bigotry or arrogant condemnation of



others: simply because my faith in God's Justice and Love makes me hesitate to believe that a sincere guileless inquirer after Truth will be permitted always to wander blindfold, or to look in vain for the knowledge he so earnestly and humbly seeks. He may often be harassed by doubts and difficulties; the full light of Truth may be long in breaking upon his vision—perhaps in this world he may never see more than its reflection; but one day all will be made clear to him. The scales will fall from his eyes, the mists will roll back from the prospect, the shadows will give place to sunshine; and it will not surely be imputed to him as a sin, by a merciful Father, that he *could not* pierce through the clouds that so sorely distressed him; that he *could not* feel the comfort that an undoubting faith must give.

The minds of men are so variously constituted, that some involuntarily ques-

tion every fact and dispute every proposition, and cannot accept truths which others receive without hesitation. Happy is he who can freely "receive the kingdom of God as a little child." Those who earnestly seek to do so, and with St. Thomas *cannot* believe without sight, are objects for the tenderest compassion. How shall we best aid them? Not by dogmatical argument or eager disputation—

"For fierceness makes  
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.  
Why should I feel another man's mistakes  
More than his sicknesses or poverty?  
In Love I should, but anger is not Love,  
Nor wisdom neither; therefore gently move."

Sometimes our very misery at the difficulties which perplex those we love, our very anxiety to pull them out of the mire, hinders our efforts and makes us push them deeper into it; they grow impatient with our arguments, or worried by constant allusions to their perplexities; and we do harm rather than good by our

well-meaning endeavours to convince them of their errors,—especially when we cannot give very clear and logical reasons for the Faith which is so precious to us; and what we mean for calm reasoning, ends in vituperation or arrogant condemnation. The silent teaching of example does far more to convince than controversy; and those we love should see the beauty of our faith in our every-day lives, and feel that it is a reality and not a dogma with us. So alone can we hope to win hearts to Christ.

“He merciful and mild  
As erst, beholding, loves His wayward child.  
When souls of highest birth  
Waste their impassion'd might on dreams of earth,  
He opens Nature's book,  
And on His glorious Gospel bids them look;  
Till by such chords as rule the choirs above,  
Their lawless cries are tuned to hymns of perfect love.”

Love and Prayer must be our mightiest weapons in the combat against error, as against sin. Earnest, persevering, loving prayer will work wonders unknown to

“earth’s charmers;” nor must we relax our energies and lose heart if we do not see its effects.

“Unheard by all but Angel ears,  
The good Cornelius knelt alone;  
Nor dreamed his prayers and tears  
Could help a world undone.”

We must cast our bread upon the waters, and it may be many days before it shall return to us; but He Who bids us ask, and we shall receive; seek, and we shall find; will let no heartfelt prayer be wasted: and perhaps when we least expect it, we shall see the fruits of our labours, in the rolling away of the mists that have overshadowed the precious soul we are watching.

The Light of Faith seems to have burst upon the Thief on the Cross from out of the thickest darkness, when even the faith of the Apostles was almost overthrown by the sight of their Lord treated as a malefactor. He recognized His

Divinity under circumstances which might well have hindered all belief in it. What stronger evidence could we have that God's ways are not our ways, and that He works by a hidden ministry on the souls of men?

And we may take comfort even in the pain of knowing that doubts and perplexities beset the path of those we love: because when sincere, we may hope that they will bring a clearer light upon truth in the end, and make their faith a far more living reality to them, than it would have been if they had been content to take its principles for granted without examination. No doubt the knowledge of the Christian verities has been very widely disseminated by the very doubts and heresies which have seemed most likely to overthrow them, and thus evil has been turned into good; the Almighty has used the weapons of the Evil One against himself. Untroubled ease is far



more to be dreaded for faith as well as for holiness than opposition and trial. Many would never have known what the Articles of the Faith they professed were, but for the cavils which have called their attention to them, and which have thus established them firmly in minds which would otherwise have held them with a very loose grasp. The Creeds themselves would never have been drawn up in their definite precision of doctrine, but for the assaults on the Faith which made such barriers necessary. Surely we may praise God for the strength which, through Error, He has given to Truth, and see

“Through moonless skies that there is light in Heaven !”

## UNKINDNESS.

“This land, though with Thy Heart’s blest extract fed,  
Will nothing yield but thorns to wound Thy Head.”

*Henry Vaughan.*

DOUBTLESS each sorrow has its own especial mission, which none other could fulfil; it has its individual blessing as well as its individual suffering. The sorrow which unkindness causes us varies considerably with our peculiar feelings. Some there are who cling so fondly to affection, that an unkind word stabs them to the heart; while others seem insensible to any but positive and material acts of unkindness. Perhaps the former would lean too much on earthly love, if they were not taught

its instability ; and life would be too bright to them if encompassed solely with kindness ; and so they are permitted to feel some of the thorns that wounded their blessed Lord, and reminded that no innocence can hope to escape a wound, since He Who knew no sin was treated as a malefactor. This fact brings the fullest comfort to a heart smitten by unkindness, the injustice to which we are subjected being our first feeling. " We do not deserve such treatment," we complain, and bitter feelings of irritation as well as soreness fill our hearts, which nothing can quiet down but the realization of the sufferings of our Lord, and of His perfect sinlessness. In gazing upon His Passion in all its circumstances of shame and suffering—in pondering on all the taunts and revilings that the scorn and malice of those whom He came to save heaped upon Him, we forget our own small troubles, or glory in them, as

making us more akin to our suffering Lord ; and we pray earnestly for the spirit which caused Him to say, in the extremity of His Agony, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Having disciplined our hearts to bear without a murmur whatever portion of His Cross may be laid upon us,—by reflection on His sufferings, and by dwelling on our sinfulness as the original cause of those sufferings, to increase our humility and self-abasement ;—having endeavoured to put away from us the feelings of wounded pride and self-love, which make it so difficult to bear unkindness, we can now venture to look it in the face, and to examine into its real amount. I do not think any paltering with truth helps one really to bear sorrow ; and therefore I do not advocate the attempt to persuade ourselves that unkindness only exists in our imagination.

It is perfectly true that we very often add to its sting by the vehemence with which we receive it, and that we magnify its extent exceedingly when we are by disposition sensitive to every wound; but I think this is only an additional reason for calm examination into it; for if we look at it humbly, and sincerely desire to understand what the true weight of the Cross is, and how much we add to it by our fretfulness and restlessness under it, we shall be able to bear it with far more real Christian submission than if we were to push it from us, and try to believe it had no weight. Do not our kindest friends make two mistakes in trying to help us to bear this sorrow? Some will assure us that the unkindness is all imaginary; that those of whom we complain have not the slightest intention to be unkind, and that we must not fancy slights, &c. &c., all which, if only in a measure true, helps us not at all to bear a wound



we feel so sore and trying. Others will seek to soothe our ruffled feelings by denunciations of the offender, and assure us "that we are a great deal too good to be so treated," "that our patience is quite wonderful," and so forth, till we begin to think ourselves greater martyrs than we had ever supposed ourselves to be, even in our wildest moments; and although this puts us in a very comfortable state of mind as regards ourselves, it is not conducive to peace with our neighbours. Surely the only right way to treat this trouble is to find out its true extent, and to see first how far we are in the wrong ourselves. In many quarrels, both parties are in some degree to blame; and we must search into our own conduct and hold it up to the mirror of Truth before we can judge fairly of that of others. As far as possible we must put ourselves in the place of the offenders, and imagine how we should feel in like circumstances, so as to ascertain

what provocation we have given them. In this examination a faithful friend may greatly assist us in throwing light upon our conduct, when we have shrouded it in mists of self-conceit ; but the friend must be firm enough to bear the pain of showing us our errors. He may aid us also in anatomizing our opponent's conduct, by showing any exaggerated colour that our sensitiveness may have given to it ; and very often we shall find thus that we have added tenfold to the real offence, and that there really was no design to wound us ; so that the unkindness was entirely unintentional—due to some misconception of our feelings or wishes—or to ignorance and inadvertence, much more easy to forgive than we had thought possible.

Our minds are so differently constituted that some people are utterly unable to comprehend what others feel, and find it positively impossible to believe that they have wounded us by word or deed

in the tenderest points. Once convinced of this, we shall find the trouble far easier to endure, especially if we can recall instances in which we have offended against others out of the like incapacity to enter into their feelings.

But if, when all the shadows are cleared away, and we have conquered self sufficiently to view the offence in its true light, we still find ourselves unable to ignore the fact that our neighbour has been guilty of a deliberate act of unkindness towards us ; how are we to meet it? Should not its very blackness make us lose sight of our own trouble in compassion for the transgressor? If he has sinned against us so sorely, what is his sin against God? If Christ regards the sin against a fellow-creature so gravely as to say, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; leave there thy gift before the altar and

go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,"\* should not our chief feeling be that of sorrow for his sin, rather than of resentment for our injury? Should not our chief anxiety be to recall the offender to repentance and amendment, rather than to exact reparation for the offence? In our exceeding compassion for the sinner we shall lose sight of our own soreness, and feeling our own proneness to fall, shall be earnest in our endeavours to help him up, when we have been involuntarily the stumbling-blocks in his way. While we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," we can hardly nourish an angry spirit towards him. We may do much to raise him by the gentleness and patience with which we bear the trespass, but far more by our earnest loving prayers for the trespasser. We must pray most for

\* St. Matthew, v. 23, 24.



those who have most need of our prayers ; even as the Angels in Heaven rejoice most over the repentance of those who need it most.

Love and prayer re-act upon each other ; we cannot pray very heartily for those who are trespassing against us, without feeling more and more lovingly towards them ; and the more strongly we see the evil of the offence, the more tender will be our compassion for the offender. Supposing him to be actuated towards us by the worst feelings of malice and unkindness, he has need enough of our pity ! For what can be more miserable than a heart at variance with God and man ? Those who do not love their fellow-creatures, cut themselves off from the purest pleasures that Heaven can give and earth permit to exist. They know nothing of the delight of doing good, and of bestowing pleasure upon others ; their enmity poisons every source of happiness ; they



live alone and die alone, and their evil feelings are the canker-worm preying upon their own hearts. Can any state more deserve our compassion than this? shall we not plead sorrowfully, lovingly, perseveringly, with our Father in Heaven, "Who maketh His Sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust," for the recovery of a soul so sorely diseased, so miserable in its loneliness, the fountains of whose life are so fatally poisoned?

And as regards ourselves; the way to take this sorrow is to remember that the trial, like all others, really comes to us from God. Those through whom the offence comes, are but instruments in His Hands. He allows it to come out of the fulness of His All-wise Love, that the true Christian character may by means of it be perfected.

I have said that it has its especial work to do; to give us opportunities for the

exercise of virtues which could not exist without it. Patience would lose half its perfection if we were not called upon to exhibit it towards those who offend us ; forbearance, gentleness, meekness, self-denial, perseverance in well-doing—nay, even charity, the well-spring and foundation of all virtues, would be incomplete if unkindness were unknown on earth. “ For,” asks our Lord, “ if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them ; and if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.” Those only can be true children of the Highest who are as He is “ kind to the unthankful and the evil.” Will no rays of sunshine come to us in the endeavour to take this trouble in the true Christian spirit of love and humility? It will often try us sorely, and arouse feelings in our hearts which we would cut off the right hand or pluck out

the right eye to escape, and in truth this is often our severest wound; but we must be patient with ourselves as with others; the struggle may have to be repeated day after day; but love and prayer will gain the victory at last. We cannot doubt it, when we know Who is fighting with us, Who is aiding us in the combat against the sinful feelings which are rising up within us. He sees that our impatience under the burthen of unkindness, our resentment against the offence, our irritability under the stings of unjust reproach, are involuntary; and we shall not ask in vain for the power to forgive even as we are forgiven. Only let us guard against forgiving in the spirit of self-righteousness, which is neither healthful for ourselves, nor healing towards others. We must not exalt ourselves upon a pinnacle, to look down with a contemptuous pity upon those who have offended us, or we shall never feel the peace of forgiveness our-

selves, or communicate it to others ; but in the fullest spirit of Christian meekness, feeling our need of pardon, forgive as we hope to be forgiven.

