

G O D I S L O V E .



OUR God is love: and all His saints  
His image bear below;  
The heart with love to God inspired,  
With love to man will glow.

Oh may we love each other, Lord!  
As we are loved of Thee;  
For none are truly born of God  
Who live in enmity.

Heirs of the same immortal bliss,  
Our hopes and fears the same,  
The cords of love our hearts should bind,  
In honour of Thy name.

As weapons of offence changed, those of defence changed, and shields gradually diminished in size, but gained in beauty and adornment, until, at last, they became merely armorial bearings.

Many passages in the Bible that make mention of the goodness or greatness of God are beautifully illustrated by the modes of agriculture, or warfare, or the peculiar customs of the times in which they were written, and we need fully to understand these in order to appreciate the beauty or force of such passages. When Abraham was sojourning in a land whose inhabitants were continually at war, God spake unto him, "Fear not, I am thy shield." And so, all down through the ages, He was the shield of all that put their trust in Him. He led Israel from bondage, often delivered them from their foes when every help of man was vain; sustained David, when hunted as a partridge on the mountains, or hidden in the dens from the relentless Saul; protected the timorous Elijah from the persecutions of Jezebel. Indeed, the Holy

Book is full of confirmation that God has ever been a sun and shield to His chosen people.

Paul, amid all his hardships by sea and land, his "fightings without and fears within," ever found God his "shield and exceeding great reward," and, after his varied experience, exhorts us to put on the whole armour of God, "above all, taking the shield of faith."

This shield does not promise immunity from bodily hurt, but it protects that which is of infinitely more value—the soul. So long as with our face to the foe we follow the Captain of our salvation, He will lead us on to victory, and nothing shall be able to hurt or destroy the soul that is protected by the "shield of faith" in Him. No subtle, sin-poisoned arrow of unholy desire, no sword-thrust of worldly policy, no shower of thick rushing temptations, shall be able to overcome its power; for "God is our strength and shield, and nothing shall prevail against Him."