

world may know that we are His disciples and that our light may thus shine into the dark and benighted hearts of those who have never "tasted that the Lord is gracious," and who are not living in the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of Christ.

"Love is the golden chain that binds  
The happy souls above;  
And he's an heir of heaven who finds  
His bosom glow with love."

EDITH L. PETERS.

Westport, N. S.

### TRUSTING IN GOD.

It has been said that in living a Christian life we must pass through tribulation, and that the Christian is continually called upon to resist temptations as well as endure afflictions. While this is true in the main, is it not possible for us to think more about our temptations and afflictions than we should; forgetful of the fact that there is a great deliverer in whom we should trust. Oh! how dull and wavering in faith are these poor hearts of ours, when we refuse to trust God under circumstances in which we would have fully trusted an earthly parent. God loves to have His children trust Him. They who trust most sorrow least. If there was continual trust there would be continual peace. The Psalms contain some beautiful expressions of trust. In Psalm iii. 6, we find a solemn declaration of trust in God: "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about." What could look worse to human sight than to be surrounded by thousands of men seeking to take away that which we hold so dear—our life. Yet the Psalmist will trust in God even then—he will not be afraid. How often the children of God find themselves placed under circumstances which, to say the least, are very trying. Surrounded by difficulties, friends have forsaken them, business matters have gone wrong, some dear one has been taken from them. And no matter which way they look, they see nothing to cheer their drooping spirits. It seems as though all their happiness and peace had fled. Life was a burden heavy to bear. Under such very trying circumstances it requires great faith in God to be able to say, "I will not be afraid. I will trust Him who doeth all things well." But if we consider awhile and meditate upon the mighty power of God, of His ability to turn affairs hither and thither at His will, that He can dispel the darkest clouds from our path—we will then begin to realize that those very troubles and afflictions that so distress us now are working out for us "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Then again, let us consider the number of scriptural illustrations we have of this great fact. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, nothing but the power of God could save him. He trusted in God for His deliverance, nor did he trust in vain. When the three Hebrew children were thrown into the fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter than usual, their trust in the living God saved them. Let us remember that God is the same to-day as He was then, that He exercises the same care over His people now as then; they are just as dear to Him and He will draw graciously near to them if they will draw near to Him.

Let us also remember that we shall receive sufficient help and grace from above to enable us to bear up under every trial. We have this beautifully expressed in the following language of the Apostle Paul. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And He said unto me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the

power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then I am strong. (2nd Cor. xii. 7-10). Let us rest assured that God's strength is made perfect through human weakness, and is made manifest by His ability to help when all other sources fail. He will never allow His children to be tried above what they are able to bear. In the still hours of the night, when lying on our beds, we are apt to think over and meditate upon our affairs, more especially if we have any trouble on our minds; under such circumstances, happy are we if we can say with the Psalmist, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." (Psalm iv. 8). There is something sweet and assuring in the fact that God watches over us, even when asleep. It also shows us the minuteness of God's care,—the individuality of His love; how it stoops, and condescends, and acts in little spheres as well as great ones, where nothing is to be had, save the gratitude and love of a poor feeble creature, whose life has been protected and preserved during a period of helplessness and sleep. Many a Christian lies down but not to sleep; he feels safe enough as far as his body is concerned, but cares and anxieties invade the privacy of his chamber. His faith is sorely tried, human nature cannot bear the pressure, and it is only by having one upon whom he can cast all his cares, that he can say: "I will lay me down in peace and sleep." Let us learn as Luther did, who, looking out of his window one summer evening, saw on a tree near by, a little bird making his brief and easy preparations for a night's rest. "Look, said he, how that little fellow preaches faith to us all. He takes hold of his twig, tucks his head under his wing and goes to sleep, leaving God to think for him. We can honor God by trusting Him, and we on our part shall be benefited. Let us trust Him more in our daily life, place more confidence in Him in the private chamber, knowing that the God of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