This is often a matter of less difficulty with regard to great acts of unkindness, than with little provocations which try our temper continually. The actual severity of any trial which seems worthy to be, so to speak, classed amongst those to which our Lord submitted, throws a halo over it which brightens up its darkness. So, again, the promises of blessing to those who suffer for righteousness' sake, and return good for evil, with which the Gospels abound, are full of encouragement, and light us along the most dismal paths ; but the little fretting vexations of daily life very often break down the patience which is strong to endure the greater trials. They are so small that we are ashamed to be irritated by them ; generally, too, they wound our self-love,



and we feel that we cannot ask for much pity or sympathy under them ; it almost lowers us to speak of them to others ; they would think us childish or touchy to be wounded by such trifles, and yet they sting us more keenly perhaps than deeper wounds.

“The martyr’s hope half wipes away the trace  
Of flowing blood ; the while life’s humblest cares  
Smart more, because they hold in Holy Writ no place.”

Our comfort is in these, that they all are known to God, and that our Lord took upon Himself our flesh with all its infirmities, so as to be able to give us perfect sympathy in every trial of humanity. In His Own Person it is probable that He experienced many of its lesser trials, although they are not recorded. That of being despised, or as we are apt to phrase it, “looked down upon,” we know He did ; and when He speaks of Himself as of a Prophet having no honour



in His own country, and in His own house, we may think with shame how disturbed we often are, when those of our household and neighbourhood do not recognize in us qualities which have gained esteem and praise elsewhere.

The belief in His Humanity will bring us much comfort in these little vexations. We must not think any trial too small to meet with sympathy from Him; and He will help us not only to endure the smart, but to conquer the self-love and self-exaltation which makes it so keen, and to look beyond this life and its little aims and trials, to that which is untroubled by the clouds and earth-mists which so envelope us here.

“At evening time it shall be Light,” and if we fix our eyes upon that Light we may even now draw some gleams from it on our darkness; and in striving to follow our Master’s perfect Pattern of Christian Charity, we shall find our path

lit up by many rays of sunshine, which we are quite unable to discern when we look only upon the ground at our feet. Only those who have experienced the pleasure of conquering unkindness and ill-will by persevering in little acts of friendliness, and seizing upon every opportunity of returning good for evil, can guess the peace and inward satisfaction with which the heart will glow even in the very endeavour to overcome evil with good. And when one has to conquer self to do this, and the victory is attained; when one has been able to speak "the soft answer that turneth away wrath," and to check the unkind word that would have been laid to our brother's account, to recall him to a better mind, and to cause joy in Heaven amongst the Angels, who rejoice over the repentant sinner; the world itself will grow brighter to our eyes, for light from the Heaven of Love and Peace above us will stream upon us

through the clouds; and a soft whisper will be breathed in our ears, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

## CALUMNY.

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.”—*St. Matt.* v. 11.

“He sweetly lived, but sweetness did not save  
His Life from foes.”

*George Herbert.*

IF He “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth,” Who gave the most perfect example of every virtue, could not escape calumny, and was scorned and reviled by those whom He came to benefit by the sacrifice of His Life, how can we hope to do so, with all our failings in goodness and wisdom? how can we venture to complain, if we meet with misrepresentation, and have to battle against unjust accusation? and that this must be

the fate of everyone who attracts any notice from the world around him, either by superior holiness or talent; History and Biography give ample proof.

I suppose no great benefactor of his race has ever escaped detraction or imputation of evil motives; and the higher the principles by which he is guided, the more perplexing his conduct appears, to the multitude who are incapable of being moved by any but selfish considerations. They assume that he must have something to gain by self-denying benevolence and unwearied kindness, because they feel that without some such motive they would not labour to do good to others. There are some minds, too, of so jealous a nature that they cannot endure to hear others well spoken of, and therefore the very annoyance of hearing them praised gives them the impulse to suggest some accusation against them, which has no foundation except in their diseased imagin-



ations. They really wish to believe the evil they insinuate, and therefore seize upon the least trifle that may appear a corroboration of their unkind suggestion; and so the report grows and spreads, till the fair fame of their virtuous neighbour is tarnished. In some such manner the unfounded slanders which have sorely tried some good men have arisen; others have been invented out of some spirit of malice or revenge; or in the hope that terror of the false accusation and its reception by the world, will induce the victim to purchase the silence of his libellers. It seems wonderful that anyone conscious of innocence should ever be induced by the dread of evil report to submit to this; but those who are naturally timid, and sensitive to the least breath that they think may sully their good name, are sometimes weak enough to be thus victimized; and thereby lose the good opinion of those who would

have stood by them if they had not given evidence of fear and weakness, which men strong in the confidence of others, and in the knowledge of their own uprightness, can scarcely believe possible in a guileless heart.

The New Testament is so full of comfort and encouragement to all who suffer for well-doing, that one would think all the promises of blessings held out to sufferers from false accusations, would make them brave to endure any unjust scorn; but those who are constitutionally courageous cannot measure the extent of suffering caused by a timid nature; neither can they estimate the effort made by such feeble spirits, when they do overcome their fears, and in a strength which is not their own, resolutely defy the evil tongues that seek to blast their reputation.

No doubt our Lord's words in His Sermon on the Mount were immediately addressed to those who would be called

upon to suffer for their belief in Him. We know from the records of the early Christian times how bravely His immediate followers underwent suffering and martyrdom, and how joyously they bore the greatest tortures that their enemies and persecutors could invent for them; accounting it their greatest honour to be thought worthy to taste any of the bitter suffering which their blessed Lord endured. They submitted patiently, nay joyously, to dishonour and evil report for His sake, and were reviled as malefactors, and accused of the most infamous crimes; such as offering up children as sacrifices on their altars, &c. &c., so that the very name of Christian became a term of reproach and opprobrium. And multitudes in succeeding ages have filled the ranks of confessors and martyrs, and have gloried in suffering as faithful followers of their Crucified Lord.

In these days, or rather in these lands,

where Christianity is professed by the nation, the higher order of martyrdom—that of suffering for the Christian Faith, is scarcely possible; but we must not think that Christ's Promises apply only to those who were reviled as Christians. All who suffer for well-doing, whether secretly, or openly before men, may claim the blessings pronounced on those who take up His Cross and follow Him. He so continually warns His Disciples to expect to be spoken evil of, and that holiness of life will not be tolerated by an evil world, that no calumnies of goodness ought to surprise us; and yet when others are concerned, we are sometimes inclined to imagine that there must be some small foundation for the accusation, a little root of evil, from which so large a plant has sprung. We quite forget "how great a matter a little fire kindleth," and when others are equally ready to suppose that we must deserve *some* of the things



said against us, and suggest that an atom of truth *may* lurk at the bottom of the falsehood, this same forgetfulness makes us as indignant as if it were perfectly outrageous to imagine that we could be to blame: as if injurious surmises had never passed through our own minds when others were unjustly accused.

Our Lord's comparisons between the happiness, the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world, and the eternal bliss in store for those who bear reproach and obloquy for the Son of Man's sake, to whom He promises a "great reward in Heaven;" convey the idea that the good word of an evil world is a thing to be condemned and dreaded. He expressly says, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets," as though this were an evidence of hollowness in religion; and so it may well be. The whole life and aspirations of a true Christian



are so utterly at variance with the conduct and aims of a votary of this world, that they can scarcely understand each other; and the life of the former is a continual reproach to the latter.

The warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to which Christ's faithful soldiers and servants are pledged by their Baptismal Vows, must bring on them the enmity of the Prince of this world and his adherents; and if it seems to slumber awhile, it is all the more perilous, because some insidious designs must be hidden underneath the apparent calm; and those who seek their eternal destruction, are but labouring the more certainly to accomplish it by throwing them off their guard. Who, then, can wish for the good word of the evil-minded? Who that protest against sin by their daily life, can expect to be spoken well of by those whose work they are undermining? The calumnies of the

wicked can scarcely be reckoned as a sorrow in themselves. Looking upon them in the Light of Revelation, and recalling the blessings pronounced on those who are reviled for righteousness' sake, we cannot regard them as such. They only become so when they poison the minds of those whose good opinion we desire, and destroy their respect or affection for us. Then indeed we do suffer, sometimes acutely; and in proportion to the degrees of love and honour we bestow on those whose confidence in us is shaken, is the pain which we endure.

Job's courage did not falter under any of his afflictions, overwhelming as they were, till his friends' condemnation and distrust of his integrity drew out all his anguish, and in an agony of despair he cursed the day of his birth, and saw no end of his misery but in death.

Very often, too, we seem to have no right to the blessings promised to those

who suffer for righteousness' sake, because we cannot trace our suffering to any act of virtue; perhaps, indeed, the calumny, or our friends' reception of it, is due to some imprudence or want of circumspection in our conduct; and if our conscience is not entirely at ease, we dare not claim this solace in our woe. Yet is there sunlight in the clouds. There is comfort unspeakable in the thought that God sees not as men see; that He knows us to be innocent of the offence with which we are charged, and that in His own good time He will "make our righteousness as clear as the light, and our just dealing as the noon-day." It may be long before He shall see fit that the truth shall be known; but we are safe in His Hands, and may say in the sublime words of Job when scorned by his friends, "My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high." If the cloud that overhangs us here is never cleared

away in this life, the brightness will be the greater hereafter, when our innocence shall be declared before men and Angels; it lingers but to perfect our faith and humility, but to enhance our exceeding great reward.

Most of us suffer more from misrepresentation than from positive calumny, unless we hold a prominent position in the eyes of the world, and thus invite its darts.

Perhaps the trial is not more easy to endure; it frets our self-esteem sorely to be accounted guilty of unworthy motives, or foibles which we despise; and we are annoyed by the petty accusations to which we scarcely condescend to reply. The manner in which the most simple and trifling action or speech is sometimes misrepresented, is one of the small trials of which life is often made up. Good humour and humility will aid us best to bear them, with a wholesome disregard of



blame which we do not deserve. Such troubles lose half their sting when pride or vanity do not make us dwell on the presumption of those who judge us, and we can laugh at folly instead of being galled by it. A cheerful contented spirit throws a sunshine of its own upon everything about it, and will be able to find amusement in that which excites anger in others.

It is useful sometimes to try to trace the origin of some of the misrepresentations afloat about us ; generally we shall find they have sprung from some stupid misapprehension of what was really said, repeated by those who have nothing to do but to swallow marvels, and comment upon idle tales and "suppositions" which grow into "facts" at last. There may have been a very tiny spice of ill-nature, perhaps none at all, in what seemed so malicious before it was inquired into ; and the inquiry may serve to make us very



cautious of taking up any idea injurious to our neighbour, or spreading an evil report by speaking of it.

