

customs and recognized manners of the society in which we move. But there are times in which, by reason of special circumstances, these same terms, however little they may have meant theretofore, are expressive of the strongest emotions of which our nature is susceptible. The joy which fills the heart of the exile as he steps upon his native shore, or which one feels on meeting again his dearest friend after a long separation; the sorrow by which we are overcome when the ties we have formed with beings of kindred spirits must be torn asunder, when the fellowship that has for many days proved a source of pleasure and a means of profit must suffer interruption, when the haunts we have loved to frequent must be forsaken;—that joy and sorrow may find an utterance in words we have often used before: but who that has felt it needs to be told that these words are then as different in meaning from their common acceptance, as are the circumstances referred to from the ordinary affairs of life? Then indeed do our current colloquialisms wax so big with import that the mind is fixed exclusively upon the things affecting us, and any attempt at a detailed statement of them yields but a shallow satisfaction.

The same principle applies extensively even to the holy Word of God. With such portions of that precious gift as record the experiences of God's people in former times, occasioned by what befell them in the course of their mortal career,