

we endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. . . . Wherefore, when we could hold out no longer, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy our brother to establish you, and to exhort you concerning your faith? This relates to all whom he had begotten to eternal life; they are so many friends whom he bears on his heart before God. The churches without number founded by him contain no member who does not have his place in those prayers, the frequency of which is almost as astonishing as their fervour. One is tempted to ask where the apostle found time (to speak only of time) to pray so constantly for so many persons; and the inexhaustible tenderness of his soul assuredly enters largely into the solution of this touching problem.

"But fraternal love does not exclude special preferences. Sufficient attention is not given to the place which friendship, a tender friendship, held in the life of Saint Paul and in his apostleship. Paul had freely renounced, in order to promote his ministry, his right of 'leading about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas;' he did not wish to be chargeable to the churches, or to restrain his own liberty by the support and the cares of a family. But it is allowable to believe, in consistency with the lively affections to which we have seen that his heart was surrendered, that it was not possible for him to renounce the sweet ties of domestic life without a sacrifice greater, perhaps, in his case, than it would have been for many other men. There is, however, no sacrifice without compensation; and that very isolation which Saint Paul took care to wrap about himself, opens for him a readier access to the consolations and helps of Christian friendship. I desire no further proof of this than the great number of brethren and sisters that are named by their names at the close of many of his epistles, and each one of them saluted by him with all the most delicate shades of the most faithful Christian affection; the apostle's fraternal family, far more numerous and perhaps yet more devoted would have been the natural family of which he had voluntarily deprived himself. There is a Priscilla and an Aquila, 'his helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for this life laid down their own necks,'

there is an Andronicus and a Junia, "his kinsmen and his fellow-prisoners, who also were in Christ before me;" there is a Persis, "the beloved, who laboured much in the Lord;" a Rufus, 'chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who,' it is added, 'is also mine. In this point of view, those chapters of salutations, which you perhaps have been wont to pass over at a bound, as possessing no general interest, would present you a study as attractive as it is instructing, by enabling you to penetrate into the private life of the apostle, and into his personal relations.

"This is not all. Among so many Christian friends that throng around him, Paul reckons a few to whom he reserves his most intimate attachment—Luke, the historian, so true, yet so affectionate; Barnabas, his first companion in labor, towards whom he would not suffer himself to be chilled by a momentary separation; Philemon, to whom he writes with a vivacity of sentiment which the pen of the most loving woman could not excel; Epaphroditus, whom God gave to his prayers, 'lest he should have sorrow upon sorrow;' Epaphras, Tychicus, and, above all the rest, Timothy and Titus;—Timothy his right arm, and Titus his left arm.

"What mother ever wrote to her son a letter more filled with solicitude than the second epistle to Timothy? The transparently affectionate language of the teacher enables us to read the very heart of the disciple, which is revealed to us in the pastoral (shall I call them, or paternal?) directions lavished upon him. Do not you see Timothy here, yielding to the double ascendancy of a mind depressed, and a body enfeebled, and shedding abundant tears in the bosom of his aged friend? Paul takes heed not to forget those tears. He knows too well what tears are. That depressed mind he raises up by his holy exhortations; he cares, also, for that enfeebled body, on whose behalf he gives elsewhere the watchful and almost motherly counsel, 'Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thy frequent infirmities.'

"And what shall we say of Titus? If I painted to you the apostle running from church to church after his dear disciple, 'his true son in the faith,' to find rest in his sweet society, you would