The chief trial of misrepresentation is when it reaches our friends, and they do not reject it with indignation. We feel that they ought to know us better than to believe us capable of the words or deeds attributed to us, and we make too little allowance for the degrees of *vraisemblance* with which the report may have reached them. It requires very unusual knowledge of the world, and very extended experience of life, to enable a person to admit the possibility that the old proverb may not be correct, and to teach him to allow that sometimes there is smoke without *any* fire. Some minds, too, are naturally prone to doubt and suspicion; perhaps they have been often deceived in their commerce with the world, and look for evil rather than good in everyone with whom they come in

contact—an unhappy condition of mind, which deserves sincere compassion, for it must cloud every ray of sunshine in this life.

The blessing of a trustful friend, whose confidence no rumour or appearance of evil can shake; who proclaims his belief in our innocence unmoved by the sneers or clamours of the world, is greater than anyone can appreciate who has not suffered from misrepresentation. If it serves to show us the faithful affection of only one of those whose love we value, it has done us good service, and convinced us of the possession of a priceless boon. And we must not judge those whose trust in us has not been so steadfast, with harshness; but be ready to take into consideration circumstances of natural temperament, and of the quarter whence the rumour reached them; the influence which the opinion of the world has upon some minds, &c. &c., and remembering

our many infirmities, try to believe that it was not outrageous to suppose that we might have been in some degree to blame, since we fall into errors as great every day of our lives, although they are known only to God and ourselves ; and if bitterness yet lurks within us, let us cast ourselves on our knees and strive to say from our inmost hearts, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

The effect of every trial of this nature, whether it be of calumny or misrepresentation, should be to wean us from an undue appreciation of the things of this world ; and to lead us to lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt them. Nothing holy here can escape the moth of detraction, and the rust to which contact with an evil world must expose it ; but nothing can blast the treasures we have in Heaven ; and the knowledge of

our Father's Love; the security that we are understood by Him—that however we may be traduced on earth, and doubted by our dearest friends, nothing can hide the truth from Him; is not the thought full of comfort? Can we hopelessly bewail the cloud that veils our innocence here: when God and the Holy Angels, perhaps the blessed Spirits of those who have gone before us to their rest, know and see it in the clear light of undying Truth?

Let us be patient awhile, and through evil report and good report, through honour and dishonour, walk calmly onward in the path that leadeth to salvation; clinging steadfastly to the Love that burns most brightly in Life's darkest hours.

“Who but a Christian thro' all life  
That blessing may prolong?  
Who thro' the world's sad day of strife  
Still chant his morning song?”

## OUR OWN ERRORS.

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His Might.”  
—*Ephes. vi. 10.*

“Awake, sad hearts, whom sorrow ever drowns ;  
Take up thine eyes, which feed on earth ;  
Unfold thy forehead gathered into frowns—  
Thy Saviour comes, and with Him mirth.

Awake, awake,  
And with a thankful heart His comfort take ;  
But thou dost still lament and pine and cry,  
And feel His Death but not His Victory.

Arise, sad heart ; if thou dost not withstand,  
Christ’s Resurrection thine may be ;  
Do not by hanging down break from the Hand  
Which, as It riseth, raiseth thee.”

*G. Herbert.*

THE afflictions by which men’s faith is tried, fall upon them in various degrees and kinds, and some trouble them not at all. But there is one sorrow which none



of us can escape ; and it would indeed be heart-breaking if we had not the comfort and hope of our Christian Faith to support us under it : and that is the consciousness of sin—the weight which our own errors lay upon us. And who that has passed beyond the boundary of childhood's innocence, and has begun to be conscious of the troubled atmosphere of the world about him, and to catch a glimpse of the dangers that must meet him in his passage through this life, can fail to feel this burden pressing more and more heavily upon him ? As life goes on, and the elasticity of youth,—which makes the energy great in proportion to the sense of the peril with which it has to contend,—yields under the pressure of repeated failures, it is more and more sensibly felt. Again and again we make vigorous resolutions against sin ; we fall, and renew them only to meet with fresh defeats, till we are fain to give up the

contest in despair, and weep bitter tears of contrition over our souls' degradation. Perhaps we see those we love suffering for our faults, in mind, in health, in reputation, and our sins return upon our own head, in this, perhaps the most bitter punishment that the great law of expiation for sin can bring upon us; or we have led others astray by our influence and example, or neglect of duty; and we watch them sinking deeper and deeper in the pitfalls, which we have dug with our own hands, and from which we are powerless to rescue them now, when the full measure of their peril comes before us.

Even if we are, through God's mercy, spared the extreme misery of feeling that we have acted as ministers of evil, to those whom we would fain save from destruction at the cost of our hearts' blood; even if our life seems pure and irreproachable to those about us, no self-examination, no searching into our own hearts, no trying

of our motives, can fail to show us enough that is amiss—repeated falls into sin, broken resolutions, yieldings to slight temptations, failures in truth, in temper, in kindness, and charity,—to fill us with shame and self-abasement; to make us cry out with David, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy Sight shall no man living be justified.”

The load of sorrow such as this is well nigh intolerable; and we cannot even wish to shake the burden off, because our condition would be desperate if we did not feel it; but we must take care that it is a godly sorrow, such as will work repentance in us; not a faithless despairing grief, which looks only on the ground beneath us, and will not raise its eyes to the Heaven of Love and pardon that is above us. We must bear in mind our Lord's victory over sin as well as His Death; and in the strength of that victory

fight cheerily against the foes that beset our path.

The Gospel abounds in promises of aid in the great battle which all must fight, to encourage us to perseverance; while it warns us against treating the combat lightly, or indulging in a false security. Our foes are deadly, and we shall need the whole armour of God against them; but with that armour we need not—nay, we must not, despair. If we were fighting in our own strength, and depending on our own righteousness, we should have cause enough to do so; and as it is, we feel at times almost overwhelmed with the struggle, and ready to believe it to be fruitless; but to yield to these feelings would be faithless and distrustful of the Divine Power and Love, in Whose Might Alone we can be victorious. Perhaps we often lose heart in this warfare, because we have mistaken views as to its nature; perhaps we expect one great struggle with



sin, and that if victorious in this, we shall find comparative ease for the remainder of our lives; those who think one great wrestle with Satan transforms us from the children of wrath to the children of God, might logically expect this. But our Lord and His Apostles lead us rather to look upon the combat as a daily and a life-long warfare against sin; and the teaching of our Church, following in this track, reminds us, in her Baptismal Service, that we are *continually* to mortify all our evil and corrupt affections, and *daily* to proceed in all virtue and godliness of living; and the Cross is signed on our foreheads in token that we are to fight under our Great Captain's banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants *unto our lives' end*. Sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God in the Laver of Baptism, we go forth to the battle in a strength not our own; when we lose



courage, is it not because we dwell more on ourselves than on the strong Arm that is fighting with us, the victorious Leader that is in the front of the battle? If the scales could fall from our eyes, and we could see the armies that are fighting on our side, "the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire;" \* "the twenty thousand chariots of God, even thousands of Angels, and the Lord among them;" † should we sink down dismayed, and think our foes insuperable? It is because we keep our eyes only upon the pitfalls at our feet, instead of upon the Light that is overhead, that we stumble on in the darkness; unmindful of the Hand that is beckoning us onward, unable to see the myriads of stars that would brighten the night of trial, if we would look upward, and press forward on our way. I say not that it is not toilsome and perilous, encompassed with dangers on all sides, and demanding

\* 2 Kings, vi. 17.

† Psalm lxxviii. 17.

our utmost vigilance that we stray not into forbidden paths; but that there is much to brighten it, much to give us joy even while we tremble. This trembling itself, if it be caused by humility and not by mistrust and lack of faith, is a beacon of hope to light us along the strait and narrow way that leadeth to salvation; for we are surely in a far safer condition of mind when we feel our weakness, and lean more entirely on the sustaining Arm that would fain support and lead us onward, than when we walk on boldly in the false strength of our self-confidence, unmindful of the perils ahead, and presume to suppose ourselves incapable of stumbling. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," saith our Lord; and His Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is full of warning to the self-righteous, and of comfort and encouragement to the trembling sinner, who in the agony of self-abasement smites upon

his breast, and prays for the mercy of which he confesses himself so unworthy, with all the fervour of a dying man clinging to his one only hope of safety. Those who feel the smart of their wounds most keenly, are in a far more healthful condition than those who are sinking to sleep in the torpor of mortification; and we may raise our eyes more hopefully when we feel most deeply our powerlessness to contend alone against the perils before us, than when all seems going well with us, and we are conscious of no especial need of help; for then indeed we may be blinded by the mists of self-satisfaction, and leaning on a rotten staff, lose our footing when we deem it most secure.

The whole foundation of the Religion of Christ is Mercy and forgiveness to repentant sinners, and we must never doubt His long-suffering, or despair of His power to raise us from the lowest depths of sin. He is very pitiful, and of

tender mercy, and invites all who labour and are heavy-laden with the burden of their sins, to come unto Him for comfort and refreshment; we may not faithlessly shrink back from His offered help, as though His Arm were shortened and He could not save us. Some minds are prone to fall into such a morbid condition of self-reproach, and feel so completely overwhelmed by the consciousness of sin, that they cannot look up, or grasp the loving Hand that is held out to them, and fall into the opposite extreme of despair. Their faith gives them no comfort, because they occupy themselves in the contemplation of their own sinfulness and frailty, to the exclusion of that of Christ's Goodness and Strength; and they become gloomy and misanthropical, showing no mercy to themselves or to others. This condition of mind, although not so offensive as the pharisaical self-satisfaction of those who pronounce confidently that



they are secure of salvation, is almost as dangerous ; and may lead those who are constitutionally desponding, or physically depressed, to a state of religious melancholy closely approaching insanity. They take a completely one-sided view of religion, and dwell only on the passages of Scripture which contain denunciations of sin, forgetting that the Bible is to be our Guide as a *whole*, and that it was never intended that we should pick out detached texts chosen after our own fancy to suit some favourite theory, and build structures of our own upon them. There are no grounds for rash or presumptuous confidence ; we are bidden to work out our salvation with fear and trembling : there are equally no grounds for despair of God's Mercy or of Grace to help in time of need. " For we have not an High Priest Which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet



without sin." There is great comfort in the knowledge of this fact, that the Son of God was Human as well as Divine; that "He is not ashamed to call us brethren;"\* and that having suffered Himself from temptation, He is able to succour them that are tempted. When we are ready to faint beneath the weight of our transgressions, let us strive to bring this article of our faith to our recollection; and dwelling on the contemplation of His Holiness and Perfection, His Love and Mercy, still our faithless heart-throbbings at the foot of His Cross, and find comfort and peace in the priceless treasures of His Grace; in the lowest depths of our humiliation. We are powerless to work alone, it is true; but He Who sanctifieth us will work in and for us; and while we mourn in contrite sorrow for our sin, we must not forget to rejoice in His Righteousness.

\* Hebrews, ii. 11.

“ I . . . . thought to weep  
For sin and sorrow, suffering and crime,  
That fill the world: all mine appointed time  
A settled grief to keep.

When lo! as day from night,  
As day from out the womb of time forlorn ;  
So from that sorrow was that gladness born,  
Even in mine own despite.”

