

—and that probably a generation would have passed away before they would have been resumed. Not then until by many evidences of the divine power and favour accompanying God's servants in the Mission field the Church had been nurtured to a higher faith, and thus was able to bear the trial, and by bearing it rise to a more advanced position of Christian attainment, does God send these fiery trials. In this let us thankfully acknowledge the hand of Him who will not quench the smoking flax, nor suffer any of his people to be tempted or tried above what they are able to bear.

From these views of the design of Christian martyrdom the duties devolving upon the Church in the present emergency will generally be obvious, but there are two or three which we desire particularly to press upon the attention of our readers.

In the first place the Church is called to the devout acknowledgment of God as the author of this dispensation, and humble submission to his will. It is the lamest theology to regard any class of events, even the worst doings of wicked men, as not embraced in the counsel of God. To represent him as either not able to control them or standing by as an idle onlooker, "permitting" them, as no concern of his, is to rob him of all that distinguishes him as God. Dark then as is this deed, as far as its human actors are concerned, and awfully guilty as they truly are, yet Scripture and true piety require us to regard it as part of "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." And this recognition of the hand of God is *the first step* required of the Church in order to that resignation and submission to his will which is justly due to the Great Ruler of the Universe—to that humiliation which will lead to our being exalted in due time—and to that faith and hope through which we shall glory even in tribulation. Let us then follow the example of our Saviour, who with the full prospect before him of all that he was to suffer from the hands of wicked men and devils, raises his thoughts to the great Lord of all, and humbly bows his head in submission to him, saying, "The cup that my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?"

Secondly, we are called upon individually to imitate the example of our departed friends by manifesting the same spirit. True it is that we are not called to die as martyrs, but the same spirit is required in every individual follower of the Lamb, and should animate us in every department of Christian activity. What is the spirit of the martyr? Does it not consist in the unflinching courage with which they adhere to their profession of Christ's name in defiance of danger and opposition, and a readiness to sacrifice every thing, even life itself, for the sake of him who died for us? And does not Christ require this of all his followers? "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." But what are the dangers we are called to face, and what the sacrifice required of us, compared with the martyrs of Jesus? If we now prove unfaithful to the honour of Christ amid the slight temptations to which we are exposed, or grudge the trifling sacrifices we are called to make for his cause, have we the spirit of the martyrs whom we profess so highly to honour? If the sneer of an ungodly acquaintance now terrifies us, or we are unwilling to sacrifice a small portion of our worldly prosperity for the advancement of His cause, how would we have stood at the martyr's stake or worn the martyr's crown? "If thou hast run with footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses, and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustest, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan?"

Lastly and especially, the Church is called to redoubled efforts for the