

condition of the people of God in this world, and of God's procedure with them, and of its results, are alike scriptural, clear, and forcible. They have all the appearance of coming from an experimental acquaintance with the laws and discipline, the privileges and hopes of God's family. We perceive from the English copy before us, that it has had a wide circulation at home, as it purports to be of the eighth thousand, and is dated 1846. Mr. Carter, of New York, has reprinted it, and we doubt not that it will be circulated by thousands also on this side of the Atlantic. May it prove a word in season to many weary souls! We give the contents and the preface to the book:

The Family; The Family Life; The Family Badge; The Family Discipline; The Family Rods; The Types; The Proving; The Rebuking; The Purifying; The Arousing; The Solemnizing; The Warning; The Recollections; The Consolation; The Eternal Results.

We give the preface at present, as a key to the design of the whole; and a fair specimen of the style, and we will probably return to the volume at some future opportunity.

"It is no easy matter to write a book for the family of God. Yet it is for them that these thoughts on chastisement are written.

They may be found not unsuitable for the younger brethren of the Man of Sorrows. For the way is rough, and the desert blast is keen. Who of them can say aught regarding their prospects here, save that tribulation awaiteth them in every place as they pass along? This they must know and prepare for, grasping more firmly at every step the gracious hand that is leading them on to the kingdom, and looking up for guidance to the loving eye that rests over them with the fondest vigilance, ever bright and ever tender, whether in shadow or in sunshine, whether amid the crowds of busy life, or in the solitude of the lonely way.

It is, then, to the members of this family that this little volume is offered. They may find in it something which may not merely interest them, but may also meet their case; something too in which, perhaps, they may recognise not the voice of a stranger, but of a brother—"a companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." For the tones of the suffering brotherhood on earth have something in them too peculiar not to be instinctively recognised. It is said of Arabian ains that they are all plaintive. They all touch some melancholy chord, as if the wail of the desert echo were the key note of each melody. It is in some measure thus with the children of the kingdom,—while sojourners in this wilderness of earth.

"Their voice is ever soft,
Gentle and low."

Sorrow has smoothed away its harshness, and breathed gentler feeling into its tones. True, it is the voice of gladness, for it is the voice of the forgiven: but still it is sorrowing gladness, calm and serious joy. Their peculiar lot as followers of a hated Lord, and their peculiar circumstances as standing in the midst of a doomed and dying world, have wrought into their spirit a deep though serene, solemnity of expression, alike in look and voice. Hence the instinctive recognition among the brotherhood, not only of the family look, but of the family tones.

It is of family concerns that we are to speak, and in these each member has a common interest. The "household of faith" has many concerns, and not the least of these are its sorrows. These are the lot of all; and there is no member of the household but has his share in these, either in personal suffering, or in helping to bear the burden of others.

What is now written may be found suitable to all, whether actually under chastisement or not. It is, however, presented specially to those who are "in heaviness through manifold temptations," suffering the rebuke of the Lord passing through fire and through water, "with affliction laid upon their loins." The bruised reed must not be broken;

the smoking flax must be quenched. The hands that hang down must be lifted up, and the feeble knees confirmed; that which is lame must not be turned out of the way but rather healed.

Our desire is to minister to the saints in the consolation and admonition of the Lord. We would seek to bear their burdens, to bind up their wounds, and to dry up at least some out of their many tears. To comfort those that mourn is not only to act in obedience to the command, "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" it is to walk by the side of Jesus in his visits of mercy to his suffering saints on earth; nay, it is to be fellow workers with the Holy Ghost as the Church's Comforter in all her tribulations and distresses.

Of these things the world knows little. Its sympathies are not with the saints, either in their sorrow or their joy. Family concerns, and especially family griefs, are not for strangers to intermeddle with. They are things too high for them. And how shall they understand them so long as they remain without? They must first come in, and take their place among the children beneath the paternal roof. And what should stay them? The gate stands open day and night. They would be welcomed in with the kindest greetings of love.

But though standing afar off from the saints, and unable to mingle its sympathies with theirs, still the world has sorrows of its own, deep and many. To grieve, and yet have no comfort; to be wounded, and yet have no healer; to be weary, and yet know no resting place; this is the world's hard lot.