The great doctrines of our Faith ought to bring Sunshine into the darkness into which our transgressions have merged us. It were an endless task to record all the lessons of love, joy, hope, and peace, which are their very essence. But I would fain say a few words suggestive of some of the minor comforts and helps with which our blessed Lord has strewed the path of the humble penitent, the fainter sunbeams which stream from the Sun of Righteousness, the Source of all our Light and joy in this tempestuous world. We must be constant in prayer and communion with Him from Whom all our strength must come. The Ser-

vices of the Church, the sober teaching of the Book of Common Prayer, provide us with petitions equally removed from assertions of self-righteousness, presumptuous assurance, and despairing denunciations of our lost condition. Nowhere can we find more fitting expressions of the humble yet hopeful penitence, with which we should kneel before the Throne of Grace, than in the General Confession preceding the Absolution which Christ's Ambassadors have authority to pronounce to "them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His Holy Gospel." And the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which He ordained "for the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of His death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby," conveys to us strength and refreshment greater than we shall be able to comprehend, till the veil between us and the Spiritual world is rent away. In seasons of great depression, when the

knowledge of sin and failure is pressing heavily upon us ; in our longing desire to ease our shoulders from its weight, we are sometimes tempted to seek after excitements in religion, which are grateful to the morbid condition of our minds, but are not healthful in their effects. We must beware of striving to excite feelings of unnatural fervour and joy in our souls, or of indulging in unreal expressions of penitence and self-abasement. We must not gauge our spiritual progress by our feelings, or we shall be in danger of violent transitions from excessive despair to excessive confidence. They often depend upon constitutional temperament, rather than upon any real growth or declension in holiness. We may not be too much emboldened by any fancied sudden advance, or too much cast down by any backsliding on our way. The growth of our spiritual life must be gradual and insensible ; faith and humility

must walk hand in hand ; and if we are permitted to see some little symptoms of progress from time to time, these are all the gleams of Sunshine we can dare to hope for ; and cheered by these we may press forward with renewed strength and vigour, " looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," and finding comfort in the thought that He knows all—all our errors and weaknesses, all our struggles and failures, our sin and our penitence. He sees us as we are, and discerns every germ of evil lurking in our hearts—every snare and pitfall in our path ; He sees also every trembling effort against sin, marks every earnest struggle to resist temptation, hears every faint yet heartfelt prayer for aid ; and " He will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way for us to escape."

Can there be any greater comfort to the



humble penitent, striving to overcome his besetting sin in trustful dependance on the Love which glows but the more warmly, the more deeply we need its vivifying power?

This perfect knowledge of us, this power to pierce through the mists which often hide the truth from the eyes of man, is our chief comfort too, when we suffer from the knowledge of the effect of our errors upon others. If we have influenced them to sin, or have grievously wounded or injured them by our conduct, and the power to make reparation for the evil we have done is denied us; the bitter grief, the life-long remorse, which such consciousness must give us, can only be cheered by the thought of this Omniscience. God's perfect justice will not punish them for our sin; He can separate it from their transgression, He knows the exact measure of their offence, and the amount of temptation which we put in

their way, and He will judge them accordingly. And as regards the suffering we have caused them, His unfailing Love will bring good out of the evil of our sin, and a blessing to them out of the curse of our transgression. We must continue to bear the knowledge of it about with us, as an inevitable consequence of the sin; but if we trust His Love and Justice, there may be some sweetness mingled with the gall. Only let us bear our penance rightly, meekly, patiently, thankfully, as befits an offending child, rather than a despairing culprit; looking upward with a smile of resignation, and feeling that our Judge is our Father, and wounds us for our souls' eternal health, and that our Lord and Master stands beside us in our woe.

“Thou know'st our bitterness, our joys are Thine;  
No stranger Thou to all our wanderings wild:  
Nor could we bear to think how every line  
Of us Thy darken'd likeness and defil'd,

Stands in full sunshine of Thy piercing Eye ;  
But that Thou call'st us Brethren ; sweet repose  
Is in that word—the Lord Who dwells on high  
Knows all, yet loves us better than He knows.”

## OUR INFIRMITIES.

“Sickness is wholesome ; crosses are but curbs,  
To check the mule, unruly man ;  
They are Heaven’s husbandry, the famous fan  
Purging the floor which chaff disturbs.  
Were all the year one constant Sunshine, wee  
Should have no flowres ;  
All would be drought and leanness ; not a tree  
Would make us bowres.”

*Henry Vaughan.*

SOME of the trials with which our pilgrimage here is encompassed, seem to be sent to exercise us in the practice of special virtues, necessary to the formation of the perfect Christian character.

Our infirmities of mind and body, for instance, are so many practical lessons in humility.

“Man is a foolish thing, a foolish thing;  
Folly and sin play all his game.”

And yet his vanity and self-esteem need to be taken down continually, to remind him of his true condition.

Few of us, I suppose, are aware of the most degraded specimens of fallen humanity which are to be met with in the worst bye-lanes, back-streets, and cellars of our large cities, where sin and want have their chief haunts; where the barriers between man and the “beasts that perish,” seem to grow more and more narrow; but we all know something of the infirmities from which men suffer, “or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern,” and the dust returns to the earth from which it sprang. So be it: for, blessed be God! *this* is not the end of man; “the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it,” and in His good



time we who "have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly." Let all who suffer from the bondage of corruption, and feel the infirmities of human nature sorely weighing upon them, open their hearts to receive this blessed consolation. Our Father in Heaven is so good to us, He gives us no wound without its balm, no cloud without its silver lining; and the glorious picture held out to the view of those who are tried by mental or physical infirmities,—the perfection of mind and body to which they are taught to look forward when earth and its corruption shall have passed away,—the vista of beauty and glory, of holiness and peace, which is spread before their eyes,—ought to make their present short-lived woes endurable, and render the eternal bliss in prospect all the more bright, from its contrast with the transitory evils which try them here.

There are times, however, when the present makes itself so sorely felt, that we are scarcely able to realize what is to come, while the suffering which is pressing upon us is so imminent.

To take an instance, — our fondest wish may have been from childhood to devote ourselves to works of charity; to minister to the poor and distressed members of Christ's flock; to spend and be spent in God's service; and sickness smites us down, some accident cripples us, or we are deprived of some one of our external senses; and we are forced to resign ourselves to what seems a completely useless life, and to give trouble and care to others, instead of doing good to them. A sore trial this: requiring our utmost trust in God's Love and Wisdom to make us submissive to His Will. Or perhaps we are ambitious; we feel that we have talents of no common order; we long to cultivate the intellect in which

we have a pardonable pride, if any pride can be fitly so called ; we look forward to fame and reputation, to success in genius and art ; and illness takes away the powers of memory and thought, and the brain refuses to obey the will ; we feel our minds too feeble to grasp the subtilities of argument, or to work out the schemes that our imagination weaves ; we are conscious, it may be, of a gradual torpor or decay of our faculties ; or the physician warns us that if we persist in the effort to fight against the physical maladies, which are too serious to be withstood, the struggle will end in death or imbecility, and we feel that there is no escape from the entire relaxation, the complete idleness which our minds absolutely demand, if we would not become guilty of suicide of body or mind. Meanwhile time passes, others get before us in the ranks of talent, our powers rust, and our aims are defeated.

Or again, we are tried by bodily deformity; the rich jewels of a pure soul and brilliant intellect are, so to speak, entombed in a casket which gives a degrading, a ludicrous, or a loathsome impression of us; or with capabilities of enjoyment of everything that is beautiful and gratifying to the eye, we are condemned to blindness; or we are unable to hear the sweet music of Nature, and are deaf to the tones of affection; or are unable to express the feelings which arise so vividly in our hearts, and our souls' eloquence dies away in inarticulate murmurs upon our lips. All these are indeed sorrows which press heavily upon us; troubles which remain such, in spite of every bright picture of the future which our imagination, inspired by the glorious promises of the Word of God, portrays for us. In some minds, too, the practical material present will always take the place of the imagined future; and they cannot grasp the idea



of glory and happiness while they are suffering from mortification and infirmity. We must strive, therefore, if our minds are thus constituted, to make the present more tolerable; and if we will second the loving efforts of our Heavenly Father to lighten the burthen to us, and receive the many gleams of sunshine which He sends to brighten the darkened day, instead of shutting them out by our despair and discontent, we shall find very much greater brightness in our lot than at first sight would seem possible. We have gazed so long upon its darkness, that we cannot easily open our eyes to the sunbeams that are striving to find entrance; but if we are willing to admit them, they will make their way in time, and throw a Heaven-born light upon the gloom.

When we are condemned to a life of passive endurance, instead of being active workers for God, we may glean much consolation from the reflection that He



would have permitted the work if it would really have promoted His glory, and the good of man ; and that He does not permit it, is a proof that it would not have had the effect we desired. In very love He refuses us the power He knows our weakness would turn to ill. If we can put aside self sufficiently to care only for the work on this account, this will content us. Our best concerted measures for doing good so often fail, and tares spring up so unexpectedly among the wheat, that in all probability we are hindered from doing harm.

And we must not think we can do no work for God, when we seem to be laid aside. He Who sees not as men see, may know that sickness and infirmity, taken rightly, will do more for the souls of those we love most dearly, than any of the most energetic labours could effect. As far as we are ourselves concerned, we cannot doubt that our enforced passiveness must

be for our good, and in making our souls more pure, it will surely make them more able to work for God and man by prayer. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," we are told; let us seek to make our prayers better and more effectual by our better lives; by our greater patience, submission, obedience, self denial, and humility, and thus to work for God in *His* way, not in *ours*. It may be that we are kept back from putting our hand to the plough, till this affliction has fitted us to take it up in the only spirit in which we could do good service, and we shall be restrained only for a while: but this we must leave in His Hands, and be content to work in any way He wills; and if we do this, we shall find, in the course of time, many little ways in which we may work for others, many little sunbeams we can throw across their daily life, which will brighten the clouds that are overhead.

If our sorrow in infirmity is a more personal one, and we grieve over the necessity of giving up our aspirations after a life of talent, and prosperous study, and exercise of art or science, the chief comfort is that God exacts the sacrifice in the fulness of His Love and Wisdom ; and that no cultivation of talent or mental faculties can be really so important to those who are to live in another world, as the growth of our spiritual life, and our advancement in holiness. Doubtless, He sees perils in the path we long to tread, from which His mercy interposes to rescue us ; nor need we fear that the talents He bestows on us should be, as we pettishly murmur, "thrown away." We may be quite sure that they are given us for some good purpose, and if we wait His good time He will show us the right channel in which to exercise them. The world's honours have blighted many of the buds of promise, that would have brought forth

blossoms and fruits in another soil : talent seldom attains perfection when success fans the flame of gratified vanity :

“ Were all the year one constant sunshine, wee  
Should have no flowres :”

And in the stillness of the quiet life to which our infirmities condemn us, it will find a much more genial atmosphere, than in the world's uncertain, very often erroneous, applause. Doubtless a nameless grave has closed over many of the truest sons of genius, endowed with powers worthy of the highest honours. Were then these powers wasted on them? Surely not! nothing that God creates can be without its use; and if He withheld the opportunity for their exercise here, it is an evidence that they are to be used in another and a better life, in some way unknown to us while we linger here in the twilight of uncertainty. Some day we shall comprehend it all; meantime let



faith throw its light on our darkness; and secure in the Love of our Omniscient Father, let this sorrow train us in patience and humility.

When personal deformity tries us, or some defect exposes us to the unkind comments of the world, the knowledge that it is God who has so afflicted us, should be sufficient to make us content with our lot. *Really* it is an honour to be tried in the furnace of affliction, for "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;" and the Hand that has shaped us thus, fashioned us after the pattern that seemed to Him best for the soul's earthly tabernacle. It is God's work; it cannot really be vile therefore; and if the Holy Spirit of God condescends to abide in it, what matters it if the form itself be uncomely? Probably the soul within it is very much benefited by the rudeness of its exterior casket; beauty of person is one of the great snares with which human nature is



beset, because of the world's undue appreciation of it; and the knowledge of this possession is very often the death-blow to cultivation of the heart and intellect. Those who look beyond the surface often find talents of the first order, and the rarest qualities of mind, hidden under an unattractive exterior. No one likes to be unloved, and if one is conscious that the outward form is unprepossessing, one labours perhaps more diligently to render the qualities within it more attractive. The admiration of the world is so partial, so capricious, that it is really not worth caring for; the love of our friends is of value, and although now and then, we are called upon to bear its absence as an additional trial, this can only be the case when the love we crave is built upon a very fragile foundation, and has a spice of worldliness in it which lessens its value: for no thoroughly good steadfast love can depend upon mere

external beauty ; and the best of all human love, that which glows in a parent's heart, is continually bestowed most lavishly on the infirm and afflicted child of the family.

