

him. I remember him smilingly saying to me, "Oh, you people think ours is a very romantic life, and that the whole current of our life tends somewhat to the making of poetry. Now" he said, "do you not see that it is a very prosy business?" And so it was. I had no idea that there was such disease among shepherds. I had no idea that the shepherd needed to be so much (if you will allow the term) a veterinary surgeon. I had no idea whatever of 'the hard, rough—shall I say 'dirty'—work that a shepherd has to go through. It all comes out, I think, in one line of this Psalm, "He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." There is a good deal of doctoring needed. It is not at all romantic and superfine.

A shepherd need to be a man with a pair of open eyes and ears, and ready hands and strong limbs. He needs to be in it, and all in it, and always in it. So does our blessed Master. He needs to be about and around us continually, for we are always going wrong. The sheep is said to be, for its size, the animal with the least brain in this animal creation. And will you allow—not me, but God, just because of that, to speak to us in this type and figure. Like a sheep, my brother, you have a genius for going wrong—a genius for going astray. I have seen how easily they will go through a gap in the hedge, and then, when they seem to be looking for it, in order to come back, they cannot find it. How easily we break out. How easily we get tangled and torn. With what infinite difficulty, as regards ourselves, we get back, and are restored. How thankful it ought to make us that the Lord Jesus Christ stands among us not only as a great Shepherd, but as a great Physician: "Jehovah Rophi"—"I am the Lord that healeth thee." He says, "There is no trouble known to sin-sick men and women that I do not know, and that I cannot cure." None! "He restoreth my soul." How often the roaring lion has sprung upon us, and, how often he might rejoice and say, "Now I have prevailed. Now I have rent them limb from limb." But, lo! we do not die. "He restoreth my soul." Not dead yet, oh devil, but alive and here, notwithstanding all that has happened; here, in this quiet sheepfold, resting myself among the green pastures and beside the still waters of His Word and Sacrament.

"That's a dead 'un," said one of the Hospital Staff, as he pointed to one of the bodies in the trenches before Sebastopol. "Oh no," said "the body"; "I'm worth a great many dead men yet." And the "dead 'un" is now known to fame as Lord Wolseley!

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteous-

ness." A man in Glasgow translated the Psalms into broad Scotch, because he thought that broad Scotch had wonderful affinities in its idiom to simple, old world Hebrew; and I think he was right. He said here, "He leadeth me in richt roddins." There are little bits of country road that seem to lead nowhere, but the farmer needs them all and uses them all. You tourists, if you struck them, would find that they led you nowhere, but the farmer uses them, and the shepherd uses them, and the dairymaid knows all about them for her charge. So with the Lord Jesus Christ. He leads us by little bits. He does not lay out a whole champaign of country, and cast us on the great highway. No, but He leads us along this sheep track to day and another tomorrow, and these tracks never lose themselves in the moor. For He will always be with us, and it will always be found that there was a track and a path, and that it was the right path. Literally translated, it is, "He leadeth me in the straight paths." They have an expected end and termination because He is Leader and He is Guide.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." This is a lamp that has often been lit on death-beds, and yet, primarily, it is not meant as a lamp for a dying chamber. It is rather meant as a light for a dark valley—for those troubles and sudden distresses, or prolonged distresses, that come to God's pilgrim folk as they go up through the wilderness of this world. David had before him instances in his own experience when he had to lead his flock through some gorge, or some deep defile—through some valley filled with gloom and shadow; and there, lurking in that corner, and here, lurking in the other corner, is the wild beast of prey, ready to spring, watching for its chance, but kept back by the watchful eyes and the sturdy arm of the shepherd with his rod and with his staff.

"The valley of the shadow of death." Sometimes we say, "Oh, it is only children who are afraid of shadows." And the point is brought out for our encouragement, that death has been vanquished by Jesus Christ, and that all that is left is only a shadow. It is said that only children are afraid of shadows. I do not know. I am not a child, but I frankly admit that I do not like darkness. With all my years, and with all my height and weight, I am naturally nervous. How does that nervousness come? Nervousness come? Nervousness springs originally, I suppose, from sin, and it needs grace to cure it; and even the valley of the shadow is a gruesome place, I do not know that you