

to stir up our own heart, and thus we should seek to encourage the hearts of one another in God.

'Cometh up.'—The progress is made step by step—and so you and I are so many steps nearer home than when last we met; and how soon, how very soon, we may take the last step, and find ourselves out of the wilderness, and in the blessed home!

But what in the meantime? The Church is here described as "leaning on her Beloved." She has a Friend!—a Friend who proved his love by laying down his life for her. None other than the precious Lord Jesus; that blessed One through whose blood we have been made clean from our sins. The Friend "who loveth at all times," and this Friend an almighty Friend, the Creator of the universe, and the One who was before all things!

We see also that she had not only taken His arm, but she leaned upon it. We all know that the first may be done without the second. Even a wife may take the arm of her husband not to obtain support for herself, but if he is in a weakly and feeble state, she may take his arm really to help and support him; but here is an arm brought before us—always strong, powerful, almighty—an arm on which we may always lean, without fear of wearing it. And only has this arm almighty and enduring strength, but think of the heart which is connected with this arm—so loving so tender, so faithful! Oh, what a Friend!

Now, beloved in Christ, do we lean upon this arm? When the difficulties and trials come, when the perplexities arise in our path, do we lean upon this strong and loving arm? This is just the point. It is just in the measure that we are enabled so to do that we shall be able to endure.

Let me affectionately ask, "Did we lean on this arm during the week that is past, and so learn to obtain spiritual sustainment?" And let us now, dur-

ing the week on which we have entered, seek to aim after this. These words, that we have been considering, are not a mere phrase without any particular meaning; but the Holy Ghost means to teach us, by this image that, in the midst of our trials and difficulties, we should, day by day, prove the strength of the arm of Jesus; and let us remember that He is the one to whom has been given "the tongue of the learned, that He should know how to speak the word in season to him that is weary." Let us seek to prove more his power and love, and we shall find that it is not in vain we lean upon that Arm.

HYMN.

I journey through a desert drear and wild
Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts beguil'd,
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my
say,
can forge the sorrows of the way.

The Work of the Christian Preacher.

BY REV. THOMAS JONES, OF SWANSEA.

Extracts from the Address delivered from the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, at the Annual Meeting, May 9, 1871.

The Christian preacher must, first of all, be a godly man, "filled with the Holy Ghost," clothed with the virtues, graces, and sympathies which the Divine Spirit alone can impart. He must possess knowledge of spiritual things, should be able to understand the Scriptures, having his mental eye sound and piercing that he may see far into "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." His faith in the gospel should be firm and unwavering; not a poor balancing of probabilities, but steady spiritual vision. Doubt is the paralysis of preaching, and arrows sent from that bow fall on the ground before you, while strong faith sends them quivering to their destination.

Men may study at the ancient seats of learning, be ordained by the bishops