A greater trial seems to me to lurk in the consciousness of the absence of qualities, likely to gain the affection and esteem of the good and true ; when we feel our own dulness of comprehension, or want of imagination, contrasting forcibly with the brightness of understanding, and the power of intellectual enjoyment, which others possess. If the fact really is that God has denied us these blessings ; not, as very often happens, that we have failed to use the faculties He has given us, so long, that they have sunk into abeyance ; it is His chastisement, and must be borne as such with resignation and humility ; and we can but look forward the more eagerly to the time when the mists shall be lifted from our souls,

and the Light of Heaven shall brighten them ; but in all probability we can do very much to strengthen and improve our mental qualities, if we make vigorous and continued efforts so to do ; and any powers gained by such exertions will certainly be worth far more than natural talents carelessly cultivated. Indolence and discontent, or a morbid condition of mind, often make us sigh over supposed incapacities which do not exist ; and however deficient we may be in talent, of one thing we are sure — and nothing else is of abiding consequence to us—we have light and strength enough given us, to fit us for Heaven ; if we will but use the means which God vouchsafes us for this end.

The deprivations of sight, hearing, and speech, are indeed great afflictions, especially to those who have once possessed them ; but great cause for thankfulness exists even in the greatest of these calamities ; there are so many ways in which

God makes up to us for the absence of the senses in which others rejoice. The blind, for instance, are generally gifted with great perfection of hearing and touch; and we cannot read the biographies of those so afflicted, without being wonderfully struck by the magnitude of the works they accomplished. The scientific discoveries of M. Huber, in paths, too, which it would appear, at first sight, impossible to tread without the keenest vision; the literary labours of the historian Prescott;\* the spirited enterprises of the blind traveller, Lieutenant Holman, and his delight in the scenes he visited, which he could only know by descrip-

\* An accident, in early youth, deprived Mr. Prescott of the sight of one eye, and so affected the other, that for weeks together he could not use it at all: and his labours, as an historian, were enormously increased by the necessity of having the numerous old records, which he was compelled to consult, as well as his notes and memoranda, read to him, while composing his works. For the "Life of Philip the Second" alone, he referred to three hundred and seventy printed volumes, and about thirty-three thick folio volumes of MS. copies of works in various European libraries.



tion ;—evidence how much may be done, and enjoyed, by senses quickened by such a deprivation ; and it is a well-known fact, marvellous to those whose eyes linger fondly on the faces most dear to them, and who delight to gaze on the beauties of Nature and the creations of art, that the blind are rarely melancholy ; cheerfulness seems to be vouchsafed to them more frequently than to those bereft of hearing, although the calamity in itself seems so much greater. But, doubtless, other blessings and sources of enjoyment and usefulness are given to the deaf and dumb, the crippled and the helpless, in their turn ; there are no infirmities without some special alleviation, and the very miseries we bewail, continually become the door to open to us pleasures and benefits, from the kindness of our fellow-creatures, to which they give us claims irresistible to a compassionate heart.

Infirmities of this nature often purchase



for us treasures of love, which could be obtained at no other price. But there are others of which men take little heed, known for the most part but to God and ourselves, which press very sorely upon us, and which are beyond the pale of human comfort; those, I mean, which *seem* to impede our spiritual growth. If God sends them, they cannot really do so, but must be the pruning-knife which cuts away the feeble branches, to make the plant more vigorous, and to give it power to put forth fresh shoots and fruitful blossoms. Infirmities of temper, failures in self-control, indolence of mind, the inability to resist temptation, or to lose sight of the seen in the unseen, are trials to us all,—though felt with almost immeasurable difference of degree,—by some as passing troubles, and by others as the weightiest of their burthens. Those only, however, who have been tried by a life of sickness, can duly estimate the pain which

they suffer, who find the duties and blessings of prayer, and praise, and communion with God, labours instead of comforts; whose every petition is an effort, whose thoughts wander hither and thither, and fix themselves upon the veriest trifles, at the time when they most desire to avoid all distraction of mind; who feel utterly unable to realize the glorious Promises of God's Word, or to grasp the consolations of Religion; and whose hearts seem stony and dead within them, at the most solemn seasons of communion with Him. The only way to take this trial is to regard it as such, and to endeavour to realize the fact that God knows how it is with us, and afflicts us so sorely to work us greater blessings hereafter. We must not add to the trial by our impatience under it; by faithless cravings after the sensible comforts of religion, or by an undue regard to our own services, so to speak, in the worship we render to God. He does not

*need* our homage, Heaven and earth are full of it—

“ Angels round His glory throne,  
Stars, His guiding Hand that own ;  
Flowers, that grow beneath our feet,  
Stones in earth’s dark womb that rest ;  
High and low in choir shall meet,  
Ere His Name shall be unblest.”

Yet He will accept our most feeble efforts to praise Him, will hear our most faltering petitions for succour, will take the will for the deed in all we fail to do, and account it true service, if we submit to the hidings of His Face, and in humble reliance on His Love, say from our hearts, “ Thy Will be done.”

All the trials of this nature,—every infirmity which afflicts us,—are, if taken rightly, preparing us for the life to come ; each cross that is laid upon us teaches us the transitory nature of our present life, and reminds us that we are pilgrims bound on a distant journey ; running the race that is set before us ; and that the

treasures of earth which would stay us on our passage through this life, are but as the dust in the balance, with those which are laid up for us when we reach the goal, to which we should be pressing forward with unclogged feet.

Surely *then* we shall praise God for the very infirmities which have tried us most sorely here, and feel that they have given us power to recognize the glory and the beauty of the realization of the images, which Scripture sets before us in the glowing prophecy of Isaiah:

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; . . . and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

## DISAPPOINTMENT.

“ When winter fortunes cloud the brows  
Of summer friends ; when eyes grow strange,  
When plighted faith forgets its vows ;  
When earth and all things in it change :  
O Lord, Thy Mercies fail me never :  
Where once Thou lovest, Thou lovest for ever.”

*John Quarles.*

I MUCH doubt whether we, any of us, ever believe axioms, the truth of which we do not find out for ourselves. We all learn even in childhood that this life is one of change; that the stability of nothing belonging to it can be trusted, and that we must expect disappointment at every step. Yet how few of us do expect it! how eagerly we go on planning and scheming for the future, and map out our lives as



though there were no such things as failure and disappointment in the world ! And when those who have travelled the same journey before us ; have painted the same bright pictures, and have seen them defaced and blotted out ; tell us of their experience, and warn us to expect the like results, we still hesitate to believe that they will befall us, and are ready to imagine that we shall succeed where everyone else has failed. Doubtless it is mercifully ordained that we should bring all these bright visions, and undismayed hopes, to our first encounter with life's troubles ; they inspire us with energy which we should altogether lack if we realized the certainty of disappointment ; and we still hope that time will bring us success, and persevere till perseverance becomes a habit of our lives, and we cease to look for any result beyond the accomplishment of the present task of the day. God in mercy keeps the future out of our

sight ; and it is well for us that He does so, or none of the great works by which men have benefited their fellows would have seen the light ; so much discouragement is there in all our efforts for the good of others ; so much to make us throw down our arms in despair ; that if we could take in at one view all the obstacles in our way, we should turn from the contest in dismay, and succumb without a struggle to the forces arrayed against us. As it is, coming upon us one by one, they do not alarm us ; hope is buoyant within us, in spite of the warnings of others ; and we earnestly strive to carry out our visions of usefulness, and labour diligently in the service of man, and for the glory of God. When disappointment comes, and come it must to all to some extent, (the higher the objects we seek to attain, the greater in all probability will be the hindrances ;) the way in which we receive it greatly influences our

character, and often helps us to test our motives in the good work. Suppose we desire earnestly to rescue some fallen souls from destruction, to establish some missions for the propagation of true Religion, to labour for the benefit of the poor, the sick, the widow and the orphan; and our efforts are checked by the supineness and ingratitude of those we desire to assist, by the clamours of the evil disposed, or the prejudices of the ignorant; or illness comes upon us; or imperative claims upon our time and energy call us to work in another direction; if we sincerely desire only that which is for the glory of God and the good of mankind, we shall be ready to give up the work at His bidding, and to see others carry out our favourite visions without thoughts of self; if we make blunders, and find that our most promising schemes turn out badly, we shall be ready to listen to the counsels of wisdom and experience, and to turn the

disappointment to good account, by beginning again with equal zeal but greater judgment and discretion : and thus we may learn not to expect too much, or to rely too much on ourselves ; and be content and thankful when we are permitted to see the slightest good effected, by labours which could only thrive under God's Blessing.

“The Son of God, in doing good,  
Was fain to look to Heaven and sigh ;  
And shall the heirs of sinful blood  
Seek joy unmixed in charity ?  
God will not let Love's work impart  
Full solace, lest it steal the heart.  
Be thou content in tears to sow,  
Blessing, like Jesus, in thy woe.”

If, on the other hand, our motives are selfish and paltry, and we are seeking our own glorification instead of God's Honour, we shall throw up our labours in disgust, and cease to care what becomes of the projects upon which we expended all our energies, when all seemed to be going on prosperously. In this case the disap-



pointment has a deteriorating effect on our character; in the other it trains us in faith and humility, and gives us valuable lessons in patience and self-discipline.

If our youthful dreams are of a less noble character, and our aspirations are chiefly of attaining to some eminence in genius or art, of making ourselves a name in the world, or of gaining its riches or honours; some unlooked-for obstacle arises, our circumstances alter, or some event occurs which changes the whole current of our lives. If we take the trial submissively, and realize the fact that "all things work together for good to them that love God," we shall find it grow less under our steadfast reliance on His Wisdom. Not only will it bring a blessing we did not expect, in the discipline so useful to our souls, but very often we shall find, in the course of events, that the check has aided us greatly in the accomplishment of our cherished de-



sires; and that our future success may be mainly attributed to the disappointment we are lamenting. A road may be opened to us, by which we may reach the goal of our ambition more directly or securely; or the adversity which seemed at first to blast all our hopes, has brought out powers and energies which will nurse our talents into greatness. Witness the many discouragements, which have befallen all whose names have been noteworthy, in their pathway to fame; and which have served to make them use exertions, which would have been altogether relaxed, had not disappointment convinced them of their necessity. The most brilliant qualities are constantly wasted and misused by the world's favourites, whose early success has not taught them the diligence and perseverance which would have made them pre-eminent, under circumstances obliging them to labour to cultivate the faculties

bestowed on them. Disappointment, too, in one direction, often throws our energies into another channel, and shows us powers and capabilities of which we were ignorant ; so that we reach the fame or greatness of which we are ambitious, by a path of which we had never dreamed ; or we achieve great things for the good of others, which we should never have accomplished if we had been allowed to carry out our own schemes.

“ C'est des difficultés qui naissent les miracles.”

If God wills us to succeed in our aims, His Providence will over-rule all the obstacles in our way.

But whether this be or be not the case, faith will teach us that disappointment cannot be sent in vain, and that it has a blessing concealed in its folds which we may not discern now ; but which, if we could comprehend it, would fill us with grateful recognition of the Divine Love

and Wisdom, which orders all things for our eternal good.