Yet it is a self-chosen one. God did not choose it for them. They choose it for themselves. God invites, nay, pleads hard with them to quit it, yet they will not. Wretched as it is, they yet prefer it to the friendship of him with whom their heart is at enmity, and whose presence is to them a gloom and terror. Yet he continues to entreat them. He does not let them alone. The "many sorrows" which compass them about are his many messages of grace, his unwearied knockings at their fast-closed door. He writes "vanity" upon the creature, "weariness and vexation" upon earth's best delights, that men may not place their confidence in these. Most mercifully does he hedge them about with disappointment of every form, that they may lift their eyes above this earth, and beyond these heavens, to the enduring blessedness that is at his right hand for ever. With what kindness, though with seeming severity does he mar their best friendships, that he may attract them to the communion of his own far better and everlasting companionship! With what compassion does he break in upon their misguided attachments, that he may draw them away from earth, and bind them to himself by the more blessed ties of his own far sweeter love! With what tenderness does he tear asunder the bonds of brotherhood and kindred, that he may unite them to himself in far dearer and eternal relationship! With what mercy does he overthrow their prospects of worldly wealth, and bring down their hopes of earthly power and greatness, that he may give them the heavenly treasure, and make them a "royal priesthood" to himself in the glorious kingdom of his Son! With what love does he ruin their reputation among men, breaking in pieces their good name which was their idol, that he may show them the vanity of human praise, leading them to desire the honour that cometh from God, to know that in his favour is life, and that the light of his countenance is the very sunshine of heaven!

Oh that a weary, broken-hearted world would learn these lessons of grace! Oh that they would taste and see that God is good! Let them but come home to him. He will not mock them with shadows, nor feed them upon husks. He will satisfy their craving souls; he will turn their midnight into noon; he will give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

Let the world, however, regard God's dealing with them as they may; let not "the children" despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when

they are rebuked of him. They at least should know the meaning of his actings towards them, for they know *themselves*. The world may misunderstand his rebukes, or put an unkind construction upon them; they cannot, for they know that "God is love."

The thoughts that follow are designed to assist them in interpreting God's ways;—not merely a finding comfort under trial, but in drawing profit from it. I have at least attempted to contribute something towards this end. I have done what I could, rather than what I would. But it may be that the Head of the family will own it, and send it with his own blessing to the scattered members near and far. He knows that they need some such words in season; and that, if thickening signs deceive not, they will ere long need them more. In such a case even this little volume may be helpful.

It is written in much weakness, and with many sins to mar it; amid what trials, it is of little moment for a stranger to learn. It is written by one who is seeking himself to profit by trial, and trembles lest it should pass by as the wind over the rock, leaving it as hard as ever; by one who would fain in every sorrow draw near to God, that he may know him more, and who is not unwilling to confess that as yet he knows but little."

MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.

The ordinary meeting of the Presbytery of Hamilton took place on the 13th of October, at which about the usual number of ministers and elders attended. The business was almost wholly of a missionary nature.

Dr. Ferrier reported us to the station at Dunaville, which he had visited. He gave a very favourable opinion of the state of the congregation, and expressed the hope that they would meet with every possible encouragement from the Presbytery, and expressed his intention of again visiting them in the course of the winter. Dr. F. also reported us to the stations in the township of Walpole, under the charge of Mr. Bethune, missionary, whose services he stated to be most efficient and acceptable. He also reported us to Oneida, a very promising station in his own neighbourhood, where four elders and three deacons had been ordained; and stated that, as it was the desire of the people, he was willing to undertake the charge of this station for a time; which the Presbytery most cordially agreed to.

The Rev. Robert Lindsay, of Ayr, brought the claims of the Presbyterians in the township of Nisouri before the Presbytery. The case was referred, with a recommendation to give them every encouragement, to the western Committee of the Presbytery.

Mr. Muir, who, during the pendency of his application for being received as a minister of this Church, has been, in accordance with the Act of Synod, placed by the Presbytery on the list of missionaries at the disposal of the Synod's Home Mission Committee, reported us to stations at Jarvis, Walsingham, and Houghton; from the former of which places an application was presented along with a list of the contributors to the mission fund, for a stated supply of missionary labour. The case was referred to the Home Mission Committee.

An application was given in from Woolwid congregation to have the sacrament of the Lord's Supper dispensed there so soon as convenient, which was agreed to, and Mr. McGregor, of Guelph, was appointed to discharge this duty (art.) on the 3rd Sabbath of December.

A memorial from Lake Shore road; Owen's Sound settlement, to be organized as a congregation, independent of the other stations with which it is now associated, was given in and read. The memorial was received, but, after deliberating, it was resolved, that there appears to the Presbytery no object to be attained in dividing the congregation of Sydenham, which must be regarded in the mean time as one missionary field; but that whenever any one section of the settlement is prepared