In the 23rd Psalm, (and who does not love that beautiful Psalm), we find another expression of trust: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." No matter how wicked a man may have been, or how good he really is, there is a solemnity amounting to awe, in the presence, or at the approach of death. Most of us have stood beside the death-bed of some friend or relation, and as we have gazed upon the cold lifeless form, thoughts of past friendship have filled our minds. We, too, have thought of the time when we may occupy the same position,—when the silent Messenger shall come for us. Oh! How our hearts have been solemnized—how we have prayed in our hearts, Lord help me to be faithful till death. But we are treading on a holy ground, and we must put off our shoes of self-dependance, and walk here in simple unwavering trust, fearing no evil if He is with us. If He has cared for us in life can we not trust Him in death. When it comes to our turn to pass from the scenes and cares of this life into that "from which no traveller returns," let us remember, that although the way may be dark, and to a certain extent unknown, God is there, and as He has cared for us and illumed our path through life in all known things, He will certainly be with us to comfort us where we most need Him. May the Lord grant us a rich supply of grace so that we may be able to trust Him under every trial. To trust Him when all is well is to sail with the wind and tide. Let us for a moment see the object of our trust in God,—the great God of heaven and earth. Justice, truth, mercy and wisdom are His attributes. How can we be afraid when we have such a protector who will take us under the "shadow of His wing." To be under the shadow of God's wing

implies closeness to God. Let us weigh this well, let us attempt to realize it, and it will bring great peace and assurance to our hearts.

Simply trusting every day,  
Trusting through a stormy way,  
Even when my faith is small,  
Trusting Jesus—that is all.

W. HARDING

May 14th, 1888.

### MY EARLY CHURCH LIFE.

What I mean by "early church life," is my first experience in a religious life. From a child I attended the worship of the "Lord's house," but had no religious experience until I united with the church. I had seen twenty summers before I obeyed the gospel of Christ. I date my first experience in church life back to that time.

We all realize the fact that our first impressions generally remain with us. It is extremely difficult to disabuse the mind from its early impressions. It is a matter of no minor importance what lessons we receive in our formative age. These early lessons increase with our age and give tone and shape to our subsequent life. Herein is wisdom in the training of children. Unless we plant the truth of God's word error will spring up. We are very scrupulous sometimes about teaching our children to pray. But the devil is not so scrupulous about teaching them to swear. It is well to steal a march on the enemy of souls by preoccupying the mind with truth and righteousness.

These early impressions are so strong and lasting that we are slow to accept or even tolerate in others any course or line of life that does not harmonize with them. I find, herein, one of the reasons why my own nature is so out of tune with much I see in church life. Much of the sentiment and order is so unlike my early Christian experience, that I have grave doubts as to their validity. Add to this the fact that my present judgment confirms my early impressions, and you have me out of faith and out of order with much that is considered in order.

About five miles from the city of Haverhill, Mass., is Ayer's Village, so called, I suppose, because of the number of Ayers who resided there. Here in this little thriving village was my first church home. Here I received my first experience in the duties and privileges of a Christian life. Although I was blessed with faithful and tender parents, who taught me much about the Christian life, yet not till here did I experience and realize them.

In the early fall of 1861, in the home of Bro. Houston, on the Lord's day were gathered seven Disciples: Bro. William Murray, Bro. Houston, Bro. McDonald and the writer, Sister Houston, Sister McDonald and Sister Emerson. Here was our first earthly heaven. Here we saw in the symbol of the bread and wine, the love of God; and in this "blest feast divine" we had a foretaste of joys above. We did not seek the praise or fear the scoffs or frowns of the world; but greatly did we desire the smiles and recognition of our Heavenly Father. We were assured that if we were right with God all would be right. The joy of that hour can never be told, but will ever be retained in the chamber of memory. In this, our adopted village, was the beginning of a new order of things in my history. I had heard about it, but here for the first time I tasted the joys and blessings of the church of Christ. Do you ask me, dear reader, why I call these humble Disciples worshipping in Bro. Houston's house "the church of Christ?" I will refer you to Paul's letter to Philemon. In the first and second verses you will find he is writing to Philemon, and to Apphia, and Archippus, and to "the church in thy house." This teaches us that it does not require any particular place or any particular number to constitute the church of Christ; but wherever the Disciples of Christ meet, whether many or few, to attend to the appointed work and