Disappointments of the affections which wound our hearts and destroy our trust in love or friendship, are sore calamities, and very difficult of patient endurance; because they naturally arouse feelings of anger and bitterness within us, which, if indulged in, would sap the very foundations of Christian charity. They wound our vanity, too—perhaps outrage our self-esteem, if we think we have been unwise or precipitate in our attachment, and have been leaning on a broken reed. We are injured in the most tender points, when our treasures of love or friendship have been lavished on an unworthy object, and we feel them wasted, and the source from whence they flow dried up, and poisoned by the treachery we have experienced. In grief like this, which often alters the whole tenour of our lives, and makes the future, which once looked so full of bright-

ness and beauty, utterly dark and dreary, without spot of earthly light to cheer it; where must we look for comfort? Only to Him Whose love can never fail us or forsake us. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will He comfort" us. As the Friend who "sticketh closer than a Brother," He will help us to bear the burthen of our desolation. "Can a mother forsake her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" He asks; "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Of no other Love can we be secure, for perfect Love dwells only in Heaven.

"From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;  
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,  
At times deceived, at times opprest.  
It here is tried and purified,  
Then hath in Heaven its perfect rest;  
It soweth here with toil and care,  
But the Harvest time of Love is there."

David, mourning over his son's rebellion and Ahitophel's treachery and desertion,



exclaims in prophetic anticipation of his Lord's betrayal by His friend and disciple, as well as in his own person, "It is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour; . . . neither was it mine adversary. But it was even thou, my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend; we took sweet counsel together, and walked in the House of God as friends."

And in like manner, when the lover or friend deserts us, we recall our joys in his affection, and dwell on the injury he has done us—on his falsehood, and the death-blow it has given to all our hopes of happiness, till the wound grows more and more deep and sore, and we fancy our own grief greater than any other. The more we dwell upon self, the more difficult it must be to calm the despairing bitterness of our feelings;—when we can look beyond the hand that has struck the blow, and can realize the truth that



God's Love permitted it to fall, and would have interposed to spare us, if He had not known that it was good for us to receive it; when we can acknowledge the justice of every chastisement, and feel that however little we deserve the injury at our friends' hands, no sorrow can be undeserved from God: when we can put aside all rancour, and forgive and pray for the offender:—though our earthly happiness may be wrecked, peace and contentment will gradually steal into our wounded hearts; and meditation on our Lord's sufferings for us, and on the perfect Love from which nothing can separate us, will calm and soothe our ruffled spirits, and lead us to fix our affections more and more upon the treasures Above, which nothing earthly can step in to mar.

As life goes on, we shall be able perhaps to see the mercy that loosens our hold on the things of this life, and makes them less and less necessary to our hearts,

while we still find objects enough for the exercise of our love and benevolence.

Perhaps God denies us the exclusive individual love so fondly cherished, in order to enlarge or multiply the channels into which our warmth of heart may flow. Certainly this should be the effect of our blighted hopes, not to make us shut up our hearts against tender and compassionate feeling, not to rail against the world's injustice and falsehood, not to refuse all belief in goodness and truth; but to render us more tender and compassionate, more considerate of others' woes, more anxious to relieve them, more capable of entering into them thoroughly, more able to help and soothe them by our sympathy.

And our sorrows, taken in an unselfish spirit, will surely bring blessings upon us which we could only obtain by such chastisements.

I have said that disappointment must

come, in some measure, to all. It falls very heavily on some, in the very fruition of their most cherished desires. Their idols of love, of ambition, of fame, crumble into dust; and after they have spent perhaps the best part of their lives, in working for the attainment of the object they have set before them, they find it worthless in the very moment of success, and feel, when it is too late, that they have wasted all their energies upon shadows of happiness and greatness, which fade away even as they put forth their hands to grasp them. We can easily discern the Love which sends us this trial; its object is so plain; to give us right views of temporal and eternal things, and to teach us to look Above for the only lasting bliss, the Love that passeth knowledge, enduring from "everlasting to everlasting." "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

While we fix our eyes on the faint uncertain gleams which are all that earth has to offer us, we are in danger of losing sight of the true Sunshine on high. Darkness overshadows us awhile, to strengthen our vision, and to enable us to pierce through the clouds, and to admit the Light which has "no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

"All things else have but their day,  
God's Love only lasts for aye."

## LONELINESS.

“The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.”—*Proverbs*, xiv. 10.

“There are who sigh that no fond heart is theirs ;  
None love them best. O vain and selfish sigh :  
Out of the bosom of His Love He spares,—  
The Father spares the Son for thee to die ;  
For thee He died, for thee He lives again,  
O'er thee He watches in His boundless reign.

Thou art as much His care as if beside  
Nor man nor Angel liv'd in Heaven and earth.”

*J. Keble.*

LONELINESS is one of the trials which vary very much in the degrees of suffering it causes, with the temperament of the sufferer. To a loving heart, delighting in the interchange of affection and sympathy, it is a hard trial ; those who have no desire to communicate their joys or sorrows to others, scarcely recognize it



as such. Those, too, who have lived a lonely life from their infancy, and have found none to enter into their childish pleasures and griefs, are more sufficient to themselves, and therefore less severely tried by the loneliness which separation or bereavement brings upon them in after years; while those who have rejoiced in the closest family ties, and have been united by the strongest bonds of affection in their childhood, feel the world a wilderness when they are obliged to tread it alone; and are unable to enjoy any of the pleasures they might find by the wayside, because there are none to take part in their delight.

There is a loneliness of heart, too, which may exist in the very midst of a large household, and give great unhappiness to souls capable of enjoying the true pleasures of affection, when the members of a family have minds so differently constituted, that they cannot enter into the

feelings or understand the thoughts that actuate each other, and so they live separate lives, each in his "hidden sphere of joy and woe," unknown and incomprehensible to the others.

This is a great misfortune, because it tends to selfishness, and renders us unable to help one another on in the rugged journey of life, as we were doubtless intended to do. The ties of kindred ought to be cherished by all, because they are of God's appointment, not our own selection; and if the loneliness of which I have spoken is caused by want of affection or consideration for others—by a selfish love of our own concerns, and a lack of interest in those of others, it ought to be earnestly striven against: it is a fault as well as a misfortune. Sometimes, too, excess of self-esteem makes us lonely; we fancy ourselves non-appreciated by those about us, and suppose that our minds soar

beyond what they can reach, and that they are not capable of entering into the enthusiastic attachment, the refined feelings, and intellectual pleasures, in which we revel. We term them dull and cold and heartless; and while we complain of want of sympathy, it is our vanity that speaks, not our affection. More of the spirit of Christian humility, and a juster appreciation of our own powers,—which we are so prone to exalt above their deserts,—would enable us to enter into the feelings of others, and to give and receive the sympathy which ought always to exist between the members of a family. The finer our own feelings are, the better able we shall be to enter into those of others; if they are of too rugged and coarse a nature to comprehend ours, that need not hinder us from taking a kind and unselfish share in what troubles or pleases them; however much we may marvel at the trifling or mundane sources of their

pain and pleasure. And in nine cases out of ten, this readiness to sympathize with others will draw from them some sympathy with us; if they cannot understand what gives us grief or joy, they know at least something of the feelings themselves, and they can be sorry when we are unhappy, and glad when we rejoice. And what is this but the unsophisticated sympathy of childhood? which often soothes us when we are in great sorrow, and we find the little hand stealing into ours, and the little face put up to kiss us, with a sense of comfort we hardly comprehend: it is because the sympathy of children is so genuine; they see that we are in trouble, and long to comfort us; and their eager compassion for wounds of which they catch a glimpse, without being able to guess at their nature, teaches them to try to comfort us in the only way which occurs to them as soothing. It can be no true Christian spirit that leads us to



set ourselves upon a pinnacle apart from our fellows, and refuses to let them feel their fellowship with us in the common joys and sorrows of this life. A large heart cannot be lonely, because it always will find some one to care for and to try to help; therefore we should speak with contrition rather than with pride, of our want of sympathy given and received. When we feel that it is both a blessing and a duty, we shall mourn its absence, and strive to overcome the hindrances of which we are conscious in our own character. For we may be very desirous of sympathy ourselves, and most anxious to express that which we feel for others, while we are quite unable to give vent to these feelings; natural reserve or awkwardness of manner holds back their expression, and our friends leave us in the full belief that we are cold and hard and unsympathizing, when all the time our hearts are bleeding for their sorrows,



and yearning for power to say what we feel, and to *try* at least to give them comfort. Our very lowliness of mind sometimes hinders us in the endeavour to show our sympathy, for we can hardly comprehend its value to others, and we hesitate to offer that which seems to ourselves so worthless. In such a trouble, the lonely heart may find comfort in prayer; if we cannot speak it to others, we may try to gain it for them by committing them earnestly to the Love that is about us all; and perhaps the prayer itself will give us power to break through the shyness which is so painful to us, and to suggest consolation which comes spontaneously to our minds, when we are dwelling on their needs, in our petitions. In spite, however, of all our endeavours to give and obtain sympathy, the power to do so may be denied us: those whom we would fain comfort, may reject our utmost efforts to help them, and altogether refuse

us a share in their feelings. If their own nature is reserved and absorbed in self, they may not be able to comprehend our desire for fellowship with them, or to believe that we feel sorrows which do not touch ourselves. When this is the case, and we have done all we can to change our relations with them, and find all our offered consolations rejected with displeasure, we can only take it as a trial not of our own causing, but of God's permitting, upon which faith and patience will throw their gleams of Heaven's sunshine.

If their alienation from us arises from any old sore caused by some error or infirmity of ours, or some offence given unconsciously in former days, we should let no feelings of pride or shyness keep us from trying to heal the wound, by making reparation for the pain or annoyance our short-comings may have given, and asking for reconciliation ; nor should we be im-

patient to conclude that we have done our utmost; or neglect any opening that may arise to restore better feeling between us. When the offence has been given to ourselves, and the offender shrinks from us on that account, we should strive to carry out our Lord's injunction to put no bounds to our forgiveness, and persevere in good offices of kindness and sympathy, which may in time, with God's Blessing, awaken reciprocal feelings of good-will, and gain us a loving heart.

When loneliness comes upon us from external causes, through the breaking up of the homes of our childhood by separation or bereavement, the trial is often very great; but it is unattended with the bitterness of feeling, which arises where it is caused by our own short-comings or those of others; and we feel that it is God's visitation, and that we may claim the promises of support and comfort which He gives to all His chastened children.

But for this assurance, our lot would often be very dreary. Perhaps we have survived those who have made the happiness of our lives, and to whom we have devoted ourselves entirely, to the exclusion of other ties; or we have been hindered by circumstances from forming friendships beyond our immediate home, and the object of our constant affection is suddenly taken from us; we are left to fight life's battle alone; and after being tenderly watched over and cared for all our lives, are uncherished, solitary, and helpless; and feel our occupation gone, and our life without an interest. However entire our submission to the Will of God may be, however much we may lose the thought of our own grief in reflections on the happiness of those from whom we are parted, it is impossible but that the blank must be sorely felt; it is intended to be so, or it would lose its special ministry—to draw our hearts to God, and to lead us



to rest them more entirely on the unfailing Love on high. The more tenderly we have been cherished, the more fondly our every wish has been consulted, the greater our present loneliness must be; we so sorely miss the little daily evidences of affection to which we have been accustomed. We retrace all these again and again; at first, with fresh bursts of sorrow at the thought that we shall never enjoy them more; at last, with a fond pleasure that soothes even while it moves our grief.

