

evils without complaining, and to do it for the sake of conscience, is an attainment which is really Christlike, and which should be cultivated with the utmost effort. This thought is emphasized in the Epistle over and over again. The evils to which Christians are exposed in common with other men are not those against which they need especially to fortify themselves. Sickness, pain, poverty are the common lot, and grace will give strength to bear them with becoming patience. That which becomes a real trial to the Christian is the fact that he may expect to suffer for well-doing; to suffer, in truth, as if he were an evil-doer deserving of the severest condemnation; to have his enthusiasm for righteousness misconstrued as hypocritical censoriousness upon the conduct of others. The divine comfort of such trials lies in the fact that they are pre-ordained of God, that the fires of persecution are essentially purifying, that they cannot really harm a genuine faith, for the guardianship of God is ensured for the safety of His real followers. Those who sanctify Christ in their hearts as Lord, give Him the central place in their loyalty and affections, need have no fear of hostile threats or acts. The reflection that the sufferings which Christ Himself endured were precisely of the character here described, should strengthen all His followers to walk with patience in His footsteps.

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

Here again the dominant hope of the early Church comes to the front. Peter told all who bore afflictions for righteousness' sake that however severe these may be, they are only temporary. The Lord would soon come, and His appearing would be a signal for the glorious and eternal victory of His saints over all their enemies. Let slaves therefore abide a little longer in the state where they are, in the assurance that a glorious deliverance is quickly at hand; let those calumniated for well-doing be patient, for their vindication will speedily appear; let those who undergo fiery trials understand that these are disciplinary in character and preparatory for participation in Christ's heavenly glory. Let all cultivate brotherly love, for next to the comfort of communion with God is the joy and strength that flow from fellowship with those who love Him. Let them think too that if the hand of chastening love bears so heavily upon those whom it desires to educate and purify, what must its weight be when laid in judgment upon those who will not believe the Gospel.

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON VIII.—THE CHRISTIAN ARMOR.—Nov. 21.

(Eph. vi. 10-20.)

GOLDEN TEXT—"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."—Eph. vi. 10.

TIME AND PLACE—About A.D. 63. Rome.

INTRODUCTION—Our last lesson told us of Paul's ministry in Rome, where, though kept as a prisoner, he was permitted for two whole years to preach the Gospel to all who came to him. During this time he also wrote four of his epistles, that to Philemon and those to the churches of Colosse, Philippi, and Ephesus. The last, by far the most important, was probably written near the close of his imprisonment, and was sent to Ephesus by the hand of Tychicus. It is probable that it was designed, not only for the church of Ephesus, but for several churches in the province of Asia, and was either passed from church to church, or a separate copy sent to each.

VERSE BY VERSE—10. "Finally."—Literally, *as for the rest*.

11. "The whole armor of God."—The Christian is regarded as a soldier of God, and must wear the armor He provides. "To stand."—To be unmoved under the assaults of Satan. "Wiles."—The crafty deceptions and stratagems employed by the devil.

12. "Against flesh and blood."—That is, against men like ourselves. "Principalities . . . powers."—These terms point to evil angels, who are the agents of the devil in his assault upon the kingdom of God.

13. "The evil day."—The day of trial and conflict.

14. "Loins girt about with truth."—The girdle, or belt, made of leather and covered with scales of metal, was an important part of the ancient armor, as it served to keep the other pieces in place and protected the most vulnerable parts of the body. "Truth."—The love and practice of truth. "Breastplate of righteousness."—Moral rectitude is here meant. The breastplate covered the shoulders and breast, and was made either of a metal plate or of small links joined together.

15. "Feet shod."—The shoe or sandal of the Roman soldier was thickly studded with nails. "Preparation of the gospel of peace."—The firmness which the peace of the gospel gives is referred to.

16. "Above all . . . shield."—In addition to all, the shield of the Roman soldier was oval in form, made of wood, covered with leather, and was borne upon the left arm. "Of faith."—A strong

rust, or confidence in God. "Fiery darts."—Referring to those used by the ancient warrior.

17. "Helmet of salvation."—The helmet was designed to protect the head. The experience of present salvation is the believer's helmet. "Sword of the Spirit."—The weapon which the Holy Spirit wields, which is the word of God.

18. "Praying always."—Not always in the act of prayer, but always being in the spirit of prayer. "All prayer."—All kinds of prayer, secret and public, etc. "Supplication."—This word refers to prayers for special blessings. "In the Spirit."—Under the guidance of the Spirit. "For all saints."—For all believers.

20. "Ambassador."—He was the ambassador of Jesus Christ, representing Him, though he was a prisoner in bonds.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—The Christian Armor—Eph. vi. 1-25.

Second Day—"Put on the Armor of Light."—Rom. xiii. 8-14.

Third Day—"Thou hast Girded me with Strength."—Psalm xviii. 30-50.

Fourth Day—"The Breastplate of Faith and Love."—1 Thess. v. 1-28.

Fifth Day—"Continue in Prayer, and Watch."—Col. iv. 1-18.

Sixth Day—"Blessed be the Lord my Strength."—Ps. cxliv. 1-15.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Nov. 21.—"GRATITUDE TO WHOM? FOR WHAT? HOW SHOWN?"—Luke xvii. 11-19. (A Thanksgiving topic.)

GRATITUDE.

Seed-time and harvest, cold and heat,
The promise of Thy word,
Thou hast fulfilled in its due time;
For this we praise Thee, Lord!
For peace and plenty o'er the land;
For firesides, homes and friends;
Accept the thanks we offer now
For all Thy goodness lends.

May we who share in heaven's best gifts
Remember those who bear
The weight of heavy-burdened hearts,
Of poverty and care.
And so in making glad some heart,
Afflicted, poor or lone,
We brighten other lives and bring
The blessing to our own.

—Christian at Work.

He who receives a good turn should never forget it. He who does one should never remember it.

Gratitude is a duty of both natural and revealed religion, and was very much recommended, pressed, and practised by all the good and wise heathens.

GRATITUDE TO GOD.

Do we live, and move, and have our being in God; and dare we refuse to be grateful to Him, and to move only in obedience to Him, shall we dare to deny the Lord who bought us, who redeemed us to God by His own blood; who died and rose again, that henceforth we should not live to ourselves, but to Him; that He might be our Lord both in life and in death.

Is it a small thing, that He offers Himself to us in all His fulness, without money and without price? Is it a small thing, that He in whom is all the fulness of God, having first offered Himself for us, now offers Himself to us; that He hath treated us hitherto with such indulgence; waited on us with such enduring patience, sustained us by such liberal bounty. Are we too inconsiderate to be His, or are His mercies too inconsiderable to constrain us to be so, the mercies that flow so freely from Him who is indeed the Father of mercies, the mercies that are so suitable to us, pardon to the guilty, light to them that dwell in darkness, life to the dead, a rich portion, and all sufficient fulness for the poor, indigent and necessitous. The mercies that we are encouraged to expect, as well as those which we enjoy. The great good laid up in store, the mercies of eternity, added to those of time, the mercies of both worlds meeting upon us. Have you heard this gracious invitation? and has your heart consented. Often reflect upon it, and bethink yourself what you have done, and where you now are. I, who was once afar off, am brought nigh, alienated from the life of God, but now holiness to the Lord. Let us express our gratitude to the giver of all good by living holy and useful lives. Let us glorify God with our bodies and with our spirits, which are His, may we glorify Him here, and enjoy Him for ever in heaven.

HOW SHOWN.

The man whose soul is saturated with grateful affection to his crucified Lord will weep when the enemy seems to get an advan-