

UNTHANKFULNESS.

THERE is no human failing more frequently and universally condemned than unthankfulness. We speak of it as a *baseness*, as something to which even the fallen and depraved among our fellow-creatures are often superior, for the vilest criminal will sometimes in this one point prove that he still possesses the common feelings of humanity. There may be deep down in his heart a sense of *gratitude* to some man or woman who, at one period of his life perhaps, put forth a loving, pitying hand to stay him in his downward course and whom he would not, base and vile as he may be, willingly injure. The greatest of our poets speaks of ingratitude in its effects as "sharper than the serpent's tooth" and a thousand passages might be cited to express the reprobation and ad-horrence felt by man for what is so unmanly and unworthy.

This being so we may well feel startled at the FACT that we are one and all guilty to the highest degree of what we so strongly condemn in theory. To THAT FRIEND of all others whom we should love with all our soul and all our strength of oart and mind, THAT FRIEND who has given us all that we possess, "life and breath and all things", who beside the countless blessings of this earthly existence did not withhold from us that priceless gift—His Son! to that Being whom we can only figure to ourselves as the Eternal Fountain of Love and Power, we are constantly showing an ingratitude which, if we pause to reflect upon our relations to Him, seems little short of madness. "Lord what is man that Thou art

mindful of him and the Son of Man that Thou regardest him!"

It shocks us when we read of the indignities, the impious mockery and scorn heaped upon our most blessed Lord by those amongst whom He had done His countless deeds of love. we think "How differently should we have acted had we been amongst those who had enjoyed His Gracious Presence." But how can we for a moment be sure of this? It is all very well to speak of their base ingratitude, and the miserable cowardice even of the best of his followers; but are we tried as they were? and are we not day by day, and hour by hour guilty of an ingratitude, less shocking to our sensibilities, perhaps, but not less real than theirs? and are we more excusable than they? If his bodily, visible Presence is not amongst us, we believe, if we have *any* Faith, that He is spiritually ever present. If we have not seen with our eyes the miracles recorded in the Gospels—are we not witnesses of His perpetual Love, and long suffering? If we are not among His *own* people, are we not among those to whom He extended the arms of world-wide compassion. *We from infancy* have lived under the influence of His Holy teaching, and if we were not of those who eat of the loaves and were filled, for *us* there is a HEAVENLY FEAST of which whosoever rightly eateth shall never die. What ingratitude then could outweigh ours when we live on without realising all this? When we account these priceless treasures as common things, and allow the things of this life, which perish with the using, to engross our thoughts and our affections?