A fresh phase of life is now to begin for us; we look around for sympathy and affection, and find ourselves alone and forlorn, and with, it may be, little in ourselves or our circumstances to attract the love, to which we have been so long accustomed, that we hardly think it possible to live without it. Where shall we find courage to face the desolation, which seems to banish every prospect of sunshine from our future life? Are there



none in Heaven or Earth, who care for us? If we believe in the Holy Catholick Church, and in the Communion of Saints, we cannot account ourselves entirely alone. Are we not members of One Great Family in Heaven and Earth, bound together by the most sacred ties—by bonds which death cannot sever—blessed by one common Love, rejoicing and sorrowing together, and with one accord doing homage to the Great Lord of all, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier? Realizing this Truth, however desolate we may feel at other times, our loneliness must be merged in this great fellowship, when prayer takes us into especial communion with God, and in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, “with Angels and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnify His Glorious Name.”

Our earthly desolation should make us cling more closely to our membership with

Christ and the other members of His Body; and in proportion as we spiritualize our affections, will be the comfort which our communion with the unseen world will give us; by enabling us to realize the Presence about us, and to lose the sense of our loneliness in the joy that the knowledge of It gives us. Rays of Sunshine from on high will stream upon us through the clouds, and light up every solitary hour with thoughts of Heaven's Bliss, and trust in its deathless Love; and while we dwell on this Love, and find consolation in it in our saddest moments, our sympathies will be enlarged by every unselfish effort we make to enter into the joys and sorrows of our fellow-creatures; and we shall find peace and contentment, nay, even reflections of Heaven's Joy and Love, in our daily path.

“ To holy tears  
In lonely hours Christ risen appears;  
In social hours who Christ would see,  
Must turn all tasks to charity.”

When all occupation seems to have lost its zest, as is often the case when those who have given it its every interest are taken from us; it is a melancholy task to make new interests for ourselves, and difficult to find any pursuit to occupy our minds merely for our own sake; but as long as there are sorrow and care in the world, there must be some one to help by our exertions or our alms, some burthens that we may lighten by our kindness and sympathy; and it is a great help when we are suffering from loneliness and yearning for the affection we have lost, to put self aside and strive to do something for other sufferers.

The kindest friends sometimes make mistakes in their efforts to comfort us. They see us sad and lonely, and without apparent interest in anything about us, and they urge us to exert ourselves and to try to find sources of interest for our own sake; and the motive they suggest

rather pulls us back than urges us forward. We feel as if we could not make efforts to do ourselves good; but the matter assumes another aspect, when there is any chance of our being able to do something for others, especially when they are in circumstances to arouse our compassion and sympathy. With this object in view, we think no labour or time ill-spent, and in striving earnestly to be useful thus, we forget self, and insensibly lose sight of our loneliness in the interest which is gradually awakened in our hearts, by the wants and sufferings of those we are labouring to serve. It may be God's Will that some infirmities with which He afflicts us hinder our search for objects for whom to work; but the cases are very rare in which we can do nothing for any one, though we may be deprived of the means of helping others in ways of our own choosing; and if so sad a fate should befall us, doubtless the privation

will be made up to us in some unexpected way, and the Sunshine of patience and resignation will brighten our lonely path.

“Leave it all in His High Hand,  
Who doth hearts as streams command.  
Gales from Heaven, if so He will,  
Sweeter melodies can wake  
On the lonely mountain rill,  
Than the meeting waters make.  
Who hath the Father and the Son  
May be left, but not alone.”



## BEREAVEMENT.

“I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”—*Rev. xiv. 13.*

“Joy of my life, while left me here!  
And still my love!  
How in thy absence thou dost steere  
Me from above!  
A life well led  
This Truth commends;  
With quick or dead  
It never ends.”

*Henry Vaughan.*

GOD sometimes prepares us for Bereavement by afflicting the objects of our love with sickness or infirmity, gradually to loosen the “silver cord,” and to teach us that we must give them up for a season into His Hands.

After long watching and anxiety, we become so completely absorbed in feeling

for them, that we can almost rejoice when their long trial is over; our very love for them forbids us to desire that they should linger on here in suffering and weakness; and when disease or age dims their faculties, when their eyes are darkened, their ears obscured, and "the grasshopper becomes a burden" to them, we cannot selfishly withhold them from the blissful rest which we believe to be awaiting them beyond the grave. The sense of our own loss in their companionship is swallowed up in considerations of their joy; and when their summons comes, we can give hearty thanks for their deliverance "from the miseries of this sinful world," and resign them calmly into God's good keeping; fully recognizing the Love which sets the spirit free from "the burden of the flesh." Their work seems to be done here, and we are content to let them go; but it is otherwise when we see those we love suddenly cut

down in the full vigour of health and strength, in the midst of a useful and happy life—when the darling child, the promising youth, the loving father or husband, the tender mother, the kind brother or sister—the one object of our fond love and care, is taken from us, and we are called to give up all the hopes we had cherished of happiness, in and with them; and to contemplate a life of loneliness and struggle, uncheered by the love which would make the most arduous life endurable. We have perhaps scarcely time to realize their peril before they are gone from us, or the blow has fallen while we are yet unconscious of it. These are grievous trials, heart-breaking calamities: and for the moment we feel utterly overpowered and crushed by them, and are unable to lift our eyes beyond the grave which seems to hold all that made life dear to us. But comfort and peace are dawning even now upon us, and hope

meets us at the grave where we lay our darlings to rest,—till the trumpet shall sound, and the “dead shall be raised incorruptible,” and the “mortal shall put on immortality;”—for Revelation teaches us that “whosoever liveth and believeth in Christ shall never die,” and that the Spirit whose departure we are mourning has already a foretaste, though not a full realization, of the bliss laid up for those who “die in the Lord.” “They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” We go back to our solitary home cheered by such thoughts, and by the hope of rejoining them ere long, never again to part from them; and even while we weep, gleams of comfort break upon us from the Land where our darlings are gone. We are able to think of their happiness rather than of our misery; at first, perhaps, more entirely than when the sense of our desolation grows upon us; it may be because of the support God gives

us while He strikes the blow, or that the very weight of it drives us to cling to His Arm, and to grasp the consolations without which we feel we must sink to the ground. Perhaps, too, we are almost stunned at the time, and but gradually awaken to the full sense of our sorrow. No one severely tried by such afflictions, can fail to recognize the Love that is shown most abundantly when we most need it, or to see how the full trial comes upon us by degrees : how He gives us strength to bear its weight, and by ways that we think not of, leads us to comfort and peace, and makes life gradually endurable to us. The recognition of this should teach us how to receive our sorrow, letting Him work the good He wills it to effect in us in His own way, and not attempting to bear more than the day's burden at once. It is the only way in which we shall find it supportable ; if we dwell upon the desolation that is



coming, and the dreary future that our imagination spreads out before us, our hearts *must* shrink from the prospect; but if we take the day's appointed task of sorrow and try to bear that well, the strength to bear more will be given to us as we need it. We must not strive either to force ourselves into an unnatural calm, or to make ourselves feel joy in grief at first. Resignation and patience are all that God exacts from us at the time; if He gives us joy afterwards, it will be a healthful and holy joy; but no unnatural exaltation of mind can profit us; it is excitement, not the real cheerfulness born of faith and hope; it cannot last, and we shall be proportionably depressed when it is over. Neither must we interfere with God's dealings with us, by our restless desire to throw off the burden of our grief, by plunging into occupations of business or pleasure, and striving to banish thoughts of our sorrow from our

minds, and to forget the loss we have sustained. To do so, we should assuredly lose the blessings of chastisement altogether, and the heart and mind that it would have softened and purified will become more hard and gross. God "loveth a cheerful giver," but the gift must be appreciated, not offered carelessly, to be accepted. We must feel the cost of the sacrifice before it becomes one, and resign the treasures God demands from us, with the cheerfulness of submission, not of indifference. We must be patient with ourselves, too, when the grief is so sore that we cannot at first sight discern any of the Light that is in the clouds: if we can say from our hearts, "Thy Will be done," even while we feel that its accomplishment rends them to the quick, and makes utter shipwreck of our happiness, the God of Compassion will accept the sacrifice, imperfect as it is; and the Sun of Righteousness will arise

with healing on His Wings; and the Light which we do not wilfully reject, but which our eyes are too feeble and obscured to receive in its fulness and splendour, will dawn upon us by degrees.

But we can only expect this, when we do not throw any obstacles in the way of its reception. If our grief is sullen, and we refuse to submit ourselves to the Will of our Father in Heaven, and murmur against His Dispensations, we must darken the atmosphere about us, and the Light He sends cannot reach us. But if we cry, "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief," and strive to clear our eyes from the mists of earth, and to look upward and onward, the Sunshine from on high will grow more and more bright, will shed its light upon the clouds that are enveloping us, and we shall be able to take our woe patiently, and to resign ourselves into the Hands of God, with a trustful dependance on His Love, that

will give us the cheerfulness which is at once a duty and a blessing. Nothing but sin can rob the Christian of peace; happiness may be beyond his reach for a time, but the Peace of God which passeth all understanding, will be given to all who seek it; and Faith in His Love and Wisdom will pour balm into the sorest wound.

It is, in fact, the non-realization of the Faith we profess, which makes our unhappiness here; if we could thoroughly trust that Love and Wisdom, we should not bewail the overthrow of our hopes, or the removal of our hearts' treasures out of our sight, because we should feel certain that He was ordering all things well, and that Love dealt the blow which has stricken us down, in order to save them or ourselves from some hidden sorrow or destruction, or to give them blessings and joy which our fondest efforts could not obtain for them. A mother is bidden to



resign the infant which she has welcomed as God's best gift, and brought into the world with suffering which makes it tenfold more precious to her; and she marvels why the sacrifice has been exacted from her, and all her maternal joys are crushed in the bud. Could she raise the veil which hides the future from her sight, she would see that sin and misery would have encompassed the young life, and smitten her own heart with an anguish it now can never know, had it blossomed into maturity. A father is rejoicing over his son's talents and goodness, and in his fond ambition for him, looking forward to a life of usefulness and honour, which will crown him with a reflected joy and pride, more dear to him than his own greatness could be. His child is suddenly smitten down, and in the desolation of his heart and the destruction of his fondest hopes, he does not see how, if he had lived, the young heart would have been blighted



by sin, or led astray by the honours which his talents would have procured for him—how he would have fallen under temptation; and so he was preserved from it, and taken away from the evil to come, by an early death, before it could throw its poison into his soul, and sully the brightness of God's image in his pure spirit. He cannot see the mercy that has saved his child from such a fate; but faith should teach him that Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom must have had some such object in view, when so great a sorrow was sent upon him. So is it with us all, when death takes our treasures from us; if we could see what God sees, we should bless the Hand that smites us, and be full of thankfulness for the very trouble that seems so sore to us. The trial of our Faith is to trust the Love we cannot see; if the veil were removed there would be none to exercise it; and God lets it remain that we may obtain the blessings that

Resignation to Dispensations we cannot comprehend will bring upon us.

Let us consider, too, what death really is to the Christian. If we took a more just view of it, and could realize the condition of the departed soul, should we desire even to hold our darlings back from the happiness which even now we may believe they are enjoying? "The souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace." "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;" even now they are reaping their reward in the brightening of the Spirit; in its freedom from the trammels of earth and sin, which held it captive here; in its gradual increase in purity, in knowledge, in love, which only could make it capable of fully entering

into the perfection of Heaven's happiness hereafter. Even now, we may believe, they see the Love that has encompassed all their earthly life; and the mists that obscured their vision here are fading away under the full Light of the Presence of God. They see Him face to face; they are with Christ, and He is making them more and more fit to live with Him for ever.

