

disappointed in carrying out schemes of ambition, in securing preferment, in amassing and holding wealth; yes, even in carrying out plans of good, benevolence and charity. They repose trust in institutions, in friends, in the future; but alas! they are "doomed to disappointment."

4. The *bitterness* and melancholy results of these disappointments are worthy of note. Many a bright and happy life has been forever clouded and depressed by early disappointment. Many a life has been shortened, and many another tragically ended, because of some overpowering disappointment. Cowper never wrote anything more tenderly beautiful than the account of how the servants, to comfort him on the death of his mother, always told him she would come back to him. He was standing before his mother's picture, and in imagination addressing her, when he wrote:

"Thy maidens grieved themselves at my concern,

Of gave me promise of thy quick return;
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child."

But the greatest of all disappointments have been portrayed by Christ in some of His parables, in which He tells us that there shall come to the very door of heaven those expecting admittance only to find themselves thrust down to hell.

5. The *sources* of disappointments are many. In general terms we may say they belong to a sinful world, where all is confusion, uncertain, and deranged. Disappointments arise from man's shortsightedness, mistakes, failures, and weakness. The connection of our text reads: "Without counsel purposes are disappointed." We cannot control events, or foresee contingencies that may intervene or insure the capacity, integrity and fidelity of others. We are constantly taken by surprise at things springing up that we never dreamed of, and made no provision for. Hence many catastrophes, by sea and land,

might have been prevented had they been anticipated.

6. The *use* to be made of disappointments. (a) They teach us the uncertainty of all human expectations and our absolute dependence upon God. (See Jas. iv: 13-15.) (b) Our own impotence. No man can say, I will do thus and so. English skeptics sneer at the *Deo volente* put into the religious notices of meetings to be held. They call it religious cant. I presume the infidel cant is, "We will hold a meeting whether God will or no." The first builder of the Eddystone Lighthouse said, when it was finished, that God Almighty could not send a storm strong enough to blow it down; but one night's storm sufficed to hurl both builder and lighthouse into a raging sea. (c) We are to expect disappointments. I do not say desire or court them; but put it into your count for the journey of life; there are many disappointments in store for the traveller. (d) When they come accept them resignedly, not stoically, but look at them rationally. (e) Disappointments may sometimes be better than success. We often err in judging of things; and you have found before now that seeming defeat proved to be real victory. (f) There is one thing that can make all disappointments blessings: It is said that Cæsar had some magic power about him by which he turned everything he touched to gold. There is more than a magic power which the believer wields over the trying dispensations of life; there is a divine power. "All things"—disappointments included—"work together for good to them that love God." Therefore do not let disappointments dishearten you, or sour you, or cause you to turn back in your heavenly journey.

"The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
In blessings on your head."

"Always make the best of them" was Prince Albert's motto in disappointments.

I can promise to be sincere; to be impartial, not.—GOETHE.