Thus much we may surely glean from Revelation, from the Light which it throws upon our reason, and from analogy with the progress of the Soul in this life. More we are not yet permitted to know; perhaps it would make us too eager to pass through the Veil that hides the Invisible World from us; or our souls would lose the blessing which they may gain by leaning on His Love, through the darkness that encompasses our heavenward path.

This life is one of probation, not of

fruition; of faith, not of sight. We know enough to make us press forward eagerly to the goal at our journey's end; and to strive to purify our souls from all that can debase and render them unfit for Heaven's bliss. For the life which begins here must go on in another world, and the Soul will surely continue its progress there, whether for good, or, oh, awful thought! for evil; till all its capacities are developed, and all its faculties perfected. The powers and capabilities of which we see the germ here, are doubtless growing, in a state where they are freed from the bondage of corruption; and expanding into beauty beyond the most glowing visions that our imagination can conceive. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." The realization of this happiness is utterly beyond our conception. Doubtless He



is fitting those who are gone before us to their rest, to enter into the fulness of His glory, and expanding the wings of their spiritual life, even as the wings of the butterfly enclosed in the chrysalis of its second life, are growing day by day till the perfect insect issues into perfect life. Every soul must surely have been created to fulfil some purpose of God's; it must have some mission to accomplish, in this life or another. May not the mother, grieving over the loss of her infant, whose little life was numbered but by days, presume to hope that the Spirit which was called hence before it could learn the truths of salvation, may have that knowledge given to it, and be more advanced in its understanding of spiritual things, than the most enlightened and greatest saint on earth? May not we think, when we sorrow over the bright promise of talent and goodness suddenly nipped in the bud, that the Soul was called hence to use the



powers, the exercise of which was hindered on earth, for the glory of God elsewhere, with added strength and brightness? And when we are oppressed by our infirmities, and by the recollection of the frailties which troubled those who have gone from among us,—may not we take comfort in the hope that these infirmities will gradually fade away, under the brightening influence of the glorious Presence of God, and that we shall become more and more assimilated to Him of Whom we are told, “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Has not God given us grounds for rejoicing amidst the grief of bereavement, and motives for striving with earnest, longing, and persevering prayer, to cleanse our souls from the debasing influence of sin, the world, and the devil; and for labouring diligently for the growth and brightness of our immortal spirit during its probationary state on earth? The

sorrow that is now wounding our hearts, in the separation which brings joy and brightness to those whom we are mourning, while it overclouds our human life, is sent to draw us more surely to Heaven; and although it seems to be God's Will that but little of the knowledge we crave, about those who have passed out of our mortal ken, should be granted to us here,—lest our desires for Heaven should stay themselves on thoughts of them, to the exclusion of the still higher aspirations of dwelling with God and becoming “perfect as He is perfect;”—we are surely intended to turn our love for them to good account, by making it an additional motive for striving after perfection? Holy Scripture seems to give us warrant for believing in their participation still in the great battle against sin; in their sympathizing with us who are still fighting, still running, in the combat they have fought, the race that they have run. Their love and sym-

pathies can only be strengthened, not diminished, by their entrance into a higher life; and surely those to whom we have been united by the bonds of a holy affection on earth, must still be caring for us, praying for us with added fervour, and longing for us to be with them, as they are with Christ.

They may be very near us even now, sympathizing with heartfelt earnestness in every gallant struggle against sin and temptation, and watching with tender affection the progress of our spiritual life. Some have thought that their knowledge of us and of our trials and backslidings, would give them pain which could scarcely be compatible with their freedom from trouble and suffering. But may not the clearer light vouchsafed to them, enable them to see so completely how all things work together for good to them that love God, as to soar beyond the thought of our sufferings, and to dwell only on the

greater joy they are preparing for us? This better knowledge, too, may enable them to endure the sight of our failings and errors, in the prospect of our victory through Christ; and knowing that Heaven's shores will be won at last, they do not count the billows as they pass, or number them only to increase their adoring recognition of the Love, that is bearing us safely over them to the haven where we would be. Sin alone can destroy our communion with them; and if we fall away from God, we can but expect to lose their love; and doubtless, in such a case Heaven's mercy blots us out from their remembrance, or saves them the pain of knowing our eternal ruin.

With this view of those who have gone before us to the World of Light, whose memory is so dear to us, that we yearn for every glimpse of their lives that Revelation affords, or reason can suggest; we shall seek to live more and more above



this world, and our hidden life with Christ and with them, will become more and more real and ennobling. Our chief anxiety will be to brighten this inner life by all the means of Grace He vouchsafes us; and in Prayer, and Praise, and Holy Communion, we shall find comfort in our loneliness, in "holy fellowship" with "the blessed company of all faithful people"\* in Heaven and earth.

Side by side, however, with this inner life, must run one of "all such good works as God has prepared for us to walk in."† Our bereavement must not narrow our hearts, and make us unmindful of the claims of others and our duties to them; nor must we be impatient when the trifling cares which are a tax upon most of us, call our minds from contemplations which grow more and more precious to us as "grows in Paradise our store." We must not dwell on these to the exclusion

\* Office for Holy Communion.

† Ibid.



of active duties, or we shall feel fretted and worried when they call us out of our retirement. And in truth, one of the trials of bereavement is to return to the world from which our sorrow has permitted us to absent ourselves awhile. We feel that our only true Sunshine comes to us from Above, and we desire constantly to bask in it. But continual Sunshine is not our appointed portion on earth, and we must brace ourselves to return to the trivial tasks of daily life, and to fulfil them with patience and perseverance—saddened though they be, by the absence of those who endeared them to us, by their participation in our cares and labours.

Our feelings, in bereavement, vary so much with our several temperaments, that while some find the greatest relief in expressing them, and dwelling on all the particulars of their sorrow, others can scarcely endure the slightest allusion to

it. Nevertheless, we must not close our hearts to the offered sympathy of those who desire to soothe us, however mistaken their attempts at consolation may be. It is enough that they sincerely desire to help us; and we must strive to let them do so in their own way, and not let the tenderness of our wounds make us shrink unduly, or ungratefully, from the hand that would fain pour a healing balsam into our sores. At first we have less difficulty in accepting the sympathy, which the kindness of those about us renders them anxious to press upon us. Their compassion is so truly excited, that its genuine warmth makes it grateful to us; but as they grow accustomed to the idea of our affliction, they expect us to rouse ourselves from the contemplation of our loss, and think we have devoted time enough to sorrow. They urge us to make exertions of which they cannot realize the pain, with a rough kindness in which we are

more sensible of the roughness than of anything else, and we shrink from the rude touch upon our grief, which is in no wise less sensitive than it was at first. We must try to remember that they cannot put themselves in our place so entirely, as to comprehend the feelings with which we are struggling, (especially when our wounds bleed inwardly,) and receive their counsel as it is meant, in all kindness and good-will. Nay, we may benefit by it in a measure, by trying to overcome the natural selfishness of absorbing grief, and to throw ourselves into the interests of those about us.

It does not need much effort to take part in the sorrow of others, when our own hearts are bleeding; and every endeavour to comfort and help them will soothe us more than any indulgence of our own feelings could do; but we ought not to be content with this, but strive to fulfil the injunction to "Rejoice with

them that do rejoice" as well, and in the unselfish endeavour to do so, some reflection of their joy may perhaps be vouchsafed to cheer our darkened lives.

In our commerce with others after a very sore bereavement, one trouble often presses heavily upon us; all the more because we cannot understand its source. We feel continually irritated by trifles, and are hurt and wounded by fancied unkindnesses about small matters, which at the very time we are smarting from them, we feel are totally inadequate to cause the annoyance they give us, and we ask ourselves in astonishment how we can be fretted by such trifles, when we are afflicted by such a real sorrow. The explanation is that we have been in an unnatural state of tension of nerves, the reaction from which depresses us, and makes us dwell upon trifles unduly. In point of fact, the ailment is more physical than mental, and we only make it worse

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when we treat it as a sin, and blame ourselves for feelings we cannot help. At the same time we must not give way to them, or allow them to influence our judgment of others' conduct. It is often a matter of perplexity, how irritations and unfriendly feelings spring up between the members of a family, at seasons of great affliction: when one would expect them to be united by a common grief. Generally, too, the troubles are about worldly matters, which ought to have less weight with those who have been so near the borders of another land, than with others. People take sorrow so differently, that they are apt to misunderstand each other's feelings; and being all more or less affected by the irritability which generally follows excitement, they give and take affronts, which sometimes press heavily upon their hearts long after the cause of offence is forgotten.

We can only be patient with ourselves,



and with others, at such times of soreness, and try to calm down the irritation by prayer, when we cannot struggle against the conviction that we have been unjustly or unkindly treated. Perhaps we have reason to feel so ; but in general we are more ready to forgive real injuries than little trifling wounds of this nature. Our very desire to be at peace with all at such a time, makes them more galling. We feel that one of the great pangs of bereavement is the recollection of any little unkindness of word or deed, of which we may have been guilty in our communion with those that are gone. Although we know that they have forgiven it, if indeed it ever rankled in their minds, we cannot banish the misery of self-reproach it brings upon us, and we resolve never again if possible, to allow bitterness of spirit to exist between us and those we love ; and so when we cannot make things go smoothly, it distresses us greatly, even

while we feel the irritation of the wound. The only way to meet this trouble is to look upon it as part of the trial of bereavement, and to ask God's help to bear it patiently. It is so much easier to bear sorrow that comes to us from Him than from others, that this view of it and the attempt to take it as befits those smitten by His Hand, will generally calm our ruffled spirits more than any reasoning of our own or others against it.

As time goes on, our friends often cause us pain by their incapacity to enter into our feelings; they do not understand the lingering of our sorrow, and perhaps accuse us of a want of submission to the Will of God; and they cannot make allowances for us, as they did when our grief was fresh and called forth their compassionate sympathy, while in truth the blank is more severely felt, as the yearning to behold again the faces we have loved so dearly, increases upon us. Our

comfort is that all this suffering, this yearning, is known to Our Lord; and that when all human sympathy fails, His Love burns most brightly; and meditation on this Love, and communion with Him, will draw light upon the darkest hours of loneliness and bereavement. In proportion as we feel the clouds overshadowing our earthly life, will be our realization of the beauty of the glorious Light of the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, where "they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." And if our grief is neither wayward nor selfish, and we strive to open our hearts to the consolations He would fain afford us, they will meet us on every side. Besides the higher sources of comfort, Nature is full of emblems of Heaven with which to cheer our onward path. St. Paul teaches us how to use our knowledge of her workings, to illustrate the blessed doctrine of the Resurrection of

the dead; and every renewal of Spring reminds us of Easter joys, which speak of comfort and hope to our stricken hearts. Summer and Autumn shadow forth to us the perfection of the blossoms and fruits which have budded here; and Winter, with its images of decay and death, gives us the assurance that all our troubles shall perish with this transitory life, and give place to an eternity of joy and light. The flowers blooming by the way-side may be full of solace to us, and the countless stars prove beacons of faith, to light us through the dreary night of sorrow and bereavement, paling only when the full glory of Sunrise shall burst upon our vision.

“O then the glory and the bliss  
When all that pain'd and seemed amiss,  
Shall melt with earth and sin away;  
When Saints beneath their Saviour's eye,  
Fill'd with each other's company,  
Shall spend in Love th' Eternal Day.”

“ We most humbly beseech Thee of Thy Goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear: beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy Heavenly Kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ’s sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.”



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**John and Charles Mozley, Printers, Derby.**

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